



**QUALITATIVE STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING  
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY  
RELATIONSHIP AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL  
STAFF AND PARENTS IN IBADAN, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract:**

**Background:** School-community relationship is the presence of an intelligent connection between teaching instructors, school administrators, the community where the school is situated and parents. The success or failure of the school system, involving the (principals, teachers, students and parents) depends to a large extent, on the general educational environment of the communities and their value system. There is a dearth of studies on parents' involvement in schools in Nigeria. This study was a qualitative study that investigated the factors influencing the implementation of school-community relationships among school staff and parents in Ibadan Nigeria. **Methods:** In-depth interviews were conducted with 49 participants (28 school staff and 21 parents). A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to select the respondents from five (5) government-funded (public) schools and (2) private schools. Consent was obtained for the use of audiotapes, which were transcribed verbatim with a thematic analysis of data. **Results:** The majority of the participants (67.8%) were female school staff between the ages of 25-60 years. Most of the parents were females (90.7%) between the ages of 25-46 years. The level of knowledge of both the school staff and parents about the school-community relationship was limited. Despite their limited knowledge, both the school staff and parents had a positive attitude toward the school-community relationship, and the schools involved the parents in the school activities. However, poor communication, type of parents' job/schedule, poor parent-teacher relationship were factors influencing

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the implementation of school-community relationships in the schools. **Conclusion:** This study emphasizes the importance of advocacy and policy changes that will enable school staff to be more receptive to parents and surrounding communities and to foster behavioural changes in both parents and school staff. Additionally, health promotion and education programs focusing on the importance of school-community relationships should be implemented among school staff.

**Keywords:** school-community relationship, community, parental involvement, stakeholders

## 1. Introduction and Literature Review

Internationally, the concept of 'health promoting schools' has been embraced as an effective strategy for promoting the health of children, adolescents, and the broader school-community ([Mūkoma & Flisher, 2004](#)). Nigeria embraced the WHO's initiative for Health Promoting Schools by developing the National School Health Policy (NSHP) and its Implementation Guidelines ([Ekenedo & Ekechukwu, 2015](#)). Its effective implementation is enhanced by school health policy which provides the standards/guidelines for its practices and procedures ([Dania & Adebayo, 2019](#)). Also, [Turunen et al. \(2017\)](#) highlighted that successful implementation is facilitated by provisions and activities relating to health-promoting school policies, the physical and social environment of the school, the curriculum, family and community connections, and school-based health services.

School-community relationship is a cordial and mutual interaction that exists between the school and the community where the school is situated ([Adelakun, 2020](#)). There ought to be a developing interest in secondary school advancement by surrounding local communities; this will make a huge contribution to a school-community cooperative relationship ([Bakwai, 2013](#)). However, varied school and surrounding community disparities have been observed, and these conflicts could further degenerate into poor relationship between the school and the host community ([Owan, 2019](#)). This has the potential for schools to be isolated from the surrounding communities that they are intended to engage with and provide service to ([Izuehie & Ofojebe, 2020](#)). Increased school-community relationship is desirable in the quest for qualitative development of the secondary school system. Equally desirable in this respect is increased interaction between school staff and parents.

With the current state of school-community relationship in some Nigerian schools, the importance of frequent meetings between teachers, community representatives, and parents was emphasized by [Okunola \(2004\)](#). In a study carried out by ([Ofougwuka, 2005](#)), parents in the community were reported to only pay the parents-teacher-association (P.T.A.) levy when enforced to do so; parents also complain that the school administration extorts money from them without teaching their children well. According to ([Kanau & Haruna, 2013](#)), it was reported that poor community participation was a

major drawback to the development of education in Nigeria. And in view of the fact that the educational ministry alone cannot be burdened with the responsibility of providing education for all and at all levels, there is the need for strategizing ways of enhancing and encouraging community participation in progressing the development of the nation's educational sector. According to [Kamkwis and Zumo \(2019\)](#), strategies for involving the community in secondary school administration was reported and he highlighted that the school cannot exist in isolation but in cooperation with the community or society in which it finds itself. The success or failure of the school system, involving the school staff, parents and students depends largely in the general educational environment of the communities and their value system.

In-depth assessments, using qualitative methods, to explore both parents and school staff knowledge, attitude, level of parental involvement in school engagements and factors that influence the implementation of school community relationship is scarce. Therefore, this study utilized a qualitative method (in-depth interviews) to assess school staff and parents' knowledge, attitude, level of parental involvement in school activities and factors that influence the implementation of school community relationship in selected schools in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The PRECEED conceptual framework was adopted for this study, and it is one of the frequently used models in Health Promotion and Education ([Moshki et al., 2015](#)). The predisposing factors explain why greater number of the secondary school staff and parents needs more information about school-community relationship. This factor can possibly impact the choices individuals will make and assume control over their general wellbeing. The reinforcing factor incorporates abilities, parental contribution, presence in PTA gatherings, and capacity to settle on educated decisions about one's relationship to another. The enabling factors incorporates relationship with parents/staff, strategy rules which helps to give fundamental criticism on the relationship that could exist between school staff and parents, consequently adding to its persistence or extraction.

## 2. Materials and Methods

In-depth interviews (IDI) were conducted for 28 school staff and 21 parents (49 in total), who consented to participate, in secondary schools in Ibadan. This involved three-stage sampling techniques to randomly select public and private schools involved in the study. At stage one, the local government areas (LGA) in Ibadan were identified to be eleven and were grouped into peripheral and metropolitan local government areas. In the second stage, seven local government areas were randomly selected (balloting). In the third stage, the selected schools in the local government areas were grouped into municipal (3 schools in the metropolitan) and less city (4 schools in the peripheral) so as to have a proper representation of respondents for the study. Equal numbers of parents and staff were selected in each school (Table 1).

Pretested In-Depth-Interview (IDI) guide was used to conduct intensive face-to-face individual interviews. This enhanced a standard format for the interview and

allowed the interviewee to share their experiences in its purest and unadulterated way with an option to fully express their total opinion. The interview questions consisted of sections focusing on socio-demographic information, the school staff and parents' level of knowledge about school community relationship, attitude of school staff and parent towards school community relationship, level of parental involvement in school programmes and factors influencing poor implementation of school community relationship among school staff and parents. Informed consent forms were read to the participants just before the interview to seek their approval and verbal and written consent was obtained from all school staff and parents before the commencement of interviews. Confidentiality was maintained during interviews and participants were interviewed in places comfortable for them. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes. The IDIs were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, alongside field notes taken during interviews. After the transcription, the researchers read through the transcripts at least four times to get familiar with the data and significant statements were underlined and/or extracted at this initial reading. Significant sentences that had similar opinions, as well as varying opinions of the participants, were labeled by the researchers. Thematic analysis method was used for the analysis of all transcribed in-depth interviews. Themes and categories were closely examined to identify common themes while subsequent information gathered was fitted into new categories. All participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of data collected. Data were stored in a password protected computer and accessible to only the authors. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ministry of Health, Oyo State Research Ethical Review Committee prior to the commencement of the study (Ref No. AD 13/479/4216A).

**Table 1:** Numbers of schools selected per LGA

Local government areas	Number of respondents (school staff)	Number of respondents (parents)
Metropolitan LGA 1	4	3
Metropolitan LGA 2	4	3
Metropolitan LGA 3	4	3
Peripheral LGA 1	4	3
Peripheral LGA 2	4	3
Peripheral LGA 3	4	3
Peripheral LGA 4	4	3

### 3. Results

Majority of the parents in this study were females 90.5% while only 9.5% were males. The age range of the parents was between 31-46 years. Majority of the parents (66.6%) were Christians while 33.3% were Muslims. Majority (85.7%) were of the Yoruba ethnic group and over half (52.3%) had secondary level of education (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Socio-demographic characteristics of parents (N=21)

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	2	9.54
	Female	19	90.47
Age of respondents (in years)	31-35	1	4.7
	36-40	7	33.3
	41-45	8	38.0
	46 and above	5	23.8
Religion	Christian	14	66.6
	Muslim	7	33.3
Ethnicity	Yoruba	18	85.7
	Igbo	2	9.5
	Edo	1	4.7
Educational level	Primary	7	33.3
	Secondary	11	52.3
	Diploma/OND/NCE	2	9.5
	Bachelor's degree	1	4.7
Occupation	Trading	8	38.0
	Artisan	12	57.1
	Civil servant	1	4.7
Types of marriage	Monogamous	8	38.0
	Polygamous	12	57.1
	Single parent	1	4.7

Majority of the school staff in this study were females (67.9%) while 32.1% were males. Age range was between 35-60 years. Majority of the school staff were Christians (78.6 %), Yoruba (89.3%) and had HND/University Degree qualification (89.3%) (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Socio-demographic characteristics of school staff (N=28)

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	9	32.14
	Female	19	67.85
Age	35-39	6	21.42
	40-44	9	32.14
	45-49	4	14.28
	50-54	6	21.42
	55-60	3	10.71
Religion	Christian	22	78.57
	Muslim	6	21.42
Ethnicity	Yoruba	25	89.28
	Igbo	2	7.14
	Edo	1	3.57
Level of Education	NCE	2	7.14
	HND/Degree	25	89.28
	M.Sc./Ph.D.	1	3.57

### 3.1 Knowledge of School Community Relationship among School Staff

The findings from this study showed that the level of knowledge of school-community relationship was limited among the school staff interviewed. The study also revealed that most of the participants see school-community relationship as the relationship that exist between the parents and teachers of the school alone, without seeing the relationship in another perspective that showed the level of dependency and interdependency of the school with its immediate environment (the community where the school is located). The views of most school staff about school-community relationship could be described as one-dimensional; however, one of the participants stated a multidimensional relationship. In terms of the way the relationship is going, majority of the participants indicated that the relationship had been cordial although few of them also reported that things were not as it should be. However, one of the participants that saw the pattern of the relationship as unidirectional responded that:

*“I can say for this period, not like the olden days, I would say, presently, the school community relationship (i.e., relationship between teachers and parents) to me, it’s not as it ought to be, because parents and teachers are to co-exist to assist these children most especially in public schools, parents claim not to have time, even on PTA meetings especially the men. We only have few women. They have less time for these children. It is not easy to visit parents at home. They tell us they are too busy. Although, in order to maintain a good relationship with the parents, when we notice that a student is not active anymore in class, we try to find out what is happening to the student. For example, 3 of the school teachers visited a boy’s house to find out about the general welfare of that student”. (Vice Principal, Public School 1)*

Another participant that viewed the pattern of the relationship to be multidirectional clarified the pattern of the relationship and was of the opinion that:

*“Wait don’t let’s muddle things up; school relationship with the community is different from that of school relationship with parents. Naturally, school and community form a symbiotic relationship, we benefit from each other. The school as an institution in the community provides the pool from where we draw our students, so we should work hand-in-hand to ensure that the objectives of universal education are achieved. The relationship is assumed to be poor, in these ways: It is multi-dimensional. The school serves as an economic hub for the community i.e., shops set up around the school which provides the market for them. But at a point we always have conflicts of interest. Because the school will say students must not go out, but those sellers would harbor students outside to buy from them. With that, the relationship is not good enough”. (Principal, Public School 4)*

Majority of the participants that also viewed the relationship in terms of its outcome rather than the pattern were also of the opinion that the level of relationship that exists between the school and the community has been continuously cordial.

*"The relationship is cordial. When we call on parents, they do come."* (Teacher 1, Public School 1)

Another participant also reported that:

*"Well, to some extent, we have cordial relationship with the community even the PTA Chairman of the school 'cos he is after the progress and welfare of the pupils. He has children who had graduated and he lives nearby. He is very much involved in school matter."* (Vice Principal, Public School 1)

Another participant with very similar opinion also said:

*".... We are enjoying good relationship; we live among them and we encourage their involvement in building school-community relationship by inviting them during PTA meetings and prize giving days" ....* (Principal, Public School 3)

### **3.2 Knowledge of School Community Relationship among Parents**

Most of the parents stated that there should be a level of relationship that should exist between the school staff and parents in order to protect the interest of their wards/children. Most parents also described school-community relationship as relationships between staff and parents. In terms of the way the relationship is advancing, many of the parents indicated that the relationship had been cordial. However, few of them stated that the relationship could have been more cordial but for some factors:

*".... There is supposed to be a relationship between the school and parents and also the community members around the school. In my daughter's school, there is a smooth relationship between the school staff and parents" ....* (Parent, Public School 4)

*".... The relationship is supposed to be good enough so as to know more about our wards. Because of some characters the students might develop anytime" ....* (Parent, Public School 1)

*".... There is a relationship but anything than for them to teach our children, what else" ....* (Parent, Public School 3)

Few of the parent participants said that there is a cordial school community relationship especially with the school staff, only for some little disagreements which they resolved after sometime. The responses which reflected their views are as follows:

*".... Yes, there is, and the school/community relationship with the staff and parents is cordial enough although there may be disagreements at times but we resolve them as adults, trying to make the life of our children better" ....* (Parent, Public School 5)

*".... There is a cordial relationship between parents and teachers" .... (Parent Public School 2)*

*".... We have a good relationship that exist among us" .... (Parent, Public School 6)*

*".... Well, I guess to a certain extent there is a good relationship between the teachers and the parents, but that of community members may not be much because, they are on their own while the school has a lot of roles to play than the community" .... (Parent, Private School 2)*

### **3.3 Attitude of School Staff towards School-Community Relationships**

The findings from this study showed that there was positive attitude towards school-community relationship due to the zeal between both staff and parents in ensuring that the established school community relationship is beneficial and functional.

The school staff that responded indicated they find all necessary means to involve the parents in all school activities: for example, by ensuring that they were invited to be part of school governing bodies, by calling for Parents Teacher Association (P.T.A) meetings and open days that serve as avenues for building up cordial Parents-Teachers' interactions and also by allowing the community members (including the parents) to make use of school facilities. The quotations below show the links between the analysis outcome and the responses of the participants:

*".... When we call for P.T.A, they respond since the administration of this present government, we have not been asked to involve any parent on the implementation of any project. Only for them, to advise us. Some wards are not staying with their real parents and at times they are not able to take care of them. Then we visit them and liaise with the real parents. Efforts of the staff is cooperating and encouraging. There was an information that reached me that a student lost her parents while they travelled in an accident. That was possible when the teacher saw him in a particular condition. After inquiry the boy started to cry and he narrated his ordeal who now stays with their pastor. So, the teachers are trying in their own little way, and they also counsel them. (Vice Principal, Public School 1).*

One of the participants also responded that:

*".... The school staffs make calls to parents; we sometimes even visit. We make sure we call them for PTA meetings" .... (Vice Principal, Private School 1)*

One participant also responded that:

*".... The teachers are trying their best in promoting relationship between parents' because some of the teachers are living around the school." .... (Vice Principal, Public School 5)*



One participant also responded that:

*"... Our attitude towards the parents in building school-community relationship is excellent as we encourage parents to see their ward; we discuss with them; we allow them to use the school; we add them to WhatsApp group, call them for Parents Teachers Association meetings and open days." .... (Teacher, Public School 2)*

*".... We have different parent with different behaviour. Some with hot temperament and some are calm. So, we treat them equally" .... (Vice Principal, Public School 7)*

Another participant related the response of the parent when called concerning the welfare of their child and said:

*".... Ah e ban po tea fun, n le debeun nisinyi' (that is, give him something to drink, I can't come now). This shows how some parents' attitude can affect the school community relationship" .... (Vice Principal, Public School 2)*

Another participant revealed that:

*".... To me, parents are customers, customers are always right, so you just learn to accommodate them" .... (Teacher, Private School 2)*

*".... It is the attitude of the parents that causes either good or bad relationship; we should learn to tolerate each other" .... (Vice Principal, Private 2)*

### **3.4 Attitude of Parent Towards School-Community Relationships**

The findings from this study showed that there was positive attitude towards school-community relationship as they discussed their commitment and roles in fostering a positive and progressive relationship.

Parents indicated that they showed enthusiasm in answering teachers/schools when they are invited for Parents Teachers Association meetings and open days, and also participated actively in these school-related activities. The parents involved in this study also revealed that their involvement in open day, Parents Teachers Association meeting and sports day were all geared towards School Community Relationship. The quotations below show the links between the analysis outcome and the responses of the participants: One of the participants responded that:

*".... Yes... (there is an existing relationship between the school staff, home (parents) and the community members in the school) ...The effort of the teachers is encouraging...and I attend open day and Parents Teachers Association meetings and I also send gifts to my children's teachers" .... (Parent, Private School 1)*

*".... They are doing well when talking about the efforts of the school staff in promoting school-community relationship...and I also attend open day and Parents Teachers Association meetings and I also send gifts to my children's teacher" .... (Parent, Public School 1)*

However, one parent stated that:

*".... Some teachers show "I don't care attitude at times, I think they feel, "oga ta, oga o ta, owo alaarun a pe" (whatever happens will happen as long as I just do my part). So, attitude of teachers must change" .... (Parent, Public School 7)*

### **3.5 Level of Parental Involvement in School Programs: School Staff**

The findings from this study showed that there was a high level of involvement and engagements from the parents, as stated by school staff. Teachers stated that they involve parents in the school activities and programmes as they were viewed as important stakeholders that have a significant part to play in the growth of the school. However, there were some differing views.

One of the participants said that:

*"... As far as this school is concerned there is a clash between the community and the governing board of this school; The primary school is also questioned to be named after their community so the case is still on with the state government the teachers are doing their best. The rapport of the teachers and parents is not cordial enough; we asked them to bring cutlass for cutting weeds on the school grounds, but they said no; although they pay N500 per student. It's a levy that we use to pay our night guards so the parents felt since administration is free parents also think everything is free. Our relationship is okay and good enough, only that most parents are not really committed to the education of their children, because attendance of parent in meetings is low" .... (Teacher, Public School 4)*

*".... Those parents are supportive except for some that are less educated among them, and you see, it is somehow not easy to convince a less educated parent to accept some things especially if he or she is not used to it or not his way of life. The parents are doing their best and we the teachers are also doing our best. We notice anything about their wards through open days and teachers relate on observations about their wards; we do this every term but only on special occasions when we notice anything, we invite the parents. Since we have telephone numbers of parents, we also organize PTA meetings where we discuss/resolve issues together. We do call PTA meeting, Involving teachers. There is another one called PTA executives who interact with PTA executives without involving teachers. Some of the students go into buildings to gamble, we are only trying to inculcate morals into students. The role of the school is to make sure the parents are involved and updated on any*

*information that has to do with the school. We use to tell them to follow up on their wards education, so that we can both help their future" ... (Teacher, Private School 2)*

A teacher also stated that:

*"... Anytime there is an issue, we call on Parent Teachers Association meeting. And parents come en mass. We also use a WhatsApp group and a bulk SMS to inform them i.e. on social media the WhatsApp group started after a meeting and their numbers/group" .... (Teacher, Public School 1)*

*"... Parental involvement is very important, because they will be the one to tell us what we don't know about the children, so we try to encourage them during PTAs and other gatherings we have together. Some parents even see us on the street after greeting we talk about our children as class teachers and we know the way forward. We do encourage the parents to be coming to school if not often, without the knowledge of their wards and see the class teacher of their ward" ... (Teacher, Public School 2)*

One other participant also stressed the importance of involving parents in school activities by pointing out the challenges and way forward towards parental involvement in school activities and programmes:

*"... Although, some of the students live with their grandparents and not their parents, yet parents should be involved too because some parents don't create time for their children" .... (Principal, Public School 3)*

Additionally, in order to get more information on the level of involvement of parents and community members with the school, which may promote a better relationship among both the school staff and parents, the school staff were asked by the researcher if they allow community members to make use of the school facilities at any time. Responses included the following:

*" .... Sure, the school allows the community members to use the field. During the last government, where we had SGB, comprising of parents/stakeholders. Community members and old students are members, school authorities, representatives of students, through the SGB the community go through them ".... (Principal Public, School 1)*

*".... We allow the community members to use the field, to play football" .... (Teacher, Public School 2)*

*".... Yes, they are often allowed, it only depends on the ceremony, but not during school hours, you know it will disturb the students" .... (Vice Principal, Public School 3)*

*".... Yes, we do. We allow them to fetch drinkable water from the school on Saturdays" ....*  
(Principal Private, School 2)

*".... Yes, to a certain extent" ....* (Vice-Principal, Private School 1)

Furthermore, to establish the strength of school community relationship among school staff and parents which will lead to the factors responsible for the poor implementation of school community relationship, school staff participants were interviewed on the activities the school engages in to encourage school-community relationship, majority of the participants were quoted as follows:

*".... we engage in community service financially. And we also pay monthly dues to the community where we are based" ....* (Principal, Private School 1)

*".... Parent Teachers Associations, valedictory services etc." ...* (Teacher, Public School 3)

*".... Activities involved in, ehmmnnm, apart from the Parent Teacher Association there is no other relationship" ....* (Principal, Public School 5)

*".... Activities that we engage in like the inter-house sport but that was 5yrs ago. This is due to corona virus. Also, prize giving day" ....* (Teacher Public School 4)

### **3.6 Level of Parental Involvement in School Programmes: Parents**

The parents involved in this study reported that they were highly and actively engaged in school activities like the open day, Parent Teachers Association meetings and sports day which were all geared towards school-community relationship. The parents also reported that they were highly involved and actively engage in the school activities. The quotations below showed the responses that supported this assertion:

*".... I attend open day and collect the teachers' cell (phone) numbers; I also send gift (because) it is important to support my child's school" ....* (Parent Private, School 1)

Another parent also said that:

*".... I attend every school activity (because) parents need to follow up on their children..."*  
(Parent, Public School 4)

*".... Also, I appreciate the teachers in cash or I send credit cards to them if I'm happy with my son's performance" ....* (Parent Private, School 2)

Furthermore, when parents were asked about what are the roles of parents in ensuring a cordial relationship between the staff and parents, majority responded that both parents and the school (teachers) have a role to play as follows:

*"... Parents should make sure they provide all that is needed for their child in school, while teachers should teach well" .... (Parent, Private School 1)*

*"... Parents should always create time out of no time" .... (Parent, Public School 4)*

*"... Parents should honor invitations when called, if they have time" .... (Parent, Public School 5)*

*"... Parents and teachers should work hand in hand to make sure there is a cordial relationship existing between the school, the community and the parents" .... (Parent, Private School 1)*

### **3.7 Factors Responsible for Poor Implementation of School-Community Relationship: School Staff**

There were several factors that could hinder the implementation of school community relationship. On teacher-related factors, teachers' level of tolerance, poor communication between teachers and parents and the tripartite relationship between the teacher, students and parents were said to be causing hindrance to the implementation of school-community relationship. Poor parental level of involvement and reluctance to conform to school policies were the direct factors also highlighted in this study findings. The following quotations were presented from the participants' interviews to support these thematic summaries.

One of the participants that stressed the role of the community in hindering the implementation of the school-community relationship opined that:

*"The school serves as an economic hub for the community i.e., shops set up around the school which provides the market for them. But at a point we always have conflicts of interest. Because the school will say students must not go out, but those sellers would harbor students outside to buy from them. With that, the relationship is not good enough". (Teacher, Public School 4)*

Another participant highlighted poor parental level of involvement by saying that:

*"Many parents don't show up on open days and... Some parents are bad influence on their child as they fail in showing discipline to their wards." (Teacher, Public School 3)*

Another participant also shared similar opinion on poor parental level of involvement by stating that:

*"The challenges we are facing are minimal as some parents are always adamant to the calls from school."* (Vice Principal, Public School 5)

*"Parents look down on teachers and most have nonchalant attitude towards the school activities."* (Vice Principal, Private School 1)

*"... Parents' attitude. Some parents think you are eroding their privacy because of ego".* (Vice Principal, Private School 7)

Another factor was the carefree attitude of parents to achieving education:

*"... When schools are trying their best, it is also expected of the parent to assist, but when the reverse is the case and the parent thinks the teacher is a "magician" who can do all things, the overall symbiotic relationship that is expected to be achieved will be affected" ....* (Vice Principal, Public School 2)

*"...Factor – one needs to be praying for the understanding of where the school is located. Just last week, a student was brought in for stealing a phone alongside with other students. But we couldn't go further on the issue since it happened after school hours. Incidents like this can cause rancor in the community if not well managed. Yes, it depends on your relationship with the students when you correct them in love, they will want to confide in you. We have several cases where we teachers had to settle disputes among their parents so with much observation, they will confide in you. What normally causes problem between the school and community is the students destroying community properties" ....* (Vice Principal, Public School)

Another teacher elaborates further:

*"...There are so many factors but I think the most important is that the community cannot exist without the school and vice versa, so the community needs the school, the school also needs the community. But we should orientate the community to know the importance of the school system, and not only that parents should also know that teacher are stakeholders in the future of their children. There is no way a child can be successful, without the impact of teachers. And the only way to do that, is when you have cordial relationship with teachers and since it's a two-way side, teachers should also give report to parents. It is when the two are effective, then there will be a desired result. The school should stretch an open-hand to the community while the community should also accept the open hands, they are extending to them" ...* (Teacher, Public School 5)

### **3.8 Factors Responsible for Poor Implementation of School-community Relationship: Parents**

From the perspectives of the parents, teachers are the one that are hindering the implementation of the school-community relationship and they stressed this in their responses:

*“Bad attitude of some teachers to students and to parents is the key the factor that is responsible for the poor implementation of school-community relationship”* (Parent, Public School 1)

*“.... In my own opinion, poor communication between school and parents is the only factor that is responsible for the poor implementation of school-community relationship” ....* (Parent, Private School 1)

Another stated factor by a parent was their low self-esteem towards approaching the school staff when called on open days:

*“.... Whenever my son’s teacher calls for my attention in his school, I always feel shy and scared and I will keep asking the boy, hope you didn’t do anything wrong? because I don’t just like going to see their teacher, since there is nothing special, they are doing, moreover, I am a very shy person. That is just the kind of person I am.” ....* (Parent, Public School 5)

Some other parents were of the opinion that it was a challenge from parents’ relationship with the school as stated below:

*“.... most parents are not ready to cooperate with teachers”.* (Parent, Public School 7)

*“... I make calls to the class teacher cos most times I’m on duty, due to the nature of my job”.* (Parent, Public School 6)

*“..... lack of cooperation with teachers”.* (Parent, Public School 4)

### **3.9 Government’s Responsibility in Promoting School-community Relationships: School Staff and Parents**

When asked what the government can do to promote school-community relationship, most of the staff and parents stated that the government should make policies that will encourage school community relationship. Some of the responses are as shown below:

### **a. Teachers**

*"The government through the media can enlighten the parents the more to at least check on their children the more to know their performances and give teachers firsthand information on how their children are coping in school". (Vice Principal, Public School 1)*

*"Government should organize trainings, seminars for teachers, since teachers cannot know everything. There are directors in the ministries, lecturers in the field of subjects, who can brush the knowledge of teachers. it happened before but now it's no more. it's only for principals only". (Teacher, Public School 2)*

*"Government should make policies that will encourage effective school community relationship". (Vice Principal, Public School 3)*

*"Government has a role, but they are playing it but we only need improvement".  
(a) government should create an awareness or sensitization on the importance of education. Even if the government are paying some, parents should also have a role to play.  
(b) Government cannot do it alone, cos to whom much is given, much is expected".  
(Principal, Public School 4)*

*"...the government should promote policies that will encourage effective school-community relationship". (Teacher, Public School 6)*

### **b. Parents**

*"Government should continue to help as on the books they are giving to our wards and not relent. And there should be a way to create awareness to parents who are not ready to cooperate with teachers". (Parent, Public School 1)*

*"The government do not have much to do on this matter. The parents have much to do. Government has done their lot". (Parent, Public School 2)*

*"The government has done their best; it is only we the parents that must change and create more time for the education of our children". (Parent, Public School 3)*

*"Government don't really have more to do. It's all about the parents the school should cooperate with the parents and vice-versa". (Parent, Private School 4)*



#### 4. Discussion

Findings from this study showed that the level of knowledge of both the school staff and parents about school-community relationship is limited as majority of them only understood the relationship as a linear and unidirectional (that is, relationship between the school and the parents). This finding is in contrast to that of a qualitative research that was carried out in the northern state in Nigeria where it was discovered that school-community relationship plays an important role in the development of both the schools and the community ([Bakwai, 2013](#)). However, findings from this study further revealed that the school-community relationship was a non-linear and multidimensional relationship existing between the government, the school staff, the parents and the schools' immediate environment as all these encompass the complex school-community relationship.

Additionally, findings highlighted that most of the staff and parents had positive attitude towards school community relationship, as they discussed their commitment and roles in fostering a positive and progressive relationship that could benefit all the concerned parties (the students, the parents, the staff and the school itself). This was in contrast to another study ([Owan, 2019](#)) which reported that the attitude of school staff was observed to contradict the professional ethics of teaching; where secondary school principals especially those in public schools were found to be naïve and less concerned about the activities of the school.

This study findings reported a good level of involvement and engagement of the parents in the school programmes and projects, although there were some dissatisfactions. These findings was similar to a study by [Ajayi et al. \(2009\)](#) which state that to a large extent, parents were involved in the administration of schools in Nigeria. It was also indicated that insufficient communication between the parties involved in school-community relationship and inadequate Parents-Teacher-Students tripartite relationship were some of the factors that hindered smooth school-community relationship among school staff and other stakeholders. Others included teachers' level of tolerance, inadequate parental level of involvement in their children's/wards' education and parent's reluctance in total conformity to the school policy regarding their children. There is need for upgrade in awareness creation and understanding of the importance and processes involved in effective school-community relationships. And these interventions should put in mind the educational status of parents as stakeholders, in order to ensure their engagement and effective participation. Parents' educational level could have a contributory factor to how involved they are in the school and their relationship with their children's teachers. A study by ([Kanau and Haruna \(2013\)](#)) reported that there was a relationship between the people's educational background and their attitude towards school, where a reasonable number of parents are less likely to show commitment to the issue of educational and community involvement.

As indicated in the findings, the government, and especially the educational sector has a role to play in encouraging school-parent-community relationship, by ensuring

adequate policies are put in place, that highlights specifically step-by-step process in implementing school-community relationships.

#### **4.1 Recommendations**

Schools and the government have important roles to play in ensuring smooth school-community relationships. Principals and Teachers should encourage good rapport between them and the community leaders. They should make effort to see community involvement in school affairs. School staff and community representatives should hold regular school community meetings where issues and strategies for effective community involvement in secondary education can be discussed. This might make community members to feel as part of the school system, and as such might be committed to its success. The government should effectively implement the private-public sector partnership reform initiative to boost community participation in education management. They should also make efforts to revive school governing boards (SGB) in the schools. The government should encourage good collaborative effort between the parents and school staffs through the mass media, thereby educating them of their responsibilities irrespective of government efforts on their children. Government, through its Ministries and Agencies of government like the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social and Community Developments and Ministry of Health or the State Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) should ensure that attitude tests are conducted for every teacher applying to teach both in public and private schools. And also ensure periodic training of all school staff.

#### **5. Conclusion**

School-community relationship is yet to receive the full attention it deserves from school staff and parents as a result of some impeding factors. This would likely continue to affect the quality of the symbiotic relationship that ought to exist between both parties. Therefore, education planners, principals and teachers (school staff) should plan, develop and implement strategies for improving school-community relationship. Parents also have a role to play as stakeholders and should be invited and encouraged to play an active role in their children's schools.

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#### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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