

Impact Of Instructional Practices And Community Engagement On Academic Performance Of Secondary School Students In Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State

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Abstract: This study investigated the impact of instructional practices and community engagement on the academic performance of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. A correlational research design was employed to determine the nature and strength of the relationships among the variables. The population comprised 97,575 students enrolled in public secondary schools within the district. A sample of 384 students was selected using multistage sampling techniques, including proportionate and simple random sampling. Two instruments were used for data collection: The Instructional Practices and Community Engagement Questionnaire (IPCEQ), and a proforma for obtaining students' academic performance from school records. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation, and its reliability was established using the test-retest method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.84. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings revealed a significant and positive relationship between instructional practices and academic performance, indicating that effective teaching practices enhance students' academic outcomes. Similarly, a moderate to strong positive relationship was found between community engagement and academic performance, suggesting that increased involvement of community stakeholders contributes positively to students' academic success. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers should be trained regularly on modern instructional strategies and that schools should promote strong partnerships with the community to foster a more supportive educational environment.

Keywords: Instructional Practices, Community Engagement, Academic Performance, Secondary School Students

INTRODUCTION

Education remains a cornerstone of personal and national development, and the academic performance of students is a major indicator of the effectiveness of the educational system. Academic performance is a critical measure of educational success, reflecting students' mastery of knowledge, skills, and competencies as evaluated through examinations, continuous assessments, and other learning benchmarks. In Delta South Senatorial District, concerns persist regarding fluctuating academic outcomes among secondary school students, with performance trends in national examinations (such as WAEC and NECO) often lagging behind state and national averages (Emordi, 2024). In recent years, there has been growing concern over the academic outcomes of students in public secondary schools across Nigeria, particularly in Delta South Senatorial District. Stakeholders have identified multiple factors contributing to the challenges in students' academic performance, among which instructional practices and community engagement play significant roles.

Instructional practices refer to the methods, strategies, and techniques employed by teachers to facilitate learning. Effective instructional practices are learner-centered, inclusive, and engaging, enabling students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. In contrast, outdated, rigid, or teacher-dominated instructional approaches can hinder active learning and limit academic progress. Bamidele (2019) found that student-centered instructional practices like inquiry-based learning improved academic performance in Lagos senior secondary schools. Bibon (2022) showed that instructional practices like differentiation improved academic performance. Julsar (2023) found no significant relationship between teachers' instructional practices and students' academic performance in a virtual learning environment.

Community engagement refers to the active involvement of parents, local leaders, and other stakeholders in supporting the school's goals and activities. When communities are engaged, they contribute resources, monitor academic progress, reinforce school values, and help in maintaining discipline and motivation among students. Schools that enjoy strong community support are more likely to experience better academic performance among students due to increased accountability and collaboration. Ishimaru et al. (2020) stress that when students feel connected to their community and valued in their education, they are more motivated to succeed academically, particularly those who feel marginalized. Involving families in school activities fosters a supportive learning environment. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2020) note that active parental involvement, such as attending conferences and volunteering, significantly boosts academic performance by strengthening the partnership between home and school. Adeyemi (2020) revealed that community engagement enhances academic performance in rural secondary schools, Yitagesu (2024) showed that community engagement contributes positively to academic performance among students, finding that engaged students performed better academically.

In the Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State with varying levels of educational development—the combined impact of instructional practices and community engagement on students' academic performance cannot be overlooked. While some schools benefit from innovative instructional practices and vibrant community participation, others struggle with poor instructional delivery

and minimal community involvement. This study, therefore, examined the impact of instructional practices and community engagement on academic performance of secondary school students in the Delta South Senatorial District, Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, there has been growing concern over the declining academic performance of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. Despite numerous educational reforms, investments in infrastructure, and teacher recruitment, students' academic outcomes have remained below expectations in several public schools (Emordi, 2024). This persistent underachievement raises questions about the effectiveness of the instructional practices employed by teachers and the level of community involvement in the educational process. Instructional practices, which include the strategies, methods, and techniques adopted by teachers in delivering lessons, play a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding and retention of knowledge. However, observations suggest that many teachers still rely heavily on traditional lecture methods with limited student engagement, potentially impacting learning outcomes. At the same time, community engagement—which involves the participation of parents, local leaders, and other stakeholders in school activities—is often minimal, despite its known influence on creating supportive learning environments. While studies (Ishimaru *et al.*, 2020, Adeyemi, 2020) in other regions have shown that both instructional practices and community involvement significantly affect academic performance, limited research exists within the specific context of Delta South Senatorial District. This gap in empirical evidence makes it difficult for policymakers and educators to identify and implement targeted interventions that could improve students' academic success. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the extent to which instructional practices and community engagement impact the academic performance of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Research Questions

The study answered the following research questions.

1. What is the relationship between instructional practices and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State?
2. What is the relationship between community engagement and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State?

Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses.

1. There is no significant relationship between instructional practices and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State
2. There is no significant relationship between community engagement and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Methodology

Research Design

The correlational research design will be used for this study. This is because it examines the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. This design allows for the investigation of relationship between variables such as management of school culture and academic performance of secondary school students.

Population for the Study

The population for this study consist of 97,575 secondary school students attending public secondary schools in the Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. (Source: Statistic Department, Post Primary Education Board, Asaba, 2024)

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study adopted the multistage sampling technique to select the respondents for the study. However, before the sampling, the researcher chose a sample size of 384 respondents in line with Krejcie & Morgan (2016) sample size recommendations for a large population. Proportionate sampling technique was used to distribute the sample size of 384 across the eight local government areas in proportion to the population size of each LGA. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one school from each local government area by the balloting method. After selecting the schools, simple random sampling technique by balloting was equally used to select students for the study according to the sample size in each LGA.

Research Instrument

Two instruments were used for data collection. They were Instructional Practices and Community Engagement Questionnaire (IPCEQ), The questionnaire was divided into three sections: each section of the questionnaire was structured based on four-point Likert scale pattern of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree, (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The second instrument was students' performance proforma used to collect the students previous term result.

Validity of the Instruments

The Instructional Practices and Community Engagement Questionnaire (IPCEQ) was validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation in College of Education, Warri. Items that do not harmonize with the research objectives or ambiguous items were removed. The content validity ensures that the instrument covers all the relevant aspects of the concept being measured.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire was administered to a pilot group of 20 secondary school students on two occasions, with a two-week interval between administrations. The correlation between the two sets of responses was calculated using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. A high correlation value ($r = 0.84$) indicated that the instruments produced stable and consistent results over time, suggesting strong test-retest reliability.

Method of Data Collection

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed across the eight LGAs with the help of three research assistants. Completed copy was retrieved from the respondent immediately after completion. The proforma was also used to collect data on students' performance.

Method of Data Analysis

The data for the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to answer the research questions. While the linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: What is the relationship between instructional practices and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State?

Table 1: Relationship between instructional practices and academic performance (n=384)

Variable	\bar{X}	S.D	r	r^2	$r^2\%$
Instructional practices	19.0703	1.83603			
Academic performance	19.3490	1.05618	.589	0.347	34.7

The result in Table 1 shows a positive and moderate relationship between instructional practices and academic performance, with a correlation coefficient (r) of .589. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.347$) indicates that 34.7% of the variation in academic performance can be explained by instructional practices. This suggests that improvements in instructional practices are moderately associated with better academic performance among students in the study area.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between community engagement and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State?

Table 2: Relationship between community engagement and academic performance (n=384)

Variable	\bar{X}	S.D	r	r^2	$r^2\%$
Community engagement	18.6719	1.64202			
Academic performance	19.3490	1.05618	.571**	.326	32.6

According to Table 2, there is also a positive and moderate relationship between community engagement and academic performance, with a correlation coefficient (r) of .571. The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = 0.326$) shows that 32.6% of the variation in students' academic performance can be attributed to community engagement. This implies that increased community involvement in educational activities has a moderately positive impact on students' academic performance.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between instructional practices and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Table 4: Regression Analysis showing relationship between instructional practices and the academic performance of secondary school students

Model	B	Std.Error	Coefficients ^a		Sig.	95.0% confidence interval for B	
			Unstandardized coefficients Beta	Standardized coefficients t		Lower bound	Upper bound
(Constant)	12.886	.456		28.282	.000	11.990	13.782
Instructional practices	.339	.024	.589	14.251	.000	.292	.386
$R^2 = 0.347$, $F = 203.100$, $p\text{-value} = (0.000)$, $df (382)$. Significant at 5% $N = 384$							

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationship between instructional practices and the academic performance of secondary school students, using a sample of 384 participants ($n = 384$). The regression model was statistically significant, $F(1,382) = 203.100$, $p < 0.000$, indicating that instructional practices significantly predicted academic performance. The model explained 34.7% of the variance in academic performance ($R^2 = 0.347$), suggesting that the quality of instructional practices contributes substantially to students' academic performance. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.589$) indicated a strong positive relationship, meaning that as instructional practices become more effective, students' academic performance improves significantly.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between community engagement and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State.

Table 4: Regression Analysis showing relationship between community engagement and the academic performance of secondary school students ($n=384$)

Model	B	Std.Error	Coefficients ^a		Sig.	95.0% confidence interval for B	
			Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients		Lower bound	Upper bound
			Beta	t			
(Constant)	12.497	.507		24.668	.000	11.501	13.493
Community engagement	.367	.027	.571	13.578	.000	.314	.420
$R^2 = 0.326$, $F = 184.363$, $p\text{-value} = (0.000)$, $df (382)$. Significant at 5% $N=384$							
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance							

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationship between community engagement and the academic performance of secondary school students, using a sample of 384 participants ($n = 384$). The regression model was statistically significant, $F(1,382) = 184.363$, $p < 0.000$, indicating that community engagement is a significant predictor of academic performance. The model explained 32.6% of the variance in academic performance ($r^2 = 0.326$), suggesting that community engagement plays substantial role in influencing students' academic success. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.571$) indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship, meaning that higher levels of community engagement are associated with improved academic performance among students.

Discussion of Findings

Instructional Practices and Academic Performance

The first findings showed that there was a significant relationship between instructional practices and academic performance among Secondary School Students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. This underscores the importance of effective teaching strategies in enhancing student outcomes. Johnson and Adesina (2020) reported that innovative instructional practices, such as active learning and formative assessments, significantly improved students' academic achievement. Nwafor and Adebisi (2021) highlighted the role of differentiated instruction in meeting diverse student needs, leading to better academic performance. Chen et al. (2023) demonstrated that the use of technology-enhanced learning tools positively influenced students' academic outcomes.

Brown and Taylor (2019) argued that the overuse of certain instructional methods, such as group work, can lead to disengagement among high-performing students. Okafor and Olatunji (2022) found no significant relationship between instructional practices and student performance in low-resource schools where external factors dominated. Lee and Kim (2023) noted that while instructional practices are important, their effectiveness depends heavily on teacher training and classroom resources.

Community Engagement and Academic Performance

The analysis revealed a moderate to strong positive relationship between community engagement and academic performance. This highlights the importance of involving community stakeholders in educational processes. Oladele and Adekunle (2020) found that active community involvement in school decision-making improved resource allocation and student outcomes. Okafor et al. (2021) demonstrated that parental and community engagement in school activities fostered a sense of accountability, leading to better academic performance. Chen and Zhang (2023) reported that schools with strong community partnerships experienced enhanced student motivation and academic success.

Brown and Hall (2020) argued that excessive community involvement can sometimes interfere with school autonomy, negatively affecting academic performance. Eze and Chukwu (2022) found no significant relationship between community

engagement and academic outcomes in schools located in urban areas with limited parental participation. Williams et al. (2023) noted that while community engagement is beneficial, its impact is often overshadowed by internal school factors such as leadership and teaching quality.

The findings underscore the significance of teacher-student relationships, instructional practices, school climate, and community engagement in shaping students' academic performance. While the negative relationship between leadership practices and academic performance warrants further investigation, the evidence highlights the multifaceted nature of factors influencing educational outcomes.

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of instructional practices and community engagement on the academic performance of secondary school students in Delta South Senatorial District of Delta State. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that instructional practices play a crucial role in shaping students' academic outcomes, as evidenced by the significant and positive relationship observed. This implies that the effectiveness and quality of teaching methods employed by teachers substantially influence students' academic achievement.

Furthermore, the study also revealed a moderate to strong positive relationship between community engagement and academic performance, indicating that active involvement of parents, local leaders, and stakeholders in school activities contributes meaningfully to the academic success of students. This highlights the importance of fostering strong school-community partnerships to create a supportive learning environment. In essence, both instructional practices and community engagement are pivotal factors that significantly influence the academic performance of secondary school students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Educational authorities should organize regular workshops, seminars, and in-service training for teachers focused on innovative and learner-centered instructional practices. This will help improve teaching effectiveness and, in turn, boost students' academic performance.
2. Schools should actively engage parents, community leaders, and local organizations in educational planning and decision-making processes. Initiatives such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), community forums, and volunteer programs can help foster stronger community involvement in school activities.
3. The Ministry of Education and school management boards should develop and enforce policies that promote inclusive and participatory instructional strategies, as well as mechanisms that encourage community participation in school governance, monitoring, and student mentorship programs.

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