

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIP ON CHILDREN'S SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of parent-teacher partnership on children's socio-emotional development in primary school in Lagos State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprises teachers and parents of primary school pupils. The study sample consists of 216 participants. A multistage sampling procedure was employed for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 4 local government education authorities in Lagos State: Alimosho, Amuwo-Odofin, Badagry, and Ojo LGEAs, respectively. A Stratified sampling technique was used to select 6 primary schools in each of the selected LGEAs in Lagos State, in order to ensure that the sample accurately reflects the demographic diversity of the population. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 4 teachers and 5 parents from each of the selected primary school pupils in the selected LGEAs in Lagos State. A self-designed instrument was used for the study titled 'Parent-Teacher Partnership on Children's Socio-Emotional Development Questionnaire (PTP_CSEDQ). The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha technique, yielding a coefficient value of 0.83. The results depict a significant positive relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's socio-emotional development in early childhood education ($r = 0.46$; $p < 0.05$). The result also affirms a significant positive relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education ($r = 0.51$; $p < 0.05$). The study recommended that there should be structured training programs for teachers focused on effective communication strategies and cultural sensitivity, enabling them to engage diverse parent populations.

Keywords: Communication, Holistic Approach, Parent-Teacher Partnership, Socio-Emotional Development

Introduction

Early childhood education is crucial in shaping a child's development, laying the groundwork for future academic success and overall well-being (Okudo & Omotuyole, 2013).

During this crucial period, socio-emotional development is a key factor. It affects a child's ability to build relationships, manage their emotions, and interact successfully in social situations (Deeba, 2021). Teachers do more than just teach these skills in the classroom. It requires a collaborative approach, actively involving parents as key partners in the educational process.

When parents and teachers work together, using open communication, mutual respect, and shared goals, they can create a positive effect. This collaboration can then improve children's social and emotional development. Understanding how parents and teachers work together, and how this affects children's social and emotional development, is especially important in Lagos State, Nigeria. Different socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural factors shape the educational environment there (Anazia *et. al.*, 2025). Analysing the nuances of these collaborations in this specific context can provide profound insights, thereby guiding the enhancement of early childhood education practices and fostering holistic child development. Early childhood education is critical because it provides the basic skills and knowledge children need to succeed in school and later in life, creating valuable educational experiences (Okudo & Omotuyole, 2013). Parental involvement in education is crucial, and schools can greatly benefit from the support of parents (Hafiz & Farik, 2017).

In Lagos State, where the educational environment is shaped by diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, parent-teacher partnerships are crucial for a child's development, especially in early childhood education (Azad *et. al.*, 2020). These collaborative relationships, which involve joint endeavours between parents and teachers, are crucial in shaping a child's socio-emotional development; they significantly influence a

child's capacity to engage in social exchanges, regulate their emotions, and cultivate a robust self-concept (Oranga *et al.*, 2023).

Strong relationships between parents and teachers are increasingly recognised as essential for effective early childhood education, providing a comprehensive approach to supporting children's growth (Angwaomaodoko, 2023). The importance of parents and community members in education has received considerable attention, as it's considered a key factor in improving educational outcomes and fostering social improvement (Eden *et al.*, 2024).

When parents and teachers work together, they often experience shared satisfaction in helping children and the school environment improve (Mburu *et al.* 2021).

Moreover, the research shows that these partnerships significantly improve a child's academic success, social skills, and overall well-being, creating a supportive environment that goes beyond the classroom (Hibi& Assadi, 2021). This collaborative approach acknowledges that learning goes beyond the classroom, seeing it as a continuous process that thrives on consistent reinforcement and shared understanding between home and school. In the context of socio-emotional development, the importance of parent-teacher partnerships is particularly clear. These partnerships provide a way to align strategies and interventions, which helps address a child's emotional needs and develop their social skills.

Parent-teacher partnerships are when parents and teachers work together to help a child grow and learn (Eden *et al.*, 2024). These partnerships go beyond the usual parent-teacher interactions, like conferences or report cards. They involve a more complete and ongoing discussion about the child's learning, behaviour, and overall well-being. Effective partnerships between parents and teachers are characterised by open communication. Such interaction includes regular meetings, parent-teacher conferences, digital platforms, and home-school communication logs. These methods allow for the consistent and open sharing of information between the home and the school.

This technique encompasses a range of communication methods: scheduled meetings, phone conversations, emails, and digital platforms. These tools help keep both parents and teachers in the loop regarding a child's development and any difficulties that might arise.

Successful partnerships also require mutual respect and understanding, where parents and teachers value each other's viewpoints and skills. It's important to recognise that parents have unique insights into their child's personality, strengths, and needs. At the same time, teachers have specialised knowledge of child development and effective teaching methods.

Furthermore, successful partnerships establish shared goals and expectations for the child's learning and development, ensuring that both parents and teachers are working towards the same objectives. Parental involvement and collaboration within the community entail active participation in community services alongside children, as well as the identification and application of community resources to bolster students' learning and overall development (Oranga *et al.*, 2023). When parents actively participate in their children's education, students often show improved academic performance, better attendance, and stronger social-emotional development (Eden *et al.*, 2024). Parental involvement includes both a commitment and active participation from parents in their child's education and school activities (Oranga *et al.*, 2023).

Parents and teachers also experience mutual support and satisfaction when they work together to create positive changes in children and the school environment (Mburu *et al.*, 2021).

When parents and teachers work together, they create a supportive environment for the child. This approach helps learning to continue both at home and in the classroom.

Parents are essential in creating a school environment that meets their child's unique needs. Working together, schools, parents, and communities can help create positive social change (Eden *et al.*, 2024). Parents can provide essential skills and talents that significantly enhance the educational experience of young learners (Oranga *et al.*, 2023). During the early years of childhood, there is a significant growth in social and emotional skills. This development lays the groundwork for future relationships, academic success, and overall mental health, as shown by Dachalson *et al.*, (2016). During this time, children develop key skills, including emotional control, empathy, social awareness, and conflict resolution (Edwards, 2012). These skills don't come naturally; they grow through interactions with carers, friends, and teachers. Parent-teacher partnerships are crucial for enhancing these skills in both domestic and educational environments (Denham, 2006).

The evaluation and promotion of socio-emotional learning in early childhood continued to be important areas of study for both educators and researchers (Mondi *et al.* 2021).

These abilities are the foundation for a wide range of accomplishments in psychosocial, academic, and professional areas (Garibaldi & Josias, 2015). Positive emotional interactions between a child and their teacher are essential for the child's social and emotional development (Mihaela, 2015). Interactions between adults and children are critical for promoting a child's social, emotional, and academic growth (Rimm-Kaufman *et al.* 2003). Furthermore, social-emotional skills are crucial for navigating the complexities of social interactions, adapting to different environments, and contributing to a well-functioning society (2021).

Therefore, parent-teacher partnerships are crucial because they offer a unique chance to create a consistent and supportive environment that helps develop these skills. These partnerships create a unified approach to supporting a child's social and emotional growth. This ensures that the values, expectations, and interventions are consistent in both environments.

When parents and teachers work together, it greatly helps a child's academic success, social skills, and overall well-being, creating a supportive environment that goes beyond the classroom. Educators play a crucial role in supporting emotional development, as they can intentionally help children grow emotionally (Thümmeler *et al.*, 2022). The quality of interactions between children and their teachers significantly affects children's development, particularly their ability to manage emotions and form relationships with others (Thümmeler *et al.*, 2022).

In early childhood education, emotional intelligence is increasingly recognised as a key element of a high-quality educational experience (Ulutaş *et al.*, 2021). When schools emphasise social and emotional learning, educators, parents, and policymakers generally agree that education should help children successfully navigate their lives (Greenberg, 2023).

Social and emotional learning (SEL) help people understand and manage their emotions, set and achieve personal goals, show empathy, build and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (Konishi & Wong, 2018). In the classroom, students frequently meet people from different backgrounds, with varying viewpoints and skills. Social and emotional learning aims to help students understand their thoughts and feelings, become more self-aware, and develop empathy for their classmates (DeVoogd *et al.*, 2016).

Parent-teacher partnerships go beyond just sharing information; they involve creating a collaborative relationship focused on the child's overall growth. These methods promote a consistent approach to addressing a child's emotional and social needs, ensuring that the strategies used at home and in school are aligned. Schools are encouraged to build positive relationships with families to support students' academic, social, and emotional growth.

Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education, it often leads to better academic performance, increased motivation, and improved emotional and behavioural outcomes (Odebawale *et al.*, 2022).

Furthermore, these collaborations offer a space for parents and educators to exchange knowledge and perspectives. This sharing deepens their grasp of a child's abilities, difficulties, and unique approach to learning. This aspect is especially important during early childhood, a time when basic social and emotional skills are being developed. Teachers gain a deeper understanding of a child's home life, cultural background, and family structure. At the same time, parents benefit from the teacher's knowledge of child development and how to manage the classroom.

These partnerships are also crucial for identifying and addressing potential socio-emotional issues early on, which helps prevent them from becoming more serious problems. Moreover, excellent communication between parents and teachers helps children feel secure and like they belong. When children see a consistent approach between home and school, they feel more supported and understood. This, in turn, helps them develop a positive view of themselves and improves their emotional well-being. A child's social environment, including their family, community, and school, significantly affects their growth and development (Deeba, 2021).

The move from preschool to formal schooling is a crucial time in a child's development, significantly affecting their social and emotional growth, particularly their ability to make and keep friends (Quinn &

Hennessy, 2010). During this time, children's interactions extend beyond their families, including peers and teachers. This aspect highlights the importance of social connections in their overall development (Sawyer *et al.*, 2021). Strong connections with the school environment, including its staff, are a key factor in academic success and social-emotional growth (Solís *et al.*, 2021). People often mistakenly believe that early childhood education solely concentrates on enhancing intelligence and academic skills. This view can overshadow the essential role of social and emotional learning in a child's overall development (Pahl & Barrett, 2007).

Developing social-emotional skills is just as important for a child's development as other areas. This ability is crucial for their future well-being and academic success (Denham, 2006). Developing social and emotional skills is a key part of early childhood education (Jadwin, 2019).

These abilities are essential for a child's overall development, helping them build healthy relationships and succeed academically (Djamnezhad *et al.*, 2021). Teachers are crucial in developing social skills by creating environments that encourage cooperation, empathy, and effective communication. These skills are essential for children to build strong relationships (Connelly, 2018). The development of friendships during early childhood is a complex process, influenced by individual traits, the environment, and the quality of relationships with parents and teachers. Friendships are critical for children's overall development (Danby *et al.*, 2012).

Friendships in early childhood are more than just play; they are important for developing social skills, emotional health, and cognitive abilities. Positive relationships with their peers significantly enhance children's ability to develop important skills like empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution (Lynch & Simpson, 2010). The development of these skills is greatly enhanced by the collaboration between parents and teachers, which provides a comprehensive approach to children's social and emotional growth.

Teachers play a key role in helping children form friendships in early childhood education, as shown by Kalicki and his team (2019). Teachers are crucial in creating inclusive classrooms. These environments help children feel safe, respected, and valued, which then encourages the development of friendships. Teachers are essential in creating an environment that helps children develop socially and emotionally, which in turn affects their ability to make and keep friends. Educators can explicitly teach social skills, such as communication, empathy, and conflict resolution, by using carefully planned activities and teaching methods (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2019).

Theoretical Frameworks

Several theoretical frameworks help us understand socio-emotional development in early childhood, which supports the importance of parent-teacher partnerships.

Attachment theory (Teti, 2001; Ordway *et al.*, 2015) suggests that secure attachments with carers are crucial for a child's sense of safety, security, and ability to manage emotions.

Attachment theory suggests that children who build secure attachments with their parents and teachers are more likely to develop healthy social and emotional skills. This reasoning is because they feel safe exploring their environment and forming relationships with others (Lang *et al.*, 2013).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory highlights how different environmental systems, including family, school, and community, work together to influence a child's development.

Within this framework, partnerships between parents and teachers are a crucial link between home and school. These partnerships form a supportive network that aids in the holistic development of children (Ali *et al.*, 2020). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasises how social interaction and cultural context shape a child's cognitive and social development (Mkhize-Mthembu, 2022). These interactions help children internalise social norms, values, and ways to manage their emotions, which, in turn, support their social and emotional development. The parent-child relationship significantly affects a child's physical and emotional well-being, as well as their social and cognitive development (Oladeni-Sakirudeen, 2018). This process also affects a child's self-esteem and academic performance (Ogren & Johnson, 2020).

Children whose parents are more involved in their education tend to be better adjusted socially and emotionally (Morris *et al.*, 2021; Rizvi, 2022).

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of parent-teacher partnership on children's socio-emotional development among primary schools in Lagos State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the impact of parent-teacher partnership on children's social skills, emotional intelligence, and overall socio-emotional well-being.
2. Examine the role of parent-teacher partnership in supporting children's transition to formal education.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's socio-emotional development in early childhood education

H02: There is no significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study population comprises teachers and parents of primary school pupils. The sample of this study consists of 216 participants. A multistage sampling procedure was employed for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 4 local government education authorities in Lagos State: Alimosho, Amuwo-Odofin, Badagry, and Ojo LGEAs, respectively. A Stratified sampling technique was used to select 6 primary schools in each of the selected LGEAs in Lagos State, in order to ensure that the sample accurately reflects the demographic diversity of the population. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 4 teachers and 5 parents from each of the selected primary school pupils, ensuring a balanced representation of different socio-economic backgrounds in the selected LGEAs in Lagos State. A self-designed instrument was used for the study titled 'Parent-Teacher Partnership on Children's Socio-Emotional Development Questionnaire (PTP_CSEDQ)'. The instrument was validated by an expert in the Department of Early Childhood Care and Primary Education, Lagos State University of Education, Oto/Ijanikin, Lagos. The item in the instrument was adjudged to meet both construct and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha technique, yielding a coefficient value of 0.83. The Data collected were analysed with Inferential statistics of Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC), which was tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Testing the hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's socio-emotional development in early childhood education

Table 1: Summary of Pearson Correlation on Parent-Teacher Partnership and Children's Socio-Emotional Development in Early Childhood Education

Variable	N	Mean	St d.D	r	Sig.	Remark
Parents-teacher partnership	216	6.334	2.891			
Children socio-emotional development in ECE	216	13.522	7.516	.463**	0.000	significant

The table above depicts a positive significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's socio-emotional development in early childhood education ($r = 0.46$; $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship was therefore rejected. This positive relationship implies that Parent-teacher partnerships are not merely about exchanging information but about forging a collaborative alliance focused on the child's holistic development. They enable a consistent approach to addressing a child's emotional and social needs, ensuring that strategies used at home and in school are aligned.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Correlation on Parent-Teacher Partnership and Children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education

Variable	N	Mean	Std.D	r	Sig.	Remark
Parents-teacher partnership	216	6.334	2.891			
Children ability to form friendships in ECE	216	10.472	5.378	.512**	0.000	significant

The table above depicts a positive significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education ($r = 0.51$; $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship was therefore rejected. This positive relationship implies that the cultivation of friendships in early childhood is a multifaceted process, influenced by various factors including individual characteristics, environmental contexts, and the quality of relationships with parents and teachers.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's socio-emotional development in early childhood education. The findings of this present study are in line with Teti, (2001); Ordway *et al.*, (2015), who emphasize the significance of secure attachments with caregivers in fostering a child's sense of safety, security, and emotional regulation. According to attachment theory, children who form secure attachments with their parents and teachers are more likely to develop healthy social and emotional skills, as they feel confident in exploring their environment and forming relationships with others (Lang *et al.*, 2013). Parental participation in a child's education is strongly linked to improved academic performance, increased motivation, and better emotional and behavioral outcomes. These partnerships also play a crucial role in identifying and addressing potential socio-emotional challenges early on, preventing them from escalating into more significant problems.

The findings from hypothesis two depict a positive and significant relationship between parent-teacher partnership and children's ability to form and maintain friendships in early childhood education. This is in line with Danby *et al.* (2012), which opined that children's ability to form friendships is vital for their overall development. Friendships in early childhood are not merely about playing together; they are crucial for social, emotional, and cognitive development. Positive relationships with peers enable children to develop vital skills such as empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution (Lynch & Simpson, 2010). The development of these abilities is enhanced through parent-teacher partnerships, which provide a holistic approach to children's social and emotional education. Oranga *et al.* (2023) parental collaboration and engagement in the community involve participation in community services with children and identification and utilization of community resources to strengthen students' learning and development.

Conclusion

Parent-teacher partnerships are indispensable for fostering holistic development in primary school children, and schools should actively promote these partnerships through targeted teacher training programs, community engagement initiatives, and policy development, especially within the intricate socio-cultural milieu of Lagos State. The relationship between parents and teachers constitutes a critical dyad that significantly influences a child's educational trajectory and overall well-being. Effective partnerships cultivate a supportive and synergistic environment, wherein the home and school collaborate to nurture children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth. It has been observed that these partnerships enhance academic outcomes and contribute significantly to children's socio-emotional competencies, such as empathy, self-regulation, and social awareness. When parents and teachers work in harmony, they provide a consistent and reinforcing framework that promotes positive behaviour, motivation, and a sense of belonging in children. The exploration of these partnerships within the specific context of Lagos State is particularly relevant due to the region's unique blend of cultural diversity, socioeconomic disparities, and educational challenges. These factors create a complex landscape that necessitates a nuanced understanding of how parent-teacher relationships can be optimised to support children's development.

The exploration of peer relationships during elementary and middle school underscores the significance of acceptance, friendships, and peer network participation in children's development. Positive peer interactions in the early grades correlate with enhanced social skills, academic performance, and relationship quality later in life. The role of peers in shaping children's social abilities is a supportive element that significantly influences the development of social competence. Learners who are well-received by their peers and manage to form and sustain friendships tend to benefit from involvement in classroom activities that offer rich learning experiences and exposure to educational resources.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the study;

1. There should be structured training programs for teachers focusing on effective communication strategies and cultural sensitivity, enabling them to engage diverse parent populations.
2. There should also be community-based initiatives that promote parental involvement in education, particularly in underserved areas, by providing resources, workshops, and support networks.
3. The development of user-friendly communication platforms, such as mobile apps or online portals, would improve the ease and frequency of communication between parents and teachers.
4. Parents should be actively engaging in their children's education. Parents contribute to improved learning outcomes, enhanced cognitive development, and the cultivation of essential life skills.

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