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## **Influence of School-Community Relationships on Sustainable School Administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area, Rivers State**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined influence of school-community relationships on sustainable school administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual LGA, Rivers State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The total population was 2793 respondents consisting of 2,760 Parent Teachers Association (PTA) members and 33 principals from 11 public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. A sample size of 350 respondents comprising of 317 Parent Teachers Association and 33 principals was derived through Taro Yamane's formula and simple random sampling technique. The instrument was a self-developed questionnaire titled: Influence of School Community Relationships on Sustainable School Administration Questionnaire" which was face and content validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation and Department of Educational Management, all in Rivers State University. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used for the reliability of the instrument which yielded reliability indexes of 0.72, 0.80 and 0.85 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used in testing the formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that to a very high extent school modern, school alienative and cooperative relationships influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that School principals should create a more robust relationship with the community and the community should in return reciprocate in enhancing the relations.*

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**Keywords:** School-community Relationships, Modern Relationship, Alienative Relationship, Cooperative Relationship and Sustainable School Administration.

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### **Introduction**

The relationship between the school and the community is crucial in achieving a long-term success in the education sector. This relationship aids to provide support, increase partnership, improve communication, stimulate cordial relationship that helps to arrest most of the shortfalls that contribute to educational gaps. The relationship becomes a propeller because the school and the community are two inseparable entities with a symbiotic relationship

(Duru-Uremadu, 2017). School-community relationship helps both to build and maintain developmental strides centered on the core values of school. However, school community relations can only be achieved based on the level of cordial relationship that is in existence. Gital (2009), uphold that cordial relationship between the school and the community is a pre-requisite for achieving a meaningful educational objective in the community and the nation at large. The community will not ordinarily come to assist the school in one form or the other, if the school administrator does not maintain a friendly and respectful relationship with the community (Nath & Ememe, 2012). Principals as the leaders of the school has the responsibility to encourage the school personnel to be open to the host community and encourage their involvement in school activities (Mbua, 2003). Good relationships and regular interaction between the school leadership and the community are fundamental in guaranteeing an environment that is enabling for staff and learners (Ngwa, 2023). The manner to which school administrators interact with host communities can significantly whittle or accelerate sustainable school administration. In essence, school community relation has great potentials for removing mistrust and distance between people and schools by nurturing transparency of information and a culture of mutual respect and by jointly pursuing improvement of school by sharing vision, process, and results (Amopho, 2020). The term sustainable school administration is the management of schools in a manner that enhances its long-term viability, growth and stability. To promote and enhance good relationship between the school and the community, the principal must develop approaches that put into cognizance the long-term effect of harnessing quality education through community involvement. These approaches help schools to develop effective school community relations through resource mobilization, collaboration, participation, provision of support and mutual benefits. Which may be significant to create a supportive and dynamic atmosphere that enhances the quality of educational delivery that are in tandem with the wider sustainability objectives. School-community relationship is the way and manners schools and their host communities communicate with one another in order to get along with things. This relationship is indispensable for building, creating collaborating, supporting and promoting cordial relationship in the business of school. Although, engaging in collaborative and supportive relationship, Duru-Uremadu (2016) specified the following as the core rationale behind the act as to, (a) educate and mold the habits, interest, attitudes and feelings of a child, (b) transmit the social norms, culture, values and tradition from one generation to another so as to prevent cultural extinction, (c) prepare an individual for survival and functionality in the society by providing and equipping an individual with knowledge, skills, competencies and

capabilities and (d) champion social and technological change when necessary. However, this mission appears to be farfetched in Abua/Odual LGA, Rivers State, due to the fact that, most of the secondary schools' principals appears to be confronted with issues that appear not suitable for effective educational delivery. The issues range from infrastructural deficiencies, administrative instability, security issues, inadequate educational resources, teacher's shortage, social economic challenges to many others. Thereby tends to truncate the effectiveness of the school. Obi (2004) claimed that some community members go as far as encroaching or trespassing on the school land as well as imposing hostile laws that affects the its climate. In most, cases school facilities are vandalized. Making the situation more detrimental to the child development, and depict that such community members are showing indifference to their children's educational development (Okongu, 2002).

The study of Agi and Adiele (2009), outlined three types of school-community relationships to be; model, alienative and cooperative. The model school-community relationship is the type in which either the school or the community benefits from each other, whereby the party receiving support has nothing to offer in return. In this case, donor-recipient relations occur in which one party donates and the other receives without giving anything in return (Ibiam, 2015). The alienative school-community relationship is built on the ground that community has little or nothing to offer the school, however, it depends on government to provide education for her people. By this, the school restricts its activities to its traditional role of teaching and learning, which might be detrimental to the improvement of instructional provisions. As a result of this, the school and the community tend to overlook whatever assistance that can be rendered to each other (Duru-Uremadu, 2017). Consequent upon this Hascher and Hagenauer (2010) disclosed that this, action can directly lead students to emotionally withdrawal from school which is often accompanied by a physical withdrawal, both of which contribute to academic failure.

Whereas, the cooperative relations according to, Ibiam (2011) is based on the premises that a link exists between the school and the community and both parties have something to offer and benefit from each other. Generally, community has major concern and interest in what schools do and how they do it (Sadker, 2008). In cooperative relations, the community helps to strengthens school administration through resource sharing, constructive collaboration, provision of effective mechanisms and active participation in school related matters, with enthusiasm at addressing community and educational needs. However, Okosun, *et al* (2023) posited that rural communities may find it difficult to cooperate and maintain positive relationships with their schools, arising from high cost of living, high unemployment rates, to

low morale which may be possess detrimental effect on community involvement. Further stating that some of the rural residents cannot afford to offer their kids with educational resources at home and these kids at school face considerable obstacles due to poverty; as a result, most parents have poor morale and unfavourable views about helping out with education.

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### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the acknowledged importance of school-community relationships in Nigeria, public secondary schools in in Abua/Odual L.G.A of Rivers State is increasingly facing challenges in fostering and sustaining effective relationship with their communities. The problem is compounded by factors such as decreasing parental involvement, community indifference towards school activities and limited collaboration between school administrators and community leaders. This phenomenon seems to have resulted inadequate resource mobilization, overstretched school facilities and a general decline in the quality of education leading to low school performance. This ugly scenario appears to have contributed to a rigorous course of achieving effective and functional educational. Based on this backdrop, the study examined the influence school-community relationships on sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The study examined the influence of school-community relationships on sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/OdualLocal Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Ascertain the extent to which school model relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Examine the extent to which school alienative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. identify the extent to which school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does school model relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does school alienative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. To what extent does school cooperative relationship influence sustainable school administration of public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?

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### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school modern relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school alienative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school cooperative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 2,793 consisting of 2,760 Parent Teachers Association (PTA) members and 33 principals (including vice principal administration and academics) from 11 public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. A sample size of 350 respondents comprising of 317 Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and 33 principals was derived through Taro Yamane's formula and simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled: "Influence of School-Community Relationships for Sustainable School Administration Questionnaire (ISCRSSAQ)" with 16 questionnaire items based on the research questions. The instrument was structured in line with the modified rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE)= 4points, High Extent (HE)=3 Points, Low Extent (LE)= 2 Points and Very Low Extent

(VLE)= 1 point respectively. The face and content validity were test run by experts in Measurement and Evaluation and the Department of Educational Management all in Rivers State University. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument which yielded reliability indexes of 0.72, 0.80 and 0.85 respectively. The researchers and two trained research assistants distributed the copies of 350 questionnaires and retrieved within the period of one week. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions with a criterion mean of 2.50. Items between 3.00 and above were considered Very High Extent, 2.50 – 2.99 were considered High Extent, 1.50 – 2.49 were regarded as Low Extent while 0.50 – 1.49 were Very Low Extent. The null hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance. Analyzed data therefore with calculated z-value greater than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$  was rejected and below was accepted.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** To what extent does school modern relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Model Relationship Influences Sustainable School Administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

S/N	Item	P.T.A		Principals			
		$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
		N=317		N=33			
1	Developing a culture of mutual respect helps to foster healthy relationship	3.23	0.69	<b>VHE</b>	3.01	0.59	<b>VHE</b>
2	Allowing community members to have voice in parents' teacher's association forum increases their level of participation	2.85	0.65	<b>HE</b>	2.95	0.58	<b>HE</b>
3	Establishing channels that accelerates transparent communication increases access to community engagement	2.77	0.60	<b>HE</b>	2.94	0.62	<b>HE</b>

4	Developing a culture for enhancing teachers professional development helps teachers develop proficient skills	3.19	0.69	<b>VHE</b>	3.30	0.76	<b>VHE</b>
5	Foster avenues for problem solving increases the sense of resources sharing	3.00	0.60	<b>VHE</b>	3.11	0.65	<b>VHE</b>
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.65</b>		<b>3.06</b>	<b>0.64</b>	

The result on Table 1 revealed that questionnaire items 1, 4 and 5 which had mean scores of 3.23, 3.19 and 3.00 with corresponding standard deviation 0.69, 0.69 and 0.60 for P.T.A and 3.01, 3.30 and 3.11 with corresponding standard deviation 0.59, 0.76 and 0.65 for principals were rated very high extent, while items 2 and 3 which had mean scores of 2.85 and 2.77 with corresponding standard deviation 0.65 and 0.60 for P.T.A and 2.95 and 2.94 with corresponding standard deviation 0.58 and 0.62 for principals were rated high extent. With grand mean scores of 3.01 and 3.06 which are above the criterion mean, this infers that to a very high extent school model relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does school alienative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 2: Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Alienative Relationship Influences Sustainable School Administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

S/N	Item	P.T.A		Decision	Principals		Decision
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD		$\bar{X}_2$	SD	
6	Lack of participation by parents in meeting the diverse needs of learners increases negative perception.	2.77	0.50	<b>HE</b>	2.90	0.72	<b>HE</b>

7	Inability to provide avenue for people to express their worries increases alienation.	2.69	0.52	<b>HE</b>	2.65	0.51	<b>HE</b>
8	Decreases parental involvement in decision-making processes affects the operations of the school.	3.13	0.77	<b>VHE</b>	3.09	0.76	<b>HE</b>
9	Difficulty in addressing issues during participation decreases support from parents	3.09	0.53	<b>VHE</b>	3.04	0.62	<b>VHE</b>
10	Not managing existing historical conflict reduces collaboration among parents	3.20	0.79	<b>VHE</b>	3.05	0.73	<b>VHE</b>
11	Alienation in school brings about resource constraint.	2.73	0.63	<b>HE</b>	2.96	0.69	<b>HE</b>
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.94</b>	<b>0.62</b>		<b>2.95</b>	<b>0.67</b>	

The result on Table 2 revealed that questionnaire items 6, 7 and 11 which had mean scores of 2.77, 2.69 and 2.73 with corresponding standard deviation 0.50, 0.52 and 0.63 for P.T.A and 2.90, 2.65 and 2.96 with corresponding standard deviation 0.72, 0.51 and 0.69 for principals were rated high extent, while items 8, 9 and 10 which had mean scores of 3.13, 3.09 and 3.20 with corresponding standard deviation 0.77, 0.53 and 0.79 for P.T.A and 3.09, 3.04 and 3.05 with corresponding standard deviation 0.76, 0.62 and 0.73 for principals were rated very high extent. With grand mean scores of 2.94 and 2.95 which are above the criterion mean, implies that to a high extent school alienative relationship sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent does school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Cooperative Relationship Influences Sustainable School Administration IN Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

S/N	Item	P.T.A		Principals		Decision
		N=317		N=33		



		$\bar{X1}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X2}$	SD	
12	Promoting viable parent/teacher's association helps to increase student academic achievement	3.69	0.54	VHE	3.77	0.59	VHE
13	Community members making use of school buildings pave ways for school to receive from community	3.37	0.65	VHE	3.29	0.68	VHE
14	Developing collaborative ventures between school and community helps to mitigate future impeding obstacles	3.45	0.96	VHE	3.20	0.80	VHE
15	Integrating community-based values in schools increases participation	3.55	0.55	VHE	3.60	0.57	VHE
16	Developing school-community based connect programme helps to enhance community participation	3.56	0.56	VHE	3.59	0.53	VHE
	<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>0.65</b>		<b>3.49</b>	<b>0.63</b>	

Data on Table 3 revealed that all questionnaire items 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 which had mean scores of 3.69, 3.37, 3.45, 3.55 and 3.56 with corresponding standard deviation 0.54, 0.65, 0.96, 0.55 and 0.56 for P.T.A and 3.77, 3.29, 3.20, 3.60 and 3.59 with corresponding standard deviation 0.59, 0.68, 0.80, 0.57 and 0.53 for principals were rated very high extent. With grand mean scores of 3.52 and 3.49 which are above the criterion mean, infers that to a very high extent school cooperative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### Hypotheses

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school modern relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Table 4: z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Modern Relationship Influences Sustainable School Administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	SL	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
P.T.A	317	3.01	0.65	348	0.05	-0.42	$\pm 1.96$	Failed to Reject No Significant Difference
Principals	33	3.06	0.64					

Data on Table 4 above revealed z-test analysis of difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school modern relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. At 0.05 level of significance and 348 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of -0.42 was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school modern relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**H<sub>02</sub>** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school alienative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Table 5: z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Alienative Relationship Influence Sustainable School Administration of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	SL	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
P.T.A	317	2.94	0.62					
				348	0.05	-0.08	$\pm 1.96$	Failed to Reject No Significant Difference
Principals	33	2.95	0.67					

Data on Table 5 above revealed z-test analysis of difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school alienative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. At 0.05 level of significance and 348 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of -0.08 was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school alienative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**H<sub>03</sub>** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Table 6: z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of P.T.A and Principals on the Extent School Cooperative Relationship Influences Sustainable School Administration in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.**

Respondents	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	SL	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
P.T.A	317	3.52	0.65					

	348	0.05	0.25	$\pm 1.96$	Failed to Reject
					No Significant Difference
Principals	33	3.49	0.63		

Data on Table 6 above revealed z-test analysis of difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. At 0.05 level of significance and 348 degree of freedom, the z-calculated value of 0.25 was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted which states that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent to which school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings on research question 1 on Table 1 revealed that to a very high extent school modern relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with grand mean scores of 3.01 and 3.06. Hypothesis 1 on Table 4 revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent school modern relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with z-calculated value of -0.42 which was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding is in agreement with Nath and Ememe (2012) who claimed that community will not ordinarily come to assist the school in one form or the other, if the school administrator does not maintain a friendly and respectful relationship with the community.

Findings on research question 2 on Table 2 showed that to a high extent school alienative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with grand mean scores of 2.94 and 2.95. Again, information on hypothesis 2 on Table 5 revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent school alternative

relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with z-calculated value of -0.08 which was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding corroborates with Hascher and Hagenauer (2010) who disclosed that this, action can directly lead students to emotionally withdrawal from school which is often accompanied by a physical withdrawal, both of which contribute to academic failure.

Findings on research question 3 on Table 3 showed that to a very high extent school cooperative relationship influences sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with grand mean scores of 3.52 and 3.49. Again, information on hypothesis 3 on Table 6 revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of PTA and principals on the extent school cooperative relationship influence sustainable school administration in public senior secondary schools in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State with z-calculated value of 0.25 which was less than the z-critical value of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding is in tandem with Okosun, *et al.* (2023) who asserted that rural communities may find it difficult to cooperate and maintain positive relationships with their schools due to issues such as high living expenses, high unemployment rates, and low morale that have a detrimental effect on community involvement in the construction of educational facilities

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### **Conclusion**

The study shows that school-community relationship with respect to model, alienative and cooperative relationships influences sustainable school administration to a very high extent. This implies that, school-community relationships will increase school and community participation, which is advantageous at promoting supportive school environment.

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### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. School principals should create a more robust relationship with the community, and the community should as well reciprocate in reviving the relationship.
2. School principals should initiate favourable actions that are expedient at stimulating cordial relationship among host community elites. This can be done by creating avenues where they can be given a proper recognition.

3. School principals should always see the need to convey their needs to the host communities during participation and the host communities should not relent to share new ideologies to the school should there be changes.

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