

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARENTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS IN THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF SCHOOL FARM**

**BY**

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***Abstract***

*This study investigated on the contributions of the parents' teachers association members in school farm operation. The population of the study was 266 principals in selected schools survey research design were adopted. The sample for the study was 183, this comprised 144 teachers and 39 principals randomly selected from the thirteen local government areas in Ebonyi state. Three research questions in line with the specifics purposes of the study and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was validated by 3 experts and the reliability of the instrument was determined by using cronbach alpha which yielded 0.89 reliability coefficient. The data collected were analyzed using mean with standard deviation for the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Based on the analysis of the data, it was found that the parents' teachers association members need to contribute to large extent in the management and operation of the school farm. It was recommended among others that the parent's teachers association members should put more effort in supporting the school farm operations for effective use of the school farm and for transfer of skills to students farm.*

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**Key Words:** Teachers: Parents teachers Association: Farm.

**Introduction**

Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is generally referred to as association of parents and teachers in the school. Some of the aims and objectives of the parents Teachers Association according to Abdullahi (1996) include; Fostering mutual understanding, harmonious relationship and cooperation among parents, guardians and teachers who are major stake holders in the education of the child. Enabling the teachers and school management have a greater insight into the home background of

their pupils and students thus leading to a better appreciation of the peculiarities of individual child. Encouraging parents involvement in the education of the child, building better understanding and bonding between the parents and the teachers. This equally deepens relationship, understanding and cooperation between the teachers and the parents. Naturally, members of the P.T.A comprise of the parents, guardians and the teachers in a school. Membership to the association is compulsory provided the parent has a ward

in a school. Active participation in the meetings, programmes and projects of the PTA is obliged to every member of the association. Ajayi (1999) posited that one of the task of parents teachers association include; planning and policy making, provision of instruction materials, tools and facilities, reading ad reference materials and maintenance of school-community relationship. He further stressed that P.T.A also has a role to play in the provision of planting materials, clearing of the school farms as well as other activities such as weeding and provision of securities in the school farm against thieves.

School farm is an area of land specially earmarked for agricultural activities by a school. This area usually possesses the potentials required for agricultural productivity. It may be in the school or at a fairly walking distance to the school. (Ndem, 2013). The qualities that make an area to be acceptable as a school farm, is the ability of the area to enhance productivity and wealth creation. Farm in a school and the community, must support the growth of crops with minimum input such as fertilizer. A plain land is most acceptable although slight undulating topography may be permitted. The land area must be near any water source and the soil loamy to ensure fertility and water conservation for optimal plant growth and productivity. For a school farm to be productive, it must be properly managed and maintained. Management according to Olaitan, Igbo, Nwachukwu, Onyemaechi and Ekong (1999) is the process of planning,

organizing, controlling, coordinating and supervising. The management of school farm involves numerous activities such as utilization of finance and material resources. Experience has shown that the management of the school farm has been the sole responsibility of the agricultural science teachers with the support of the school management. Ordinarily, the parents teachers association which is part and parcel of the school are expected to contribute positively to the management and operation of the school, especially in the area of provision of security; but it appears that in many schools, in Ebonyi State, the parents teachers association members are not contributing in the management and operation of the school farm. This has negatively affected the management and operation of the school farm. The consequences of lack of contribution of parents teachers Association members in the management and operation of the school farm is that it makes the management of the school farm not to be effective which makes the students not to acquire the required practical skills in agricultural production. It is on the basis of this that this work is designed to determine the extents of contributions of the parent teachers association members in the management and operation of the school farm. Specifically the study determined the contributions of PTA members in pre-planting and planting operations of the school farm operations, provisions of farm inputs for the school farm operation and post-planting activities of the school farm operation.

**Methodology**

The study adopted survey research design and was carried out in EbonyiState. The population of the study was 266 principals in the selected schools. The sample for the study was 183. This comprised 144 teachers and 39 principals selected randomly from the thirteen Local Government Areas that make up Ebonyi state. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire and each item in the questionnaire had a four points response options of strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and strongly disagree with their nominal values of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by 3 experts’ one expert in measurement and evaluation and two experts in agricultural education from Ebonyi state university. The reliability of the instrument was determined by the use of cronbach alpha which yielded reliability

coefficient of 0.85. The data were gathered by the researchers distributing the questionnaires to the respondents and retrieving them within two weeks. Out of the 183 questionnaires distributed, 180 were retrieved which represents 98.4% return rate. The data collected were analyzed using mean with standard deviation for the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses formulated.

In taking decision, 2.50 was adopted as the criterion level or bench mark, and with reference to the hypotheses tested, the t-calculated was compared with the t-critical value and if the t-calculated was less than the t-critical, the null-hypothesis of no significant was accepted, but if the t-calculated was greater than the t-critical, the null-hypothesis was not accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

**Result and Discussion**

The results and discussion of the study were based on each of the research questions and presented in table 1-3.

**Research Question 1**

What are the contributions of the PTA members in pre-planting and planting operations of the school farm?

Data for answering research question one are presented in table 1

**Table 1:** Mean response of the respondents on contributions of the PTA member in pre-planting and planting activities of the school farm.

S/N	Item statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Land clearing	3.39	1.81	Agree
2	Making of mounds	2.58	1.83	Agree
3	Making of Beds	3.68	0.94	Agree

4	Making of Ridges	3.43	1.82	Agree
5	Making out the plot	3.43	1.73	Agree

Data in table 1 revealed that all the five items had their mean values ranged from 2.58-3.68. Each of the mean value was above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating that the items were the contributions of

PTA members in the management and operation of the school farm. The standard deviation of the five items ranged from 0.94 to 1.83. Therefore the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses.

### Research Question 2

What are the contributions of the PTA members in provision of farm inputs for the school farm?

Data for Answering research question two were presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Mean responses of the respondents on contributions of the PTA members on provision of farm inputs for the management and operation of the school farm.

S/N	Item statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	The PTA members provides yam seedlings	3.00	0.71	Agree
2	The PTA members provides maize gains	2.84	0.13	Agree
3	The PTA members provides cassava cuttings	3.12	1.81	Agree
4	The PTA members provides groundnut seeds	3.50	1.99	Agree
5	The PTA members provides pepper seeds	2.54	1.64	Agree
6	The PTA members provides Agro-chemicals	2.58	0.89	Agree

Data in table 2 revealed that all the six items had their mean values ranged from 2.50-3.50. Each of the mean value was above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating that the items were the contributions of the PTA members in the management and operation of school farms. The standard deviations of the five items ranged from 0.13-1.99. Therefore the respondents were not too far from one another in their responses

### Research Question 3

What are the contributions of the P.T.A members in post -planting activities of the school farm?

Data answering research question three were presented in table 3 below.

**Table 3:** Mean represses of the respondents on the contributions of the P.T.A members in post-planting operations of the school farm

S/N	Item statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
1	Weeding of the farm	3.21	1.80	Agree
2	Fertilizer and manure appliction	2.54	0.81	Agree
3	Pest and disease control	3.01	0.91	Agree

4	Staking of some crops	2.55	1.83	Agree
5	Provision of security	2.38	1.51	Disagree

Data in table 3 showed that items 1, 2, 3 and 4 had their mean values ranged from 2.54-3.21 while item number 5 had its mean value of 2.38. The mean value of items 1-4 are above 2.50 which is the cut-off point indicating that the items were the contributions of the PTA members in

management and operation of the school and do not contribute in item number five. The standard deviation of the items in table 3 ranged from 0.81-1.83. This indicates that the respondents were not too far from one another in their opinions.

### Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between the mean ratings of the teachers and the principals on the contributions of the parents teachers association in pre-planting and planting operations of the school farm.

**Table 4:** Summary of the t-test analysis on the contributions of the parents teachers association members in pre-planting and planting operations for the school farm operations.

N <sub>1</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{G}\bar{X}$	GSD	df	t-cal	Sig. level	Remarks
144	29	3.01	0.91	3.02	0.89	3.01	0.90	181	1.03	0.05	*

\* = No significant difference

**Table 4:** Reveals that the t-calculated was less than the t-table. Therefore, the null-hypothesis was accepted at degree of freedom of 181 and at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the opinions of the teachers were not far from the opinions of the principals on the contributions of the PTA members in pre-planting and planting activities on the school farm.

### Hypotheses

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There will be no significant difference between the mean ratings of the teachers and the principals on the contributions of the parents teachers association members in provision of farm inputs for the school farm operation.

**Table 5:** Summary of the t-test analysis on the contributions of the parents' teachers association in provision of farm inputs for the school farm operation.

N <sub>1</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	G $\bar{X}$	GSD	df	t-cal	Sig. level	Remarks
144	29	3.82	0.81	3.00	0.90	3.01	0.85	181	1.08	0.05	*

\* = No significant difference

**Table 5:** Reveals that the t-calculated was less than the t-tabulated. Then the null-hypothesis was accepted at the degree of

freedom of 181 and at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the opinions of the teachers did not differ from the

school principals on the contributions of the parent's teachers association members in provision of farm inputs for the school farm operation.

### **Findings**

Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings emanated from the study;

1. The parents teachers association members contribute in pre-planting and planting activities in the management and operation of the school farm.
2. The parents teachers association members contribute in provision of farm

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings of this study were discussed based on each research question. It was found that the parents teachers association members contribute in pre-planting and planting activities such as land preparation, clearing of the farm, making of beds, mounds, others include, provision of farm inputs as well as contributing in post-planting activities such as weed control, control of diseases and pests and application of fertilizers and manure. These findings are in agreement with Ajayi (1999) who reported that the parents teachers association in many schools contribute in provision of planting materials, provision of other inputs in the operation of the school farm. Also the findings agrees with Abdullah; (1996) who stated that the parents teachers association has great role to play in all the school's activities including the management and operation of the school farm.

inputs in the management and operation of the school farm.

3. The parents teachers association members contribute in post-planting activities for management and operation of the school farm except in provision of security in the school farm.
4. There was no significant difference in the opinions of the parents teachers association members on their contributions in pre-planting, planting and post-planting activities of the school farm.

### **Conclusion**

The school farm is a land laboratory where students are exposed to the practical aspect of agricultural science based on what they were taught in the classroom. For the students to acquire the required skills from the school farm, the school farm must be properly managed, but to achieve effective management and operation of the school farm, all the stake holders of the school must be involved. The parents teachers association is one of the major stake holders of the school. This work determined the contributions of the parents teachers association members on the management and operation of the school farm. It was found that the parents teachers association members contribute in provision of farm inputs clearing of the farm land, weeding, diseases and pest control, but do not contribute in the security of the school farm.

### **Recommendations**

1. The parents teachers association members should contribute effectively in the pre-planting activities of the school farm.
2. The parents teachers association members should do more in the provision of inputs for the operation of the school farm.
3. The school should always involve the parent's teachers association members in the post-planting activities of the school farm as well as the security of the farm.

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