



# Knowledge and Perception of School Social Work Services Among Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and its Implication to Community and Sustainable Development in South-east Nigeria

*Okafor Samuel O. \**, *Izueke Edwin M. C. \*\**, *Okoye Elizabeth O. \*\*\**, *Chuke Ngozi U. \*\*\*\**, *Kekeocha-Christopher Irene C. \*\*\*\*\**, *Okezi Obara \*\*\*\*\**, *Abdulrouf Isah \*\*\*\*\**, *Udenze Chukwudike \*\*\*\*\**

## Author information

- \* Okafor Samuel O., Department of Sociology-Anthropology University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: Samuelokey200@gmail.com
- \*\* Izueke Edwin M. C., Department of Public Administration and Local Government University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: edy.izueke@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\* Okoye Elizabeth O., Department of Adult Education & Extra Mural Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: onyiyechi.okoye@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\*\* Chuke Ngozi U., Department of Adult Education & Extra Mural Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Email: Ngozi.chuk@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\*\*\* Kekeocha-Christopher Irene C., Social Science Unit, School of General Studies University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: Irene.kekochoa@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\*\*\* Okezi Obara, Department of Public Administration and Local Government, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria., Email: okezi.obra@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\*\*\* Abdulrouf Isah, Department of Public Administration and Local Government, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: abulrouf.isah@unn.edu.ng
- \*\*\*\*\* Udenze Chukwudike, Department of Public Administration and Local Government University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. Email: Chukwudikeundenze@unn.edu.ng

## Article first published online

July 2022

## HOW TO CITE

Okafor, S.O., Izueke, E.M.C. , Okoye, E.O. , Chuke, N.U. , Kekeocha-Christopher, I.C., Okezi, O., Abdulrouf, I., Udenze, C. (2022). Knowledge and Perception of School Social Work Services Among Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and its Implication to Community and Sustainable Development in South-east Nigeria, Italian Journal of Sociology of Education, 14(2), 175-200.

DOI: 10.14658/pupj-ijse-2022-2-9

# Knowledge and Perception of School Social Work Services Among Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and its Implication to Community and Sustainable Development in South-east Nigeria

*Okafor Samuel O., Izueke Edwin M. C. , Okoye Elizabeth O. , Chuke Ngozi U. , Kekeocha-Christopher Irene C. , Okezi Obara , Abdulrouf Isah , Udenze Chukwudike*

---

Abstract: Social work service in the school setting is one of the facilitating factors to improved educational system especially as obtainable in the developed nations. However, in the developing nations such as Nigeria and Southeast Nigeria in particular, social work services appear to be unrecognised or rather at developing stage especially in the public institutions, where the services of the social workers are unfamiliar to the socio-cultural outward appearance of the population. As such, the present study focused on the knowledge and perception of school social work services among the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of some selected primary and secondary schools in Nsukka/Enugu areas. The study was guided by Diffusion Innovation theory, while the study applied survey design involving 240 members of PTA from 24 schools; the data collection instrument for the study was questionnaire designed in nominal and ordinal scales. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, t-test and linear model. According to the findings there is no significant difference in the perception of school social work services among the teachers ( $M = 3.1818$ ,  $SD = .57715$ ) and the parents ( $M = 3.1111$ ,  $SD = .31573$ ); [ $t(209) = 1.204$ ,  $p = .23$ ]; there is no significant difference in the knowledge of school social work services among the teachers ( $M = 2.4545$ ,  $SD = .89412$ ) and the parents ( $M = 2.3333$ ,  $SD = .82030$ ); [ $t(238) = 1.08$ ,  $p = .28$ ] while, perception of school social work services can be predicted by socio-demographic variables and knowledge about social work services.

Keywords, Academic challenges, Social work services in Nigeria, Community development, School social work, Knowledge/perception of social work

---

## **Introduction**

Social work service in the school setting is one of the facilitating factors to improved educational system especially in the developed nations (Poppy, 2012; Rick et al., 2021; Manohar & Maxwell, 2020). As augmentation to the overall teaching, training and developing of the students/youth through the educational platform, social work services in the school setting has helped in human capacity development among the developed nations (Jiang et al., 2018; Corrin et al., 2015). Social work services in the school setting better known as school social work is overlapping but distinguished from other related services in the school setting as research and observations over the years have necessitated the clear distinction between the school social workers and the allied services in the school setting. According to Constable, Kuzmickaite, Harrison and Volkmann (1999), in spite of the social workers' many roles and responsibilities overlapping with other allied profession in the school setting, four basic tasks have been identified as common to all school social workers such as consultation with others in the school system as a member of a team, assessment, which applies to a variety of different roles in direct service, consultation, and program development; direct intervention with children and parents in individual, group, and family modalities as well as, assistance with program development. Furthermore, School social workers focus on school-community-child-parent interaction and work to help children reach their potential through the most effective use of their educational opportunities. Social work as context and content induced services locating the needs of a particular population as well as context relevant sustainable approach to meet the needs of the children and youth development is refined according to the challenges and experiences observed over the years in different contexts. As such, in different parts of the world, there is fluidity but with some level of particularization of the school social work services developed and applied in certain regions and contexts to meet the particular needs of the population in question for individual, community and national development as this study poised to unravel in the Nigerian Southeast region According to the North Carolina School Social Worker Job Description (NCSSWJD, 2008, p.7),

The School Social Worker promotes and enhances the overall academic mission by providing services that strengthen home, school, and community partnerships and address barriers to learning and achievement. The School Social Worker significantly contributes to the development of a healthy, safe, and caring environment. Such an environment is achieved by advancing the understanding of the emotional and social development of children and the influences of family, community, and cultural differences on student success along with the implementation of effective intervention strategies.

According to the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA, 2013), the role of the school social worker in the School Social Work National Practice Model includes provision of evidence-based education, behavior, and mental health services, promotion of a school climate and culture conducive to student learning and teaching excellence, maximization of access to school-based and community-based resources. According to Sun Prairie Area School District, Wisconsin (N.D), school social workers are saddled with the responsibilities such as home-school-community liaison, home visits and truancy intervention, social emotional and behavioral assessment, direct services (individual/group therapeutic services, social and emotional learning), treatment of emotional disorders and professional case management consultation for behavior intervention plans. Although contextually, American social work setting seems to be peculiar and one out of numerous perspectives and approaches across nations and regions, the American school social work appear to be one of the oldest in history and maintains some level of fluidity with the conventional school social work approach as well as other regional and national differences obtainable in other nations and contexts.

Due to profession interface with other disciplines/professions, school social workers operates in a delicate but complicated stance in the management of the affairs of the students with Teachers, Administrators, Counselors, Nurses, Psychologists, Diagnosticians, Vocational Counselors or Transition Specialists, Teachers' aides, Speech Therapists, and Physical Therapists (Openshaw, 2008). However, according to Bronstein (2003), such interdisciplinary context requires from a school social worker, interdependence, the ability to perform newly created professional activities and take on new tasks as necessary, flexibility, collective ownership of goals, and reflection on processes. With the complex processes and challenges involved in the training and educating the youth through formal education, the necessity of school social work is glaring such that across the globe where school social work has gained ground, educational activities tend to be stress free for both the teachers and students with the tedious works of the school social workers. As a matter of fact, studies have shown the impacts of school social work services on the overall wellbeing of the youth and the society at large as rewarding to the individuals and the society at large (Franklin, Kim & Tripodi, 2009; Villarreal & Ha, 2020; Ochocki et al., 2020; Wicki et al., 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to studies, most of the extraneous factors negatively affecting education and youth development in Africa and other developing nations hover around the inadequate attention to the social and emotional needs

of the youth especially in the primary and secondary schools (Nwadinigwe & Azuka-Obieke, 2012; Animba, 2020; Eremie & Bethel-Eke, 2019; Okorie, 2014; Amalu, 2018; Babajide & Amosu, 2019). For instance, a number of studies in Africa and elsewhere have astonishingly revealed that teenage pregnancy as well as other factors responsible for the girls' school dropouts, are connected to the communication barriers between the girls in school, their teachers and the parents at home (Amadi, 2019; Madume & Dibia, 2021; Alabi & Oni, 2017; Waraga & Ngari, 2018; Mathewos & Mekuria, 2018). In context and consensus, empirical evidences and everyday observation in Nigerian secondary schools (Garba, 2007), has proven the challenges and needs of the secondary school students as squarely located in the ambit of school social work services.

In Southeast Nigeria and other nearby regions, a number of studies have proven the socio-emotional vulnerability of the secondary school students (Aluede, Ojugo & Okoza, 2012; Zuilkowski & Marty, 2021; Lazarus, 2020; Adekemi & Funmilayo, 2016; Famakinwa, Olagunju & Akinnawonu, 2016; Adeyera, Uchendu & Owoaje, 2020), indicating the inalienable need for the services of school social workers. However, in the developing nations such as Nigeria, social work services appear to be unrecognised or rather at developing stage especially in the Southeast Nigeria, where the services of the social workers are unfamiliar to the socio-cultural outward appearance of the system owing to the relatively late entrance and slow development of the discipline per excellence (Obeten, Onyenemerem & Mba, 2020; Nwachukwu, 2015; Onalu & Okoye, 2021; Isangha, Choi & Chiu, 2021; Irele, 2011; Ebingbo et al., 2019; Chukwu et al., 2019). In specifics, the socio-cultural outward appearance of the people of the Southeast Nigeria hinges on their attachment to the hitherto, small-scale society institution structures, which does not allow certain services from outside the domestic and communal assistance. For instance, strangers are prohibited from involving in certain family issues, which is believed to be handled at most, the extended family level. Such is also applicable to the upbringing of the children and the youth, which result to seclusion from outside intervention. As such, the services of Social workers in general and school social work in particular seem to be unfamiliar and unsettled among the population.

From hospital setting to the school setting and other similar public institutions, the presence of the social workers is yet to be accorded a meaningful recognition by the administrative structures and authority-figures in these settings (Isangha, Choi & Chiu, 2021; Okala, 2020; Oriji, Oriji & Oweibi, 2015). This has made it difficult for the families and institutions to use the services of the social workers, which appear to be alien to the dominant culture of sacredness of the family institution in this part of the world. While each family has unique appearance before the public institutions, services

of the modern social institutions usually appear to them as intrusion into the family bonds and networks, which are deemed sacred and exclusively for the in-group members. As such, in Southeast Nigeria, the services of the modern social system such as social work services are yet to gain the trust of the family institution, which is the largest client to social work services anywhere in the world (Chukwu et al., 2019; Ebimgbo et al., 2019a; Ebimgbo et al., 2019b). The distance between the social workers and the family institution in Southeast Nigeria owes to the late entrance of the institution, dearth of trained social workers as well as lack of the expected coordination responsibilities by the public institutions such as education, health and the likes, characterising social work services here in Nigeria and other parts of the globe (Obeten, Onyenemerem & Mba, 2020; Irele, 2011).

Although in recent times, social work services via internship programs is being thrust into the educational, health and other institutions in Southeast Nigeria, there is still evidence of apathy among the administrators and the institutional managements representing the public institutions in one hand, and patients, students and parents representing the family institution in the other hand (Okoye & Ijebor, 2013; Udeani, 2019; Okoye, 2018). Where social workers appear or take responsibility, they do such in adhoc approach or at worst, in demeaning to the supposedly colleagues in other skills and professions. Meanwhile, social workers in principle and practice are the unseen panacea to the numerous complications facing individuals, families and communities, which reflects at the various conditions and challenges people face in the educational setting, health institutions, family institution, career, youth development, community development etc. in Southeast and other parts of Nigeria (Chukwu et al., 2019; Eneh et al., 2017; Cleary, 2017). This is more reflected in the Nigerian secondary school setting. According to a longitudinal study spanning through six years by Garba (2007), there are enormous challenges facing the Nigerian secondary school students as reported by the students and observed by the teachers and stakeholders. These included educational challenges, vocational challenges, personal concerns, social concerns and unclassified such as teachers' negative attitude towards students in and outside the class. Beyond the challenges reported by the students, there are challenges documented from what has been happening in the school system as documented by Garba (2007, cited in Garba, 2012, p. 202). According to Garba (2012), the emerging educational challenges included reported cases of malpractices, mass failure, poor examination coordination and teachers' attitude to work; emerging vocational challenges such as lack of relationship between subjects offered by the students and their vocational aspiration; emerging personal concern such as sexually transmitted diseases and emotional crises; emerging social concerns as well as unclassified issues. According to the observations by the stakeholders as documented by Garba

(2007, cited in Garba, 2012, p.203), “there are the evidences of proliferation of movies, romantic novels, video games and encroachment of social media abuse; increase in absenteeism, low academic performance, substance abuse and examination malpractices; increasing cases of disruptive behavior increasing cases of hooliganism and shunning away from counseling”.

More importantly, the educational institution in Southeast Nigerian region is gradually degenerating due to lack of observation of some emotional needs and challenges of the pupils/students, which squarely lies within the core skills and practices of the social workers. School dropouts at primary and secondary school levels have become worrisome with about 16% and 14.5% dropping out of school annually in Southeast and Enugu state respectively (National Population Commission, 2019). Some studies have revealed that the rate of school dropouts in the state is connected with emotional challenges stemming from family background, neighbourhood experience, peer influence and similar circumstances stressing the coping and adaptation potentials of these pupils/students (Iwuagwu, 2019, National Population Commission, 2019; Lekwa & Anyaogu, 2016; Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, 2016). Equally, statistics have shown abysmal performances among the primary and secondary pupils/students positively correlated with the inability to concentrate in the classroom during studies as well as inability to communicate and understand their teachers in a study setting, the gap between the parents, students and the teachers in managing the emotional and other challenges encroaching into the academic wellbeing of the students (Garba, 2007; Wachikwu, Kevwe, Magnus-Arewa & Nwaukwu, 2017; Okwuduba et al., 2021). Studies have equally revealed the negative impact of poor communication between the parents and the teachers on the overall development of the pupils/students as well as the educational institutions (Birchall, 2018; UNESCO, 2017). In Enugu state, child abuse in the educational, family and community settings have been discovered to be rampant both in rural and urban communities; bullying, maltreatment, poor family sponsorship, lack of motivation and concentration due to the experiences from the family, peers, teachers and neighbourhood among the pupils/students with negative impacts on the academic performance and overall wellbeing of these pupils/students affected (Manyike et al., 2015; Okpechi, 2013; Bisi-Onyemaechi et al., 2018; Enebe et al., 2021; National Bureau of Statistics, 2018; International Labour Organization, 2020). All these challenges, which the professional solutions lies within the skills and practices of school social work profession have been ravaging the state and the region with much complicated consequences presently and in the future. Although studies on educational institution and social work services in the region has been scanty in number and focus on the social work services and educational improvement among the primary and secondary schools, the fewer

studies available (Onalu & Okoye, 2021; Okoye, 2015; Nnama-Okechukwu & McLaughlin, 2022) gave a clue into the need for a study with a clear-cut edge on socio-cultural circumstances surrounding the family and educational institutions, and the utilitarian values of school social work services in the region.

The socio-cultural context linking the teachers, students and their parents is informed by the developmental history of the region and the hitherto, small-scale societies operating in the mechanical solidarity as Durkheim earlier classified in the grouping of societies and development. This is captured in the diffusion innovation model expressing the appearance of innovation and adaptation processes. While some teachers seem to have come to terms with modern civilization of which school social work services is part of it, the parents are at the stage of adapting to the unfolding developmental processes, which the recommendations from the school teachers invariably play some roles in augmenting it. Hence, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) creates a platform in generating atmosphere of understanding of the new trending in the school system and the modern civilization. This as obtainable in the diffusion of innovation model explains the unseen resistance to certain changes and innovations meant for the development and civilizations by the members of the society as it has to do with the parents and teachers in this context, in encouraging the services of school social workers. Although the teachers in the school setting do have some level of frictions and complications in the line of duties as they fluidly relate with the functions and expected skills of the school social workers (SSWAA, 2013; Isaksson & Larsson, 2017; Isaksson & Sjöström, 2016; Kichura, 2019), using the services of the school social workers heavily depended on the overall understanding of the utilitarian values of these services among the teachers and the parents, which can inform unanimous agreement and recommendation for such services on the platform of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) as it is obtainable in this region and the state in particular. However, for proper intervention by the policy makers as well as the school system in the region and the state, there is a need for empirical information on the knowledge and perception of the school social work services. As such, this study focused on the knowledge and perception of social work services among the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of randomly selected primary and secondary (both government and private) schools within Nsukka and Enugu, rural, semi urban and urban areas in Enugu state, southeast Nigeria. In view of the aforementioned social issues, the study answered the below research questions:

What is the mean perception of the elements of school social work services among the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) in Nsukka communities and Enugu metropolis?

Is there any significant difference in the knowledge of school social work services between the teachers and parents in Nsukka communities and Enugu metropolis?

Is there any significant difference in the perception of school social work services between the teachers and parents in Nsukka communities and Enugu metropolis?

What are the predicting factors to perception of school social work services among the parents and teachers association (PTA) in Nsukka communities and Enugu metropolis?

### **Theoretical framework: Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT) is a framework capturing the unfolding human behavioural response preferably in a collective manner, towards hitherto an alien material and non material socio-cultural elements from the outside world to the society or group in question. This theory was put forward by Ryan and Gross in 1943 and further advanced by Bohlen et al. (1958). The Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT) is more on the impetus of innovation as an agent of behaviour change, with innovation itself observed as an idea, practice, or object perceived as new (Rogers, 2003). Although the innovation in itself may be unknown panacea to social problems and challenges facing the group but at face value, such innovation may not easily penetrate the group until certain clarifications are made in form of processes through which the innovation must pass to earn certification among the majority members of the system. DIT is anchored on four cardinal explanatory instances such as innovation, communication channel, time and social system (Rogers, 2003). According to the instance of innovation, human behaviour towards a particular practice, idea or object will change more rapidly if innovations are preferable to the previous options, with some level of consistency with the existing values among a population. The value and competence of innovation in the face of the dominant values among the recipient population, is a subject to the extent of awareness among the population in question. School social work practices as an innovation approach in educational sector in the developing world is yet to be accorded recognition irrespective of how long the practice has been in existence and how it came into operation in Nigeria. For instance, Social work as a profession is still limited to a few numbers of institutions since 1969 when the government set up a platform for the operation of the allied programs to social work profession. As a matter of fact, the profession is highly limited and lacked the capacity to bring a homogeneous and sustainable innovations expected in the educational sector. By implication, the rapid response expected from

the population towards the innovation by school social work practices is hampered by the slow movement of the idea and practice in Nigeria.

Communication in the framework of DIT points to the essence of well informed population on the emerging issues and development; this takes place at the various levels and stages of communication obtainable among a group. Different information exchange relationships have specific impacts in relation to innovation diffusion mechanism. From micro to macro levels of communications such as interpersonal, family setting, community settings and institutional settings, innovation can be communicated to the members of the population. By implication, the interpersonal as well as public media channels become an inalienable substance for the information circulation and public enlightenment for emerging innovation to gradually become part of the social life and activities of the receiving population. School social work as subject to some levels of communication such as the institutional level, community level and family level can only get to attract the attention and approval of the population if there is a well coordinated awareness campaign embedded in the interactions between the teachers and school social workers as well as between the school social workers and the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). Among the factors that have hindered the progress of social work services in the developing nation such as Nigeria, is the line of communication and the ability of the social work professionals in communicating their skills to the masses who are in dire need of the services of the social workers.

The human population receiving the innovation from elsewhere is element of a system which operate on self regulatory mode, accepting healthy and helpful innovation and rejecting unhealthy and unhelpful changes. The social system, which contains networks and fluid relationship of networks, operate with certain boundaries, which have geographical, racial, religious as well as socio-cultural and ethnic markers. While the boundary markers at the surface play some roles that affects the safe landing of an innovation and changes among a particular population, the fluid networks of the socio-demographic markers such as the level of education, socio-cultural milieu and the likes, become the salient factors to the appearance of the diffusion of innovation into the population. While in some context, these socio-cultural and demographic markers among the population appear generally in two dimensions (homophily and heterophily), each dimension has a degree of effect on the diffusion of innovation. For instance, homophily, which project the homogeneous nature of a population, points to the commonality of certain socio-demographic indices among the population such as level of education, social status and common social values, which places a segment of the population at a stable level in responding to innovation. On the other hand, heterophily, displays disaggregated segments of the population with

some level of incompatibility in the socio-demographic indices, which invariably, affect the level of public response to diffusion of innovation into a population. Nigeria as well as the south-east Nigeria social system exists as an atmosphere to accommodate or reject any incoming changes in form of innovation. As observed over the years by researchers, public acceptance of innovation in different dimensions of human social operation have followed the trajectory of the obtainable patterns and forms of behavioural disposition towards the known social phenomenon. School social work in this region is made to face with the obtainable behavioural pattern among the population such as the socio-cultural milieu operating as the base of the population's behaviour (Nnama-Okechukwu & McLaughlin, 2022). This calls for a formidable fluid interaction among the Parents Teachers Association and the school social workers as agent of innovation in the educational system.

Specifically, every innovation has a time lag, which is needed for the innovation to settle among the population before its social acceptance and approval by the group. This may be depending on some factors such as the position of the object of innovation in the scale of preference of the population in question as well as the compatibility with the available options in terms of usability and threshold of social awareness among the population. Although DIT originated in rural Sociology focusing on the rural farmers and agricultural activities, it has been applied in a number of studies related to the marketing, development and health (Greenhalgh et al., 2004), pointing to the capacity of the theory as social science compass in navigating the multifaceted terrain of human behavioural dimensions towards arrays of social issues. Social work as a profession has only gained entrance into few regions of Nigeria with the establishment of training institutions (Mbah, Malachy & Ugwu, 2017), while in the meantime, the few trained social workers compared to the population of the country as well as the region involved, cannot easily saturate the system presently pending when elaborate work is done in the establishment of the discipline in more institutions of higher learning as other disciplines. By implication, the time lag for the embedding of the social work services as well as the school social work services seem to be hanging on the spreading of the discipline as well as the production of more professional social workers to match with the system capacity.

## **Research Methodology**

The study was carried out in the Southeast region of Nigeria, specifically in Nsukka and Enugu metropolis involving the schools in rural, semi urban and urban areas. Twenty four (24) schools were selected for the study, which included eight (4primary and 4secondary/high schools) schools from Enugu urban, six (3primary and 3secondary/high schools) form Nsukka urban, and

ten (5 primary and 5 secondary/high schools) from Nsukka rural communities. Quota sampling technique was adopted to select ten (10) respondents (males and females) from the twenty four schools selected for the study. Equally, quota sampling technique was adopted to select five (5) teachers and five (5) parents from among the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) of each of the schools. Meanwhile, systematic random sampling technique was applied in the selection of the individual study respondents from the list of the teachers as well as the parents of each school.

Due to the inconsistency in the number of the teachers as well as the parents from each of the schools, which could not allow for the use of 5<sup>th</sup> term or K<sup>th</sup> term in selecting the respondents, the study used the attendants' lists for the recent PTA meetings of each of the schools. Where the attendance list was lumped together with the teachers and the parents, it was separated otherwise, the list for the teachers and that of the parents were numbered for random selection through balloting. Five (5) teachers and five (5) parents were selected from each of the schools, while 10 respondents in total were selected from each of the schools making a total of 240 respondents for the study. The instrument for the study was survey questionnaire developed on nominal and ordinal scales with specific focus on the indices of school social work services, knowledge and attitude towards Social Workers. While the first section of the questionnaire focused on the socioeconomic and demographic information of the respondents, the second section of the questionnaire focused on the substantive issues to the study. Among the questions on the substantive issues to the study are, *please rate your knowledge of Social Workers as Professionals; please rate your knowledge of School Social Work services; do you perceive school Social Work services as necessary for your school/school of your child? Please rate your agreement with the following services as necessary for school/the school of your child [developing intervention strategies to increase academic success and to manage student's crisis]; [working with parents to facilitate their children's school adjustment and alleviating family stress for effective function of the child in school & community], etc.*

The instrument of data collection (questionnaire) was subjected to evaluation by two (2) experts from the faculty of education who validated it before the field work. The questionnaires were taken to the field for preliminary analysis according to the Cronbach alpha analysis; the overall consistency of the questionnaire items was tested with the Cronbach alpha (0.81). However, according to item by item analysis, the reliability values of the substantive variables are: knowledge of school social work (0.75) as well as perception of school social work services (0.80). The questionnaires were administered to the teachers and the parents directly via their schools and the schools of their children. While those of the teachers were administered to them at the school venues, those of the parents were sent through their

wards who returned the questionnaire instrument the next day after they have been duly filled by their parents. The data collected were coded and analysed using Social Science Statically Package (SPSS version23) while the research questions guiding the study were answered with descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as t-test and linear model.

### Presentation of the Findings and Analysis

Table1 - The socio-demographic variables of the respondents

| Socio-demographic variables   |                                               | N   | Percentages (%) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| Gender                        | Males                                         | 120 | 50.0%           |
|                               | Females                                       | 120 | 50.0%           |
| Age of the respondents        | 26-31                                         | 84  | 35.0%           |
|                               | 32-37                                         | 36  | 15.0%           |
|                               | 38-43                                         | 72  | 30.0%           |
|                               | 44-49                                         | 36  | 15.0%           |
|                               | 50 and above                                  | 12  | 5.0%            |
| Education                     | High School/National Certificate in Education | 108 | 45.0%           |
|                               | Higher National Diploma/ Degree               | 24  | 10.0%           |
|                               | Masters and above                             | 108 | 45.0%           |
| Religious affiliations        | Christianity                                  | 192 | 80.0%           |
|                               | Islam                                         | 48  | 20.0%           |
| Levels of the teachers        | Not applicable                                | 108 | 45.0%           |
|                               | Classroom teacher                             | 120 | 50.0%           |
|                               | Assistant head teacher/Vice Principal         | 12  | 5.0%            |
| Category: Teachers or Parents | Teacher                                       | 132 | 55.0%           |
|                               | Parents                                       | 108 | 45.0%           |
| No of children in school      | 1                                             | 132 | 55.0%           |
|                               | 2-4                                           | 96  | 40.0%           |
|                               | 5 and above                                   | 12  | 5.0%            |
| Total                         |                                               | 240 | 100.0%          |

The above table1 presented the socio-demographic information of the respondents. According to the table, 50% of the respondents are males as well

as 50% females. In the age categorization, 35% of the respondents are in the age category of 26-31 years, 30% are in the age category of 38-43 years, 15% of the respondents are in the age category of 32-37 years; equally, 15% of the respondents are in the age category of 44-49 years, while 5 percent are in the age category of 50 years and above. In the distribution of the respondents' educational background, 45% of the respondents have between high school certificate and National Certificate in Education, while 45% have Masters Certificate and above. 80% of the respondents are Christians while 20% are Muslims. In the classification of the office cadre, 50% of the respondents are classroom teachers, while 5 percent are in the class of assistant head teachers and vice principals. Teachers who involved in the study made up the 55% of the respondents while parents are 45% in the study. While 55% of the respondents had between 0-1 child in the primary or secondary school, 40% of the respondents have 2-4 children in the primary and secondary schools as only 5 percent of the respondents have more than 4 children in the primary and secondary schools.

Table2 - Other variables included in the Study

| Variables                                                                                     | N                     | Percentages (%) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| The respondents' residence                                                                    | Rural community       | 48<br>20.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Semi urban community  | 120<br>50.0%    |
|                                                                                               | Urban community       | 72<br>30.0%     |
| The location of the children school                                                           | Rural                 | 84<br>35.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Semi urban            | 96<br>40.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Urban                 | 60<br>25.0%     |
| How long the wards have been in the school                                                    | Less than or one year | 84<br>35.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Two to Three years    | 84<br>35.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Four years and more   | 72<br>30.0%     |
| Can you rate your child's school as performing excellently                                    | Strongly disagree     | 24<br>10.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Disagree              | 60<br>25.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Agree                 | 120<br>50.0%    |
|                                                                                               | Strongly agree        | 36<br>15.0%     |
| Please rate your knowledge of the social workers as professionals                             | Very poor             | 36<br>15.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Fairly                | 36<br>15.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Good                  | 132<br>55.0%    |
|                                                                                               | Excellent             | 36<br>15.0%     |
| Please rate your knowledge of school social work services                                     | Very poor             | 48<br>20.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Fairly                | 60<br>25.0%     |
|                                                                                               | Good                  | 120<br>50.0%    |
|                                                                                               | Excellent             | 12<br>5.0%      |
| Do you perceive school Social Work services as necessary for your school/school of your child | Strongly disagree     | 49<br>20.4      |
|                                                                                               | Disagree              | 75<br>31.3%     |
|                                                                                               | Agree                 | 68<br>28.3%     |
|                                                                                               | Strongly agree        | 48<br>20.0%     |
| Total                                                                                         | 240                   | 100.0%          |

Table 2 above presented other variables of the study. According to the table, 20% of the respondents are from the rural communities, 50% are living in the semi urban areas while, 30% are living in the urban areas. According to the distribution of the location of their children’s schools, 35% indicated that the school of their children are located in the rural communities, 40% indicated that their children’s schools are located in the semi urban areas while, 25% indicated that the school of their children are located in the urban areas. In the distribution of the duration of the children in the school, 35% indicated that their wards have been in the school for less than or one year, 35% indicated that their wards have been in the school for about three years, while 30% indicated that their children have been in the school for four years and more. 10% of the respondents strongly disagree that the school of their children are performing to satisfaction, 25% disagreed, 50% agreed, while 15% strongly agreed that the school of their wards are performing satisfactorily. 15% of the respondents have very poor and fair knowledge of the social workers as professionals respectively, 55% have good knowledge of the social workers as professionals, while 15% have excellent knowledge of the social workers as professionals. Only 5% of the respondents have excellent knowledge of school social work services, 50% have good knowledge of school social work services, 25% have fair knowledge of school social work services while, 20% have very poor knowledge of school social work services. 20.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed that school social work services are necessary in primary and secondary schools in the area, 31.3% disagreed, 28.3% agreed while, 20% strongly agreed that school social work services are necessary in the primary and secondary schools in the area.

Table3 - The mean analysis of the perception of school social work service indices among the Parents and Teachers

| S/N                                                                                                                                                               | SD | D  | A   | SA  | N   | Mean   | Std. Deviation | Decision |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|--------|----------------|----------|
| Obtaining and coordinating community resources to meet students’ needs through the advocating of new and improved community/school service                        | 0  | 0  | 96  | 144 | 240 | 3.4000 | .49092         | Accepted |
| Developing staff in-service training programs, assisting teachers with behavior management and providing direct support to staff.                                 | 0  | 12 | 108 | 120 | 240 | 3.4500 | .59072         | Accepted |
| Providing staff with essential information to better understand factors (socio-cultural, familial, health, etc.) affecting a student’s performance and behaviour. | 0  | 12 | 120 | 108 | 240 | 3.4000 | .58431         | Accepted |

|                                                                                                                                                              |    |    |     |     |     |        |        |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|--------|--------|----------|
| Assisting parents to access programs available to students with special needs in accessing and utilizing school and community resources.                     | 0  | 0  | 120 | 120 | 240 | 3.5000 | .50104 | Accepted |
| Working with parents to facilitate their children’s school adjustment and alleviating family stress for effective function of the child in school &community | 0  | 12 | 96  | 132 | 240 | 3.5000 | .59284 | Accepted |
| Assisting with conflict resolution, anger management and helping the child develop appropriate social interaction skills in accepting self and others        | 24 | 0  | 108 | 108 | 240 | 3.2500 | .88927 | Accepted |
| Developing intervention strategies to increase academic success and to manage student’s crisis                                                               | 0  | 0  | 120 | 120 | 240 | 3.5000 | .50104 | Accepted |

The table 3 above displayed the perception of the core indices of school social work services among the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) in Nsukka and Enugu metropolis. The likert scale was set on 4 items scale with 50% (2.5) and above as the acceptable option in the mean analysis. From the table, based on the cutoff point, all the included indices are perceived by the parents and the teachers as necessary for the improvement of education and the pupils/students in the primary and secondary schools in this region. These indices were isolated to see how the parents and teachers could perceive such without knowing the profession/professionals providing the services.

Table 4 - Independent Samples Test on Perception of inclusion of school social work services in the program of the schools in the area

| F                                         |                             | Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |                 |                 |                       |                                           |         |        |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
|                                           |                             | Sig.                                    | T    | df                           | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |        |
|                                           |                             |                                         |      |                              |                 |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper   |        |
| Perception of school social work services | Equal variances assumed     | 36.756                                  | .000 | 1.141                        | 238             | .255            | .07071                | .06198                                    | -.05139 | .19280 |
|                                           | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | 1.204                        | 209.967         | .230            | .07071                | .05871                                    | -.04502 | .18644 |

According to the table 4 above, an independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean perception scores for the two groups in PTA (Parents and Teachers) in Enugu state primary and secondary schools (in Nsukka and Enugu metropolis). According to the finding, there is no significant difference in the perception of school social work services among the teachers ( $M = 3.1818, SD = .57715$ ) and the parents ( $M = 3.1111, SD = .31573$ ); [ $t(209) = 1.204, p = .23$ ] which means the null hypothesis is accepted that, there is no significant difference in the perception of inclusion of school social work services in the program of the primary and secondary schools, between the parents and teachers in the area. However the magnitude of the difference was calculated according to the eta computation using the formula [ $\eta^2 = t^2/t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2) = .006$  showing small effect or rather 6 percent differences explained by being a parent or a teacher in the PTA.

Table 5 - Independent Sample Test

| F                                        |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |                 |                 |                       |                                           |         |        |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
|                                          |                             | Sig.                                    | T    | df                           | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |         |        |
|                                          |                             |                                         |      |                              |                 |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper   |        |
| Knowledge of school social work services | Equal variances assumed     | .488                                    | .486 | 1.084                        | .238            | .279            | .12121                | .11181                                    | -.09905 | .34147 |
|                                          | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | 1.094                        | 234.861         | .275            | .12121                | .11085                                    | -.09717 | .33959 |

According to the table 5 above, an independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean knowledge scores for the two groups in PTA (Parents and Teachers) in Enugu state primary and secondary schools (in Nsukka and Enugu metropolis). According to the finding, there is no significant difference in the knowledge of school social work services among the teachers ( $M = 2.4545, SD = .89412$ ) and the parents ( $M = 2.3333, SD = .82030$ ); [ $t(238) = 1.08, p = .28$ ] which means the null hypothesis is accepted that, there is no significant difference in the knowledge of school social work services between the parents and teachers in the area. However the magnitude of the difference was calculated according to the eta computation using the formula [ $\eta^2 = t^2/t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2) = .003$  showing small effect.

Table 6 - Coefficients of perception of inclusion of school social work services and other variables

| Model                                                                                                              | B                                                | Unstandardized Coefficients |      | Standardized Coefficients | t      | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                                                                                                    |                                                  | Std. Error                  | Beta |                           |        |      |
| 1                                                                                                                  | (Constant)                                       | 2.413                       | .352 |                           | 6.853  | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | Gender                                           | .138                        | .105 | .145                      | 1.310  | .191 |
|                                                                                                                    | Age of the respondents                           | .038                        | .033 | .099                      | 1.169  | .244 |
|                                                                                                                    | Education                                        | -.267                       | .040 | -.573                     | -6.620 | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | Religious affiliations                           | .286                        | .088 | .240                      | 3.246  | .001 |
|                                                                                                                    | Levels of the teachers                           | .203                        | .074 | .248                      | 2.763  | .006 |
|                                                                                                                    | No of children in school                         | -.097                       | .088 | -.121                     | -1.102 | .272 |
|                                                                                                                    | The respondents' residence                       | .332                        | .075 | .488                      | 4.453  | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | The location of the children school              | -.210                       | .057 | -.339                     | -3.709 | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | How long the wards have been in the school       | .010                        | .050 | .016                      | .191   | .849 |
|                                                                                                                    | Whether the school is performing excellently     | .244                        | .051 | .431                      | 4.810  | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | Knowledge of the social workers as professionals | -.331                       | .056 | -.624                     | -5.926 | .000 |
|                                                                                                                    | Knowledge of school social work services         | .142                        | .050 | .257                      | 2.846  | .005 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Perception of inclusion of school social work services in the primary and secondary schools |                                                  |                             |      |                           |        |      |

$R = 0.609 (60.9\%), F = 11.169, P = .005$

The above table 6 presented the predictors of perception of the inclusion of school social work services in the program of the primary and secondary schools among the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of some select-

ed primary and secondary schools in Nsukka and Enugu metropolis, while the predicting power of the model is 60.9%. From the model, a number of factors appeared as positive predictors of perception of inclusion of school social work services in the school program in the areas such as, education, religious affiliation, location of the residence of the respondent, location of the schools of their children whether in rural, semi urban or urban areas, whether the school of their children was performing to their satisfaction, knowledge of the social workers as professionals as well as knowledge of the school social work services. However, educational background, location of the children school and knowledge of the social workers as professionals appeared in the negative direction, which indicates that such factors did not encouraged the introduction of school social work services in the primary and secondary schools among the parents teachers association. In specifics, each of the included variables in the model, which appeared to be significant, is more or less, speaking about the support or opposition to the introduction of school social work services with some level of implications. In the position of the education as independent variable in the model, majority of the respondents (55%) have received between elementary education and degree training while, about 45% of the respondents are educated beyond first degree training. While the majority of the respondents (55%) who obtained at least degree training compared to 45% with postgraduate training indicated a somewhat enlightenment gap between the population under study and the ongoing global transformation in education, there is still an extraneous variable yet to be explained in this position. For instance, while 70% of the respondents reside in the rural and semi urban areas, 75% of the respondents have their wards in the schools located in the rural and semi urban areas showing, a little distance from the realities of the modern society which in this part of the world is easily located in the urban areas. This equally reflected on their perception of the performance of the schools of their children as 60% of the respondents agreed that the schools of their children are performing excellently even in the absence of school social work services.

Religious affiliation as a positive predictor of the introduction of the school social work services stems from the similarity of social work services with the charity organizations and religious organizations especially among the Christian communities. For instance, majority of the respondents (80%) are Christians while, more than 60% of the respondents indicated knowing about social work services. However, the inconsistency between knowing about social work services and introducing such in the school of their children, showed the interference of religious affiliation in the understanding and classification of the social work services. Meanwhile, residence location has a way of affecting the disposition of the citizens towards education. In the present study, this is anchored on the majority of the respondents (55%)

who are located between the urban and semi urban areas. While the location of the urban centers can be an added advantage to the residents in terms of the diffusion of modern civilization (here, the improvement of education through social work services), the spillover of such is found usually among the residents of the semi urban areas. In any case, the appearance of residence in the model as positive predictor of acceptance of school social work services is anchored on the proximity to the modern civilization through the urban and semi urban centers that engineers diffusion of innovation in the globalization agenda.

Majority of the respondents (65%) agreed that the schools of their wards are performing excellently and this reflected on the model as a positive predictor of the acceptance of introduction of school social work services in the area. This further affirmed the envisaged need for improvement in the quality of training and services accessed by the parents from the schools their wards attend. Knowledge of the social workers as professionals did not translate to the acceptance of the school social work services in the schools attended by the children of the respondents owing to the gap between the surface knowledge about social workers and the areas of specialization of the social workers. For instance, while 65% of the respondents indicated their knowledge of the social workers, less than 50% accepted the necessity of the school social work services in the schools of their wards.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Social work services in the school setting or rather the concept of school social work is yet to secure a space in the relationship of the family life and school expectation among the citizens of the developing nations such as in Nigeria. While the indices of school social work services rightly aligned with the inward expectation and needs of the parents and teachers association for the improvement of the performance of the schools as well as the students, the categorical concept of school social work services seem to be unfamiliar to them. For instance, all the indices of school social work services included in the mean analysis appeared to be favourably perceived as necessary for the improvement of the school and students' performance among the parents and teachers (see table3 above) however, on the knowledge of the professional essence of social workers as well as school social workers, majority of the respondents exhibited rather lack of knowledge of the essence of the social workers. This also reflected on their perception of the inclusion of the social work services in the primary and secondary school programs of which majority of them countered such (see table2 above).

The t-test result revealed the consistency in the level of enlightenment among the teachers and parents both on the knowledge of the school social

work services and the perception of the inclusion of school social work services in the school programs (see tables 4&5). This reflected the socio-cultural homogeneity among the teachers and parents irrespective of the educational exposure obtainable among them. The knowledge and perception of social work services in southeast Nigeria is still on the unfamiliarity side of the scale of knowledge of academic disciplines and their utilitarian essence to the population especially as the discipline appeared to be virgin area yet to be explored academically and policy wise. This is ascertained in the model above showing, religion, residence, school performance and knowledge of school social work services as positive predictors of perception of inclusion of school social work services in the programs of primary and secondary schools in the areas. While religion in the model surfaced as the intermediary between charity work familiar to the religious adherents and the charity nature of the social work services, residence of the respondents, which are mostly in the urban region (see table 1 above), showed the gradual effects of enlightenment and civilization obtainable in the urban cities, which gradually circulate among the population unconsciously. Equally, the knowledge of school social work among some respondents appeared to be a factor in the perception of the services of the school social workers. The knowledge and perception of school social work services or rather, the school social workers, anchors on the obtainable condition among the population in Southeast Nigeria, heavily dependent on the socio-cultural history of the people. This is explained by the Diffusion of Innovation theory.

Diffusion of Innovation theory is anchored on four cardinal explanatory instances such as innovation, communication channel, time and social system (Rogers, 2003). As it applies to the findings of the present study, the need for school social work among the parents and teachers of the primary and secondary school students cannot be overemphasized in view of the rapid civilization taken place across the world of which many want to key into it. For instance, about 35% of the respondents believed that their schools/schools of their children are not performing to a satisfactory level, while only 15% strongly agreed that their schools are performing to a satisfactory level showing, the spread of the need for a modernised primary and secondary schools of which school social work services are imperative. However, for the homogenization of the disjointed perspectives and observations of the parents and teachers, there is a need for appropriate channel of communication of the essence and importance of school social work services, which seems to be lacking due to the dearth of social work professionals in the region. For instance, in the categorical knowledge and perception of school social work services, there is some level of rejection due to the unfamiliar status of the concept and discipline among the population but, this appeared to be contradictory to the overall perception of the indices of the school

social work services showing the gap between the need and aspiration of the population in improving the quality of education, and the appropriate professionals through which such can be actualized.

In time lag and the social system in which the school social work is being expected, there seems to be some level of compatibility however, the time may be longer for the innovation to settle in the region owing to a number of factors such as proper communication of the services and needs for the school social work services, the socio-cultural history of the southeast Nigerian region, which is mainly the Igbo as well as appropriate policy drive in the ministry of education located squarely with the government. The people of Igbo, located in the Southeast of present-day Nigeria, have occupied the area as far back as 900 A.D. (Isichei, 1977). The group possesses unique attributes in every area of life, such as the economy, political system, religion, culture, health system, and family system (Anyanwu, 1989; Uchendu, 1965; Talbot, 1969). The geographical location of the People Igbo span through Southeast Nigeria to South-south Nigeria, which can be attributed to the arrival of Europeans to the area, the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria, and the civil war after the independence of Nigeria, during which the three Nigerian regions (North, West and Eastern Nigeria) were further divided into states. However, the Igbo people occupying the Southeast Nigeria is relatively a secluded and closed group when it comes to family and communal life creating, a somewhat unique approach to elements of civilization from outside.

Conclusively, the essence of social work as well as school social work services is yet to be understood and appreciated by the majority in the Southeast Nigerian region due largely to the lack of sustainable synergy expected from the social work community. This is obtainable in the region owing to the developmental history of the region in reality as civilization is yet to properly seat in the public institutions in the region. From this study, it is established that the services of the school social workers per excellence is needed by the majority of the members of the stakeholders in the primary and secondary schools (PTA) in the region for the improvement of education but, there is existing gap of knowledge between the people and what they appreciate, which can be filled by an elaborate enlightenment and awareness campaign through the school platforms and the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). By implication as the findings of this study showed, there is a need for the expansion of the presence and curriculum for social work education, aiming at developing specialized social workers as well as conducive atmosphere for their functioning in the area. Currently, social work as a discipline is limited to a few specializations in the areas of health, ageing, migration, etc., while the educational disciplines lacked the collaboration link for the essence of social work to educational discipline owing to the domination of

guidance and counselling as a discipline in education in this region. However following the developmental realities among the population of the South-east Nigeria, the need for social work education cannot be over emphasized owing to the obvious gap between the expectations of the citizens in the training of their wards at the primary and high school levels, which resonate with the elements and principles of social work education and the current global civilization agenda.

## References

- Adekemi E. O. & Funmilayo A. O. (2016). Assessment of vulnerability status of public school children and existing school health programmes in Osun State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences*, 4: 42-50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijans.2016.03.001>.
- Adeyera, O., Uchendu, O. & Owoaje, E. (2020). Resilience among secondary school students in South-Western Nigeria; association with abuse and neglect. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 32(6), 20180013. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijamh-2018-0013>
- Alabi O. T. Oni, I. O. (2017). Teenage Pregnancy in Nigeria: Causes, Effect and Control. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7 (2), 17-32.
- Aluede, O., Ojugo, A.I., & Okoza, J. (2012). Emotional Abuse of Secondary School Students by Teachers in Edo State, Nigeria. *Research in Education*, 88, 29 - 39.
- Amadi S. (2019). Teenage Pregnancy and its Influence on Secondary School Education in Nigeria. *British Journal of Education*, 7, (11), 87-96.
- Amalu, M. N. (2018). Emotional intelligence as predictor of academic performance among Secondary School Students in Makurdi Metropolis of Benue State. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 11(1), 63-70.
- Animba, I. E. (2020). Mental Health Crises in Nigeria: The Urgent Need for Mental Health Education in Secondary Schools. *Journal of Guidance and Counselling Studies*, 4, (2), 178-191.
- Babajide, V.F.T. & Amosu, John A. M. (2019) The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Physics in Educational District IV of Lagos State, Nigeria. Education & Science. *Journal of Policy Review and Curriculum Development* 9(2), 196-206.
- Birchall, J. (2018). *Early marriage, pregnancy and girl child school dropout*. K4D Helpdesk Report. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.
- Bisi-Onyemaechi, A. I., Akani, N. A., Ikefuna, A. N., Tagbo, B. N. & Chinawa, J. M. (2018). Evaluation of the School Environment of Public and Private Schools in Enugu to Ensure Child Health Promotion. *Niger J Clin Pract*, 21:195-200.
- Bohlen, J.M., Coughenour, C.M., Lionberger, H.F., Moe, E.O. & Rogers, E.M.(1958). Adopters of New Farm Ideas. *North Central Regional Extension Publication* 13. East Lansing, Michigan State University.
- Chukwu, N. E. & Idemili-Aronu, A. (2019). Cross sectional survey of access to social services by families of persons with intellectual disability (PIDs) in Imo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Work in Developing Societies*, 1(2), 3-14.

- Chukwu, N. E., Okoye, U. O., Onyeneho, N. G. & Okeibunor, J. C. (2019). Coping strategies of families of persons with learning disability in Imo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition*, 38(9). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41043-019-0168-2>.
- Cleary, T. (2017). Social Work with Children and Families. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 47(1), 277–279.
- Corrin, W.J., Parise, L.M., Cerna, O.S., Haider, Z., & Somers, M. (2015). Case Management for Students at Risk of Dropping Out: Implementation and Interim Impact Findings from the Communities in Schools Evaluation. *Econometric Modeling: Microeconomic Studies of Health*.
- Ebimngbo, S. O., Obi-Keguna, C. N., Chukwu, N. E., Onalu, C. E., Abonyi, S. E. & Okoye, U. O. (2019b). Culture-based Social support to Older Adults in Nnewi, South-East Nigeria. *Etude de la Population Africaine/African Population Studies*, 33(2), 4891-4900.
- Ebimngbo, S. O., Onalu, C. O., Chukwu, N. E., Onwuama, O. P. Okah, P. S. & Iwuagwu, T. E. (2019). Knowledge of public health challenges of open defecation in rural areas of South-East Nigeria: Implications for social workers. *Etude de la Population Africaine/African Population Studies*, 33(1), 4787-4800.
- Enebe, N.O., Enebe, J. T., Agunwa, C.C., Ossai, E. N., Ezeoke, U. E., Idoko, C. A. & Mbachur, C. O. (2021). Prevalence and predictors of child labour among junior public secondary school students in Enugu, Nigeria: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health* 21, 1339. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11429-w>
- Eneh, J., Nnama-Okechukwu, C., Uzuogbu, C. & Okoye, U. (2017). Social work with families. In Okoye, U., Chukwu, N. & Agwu, P. (Eds.). *Social work in Nigeria: Book of readings*. Nsukka: University of Nigeria Press Ltd.
- Eremie M. & Bethel-Eke, O. A. (2019). Influence of Emotional Behavioural Disorder on Academic Performance of Junior Secondary School Students in Rivers State International *Journal of Innovative Psychology & Social Development* 7(2):114-121.
- Famakinwa T.T1, Olagunju O.E1, Akinnawonu C. (2016). A Study of Psychosocial Challenges of Public Secondary School Students in a Semi-Urban Area of Southwest-Nigeria. *Journal of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care*. 28(1) 59-64.
- Franklin, C., Kim, J.S., & Tripodi, S.J. (2009). A Meta-Analysis of Published School Social Work Practice Studies. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 19, 667 - 677.
- Garba, A. (2007, Oct 27). Home and school factors responsible for dropout in the North-West, Nigeria. *Education in Nigeria: A Review*. Kano, North-West Zone, Nigeria: Northern Publishing Company.
- Garba, A. (2012). Secondary Education in Nigeria: A Synthesis of Basic Student-Specific Concerns from Guidance and Counseling Perspective. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education*, 15 (2) 195 – 205.
- Greenhalgh, T., Robert, G., Macfarlane, F., Bate, P. & Kyriakidou, O. (2004). Diffusion of Innovations in Service Organisations: Systematic Review and Recommendations. *The Millbank Quarterly*, 82, 581-629.
- Hood, R., Goldacre, A., Webb, C., Bywaters, P., Gorin, S. & Clements, K. (2021). Beyond the Toxic Trio: Exploring Demand Typologies in Children's Social Care. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 51, (6), 1942-1962, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcab058>
- International Labour Organization. Report III (2020). Child labour statistics. *18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians Geneva, 24 November–5 December 2020* ICLS/18/2020/III. Available from [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilobookstore/orderonline/books/WCMS\\_106182/lang%2D%2Den/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilobookstore/orderonline/books/WCMS_106182/lang%2D%2Den/index.htm)

- Irele, A. O. (2011). The Evolution of Social Welfare and Social Work in Nigeria. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, 8(3), 238-252.
- Isaksson, C. & Larsson, A. (2017). Jurisdiction in school social workers' and teachers' work for pupils' well-being. *Education Inquiry*, DOI: 10.1080/20004508.2017.1318028.
- Isaksson, C. & Sjöström, S. (2016). Looking for 'social work' in school social work, *European Journal of Social Work*, DOI: 10.1080/13691457.2016.1188775.
- Isangha, S. O., Choi, W. M. A., & Chiu, M. Y. L. (2021). COVID-19: Where are the Nigerian social workers? *Qualitative Social Work*, 20(1-2), 343-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325020973336>
- Isangha, S. O., Choi, W. M. A., & Chiu, M. Y. L. (2021). COVID-19: Where are the Nigerian social workers? *Qualitative Social Work*, 20(1-2), 343-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325020973336>
- Iwuagwu, N. P. (2019). Causes, Effects and Remedies of Student's Dropout of Secondary School in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences* 3, (3), 01-12.
- Jiang, N., Maloney, T.R., Staneva, A., Wilson, M., & Vaithianathan, R. (2018). *The Impact of Social Workers in Schools: a Preliminary Investigation Using Linked Administrative Data*. Evaluation of Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) services, Ministry of Social Development, retrieved from: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/evaluation/social-workers-in-schools-services/index.html>
- Kichura, M. (2019). *The Impact Organizational Factors Have on Role Ambiguity Amongst School Social Workers*. Digital Commons @ ACU, Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 149.
- Lekwa, E. A. & Anyaogu, B. E. (2016). Economic Recession, Hawking and Students Drop out of School in the Five Eastern States of Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Research*. 2 (2), 14-21.
- Madume, I. & Dibia, L. D. (2021). Causes and Effects of Teenage Pregnancy among Female Secondary School Students in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of Rivers State. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science* 9 (7), 01-07.
- Manohar P. & Nixon, M. (2020). Social policy practice preferences by social work students: Implications for macro practice education, *The British Journal of Social Work*, 50, (8), 2279-2297, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa179>
- Manyike, P. C., Chinawa, J. M., Elias, A., Udechukwu, N. P., Odutola, O. I. & Awoere, C. T. (2015). Child sexual abuse among adolescents in southeast Nigeria: A concealed public health behavioral issue. *Pak J Med Sci* 2015;31(4):827-832. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12669/pjms.314.7115>
- Mathewos, S., & Mekuria, A. (2018). Teenage Pregnancy and Its Associated Factors among School Adolescents of Arba Minch Town, Southern Ethiopia. *Ethiopian journal of health sciences*, 28(3), 287-298. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ejhs.v28i3.6>
- National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2018). *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2016-17*. Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics.
- North Carolina School Social Worker (2008). *School social worker: Student services job description*. Retrieved from <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/work4ncschools/employment/jobdescrip/socialworkerjob.pdf>
- NPC (2019) *Basic Education Profile for Southeast Nigeria Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States*. Abuja: National Population Commission.
- Nwachukwu, P. T. (2015). *A Comparison Study of Challenges Facing Effective Social Work Practice and Administration in Bucolic Areas in Both South Africa And Nigeria*. A thesis

submitted in accordance with the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy Department of Social Work University Of Zululand.

- Nwadinigwe, I.P. & Azuka-Obieke, U. (2012). The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Lagos, Nigeria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 3(4): 395-401.
- Obeten U. B., Onyenemerem N. P. & Mbah F. (2020). The Challenges of Social Work Practice in Nigeria and it's Implication on National Development. *International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences*, 13: 82-90
- Ochocki, S., Frey, A. J., Patterson, D. A., Herron, F., Beck, N. & Dupper, D. R. (2020). Evaluating the Zones of Regulation intervention to improve the self-control of elementary students," *International Journal of School Social Work*. 5 (2), 1 16. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1046>
- Okala A. U. (2020). Social Work Services Available To Elderly Persons in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences*, 12:114-126.
- Okorie, A. N. (2014). Relationship among Peer Pressure, Time Management and Academic Performance of In-School Adolescents in Umuahia. Thesis presented to the Department of Education Foundations (Guidance and Counselling), Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria.
- Okoye, U. O & Ijebor, E. E. (March, 2013). The Nigerian Social Worker and the challenge of practicing in a multi-cultural society. *Paper presented at the 2 nd National Conference of the Nigerian Association of Social Work Educators (NASWE). On the theme Social Work Practice in a Diverse Society: Meeting the Challenges of Contemporary Nigeria From Wednesday 13th –Saturday 16th March, 2013 at The Banquet Hall, University of Benin, Benin-city.*
- Okoye, U.O (2013). Trends and challenges of social work practice in Nigeria. In Cree, V.E. (ed) *Becoming a Social Worker: Global Narratives*. London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- Okpechi, P.A. (2013). Child Abuse and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Central Senatorial District of Cross River State. *Global Journal of Educational Research*, 12: 47-54.
- Okwuduba, E. N., Nwosu, K. C., Okigbo, E. C., Samuel, N. N. & Achugbu, C. (2021). Impact of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional intelligence and self-directed learning on academic performance among pre-university science students. *Heliyon*, 7, (3), e06611, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06611>.
- Onalu, C. E., & Okoye, U. O. (2021). Social Justice and Social Work Curriculum at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 31(6), 576–583. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497315211001532>
- Openshaw, L. (2008). *Social Work in Schools: Principles and Practice*. New York: Guilford Publications
- Oriji, C., Oriji, M. M. & Oweibi, J. (2015). Psycho-Social Roles of Medical Social Workers in Managing Stressed Patients in Government Hospitals in Rivers State, Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5 (12)186-190.
- Poppy, A. A. (2012). *The Role of a School Social Worker from an Administrator's Perspective*. Retrieved from Sophia, the St. Catherine University repository website (20<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2021): [https://sophia.stkate.edu/msw\\_papers/74](https://sophia.stkate.edu/msw_papers/74)
- Rogers, E.M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations*. Free Press.
- Ryan, B. & Gross, N.C. (1943). The Diffusion of Hybrid Seed Corn in Two Iowa Communities. *Rural Sociology*, 8, 15-24.

- Samuel O. Ebimngbo, Chukwu, N. E., Onalu, C. E. & Okoye, U. O. (2019a). Perceived challenges associated with care of older adults by caregivers and implications for social workers in south- East Nigeria. *Indian Journal of Gerontology*, 33(2), 160-177.
- Subrahmanyam, G. (2016). *Gender perspectives on causes and effects of school dropouts*. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.
- Udeani, C. C. (2019). Social Work in Contemporary Nigerian Society: Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Social Work in Developing Societies*, 1(1), 1- 16.
- UNESCO (2017). *Early and unintended pregnancy and the education sector: Evidence review and recommendations*. UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002515/251509E.pdf>
- Villarreal, S. L. and Ha, N. T. (2020). School Social Work in Vietnam: Development and Capacity Building through International Collaboration. *International Journal of School Social Work*: Vol. 5: Iss. 2. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1065>
- Wachikwu, T., Kevwe, O. A., Magnus-Arewa, E. A. & Nwaukwu, C. (2017). Psychological Factors and Students' Academic Achievement in Mathematics in Ughelli-South Local Government Area of Delta State Nigeria. *British Journal of Education*.5, (10), 8-21.
- Waraga, T. N. & Ngari, S. M. (2018). Social Causes of Pregnancies Among Secondary School Girls: Implication for Counselling in Pokot South Sub County of West Pokot County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9 (29)103-108.
- Wicki, W., Künzle, R., Mueller, M., Ziegele, U., Stadelmann, K. & Gschwind, K. (2020). Tasks and impact of school social work in Switzerland as perceived by teachers, principals and school social workers – a multilevel analysis. *International Journal of School Social Work*: Vol. 5: (2). <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1052>
- Zuilkowski, S.S., & Marty, A. (2021). Student perceptions of school safety and student learning outcomes in a context of protracted conflict. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 82, 102372.