School-Family-Community Partnerships and Its' Influence on Students 'Achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Ilemela Municipal, Tanzania

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Abstract— Education is an investment which brings socio-economic return to the person and nation at large. In implementing various strategies to improve student development and academic outcomes, it is important to include all key stake holders by fostering close schools, family and community partnerships, and not only teachers and administrators, but also family and community members. These partnerships improve schools and lead to student's success in academic and social arena. In Tanzania public secondary schools, family and community partnerships is considered to be low and students' performance in academic and discipline continues to be poor compared to schools with strong family community partnerships. Therefore, the objectives of this study were; to identify the existing school-family-community partnerships in public secondary school in Ilemela Municipal, to investigate whether school-family-community partnerships in public secondary schools influence students 'achievement in Ilemela Municipal and to find out if there are any challenges facing of school-family-community partnerships implementation in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal. The study employed a mixed research methods where questionnaires and interview were used to collect data. The total sample size was 141; respondents involved were teachers, heads of school, students, District Education Officer, and family and community members. Descriptive statistics analysis and thematic analysis was used, and the findings revealed that there are few and poor School-family community partnerships. The study found out that, partnerships have great influence on students 'achievement. Furthermore, the study found various challenges which face the implementation of school-family-community partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela district. The study recommends that The Ministry of education and vocational training the Ministry of education to make policy reforms to encourage a national wide involvement of families and community in school development activities to ensure quality provision of education which will enhance best returns in socio-economic such as industrialized economy.

Keywords— School-Family-Community Partnerships, Student' Achievement, Public Secondary schools, Tanzania.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education continues to be the area of great concern in every country. It was believed for many years that education is the key for development of individuals and their nations. Skills and knowledge acquired through education shape individual mind-set to be able to solve various problems and discover new ways of living for the betterment of society. Nola and Irzik (2005) assert that education is a tool through which

individuals acquire skills that empower one life and become productive member of the community. Also Bell-Gam (2003) as cited in the conference paper of Olumese, Okukpon & Clark (2009) that education is concerned with the transmission of knowledge and acquisition of skills that will capacitate the individual not only to survive in the society but also to contribute to the future development and transformation of the economy. This is the reason why education is referred as an investment by the families and community. Whereby, all parties must be involved in the whole process of education of their children for students 'achievement at different levels.

According to Jones and Hazuka (2012) over 20 years there has been an increased emphasis on the importance of partnering with families and communities to enhance students 'achievement in school. Most recent research have moved from the term "parental involvement" to "family involvement" to recognizes the wider family roles in supporting children education (Long, 2010). Starting from family to community level every level is obliged to ensure children get access to quality education. They are involved in various ways such as financing of education, UNESCO and OECD (2002) suggests typical sources of financing education which are; government or public which is always the largest contributor, income generated by schools, external grants, loans channelled via government accounts or direct o institutions), households (mainly parents), private organizations (NGOs), local administration and local communities. Literature insist on a better word than parental involvement which is School-Family-Community Partnerships so as not to leave school to parents but also to involve other members of the family and community in the development of the child (Epstein, 2001).

II.   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the theory of Overlapping spheres of influence developed by Joyce L. Epstein in 1987.The theory hold that the external structure of theoretical model of overlapping spheres of influence shows a pictorial of the major three spheres representing family, community and school which students learn and grow that may be pushed together or apart by different forces; time, characteristics, attitudes, interactions, philosophies and practices of a family and those of a school and community. The model locates students at the centre and recognizes they are active and main actors in their education in schools. School-Family-

Community Partnerships may be designed to engage, guide and motivate students to perform better. The theory presents an assumption that if children feel cared for and encouraged to work hard by family, community and teachers, they are more likely to perform better in learning how to read, write, calculate and use their talents effectively. Thus, the theory emphasizes on the reciprocity of among teachers, student and family relationship (Sanders & Epstein, 2005; Deslandes, 2001; Epstein, 2011).

It was through time dedicated to help students, practices by school, family and teachers attitudes and community and teachers philosophy over education matters. When schools partner with families they pull two main overlapping spheres of influence which is very important to student success (Long, 2010).

Existing School-Family-Community Partnerships

Education should provide knowledge and various skills which shape individual behaviours and enable them to participate better in their communities. It is regarded as a process of providing knowledge, skills and also fostering right attitudes and habits (Chandra & Sharma, 2004). And in order to foster quality education School-Family-Community Partnerships exist to assist effective learning process of students. According to Epstein and Salinas (2004) there are six major types of involvement; parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, decision making, collaborating with the community. To learn at a high level, all students need guidance and support from their teachers, families and community through the stated partnerships.

With regard to collaborating with the community different partners in the community collaborate with schools for example in financing government officials, donors for NGOs, parents and community are education stakeholders who mobilize financial resources for secondary schools. It is estimated that the cost of junior-secondary education student in Africa is 3-4 times of that of primary education (Lewin & Caillods, 2001). In order to provide quality secondary education, it requires school-family-community partnership to join hands with the government to provide adequate funding for education.

Sheldon and Epstein (2002) study showed that two types of involvement; parenting and volunteering, were most predictive of reducing the percentages of students who were subject to discipline. The results suggest that creating more connections and greater cooperation among the school,

family, and community contexts as one way for schools to improve student behaviour and discipline.

Other types of school-family-community involvement were revealed by Crites (2008) that throughout a year families and community members are invited to special events at school such as curriculum night, reading night and math night so as to influence student achievement. Also Long (2010) asserts that adult volunteers have seen to be successful and in his review he observed that higher income communities enjoy more volunteer participation. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) asserted that home-school communication is one of the most traditional and a vital form of parental involvement, but it is often poorly implemented. Despite that challenge, this type of partnership is observed by other studies in Africa.

In South Africa a study conducted by Mutodi and Ngirande (2014) on the impact of parental involvement on student performance, among South African secondary schools. The study employed a quantitative approach and a sample of 150 parents, the study found that there were three highly implemented parental involvement; parenting, parent-teacher communication and home and family support. And these types of involvement were found to be positively related to students 'performance.

Moreover, according to Spreen and Fancsali (2005) in Botswana parents are invited to school twice annually to evaluate the pupils work and measure student performance, additional meetings are arranged on according to the needs. The country report shows nearly all teachers indicated that held meetings at least bi-annually and at times more. This implied that communication type of involvement is mostly implemented in various schools depending on the needs at the moment.

Also a study conducted by Muthoni (2015) in Kenya on the impact of community involvement in public school management ; a case of Machakos County , found that existing types of school-family-community involvement are raising of funds, reporting cases of truancy, ensuring safety and discipline of students. It means that all these partnerships aimed at students 'achievement.

Also another study by Kimaro and Machumu (2015) revealed that parental involvement at home, especially parents asking their children about homework regularly, and helping them with homework had some significant relationships with children's academic achievement. This confirmed the significant relationship between the level of parental involvement in school activities and their children's academic achievement.

In Tanzania one study revealed the participation of community members in the construction of classrooms in ward based secondary schools categorized into two parts; One part includes those who participated in construction through cash contribution and the second part includes those who contributed by offering labour power (Kambuga, 2013)

In addition to that Epstein and Sheldon (2006) opined that well documented problems with student achievement are contributed by old thinking of separating school and students from home and community, leaving teachers to work in isolation from other influential people in a student's life.

Therefore, all types of involvement are only become successful if well integrated with school overall mission and goals (Van Roekel, 2008). For further assisting schools to develop successful School-Family-Community Partnerships Epstein developed an action team approach for school-family-community partnership which consist of six to twelve members including family members, teachers, administrators, other school staff, community member and student (Sanders & Epstein, 2005).

However, many studies conducted in school-community partnerships in Africa revealed that there are few existing partnerships in secondary schools such as checking school exercises, communicating through parents meeting but the attendance of parents is very low (Bwana, 2013). Also a study conducted in Tanzania on Community involvement in planning and decision making for democratization in Bagamoyo district, the study findings revealed that parents and community involvement in community secondary schools was very minimal and weak (John, 2015; Mngarah, 2017).

Based on the reviewed literatures, it is observed that in developed countries there are strong existing School-Family-Community Partnerships compared to developing countries especially Tanzania, studies showed contradictions some showed that Tanzania lack parental involvement and other showed few partnerships. Therefore, this study identified the existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships in Ilemela Municipal, using a mixed research approach and the larger sample to enable collections of credible data on problem understudy.

The Influence of School-Family-Community Partnerships on Students Achievements

Research uphold that benefits of parental involvement include greater academic achievement to students and good school-community relationships, enhancing moral development and good behaviour (Lawson and Almeda-Lawson, 2012: Henderson and Mapp, 2002; Green wood and Hickman, 1991) as cited in Baker, Wise, Kelley and Skiba, 2016.

According to Epstein (2011) there are many reasons for developing School-Family-Community Partnerships such as improving school climate, programs, and mainly to help student to succeed in school and future life. A study conducted by Kaminski (2011) suggests that family involvement lead to children attend to school regularly, positive attitudes and behaviour, complete home work, get high scores, more likely to graduate and proceed with higher levels of studies.

Another study reported that when parents are involved in their students' education, those students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently (Antunez, 2000). A study conducted in Georgia on the impact of parental involvement on student success; school and family partnerships from the perspectives of parents and teachers. The study used a qualitative approach and the findings revealed that parental involvement positively impacts student success (Newchurch, 2017). In align to that these partnerships give teachers increased understanding of students background and also encouraging positive connections between student (youth) with local organizations and business (Collins, 1995). Also Long (2010) proposed that family involvement does have positive effects on student outcomes, such as reducing truancy and dropout rates, increasing academic success and building resilience in facing other barriers to success student face inside and outside the school. When families, communities and schools form partnerships to enable children's learning, everyone benefits — schools work better, families become closer, community resources thrive, and students improve academically (Antunez, 2000).

Furthermore, another study by Erlendsdottir (2010) in Namibia suggested that parental involvement has positive effects on student's academic achievement. And Mitsue (1999) entailed that sustainable school-community partnerships are raising money, ensuring students regular attendance, providing skills and cultural information, help students with studying, and gathering resources for education. Also community participation in education promotes girls education, identifying and addressing challenges facing schools such inadequacy of materials, discipline and early pregnancies.

Another study in Kenya by Muthoni (2015) concluded that there is an interrelationship between community involvement and student achievement. The similar results on the positive influence of school-family-community partnership were obtained by Mngarah (2015).

In Tanzania a study conducted by Kikoti (2018) on parental participation in improving student 'academic performance in Sumbawanga Municipal. The study established that frequent communication between teachers and parents, helping students with their work enhance student's performance.

On the other side Nyembeke (2016) conducted a study on parental involvement on students 'academic activities in community secondary schools in Kilosa District, Tanzania as a case study. The study findings indicated that students and teachers are left alone by parents/guardians in enhancing student 'performance, thus their academic achievement is negatively affected.

However, the reviewed literatures showed that most researches have been done only on one aspect of parental involvement or community involvement. Hence, this current study was based on all aspects including family, community and school and how these partnerships influenced achievement of students; academic performance, regular attendance, discipline and morality.

Challenges Facing School-Family-Community Partnerships Implementation

Various studies have revealed challenges in implementing School-Family-Community Partnerships. Policy makers, community leaders and parents view schools and student learning as the responsibility of educator (National Education Association [NEA], 2008). Thus, only teachers are responsible for students 'achievement. The later disagreed with the current term of School-Family-Community Partnerships which recognizes the responsibility of all partners in the achievement of students.

A study in Canada by Collins (2000) on exemplary models of parental and community involvement: a study of ten Newfoundland and Labrador schools. A case study approach was used in this study. The study found that barriers to parent-community partnerships are lack of time, parent anxiety, teacher's anxiety and location or transportation. And the study recommends that for parents to find time for

participation, school administration and teachers should value their contribution. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) opined that family members' level of education will influence their participation in school or home based activities. Thus, these challenges affect the effective implementation of School-Family-Community partnerships.

Another challenge revealed by Antunez (2000) is language skills. The Inability to understand the language of the school is a major barrier to the parents who have not achieved full English proficiency, interactions with the schools are difficult and also helping students with their school work is difficult. This is true in case of Africa especially Tanzania where English is not a first language, and the language of instruction for secondary schools is English except one subject which is Swahili.

Furthermore, Antunez adds that work interference is a major reason stated by parents for non- involvement in school activities. Conflicts between parent and school schedules may mean neither parents cannot attend school events nor help their children with homework due to their work schedule.

Other challenges were stipulated by a study conducted in South Africa by Gwija (2016) on the role of parents in enhancing academic performance in secondary schools in the Metro-Central Education district, Western cape uncover that one of the challenges in enforcing parents participation in children's academic performance is lack of parental involvement policy which guide the whole partnerships implementations. Policy is another great area of concern when it comes to effective implementation of these partnerships.

In Botswana another challenge of community engagement revealed by the school head's report is lack of cooperation from the community as a major problem (Spreen & Fancsali, 2005). In Kenya a study conducted on Home-school-community partnerships: an imperative in teacher education program in Kenya by Nyatuka and Nyakan (2015) which used a descriptive survey design. The findings revealed that 30% of teachers in primary schools indicated that they had never studied a course to do with School-Family-Community Partnerships at either teaching college or in-service training; this has been seen as one of the sources of challenges in implementing these partnerships in schools. Other studies from Kenya by Muthoni (2015) and Bwana (2013) revealed that community members lack cooperation from due to parents' attendance in meetings being very low. The same

results was obtained by Makwinya and Komba (2014) that parents are dissatisfied by the frequency of communication and involvement in school-related issues, thus parents future plans in participating in the partnership are low.

In Tanzania one study reported lack of parental involvement in the education of students in Tanzania (Givens, 2014). While another study conducted in Kilimanjaro by Kibona (2013) used a mixed approach found that leaders at community levels were not involved in academic issues. In contrast to the previous studies John (2015) and Kikoti (2018) found that parents and community involvement in community secondary schools existed but very minimal and the factor contributed to this problem was economic hardships (poverty) of parents and community members, poor communication and parents' illiteracy. In addition to that Mngarah (2017) in his study on assessment of family-school collaboration toward students 'moral development in Lushoto District found that families did not cooperate with school to nurture students' moral development. And the study recommended that strengthening collaboration between partners and school will address moral crisis in Tanzania.

Education vision of Tanzania stated that, " to have a well educated Tanzanian, with knowledge, skills and direction: competent and ready to face social, political, and economic challenges and to participate effectively in efforts to reach development goals set by nationally and internationally by 2025" (MoEVT, 2010). Also currently our government emphasized on industrialized economy. In order to achieve these goals, schools need to partner with families and community to achieve school goals, to prepare students efficient for industrial economy. Epstein and Sheldon (2006) highlighted that all we need is to make sure that School-Family-Community Partnerships programs are linked directly to school goals for student success

As an African proverb said that it takes a village to raise a child, meaning that the responsibility of children's education is not only for one institution (school) but the whole community to ensure the academic achievement of students. Therefore, the current study conducted in Ilemela Municipal was necessary because there were few published studies conducted specifically to find out challenges facing the implementation of School-Family-Community Partnerships.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In implementing various strategies to improve student development and academic outcomes, it is important to include all key stake holders by fostering close schools, family and community partnerships, and not only teachers and administrators, but also family and community members (Cook, Hayden, Bryan and Belford, 2016). These partnerships improve schools and lead to student's success in academic and social arena (Epstein, 2011). In Tanzania students' performance continues to be poor in public secondary schools (MoEVT, 2016). And past studies conducted on the area of parental and community involvement has shown that public schools lack parental involvement (Givens, 2014), while other studies found that parent and community involvement in community schools was very minimal and families did not cooperate with schools to nurture students' development (John, 2015; Mngarah, 2017).Thus, School-Family-Community Partnerships are considered to be low in Tanzania.

However, it is not understood whether low School-Family-Community Partnerships can be the reason for poor students' performance. Therefore, the researcher was interested in establishing whether School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students' achievement in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal Council.

General Objective of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate on School-Family-Community Partnerships and its' influence on students 'achievement in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal, Tanzania.

Specific Objectives of the Study

i. To identify the existing School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal.

ii. To investigate whether School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students 'achievement in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal.

iii. To find out if there are any challenges facing School-Family-Community Partnerships implementation in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal.

IV.   MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Ilemela Municipal Council. The researcher has chosen Ilemela Municipal as a study area because of the availability of public secondary schools where students perform poor (MoEVT, 2016). Hence the targeted respondents were essential to provide the answer to the problem at hand in relation to School-Family-Community Partnerships and its influence on students' achievement in Ilemela Municipal.

The study used a mixed approach and a descriptive survey design. The study content only focused on School-Family-Community Partnerships and its influence on students 'achievement in public secondary school. This study used both probability sampling: simple random sampling, and non-probability sampling: purposive sample. Simple random sampling was used to select students and teachers to ensure that each individual has an equal chance to be included in the sample of the study, and purposive sampling was used to select the head of schools, DEO, family and community members who are selected specifically because of their position and important role in students' education and life. The researcher used a simple random sampling techniques to ensure each subgroup characteristics is represented in the sample to enhance external validity of the study (Oso & Onen, 2008). A study sample consisted of head of schools (5), District education officer (1), teachers (20), students (100), family (10) and community members (5).

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from a representative sample of the study population. This enabled the researcher to obtain detailed information; descriptions and explanations of the phenomena under study and enable quantitative description of the variables. In this study both qualitative and quantitative data analysis was employed. This includes thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics analysis. In quantitative analysis numerical data was recorded and grouped using tables, and then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 and the results were presented in terms of graphical presentation; presented in frequencies and percentages. Later on results were presented in tables according to the research objectives to form a research report.

V.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First objective aimed at identifying the existing School-Family-Partnerships in public secondary schools of Ilemela Municipal, data were collected using both questionnaires and interviews. Table 1 presents teachers responses on the

existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal through

questionnaires.

Table 1 Existing School-Family-Community Partnerships

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
School communicates information of students 'progress.	0	0	1	5.0	6	30.0	7	35.0	6	30.0
School conducts meetings with family on parental skills.	0	0	2	10.0	4	20.0	3	15.0	11	55.0
School links families for support.	0	0	2	10.0	7	35.0	6	30.0	5	25.0
School enhances learning at home.	1	5.0	1	5.0	2	10.0	7	35.0	9	45.0
School invites family and community members to volunteer.	0	0	3	15.0	4	20.0	5	25.0	8	40.0
School involves family and community in school decision making.	0	0	5	25.0	3	15.0	6	30.0	6	30.0
School develops partnerships with local businesses, community organizations and companies for school development.	7	35.0	5	25.0	2	10.0	6	30.0	7	35.0

Source: Field Data (2019).

Key: 1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Good   4=Very good 5=Excellent

F=Frequency   %=Percentage

Table 1 above shows the responses of teachers on the existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships in their schools. It revealed that several partnerships exist in schools. Most dominant partnerships include communication, where the majority of teachers (55%) revealed that school conducts meetings/trainings with family on parental skills at least twice a year. Schools use meetings as a means of communicating to family and community to discuss various issues concerning school and students development. It implied one of common types of involvement where schools design and implement a two way communication with families about school programs and student 'progress.

And (35%) revealed that schools provide information regarding students 'progress to parents. This is another finding which implied that schools implements communicating type of school-family partnerships in good way, through preparing students reports every term after annual or terminal exams and requires parents to pick them up. Communication helps parents and students themselves to

understand the academic and behaviour progress of students. Hence, results to students 'achievement.

Another type of partnerships which existed was learning at home. Whereby, 45% of teachers showed that schools enhance learning at home. Student learning is enhanced by the discussion of teachers and family on how their children can study at home. This implied that schools performed practices such as counselling to help families establishing a better environment at home to support student learning.

Also other types of partnerships existed including volunteering (40%) where schools invite families and community members to participate in different school projects. And decision making (30%) is another partnership found where community and family are involved in school governance through school board. The last one was community collaboration (35%). This was used mainly in order to mobilize educational resources for schools and students using practices such as fund raising activities.

However, few teachers (25%) rate the variable; school links family with programs and resources in the community which provide support to families excellent and 30% rate this variable very good. This means that this type of partnership is lowly implemented in public secondary schools, it could be due to lack of resources or programs nearby or lack of awareness of this type of partnership which can enhance parenting and nurture students.

The results presented by table 1 means that volunteering, decision making and community collaboration types of partnerships are implemented in a very low scale compared to communicating, parenting and learning at home types of involvements.

The results shown on table 1 on the existing types of SFC Partnerships are similar to the proposed six types of involvement by Epstein (1986) where school, community and family collaborate in school development.

On the other hand, other findings about the existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships were collected through the use of interview and one of the interviewees, respondent X revealed that,

> "School-Family-Community Partnerships exist due to education policy. Education circular number one of 2018 talks about every school to have a school board and school committee which form school management team; including community leaders, members, parents and elders around the school. To make sure that students achieve their goals. Our municipal have a blog which they display and inform everything concerning schools development and partnerships where everyone can see and participate, including examination results etc. [Interview, Respondent X, April 24 2019]

The respondent X information on the existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships implied that the Ministry of Education recognizes these partnerships and there are official circular which govern its implementation and participation from each partner starting from family, community and school.

Another respondent from family Q who was interviewed said that:

> I am not usually participating in school meetings due to my busy schedule of economic activities. Meetings are on weekdays and that time and day I will be working. Also even if I went there teachers won't accept our ideas. However teachers are responsible to take good care of our children. [Interview, Family Q, April 24 2019]

Respondent Q implied that some families are not usually in support of the partnerships due to various reasons such as busy schedule, which is influenced by their economic condition. Also from the Interviewee view, it implies that some families do not participate fully due to their perception that their ideas are not accepted during the meetings. This can act as a barrier for the family or community to participate actively in school matters.

As mentioned before, the above results from table 1 and interviews on the existing types of partnerships in public schools concur with types of partnerships proposed by Epstein; six major types of involvement: communication, volunteering, parenting, learning at home, collaboration with the community and decision making (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Although in public schools they do not call them exactly as Epstein did and they are not aware of the one proposed by Epstein. A similar result was also observed by Bwana (2013) that there is communication through parents meetings.

Furthermore, findings revealed that other partners such as families and communities are not fully participating in partnerships activities. Thus, they provide the answers to the problem that the observed poor performance of students and bad behaviour may be associated with poor partnerships existed in public secondary schools.

On the other hand other respondents of this study; students revealed their responses on the same objective of the existing types of School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal as shown on table 2 below.

Table 2 Existing School-Family-Community Partnerships

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
School communicates information of students 'progress.	13	13.4	27	27.8	15	15.5	14	14.3	28	28.9
School conducts meetings with family on parental skills.	15	15.5	24	24.7	12	12.4	15	15.5	31	32.0
School links families for support.	15	15.5	25	25.8	23	23.7	16	16.5	18	18.6
School enhances learning at home.	33	33.0	20	20.6	11	11.3	22	22.7	11	11.4
Family helps you with your homework.	40	41.2	22	22.7	12	12.4	14	14.4	9	9.3
Family attends meetings at school	41	42.3	19	19.6	12	12.4	15	15.5	10	10.3
Family make follow up on your progress.	41	42.3	19	19.6	12	12.4	15	15.5	10	10.3
School invites family and community members to volunteer.	7	7.2	35	36.2	25	25.8	22	22.7	8	8.2
School involves family and community in school decision making.	18	18.6	14	14.4	17	17.5	22	22.7	26	26.8
School develops partnerships with local businesses, community organizations and companies for school development.	22	22.7	21	21.6	12	12.4	19	19.6	23	23.7

Source: Field Data (2019)

Key: 1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Good   4=Very good 5=Excellent

F=Frequency   %=Percentage

Table 2 shows that most of the students (42.0%) revealed that their family poorly attends meetings at school. And other majority (42%) who shows that parents follow up on their progress is poor. Another result by (41.2%) of students' shows family is helping them with their home work is poor. This implies that family members are not well informed of School-Family-Community Partnerships and their importance to school and student development. And this is due to poor attendance to school meetings, helping with students' homework and making follow up on their progress at school.

However, few students (32%) rates excellent on school conducting meetings and trainings on parental skills and (28%) on school communicate information to parents regarding students' progress (excellent). This means that school meetings are not often conducted as observed by students. And training on parenting skills is not often provided by the school. This finding is different compared to

teachers' response, because they have a high rate of performing these two types of partnerships and parenting. This implies that teachers may fear to tell if they have few meetings and training during the data collection.

Students data shows that the lower type of partnerships existing include; (26.8%) of students indicated that school involve family and community in decision making, (25.8%) shows that school invites family and community to volunteer. Lastly, 23.7% of students show that school develops collaboration with community local business, community organization sand companies for school development. When results from teachers and students are compared, teachers show high rates on the existence of dominant partnerships while students' rates low the same types of partnerships. The results means that students as one element of School-Family-Community Partnerships are not aware of the partnerships whether exist or not. Either their

not involved or given information about the existing partnerships.

With regards to the existing partnerships between school, family and community, the study findings again appeared to be relevant to Open System Theory (OST) that school as an open system is based on the interaction between the interdependent elements within the school. Inputs are human, financial, physical and information resources from the environment (families, community, government, etc.), the throughput is the transformation process of teaching and learning at school where administrators, teachers, students and community interacts to achieve school goals, and the output refers to the attainment of goals represented by achievement of graduates with academic, social, cultural success. Therefore, School-Family-Community Partnerships work together to make sure schools as open systems receive inputs for its production process and work together in a cycled process toward the output and feedback process and these partnerships ensure school survival (Lunenburg, 2010) .

The study findings also agree with another theory under this study: Overlapping spheres of influence where the theory asserts that students are affected by three spheres of influence namely family, school and community (Epstein, 2011). Therefore, based on the existing few and poor partnerships, it means that three spheres of influence are not fully drawn together (not overlapping). This is the reason

why in students findings show that student who is the main target of this partnership is not aware of the partnerships existed or doesn't see the practices.

Therefore, despite student lack of awareness of the existing partnerships between school-family and community, the study found mainly four types exists; communication, learning at home, parenting and decision making. These results of existing partnerships is in contrast with the results of Given (2014) who revealed that there is lack of parental involvement in the education of students in Tanzania. This means that parents or family are involved in education but their participation is low due to various challenges such as poor understanding of the importance of these partnerships in relation to students 'achievement.

The significance of these findings is to guide heads of school, members of the school board and teachers in public secondary schools to design effective School-Family-Community partnership, increase accountability and to have a good relationship with family and community around the school necessary to in their work in attaining education goals and bring students achievement.

The following section presents the findings under the second objective; investigating the extent to which School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students' achievement. The following Table 3 shows the responses of this objective by teachers obtained through questionnaires.

Table 3 The Influence of Partnerships on Students 'Achievement

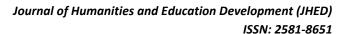| Variable	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Student 'achievement	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	20.0	16	80.0
Academic achievement	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5.0	19	95.0
Regular attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5.0	19	95.0
Discipline	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	25.0	15	75.0
Morality	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	20.0	16	80.0

Source: Field Data (2019).

Key: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Somewhat Disagree 3=Neutral   4=Somewhat Agree 5=Strongly Agree

F=Frequency   %=Percentage

In Table 3 the majority of teachers (80%) strongly agree that School-Family-Community Partnerships influence overall students' achievements. The study results confirm the theory

under the study overlapping spheres of influence by Epstein (1986): school, community and family overlaps more (drawn together) they affect children's achievement in various

aspects such as academic performance, attendance, discipline and morality. It is through their time dedicated to helping students, practices by school, family and teachers attitudes and community and teachers philosophy over education matters. All these help students to perform well and proceed with further studies. This is due to the effective support they get from the major three spheres of school, at home and within the community in their learning activities. In addition to that as these major spheres interact, plans and implement various educational goal oriented programs direct effects goes to students who are located at the intersection point of spheres at the centre.

Also the majority of them (95%) again strongly agree that academic achievement is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships. This implies that academic achievement is the outcome of the school, family and community to work together in creating an environment which is conducive for students learning. Similar results were revealed by Muthoni (2015) that there was an interrelationship between community involvement and student achievement. The similar results on the positive influence of school-family-community partnership were obtained by Mngarah (2015).

Another finding shows that, most of the teachers' rate (95%) of the variable regular attendance of students as an influence of School-Family-Community Partnerships. This implies that the problem of absenteeism experienced in public schools is the result of poor existing partnerships between school, family and community. Because the findings revealed the greater extent to which these partnerships influence regular attendance of students.

And (80%) and (75%) strongly agree that discipline and morality of students is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships. These results imply that it is true that School-Family-Community Partnerships influence student achievement in a great way in sense of behaviour. If practiced well, positive impact will appear on students' discipline and morality achievement. As every student act of indiscipline or immoral is reported and solved by school, family and community, students are more likely to change their behaviour.

In support of whether School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students 'achievement other participants were interviewed and here is what one of the participant Z said;

> School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students 'achievement one hundred percent! For example, community members may see boarding students doing a bad action such as smoking marijuana and report them to school to discipline actions. Also school boards play a great role in a student's development. School is not an island; there should be communication between school and families so as to help students. [Interview, Participant Z, School A, April 12 2019]

Participant Z also agrees with other participants asked about whether partnerships lead to students 'achievement. The participant went further and revealed how community can participate to enhance students 'behaviour. The above findings also agree with other studies in Europe, Africa and Tanzania; Mngarah (2015) revealed that there is a positive effect of partnerships on academic achievement, regular attendance and behaviour of students. The same results were observed by Erlendsdottir (2010), Long (2010) and Kaminski (2011).

In comparison with the theory which guided the study, Overlapping spheres of influence which stated that: there are three spheres of influence; family, school and community. When these spheres drawn together they have a positive effect on student learning and vice versa when these spheres drawn apart Epstein (2011). The study's findings align with the later theory that strong School-Family-Community Partnerships have great influence on students 'academic and behavioural achievement. However, it was observed that only parents are considered vital and blamed for student issues, not the whole family. And this is the reason why other family members are not participating in School-Family-Community Partnerships. It is time to understand the wider role of the family to participate in students' development.

Students 'questionnaire also had a section for revealing whether School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students' achievement. Table 4 shows the responses from students.

Table 4 The Influence of Partnerships on Students 'Achievement

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Student 'achievement	0	0	0	0	2	2.1	16	16.5	79	81.4
Academic achievement	0	0	0	0	3	3.1	17	17.5	77	79.4
Regular attendance	2	2.1	3	3.1	3	3.1	21	21.6	68	70.1
Discipline	2	2.1	1	1.0	1	1.0	30	30.9	63	64.9
Morality	1	1.0	1	1.0	0	0	20	20.8	72	75.0

Source: Field Data (2019).

Key: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Somewhat Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Somewhat Agree 5=Strongly Agree

F=Frequency %=Percentage

Table 4 shows similar responses as those of teachers. Most of the students' responses (81.4%) strongly agree that students' achievement is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships.

Also most of them (79.4%) strongly agree that academic achievement is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships. Similar results were revealed by Alton-Lee (as cited in Martin, 2013) that family-school partnerships have positive impacts on academic achievement of students.

And 70.1% of students strongly agree that regular attendance of students is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships. This revealed that schools that build strong partnerships with families and community have shown improved attendance.

Also students' results showed 64.9% and 75.0% strongly agree that discipline and morality is influenced by School-Family-Community Partnerships. Therefore, these results suggest that School-Family-Community Partnerships have great influence on students 'achievement in many angles. And every stakeholder including students they agree that partnerships make great difference in their academic and personal development. Long (2010) found that when schools partner with families they pull two main overlapping spheres of influence which is very important to student success.

In addition to that these study findings are similar to Newchurch (2017) which revealed that parental involvement positively impacts student success. The research findings agree to the study framework whereby if all these types of School-Family-Community Partnerships practiced by school effectively they affect the dependent variable which is

students 'achievement characterized by academic performance, attendance, discipline and morality.

Thus, the significance of this study's findings in Tanzania, is to create awareness of all education stakeholders including parents and other family members and community on the importance of participating and supporting education through school events and programs to enhance students 'achievement in academic, social, cultural, political and economic achievement as the respondents all agree that these partnerships influence students 'achievement.

The following section presents the findings of the objective number three; investigating the challenges facing the implementation of School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela municipal. The researcher uses the open ended questionnaire and interview to obtain information regarding this objective. The findings show the following themes as challenges;

Low Understanding of School-Family-Community Partnerships

Majority of the teachers 'responses on the challenges facing the implementation of the School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools were on the low understanding about partnerships and its importance on school development. Based on the interviews conducted with families and community members, most of the interviewee failed to explain about these partnerships in relation to school context.

> "I don't know much about the term School-Family-Community

Partnerships. All I know is that parents can participate in school meeting if there is one". [Interview, Family W, April 12 2019]

This implied that not only family and community, but also teachers do not understand the partnership concept between them and how they affect students' achievement. Their participation doesn't extend to partnerships. Their relationship is not strong enough to qualify a partnership.

Poor Family and Community Attendance in School Meetings and Regular Follow Up on Children's Progress

This is another challenge with high frequency; parents do not regularly attend meetings and making follow up on their children's progress. This is due to the busy schedule of parents/ guardians for economic reasons (the time/day for meeting interferes with parents' jobs schedule).

> "To tell the truth I am not usually attending meetings called at my children's school, because of my job schedule." [Interview, Family F, April 12 2019]

This means the involvement only considers parents and not other family members, thus when the parents or guardians are not available other family members are not participating in school meetings or making follow up on children's progress at school. In addition to that another finding revealed that some children are not living with their parents or have been abandoned by their parents, this make difficult for teachers to help children through the available relatives.

Students' findings on the other hand do not differ from those of teachers; majority of students' response shows that parents are not attending meetings regularly and do not make frequent follow up on their progress at school. Other challenges include;

Political Interference with Education Matters

And another finding with high frequency is political interference with education matters. This could mean that some political decisions affect the development of school activities. For example the new policy of fee-free secondary education in Tanzania of 2016 allows all children to study without contributing fees. But some school's activities requires additional funds from family and community, the response from parents on contributions is low. This is revealed by one of the interviewees who said:

Some school activities require additional funds such as meals for form four students who remain for remedial classes, and parents and teachers meet and agree to contribute to their children's meal. But some parents do not agree and say that education is free why such contributions. These bring difficulties for schools to do their work and succeed in enhancing students' achievement. [Interview, Teacher, School B, April 29 2019]

Poor Communication between Teachers, Students and families

Poor communication between teachers, parents and students starts from home to school. Student's face challenges of some parents do not listen or giving them time for personal study. Also at school some students have problems and they are not given chance to explain by their teachers. This led to a broken the chain of relationship between family, student and teacher.

Poverty or Low Economic Condition of Families and Community Members

Another challenge revealed by respondents both through questionnaire and interview is poverty. This could mean that many parents of students in public school their economic status is low. Thus, they cannot provide students with their needs nor school contributions.

> "I am not usually in place to attend meetings at school because by that time I am always at work. It is better for me to be at work finding the daily income than lost it". [Interview, Respondent T, April 29, 2019]

The above family member represents larger group who cannot attend school meetings or making follow up on students' progress due to their economic activities interference with school timetable. This impedes the effective implementation of school, family and community partnerships at many schools.

Negative participation of community members

This is another challenge revealed in the study, like initiating a music club near school area for students to dance music

and have parties, and community members having an affair with students.

> "We as a community we are the source for poor students' performance, because near this school there is a club where you can find students dancing and drinking which is not good behaviour". [Interview, Community Member 1, 29 April, 2019]

Another interviewee added that female students are more at risk due to the behaviour of some community members who engage themselves with young girls in an affair.

> It is important for every parent to make sure that you monitor your children's whereabouts, especially when they are going to school. Recently we have reported a case where a young girl passes over a man's house before going to school. These kinds of behaviours results to teen pregnancies. [Interview, Community Member 2, 29 April, 2019]

Negative Understanding of Fee-Free Secondary Education Policy

Some families and community members have negative understanding of free education policy. They think that since there are no school fees, they are not supposed to contribute for any school or students development.

The similar results on challenges facing the partnership between school-family and community were obtained by Bwana (2013); attendance of parents to meetings is very low and involvement by school is very low. However, in other places involvement seem to be high and response of parents is low (John, 2015; Mngarah, 2017). Thus, a number of studies including this current study revealed that family and community participation is unsatisfactory due to various reasons one is lack of time and economic hardship (Kibona, 2013; John, 2015; Kikoti, 2018). Hence, teachers and students are left alone by other stakeholders of partnership such as family and community and due to this students ' academic achievement is negatively affected (Nyembeke, 2016; NEA, 2018). The above implications concurred with Mitsue (1999) who suggest sustainable solutions such as fund raising, ensuring students regular attendance, helping students learning at home and addressing students 'problems such as inadequacy of materials and discipline.

Therefore, the above findings suggest that School-Family-Community Partnerships are faced with numerous challenges. The most challenge seems on low family participation. Therefore, the researcher suggests that all family members should participate in school and student development activities.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate on School-Family-Community Partnerships and students 'achievement in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal, Tanzania. Under the first objective the study found few and poor existing partnerships mainly communicating, decision making and learning at home. The study concludes that in order to improve students' academic and behaviour performances it is important to enhance implementation of these partnerships by effective involvement of all partners so that students 'achievement can be achieved.

With regard to the second objective to investigate whether School-Family-Community Partnerships influence students' achievement, the study findings showed great influence of these partnerships on students' achievement. The study concludes that School-Family-Community Partnerships have positive influence on students 'achievement such as academic performance, regular attendance, discipline and morality. But these achievements are possible only if schools implements effective partnerships and all partners such as family and community participate effectively at home-based to school-based initiatives.

Furthermore, with regard to the third objective of on the challenges which face the implementation of School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools, the study concludes that public secondary schools face numerous challenges, due to these challenges schools have few and poor existing types of partnerships. Since existing challenges affect academic performance, regular attendance, discipline and moral status of students. Achievement of students is less likely to be achieved by the weak partnerships at home and schools. Therefore, the study recommends that it is very important to enhance these partnerships by all stakeholders including family not limited to parents, community, school leaders and teachers, students, local government leaders and the ministry of education. In order to make sure that, different types of partnerships are

implemented so as to bring about students 'achievement not only in school but also in their life.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on the conclusions of the findings the following are the recommendations for practice:

Due to the existence of few and poor School-Family-Community Partnerships in public secondary schools in Ilemela Municipal, the study recommends the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should create public awareness on the importance of School-Family-Community Partnerships in relation to school development and student achievement. So that family, community and schools should participate fully in various types of partnerships to enhance students' academic and behaviour achievement.

Also the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should provide a course in School-Family-Community Partnerships enhancement in Teaching courses and in-service training so as to ensure teachers both in-service and newly graduates understand these partnerships which lead to effective implementation of various partnerships in schools.

Recommendations for Further Studies

This study on School-Family-Community Partnerships and its influence on students' achievement were conducted in Ilemela district in Mwanza, Tanzania. The researcher feels that the same study should be undertaken in other parts of Tanzania, so as to ensure proper coverage and data collected will be used to generalize these findings regarding School-Family-Community Partnerships and students 'achievement in Tanzania.

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DEFINITON OF TERMS

The following words defined below carried the operational meaning under this study.

Community: a group which share geography, tradition, culture, class, law and race.

Family: a group of individuals who relate either by marriage or blood background.

School: is an institution provides education or learning service to children.

Secondary Education: is a post-primary formal education offered to a person who will have successfully completed seven years of primary education and have met the requisite entry requisite.

School-Family-Community Partnerships: refers to collaboration between school, family and community including parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, and decision making and collaborating with the community.

Achievement: refers to student successful performances include academic performance, regular attendance, discipline and morality.

Public Secondary Schools: are schools that are managed, maintained and funded by the government.