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**The Impact of Whole-School Supportive Strategies and Improvement of Learning  
Readiness of Fisherfolk Children in Coastal Regions of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria**

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**By**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the relationship between whole-school strategies and improvement of learning readiness of fisherfolk children in coastal regions of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study postulated two specific objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses for its guidance. It adopted a correlational research design. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 12 migrant schools in the State. The instrument developed by the researcher, titled “whole-school supportive strategies for migrant students learning readiness questionnaire (WHOSSMLRQ) with reliability indices ranging from 0.88 and 0.91 on Cronbach’s Alpha was used for data collection. The study population was 71 migrant teachers. The Taro Yamen’s formula was employed to determine the sample of 49 respondents, randomly selected from the population. The data collected were subjected to Regression statistics, which the r-value was used in answering the research questions and f-value was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The results indicated very low relationship, but negative impact between predictors (supportive school culture) and learning readiness (criterion). It further indicated a very low relationship, but positive impact between proactive policies implementations and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in the study area. The study concluded that proper manipulation of supportive school culture and proactive policies implementations could ensure the effective learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children for effective educational gains. It was recommended among others, that ministry of education and school management should implement realistic policies that would checkmate the level of supportive school culture towards encouraging effective school attendance of migrant fisherfolk children in the study area.*

**Key Words: whole-school strategies, supportive cultures, policies implementations, learning readiness, migrant fisherfolk children**

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**Introduction**

Whole-school is the educational process that uses collaborative programme of action to improve the learners’ learning behaviours and their wellbeing. Whole-school strategy is an all-inclusive educational practice of addressing the diversity of learners’ needs towards improving their learning readiness and achievement. It is a mutual collaborative action by school community and other stakeholders in education for the enhancement of students’ learning, cultivate positive learning behaviours and condition that support their wellbeing to attain sustainable quality of life (International Bureau of Education, 2017).

Whole-school support strategy is an approach to education that recognises that successful implementation of curriculum and equipping of all facets of learning environments can positively or negatively impact the students' learning outcome. The whole-school supportive strategies is the educational approach that brings together all members of school community (directors of schools, proprietors, principals, teachers, school staff), parents and community members at school locations for a common course of education that addresses the needs of learners (Anadioha, 2008). Whole-school supportive strategies are aiming to provide support to school physical and human resource management in order to meet the learning objectives.

The concept provides the opportunity for school managers to learn and understand the dynamics of school management towards determining best approach to ensure that the needs and priorities for achieving qualitative learning outcome at school is realised. Brownlow (2014) identified instruments that can be used to implement whole-school supportive strategies for sustainable learning gains to include building capacity, supportive school culture, proactive policies and practices, key understandings and competencies, protective physical environment and school family-community partnerships. The author articulated that a coordinated procedure in the application of these components simultaneously during practice is capable of emancipating the educational system to the benefit of the society.

It is postulated that the components of whole-school as supportive methodologies for achieving educational gains could help to provide learners the understanding of who they are, how to learn and establish quality relationships with others. However, despite the numerous components of whole-school approaches as enunciated by Brownlow (2014), this study chooses to make use of supportive school cultures and proactive policies and practices as variables for this study. Supportive school culture is expressed as the pattern and quality of relationships that is established among students, teachers and other staff of the schools in their attempt to meet up with the educational objectives.

Effiong (2017) posited that school culture is the atmosphere school members organise which enable them to work together, adhere to set of beliefs, values and the cultural working relationships they established among them. This entails that a supportive school culture could provide safety, promote open communications, sense of connectedness within the school community and protect learners from risk of violent activities in schools. Boyd (2018) reported that creating a supportive environment for students entails that all students feel safe, professionally developed and support collaborations among teachers, develop inclusive strategies that can help create multiple pathways for student and teachers to gain maximally and promote mental health education among them. Notably, supportive school culture could impact migrant fisherfolk children's learning readiness for the achievement of educational goals with aid of proactive policies implementation in the school system.

Proactive policies and practice is another dimension that can help to promote whole-school supportive strategies to improve learning readiness of fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State. Practical policies on effective approaches and methodologies for teaching the core-subjects at the basic and technique education levels; use and improvisation of instructional materials, school-base assessment, effective curriculum implementation, create a conducive working condition for teachers to enhance motivation, status enhancement and retention among others are possible frameworks that can thrive migrant education (Federal Ministry of Education (FME), 2008). It is postulated that these polices and practical frameworks are capable of promoting and/or encouraging fisherfolk children as well as improving their learning readiness in order to acquire skills they need for maximum educational gains. Perhaps,

the whole-school supportive strategies are important factor that can improve the learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children for effective educational attainment in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State.

Fundamentally, a child who thrives in inclusive settings tends to recognise the fact that each child is an important part of a particular society. It is observed that when differences are celebrated and similarities discovered, children learn to value themselves, appreciate their peers, develop meaningful and significant relationships with one another (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). In this context, children friendships may foster a sense of connection and security; build self-esteem and self-confidence, helping younger ones to adapt more readily to the cultural requirement and learning (Blaise & Taylor, 2012). These friendships capabilities can provide important opportunities for children to develop sound emotions, which may prepare grounds for their readiness to learn in school (Effiong, 2017). The relationships could make children vulnerable to group learning, and likely to instigate their curiosity as well as enthusiasm about their eagerness for learning. This seems to predispose them to learn better due to the inclusive supportive cultures and proactive government policies and practice that offer them enabling environment as well as frameworks for successful learning. The experience could engender their ability and capacity to be ready to learn in school and that may determine to a great extent their level of educational attainment later in life.

Learning readiness in school conceptually tends to address all children, especially the economically disadvantaged and the vulnerable, including girls, children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and children living in coastal and/or rural areas (Umoren, 2018). According to Wanerman, Roffman and Britton (2011), it is referred to the preparation before entry into school and eagerness for learning, thereby enabling a successful transition to a school learning environment. It has been established that the success in school is determined by a range of behaviours and abilities, such as literacy, numeracy, ability to follow directions, working well with other children and engaging in learning activities (Kaga, 2008). Learning readiness may be more valuable than academics competencies, because readiness encompasses children's physical, social and emotional progress and without it learning does not occur (Vandell, Nenide & Van Winklem, 2016).

The acquisition of learning skills is achievable as a result of the quality of readiness of children's learning. Learning readiness of children involves social, attitudinal and affective characteristics that produce independence, self-motivated, creative environment that make learning worthwhile. Remarkably, a child who is intrinsically motivated, highly but mutually and culturally supported coupled with effective proactive policies implementation practice can endure to be ready for learning. Conversely, those children who do not experience mutual inclusive supports, yet feature with theoretical policy implementation and practice, may find it difficult and burdensome to be ready for learning in school. This becomes the rationale for this study to investigate the impact of whole-school supportive strategies on learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal regions of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the problem**

The incessant movement of migrant fisherfolk children around the coastal regions is a challenge that affects most of them not to pay attention to schooling and always not ready for learning. It is observed that most migrant fisherfolk children are usually struggle to achieve the same level of education success as their peers. Most of them have the enthusiasm and anxiousness for learning, but unfortunately they are not encouraged by their parents in terms of

earlier preparation towards such endeavours. That is why most of them find learning experiences disgusting and dissatisfying due to lack of encouragement by their parents, coupled with their untimely movement around the coastal areas. These obviously make them to remain victims of discrimination from access to educational, political and other socio-economic benefits of their States despite efforts to implement whole-school strategies in order to avail them the learning opportunity. The implementation strategies such as collapsible classroom, boat school, interactive radio instruction among others to educate these migrants towards meeting the goal of education for all, yet all efforts are to no avail. Yet, teachers usually go to school without meeting children to teach. They neglect class attendance deliberately while concentrating with their fishing business. However, the problems of this study is that supportive school culture and proactive policies implementation have not been fully practiced in the learning situation of migrant schools and that has positively or negatively impact fisherfolk children's readiness for learning. This has instigated the curiosity of the researcher to investigate whether whole-school supportive strategies impact the learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of whole-school supportive strategies on learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *Specifically, the study sort to:*

1. Determine the relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools.
2. Determine the relationship between proactive policies implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were postulated:

1. What is the level of relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools?
2. What is the level of relationship between proactive policies implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools?

### **Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between proactive policies implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools.

### **Research Method**

The study adopted a correlational research design. This design is suitable for the study because it helps the researcher to investigate the level of relationships between variables of this study without manipulating them. The study was conducted in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State which covers Local Government Areas such as Eastern Obolo, Eket, Esit Eket, Ibeno, Onna, Oron, Ibiono Ibom, Ikot Abasi, Itu, Mbo, Mkpato Enin, Urue Offong/Uruko, Udung Uko and Uruan respectively. The fishing settlements are located at different parts of these Local

Government Areas. The population of these sixteen local fishing settlements is 1,788,784 sq meters (National Population Commission, Abuja, 2006). The population for this study consisted of all the 71 migrant teachers (State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Akwa Ibom State for of 2018/2019 Academic Session). A sample size of 49 teachers (33 males and 16 females) was determined using Taro Yamane population reduction formulae, with 2.5 per cent of 99 percent of margin of error selected from the target population.

Taro Yamane method is as follows:  $n = N/(1+N (e)^2)$ , where; n – signifies the sample size, N – signifies the population under study, e – signifies the margin error.

The simple random sampling technique was used to select the subjects from 12 migrant schools in the three education zones of Akwa Ibom State. The research instrument called “*Whole-school Supportive Strategies for Migrant Students Learning Readiness Questionnaire (WHOSSMLRQ)*” was developed by the researcher, derived from the finding of the reviewed literature related to the study. The instrument had three sections, A, B and C. Section A obtained personal information from the respondents, Section B elicited data from the variables of whole-school supportive strategies such as supportive school culture (5 items), and proactive policy practice implementation (5 items). Section C obtained information from students’ learning readiness (5 items). The instrument was administered by the researcher to the respondents, after obtaining permission from the heads of each migrant school. A total of 49 copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents, collected on the spots and they were suitable for statistical analyses.

The face validity of the instrument was ascertained by experts in educational management and planning, and measurement and evaluation, all in Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, Uyo. They checked the accuracy of items and reliability. The instrument was subjected to internal consistency test with the Cronbach Alpha statistics that yielded reliability coefficients between 0.88 and 0.91, through a trial test on 20 migrant teachers in Uyo senatorial District that were not part of the main study. The statistical tool used for data analysis was Regression Statistics. The r-value was used to answer the Research Questions, while f-value was used to test the Null Hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. The bases for the decision of the research questions conclusion were as follows: 0.00 – 0.20 = Very Low Impact, 0.20 – 0.40 = Low Impact, 0.40 – 0.60 = Moderate Impact, 0.60 – 0.80 = High Impact and 0.80 – 1.0 = Very High Impact respectively.

**Results**

The results of data analyses of this study are presented in tables 1 to 4 below:

**Research Question 1**

- 1) What is the level of relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools?

**Table 1: Regression analysis of relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children**

Variable	n	r	r <sup>2</sup>	Decision
Supportive School Culture learning Readiness	49	-0.63	-0.011	Very Low Relationship and negative impact

Table 1 shows that the sample of 49 gave an r-value as -0.63,  $r^2$  as -0.011 and the relationship is low with negative impact. This implies that the relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant children in the study area is very low and negative impact. The research question is answered that there is a very low negative relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State.

**Research Question 2**

- 2) What is the level of relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools?

**Table 1: Regression analysis of relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children**

Variable	n	R	$r^2$	Decision
Proactive policy implementation learning Readiness	49	0.68	-0.01	Very Low Relationship and Negative Impact

Table 2 shows that, the sample of 49 gave an r-value as -0.68,  $r^2$  as -0.010, a very low relationship and positive impact. This implies that the relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant children in the study area is very low and positive impact. The research question is answered that there is a very low negative relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State.

**Null Hypotheses**

There is no significant relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools.

**Table 3: f-test of significance of relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	$p$ -value.
1	Regression	1.994	1	1.994	.273	.003 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	504.935	69	7.318		
	Total	506.930	70			

\*\*prediction is not significant at .05 level,  $df = 1$  and  $69$ , 2-tailed

Table 3 shows that the f-calculated of 0.273 which is greater than the  $p$ -value of .003, at  $p < .05$  levels, and degree of freedom of 1 and 69 at two tailed test. As in Table 3, the f-value between supportive school culture (predictor) and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children (criterion) shows significant relationship. Hypothesis 1 is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant relationship between proactive policies implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region schools.

**Table 4: f-test of significance of relationship between proactive policies implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	<i>p</i> -value.
1	Regression	2.350	1	2.350	.321	.573 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	504.580	69	7.313		
	Total	506.930	70			

\*\*prediction is not significant at .05 level, df = 1 and 69, 2-tailed

Table 4 shows that the f-calculated of 0.321 which is less than the *p*-value of .573, at *p*<.05 level, and degree of freedom of 1 and 69 at two tailed test. As in Table 4 the f-value between proactive policy implementation (predictor) and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children (criterion) shows no significant. Hypothesis 2 is upheld. This implies that there is no significant relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

**Discussion of Findings**

The finding of this study indicated a very low relationship between supportive school culture and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in coastal region of Akwa Ibom State and negative impact. The relationship was significant. The low significant relationship entails that as the supportive school culture was negatively decreasing by 1 per cent, so also the learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children increase by 99 per cent. This study is in support of the study of Boyd (2018), which reported that creating a supportive environment for students could make them feel safe and collaborations among teachers are guaranteed, while developing such inclusive strategy that can help create multiple pathways for student and teachers to gain maximally in learning important values which school provides. It is suggested that a very low relationship with negative impact entails that the present situation of school culture which the migrant fisherfolk are receiving their learning are poor and that has been the cause of reluctant attitude of the learners. They have no motivation to go to school that resulted to lack of readiness to learn.

The finding of this study indicate very low positive relationship between proactive policy implementation and learning readiness of migrant fisherfolk children in the coastal areas of Akwa Ibom State. Of course, the relationship was not significant. This has obviously indicated that policies implementations do not directly affect learners rather it impact them indirectly, hence, this shows positive impact but no relationship. This study is in congruence with the study of Manaster and Jobe (2012), revealed that when differences are celebrated and similarities discovered resulted from effective policies implementation, children learn to value themselves,

appreciate their peers, develop meaningful and significant relationships with one another, while these attributes would help to trigger their readiness to learning. FME (2008) established that practical policies on effective approaches and methodologies for teaching the core-subjects at the basic and technical education levels; use and improvisation of instructional materials, school-base assessment, effective curriculum implementation, create a conducive working condition for teachers to enhance motivation, status enhancement and retention among others are possible frameworks that can thrive migrant education.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that supportive school culture and proactive policies implementation have been identified as whole-school supportive strategies variables that can contribute to migrant fisherfolk children learning readiness. It is discovered that these components of whole-school strategies correlate with learning readiness in order to provide opportunity for these children to learn better. It was discovered that very poor educational gains of migrant fisherfolk children observed in this study impacting negatively on their lack of learning readiness was traceable to supportive school culture and proactive policies implementation. Hence, it is concluded that proper manipulation of supportive school culture and proactive policies implementation as strategies of whole-school would alleviate migrant fisherfolk children holistically with regards to their learning readiness for effective educational gains in the study area.

### **Recommendation**

The study recommended as follows:

- 1) Government of Akwa Ibom State should endeavour to monitor the implementation of policies realistically in order to create environment conducive for learning that would promote the educational essence for migrant fisherfolk children.
- 2) The school administrators, teachers and other school staff should endeavour to undertake their responsibilities regarding making learning to thrive in school in order to motivate children and encourage their readiness to learn.

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