

**INFLUENCE OF FOSTERING COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP
BETWEEN PARENTS AND EDUCATORS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION IN PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN EGOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.**

**BY
IGBELE FAITH
IED2209728**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

JANUARY, 2026

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT WRITTEN IN THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR IN EDUCATION
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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this project was carried out by IGBELE FAITH with matriculation number IED2209728 of the Institute of Education university of Benin, Benin City Edo state in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor in Education B.Ed degree in early childhood education

Mrs. U.E. Ikhielea
Project Supervisor)

Date

Prof. K . Aluko
(project coordinator)

Date

Dr. K. Imasuen
(Director, Institute of Education)

Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my parents Mr and Mrs Igbele, it wouldn't have been possible without your prayer, love and support.

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My special thanks goes to my parents, Mr & Mrs Igbele for their prayers, Patience, support and understanding all through my stay in School. And to my entire family for their support, care, and encouragement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	I
CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the study	1

Statement of the problem	4
Purpose of the study	6
Research questions	7
Significance of the study	8
Scope and delimitation of the study	9
Definition of terms	10
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Theoretical Framework	13
Concept of Early Childhood Education	17
Concept of Collaboration	18
Concept of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators	20
Meaning of Collaborative Leadership	20
The Role of Parents in Collaborative Leadership	21

The Role of Educators in Collaborative Leadership	23
Principles of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators	24
The importance of collaborative leadership between parents and educators	29
Challenges of Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education	34
Strategies for Strengthening Parent and Teacher Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education	40
Summary of related Literature Review	45
 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	
Research design	49
Population of the study	49
Sample and sampling technique	50
Research instrument	50
Validity of the instrument	51

Reliability of the instrument	51
Method of Data collection	51
Method of Data analysis	52

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Presentation of results	53
Discussion of findings	63

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary	67
Conclusion	68
Recommendations	69

REFERENCES

73

APPENDIX

76

ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Education (ECE) plays a vital role in the cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development of young children. One effective way to enhance quality learning in early childhood settings is through strong collaboration between parents and educators. This study examined the role of early childhood education in fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators, with emphasis on shared responsibility, effective communication, and mutual trust in supporting children's holistic development.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised early childhood educators and parents from selected pre-primary schools. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to assess the level of parent teacher collaboration, the roles of collaborative leadership, challenges affecting partnerships, and strategies for strengthening collaboration in early childhood education. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics.

The findings revealed that effective collaboration between parents and teachers improves children's academic performance, emotional well-being, and social adjustment. The study also identified challenges such as poor communication, limited parental involvement, time constraints, and the absence of clear collaboration policies in schools. However, strategies including regular communication, parent teacher meetings, leadership support, teacher training on family engagement, and the use of digital communication tools were found to strengthen collaborative relationships.

The study concluded that collaborative leadership between parents and educators is essential for achieving quality outcomes in early childhood education. It recommended that school administrators, teachers, and education policymakers promote inclusive practices and policies that encourage sustained parent teacher collaboration to support children's overall development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Education is one of the strongest tools for shaping individuals and societies. Among all levels of education, Early Childhood Education (ECE) stands out as the most delicate and formative stage. This is because the early years of life from birth to about eight years are the period when the brain grows fastest and children begin to build the skills, values, and attitudes that will influence their future learning and behaviour (UNICEF India, 2021; WHO/UNICEF, 2023). In these years, children are like “wet cement”; whatever is impressed upon them leaves lasting marks (WHO, 2018). Both parents and Educators have important roles to play in this stage. Parents are naturally the first Educators of the child, giving lessons in speech, values, social skills, and culture right from infancy. Educators, on the other hand, are trained professionals who provide structured learning and guide children through developmental milestones. When both sides work in harmony, children benefit from a strong and consistent support system. However, when parents and educators work in isolation, children often experience gaps or conflicting expectations that can slow

down their growth and learning. In many schools, especially within the Nigerian context, collaboration is often misunderstood. Parents sometimes see education as the sole responsibility of Educators. Their role is reduced to paying school fees, providing materials, or attending meetings when invited. In such cases, parents are treated as supporters rather than partners. On the other hand, some educators hold on to a traditional view of leadership, where they believe that they alone have the knowledge and authority to decide what is best for the child. This type of mindset creates a hierarchy rather than a partnership, leaving parents with little voice in decisions that directly affect their children (Adebayo, 2018).

This is why collaborative leadership has become an important approach in early childhood education. Collaborative leadership is not about one group controlling the other; rather, it is about parents and educators sharing responsibilities, exchanging ideas, and making decisions together in the best interest of the child. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory reminds us that a child grows within multiple circles of influence which is the (family, school, and community) and that the interaction between these circles determines how well the child thrives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the same way, Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory explains that when the "spheres" of parents, schools, and communities overlap, children achieve better results academically, socially, and emotionally (Epstein, 2011). Schools that

encourage strong parent and teacher collaboration often see children who are more confident, better behaved, and more successful academically (van Voorhis et al., 2019; Garbacz et al., 2022). Children benefit because they receive the same message of support both at home and at school. On the other hand, when collaboration is weak, children may face confusion, mixed values, and inconsistent discipline.

In Nigeria, this collaboration is even more important because of the country's rich diversity of languages, cultures, and backgrounds. Parents bring knowledge of their child's individuality, cultural values, and family traditions, while Educators bring professional expertise and structured learning methods. Together, these two influences can provide a balanced and holistic education for children (Okoroafor, 2019). Unfortunately, in many pre-primary schools, especially in places like Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, collaboration is still weak. Many parents genuinely care about their children's education but are often unsure of how to get involved beyond paying fees or attending meetings. This study will enlighten parents on the fact that they are not just "helpers" but co-leaders in their child's educational journey. By understanding their roles in collaborative leadership, parents will feel more valued and empowered. They will also gain practical knowledge on how to support learning at home, communicate effectively with Educators, and contribute ideas that shape school programs. In the long run, this increases parents' confidence in their ability to

influence their child's future. Educators sometimes feel overburdened with the responsibility of handling large groups of children, planning lessons, and managing behaviour. This study will show educators that involving parents as partners eases some of this burden. With strong collaboration, Educators can draw from parents' knowledge of their child's unique background and personality. It will also remind Educators that leadership is not about working alone but about sharing responsibility. This shift in perspective can improve trust, reduce conflict, and make teaching more effective and rewarding. Parent sometimes believe education is the sole duty of Educators, while Educators may not create enough room for parents to participate meaningfully beyond paying fees or attending meetings (Adebayo, 2018). Because of these gaps, the idea of fostering collaborative leadership is not just desirable it is necessary. When parents and educators share leadership, they build trust, solve problems more effectively, and create a united vision for children's development. Ultimately, such collaboration ensures that children grow in safe, supportive, and stimulating environments where both home and school pull in the same direction (UNICEF, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Early childhood education has been recognized globally as the foundation for lifelong learning and development. At this stage, both parents and Educators are expected to work together to support the holistic growth of the child. Yet, in many early childhood settings, the reality does not reflect this expectation. The relationship between parents and Educators often remains weak, limited, or one sided. The problem is that when collaboration is weak or one sided, children suffer the most. For instance, a teacher may introduce a new learning approach in school, but if parents are not informed or carried along, they may not reinforce it at home. likewise, if parents observe a behavioural challenge at home but cannot share it openly with Educators, the opportunity to find a joint solution is lost. This lack of alignment often results in inconsistency in values, discipline, and learning practices, which can confuse the child and slow down development (Keengwe & Onchwari, 2022).

It has been observed that in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, challenges of poor collaboration are visible in many early childhood centres. While Educators try to manage large groups of children with limited resources, parents are often not deeply engaged in the learning process beyond financial input. Factors such as busy work schedules, lack of awareness, cultural beliefs, and poor communication systems widen the gap between parents and educators (Okoroafor, 2019). In some schools lack structured platforms such as parent councils, workshops, or regular joint

meetings where both groups can share leadership responsibilities. The consequence of these gaps is far reaching. Children miss out on the benefits of having a strong and united support system. Educators may feel overwhelmed without parental support, and parents may feel sidelined in their children's education. Ultimately, this lack of collaborative leadership limits the potential of early childhood education in producing well rounded, confident, and capable learners (UNICEF, 2019). Therefore, the problem this study seeks to address is the limited practice of collaborative leadership between parents and educators in early childhood education, particularly in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. There is a need to examine how fostering this form of leadership can strengthen trust, improve communication, and create a more consistent learning environment that supports the child's holistic development.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators in early childhood education in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. However other specific objectives include:

- To assess the extent of collaboration between parents and educators in early childhood schools in Egor LGA Benin city Edo State.

- To examine the roles of parents and educators in collaborative leadership in Egor LGA Benin city Edo State.
- To identify the challenges hindering collaborative leadership in early childhood education in Egor LGA Benin city Edo State.
- To explore the benefits of fostering collaborative leadership for children, parents, and educators in Egor LGA Benin city Edo State.
- To recommend strategies to strengthen parent-educator collaborative leadership in early childhood institutions in Egor LGA Benin city Edo State.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the above stated objectives the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do parents and educators collaborate in early childhood schools in Edo state, Benin city Egor local government?
2. What roles do parents and educators play in collaborative leadership in Edo state, Benin city Egor local government?

3. What challenges hinder collaborative leadership in early childhood education in Edo state, Benin city Egor local government?
4. What benefits can be derived from fostering collaborative leadership for children, parents, and educators in Edo state, Benin city Egor local government?
5. What strategies can be adopted to strengthen parent and educator collaborative leadership in early childhood institutions in Edo state, Benin city Egor local government?

Significance of the Study

This study will be significant to parents, Educators, policy makers/administrators, researchers and the society.

This study will be significant to parents for them to know that they are important in their child's education. The findings of this research will encourage them to be more involved in their child's education and not just in paying fees but in knowing what their children are learning, helping them at home, and talking openly with Educators.

The study will be significant to early childhood educators as it will encourage them to see that they don't have to work alone. When parents are involved, teaching becomes easier and more enjoyable because everyone is working toward the same goal.

The study is also useful for policy makers/administrators. It will guide them in creating school policies and programs, seminars, that promote teamwork between home and school. This can help improve the quality of early childhood education in the community.

this study will provide researchers with new data, ideas, and findings that can be used to support or compare future research. It will also help identify new areas of study that have not yet been deeply explored, and help create a gap for other researchers to follow.

Finally, this study will be significant to the society. When children are raised through the combined effort of Educators and parents, they grow up to be confident, responsible, and caring individuals. In the end, strong collaboration between home and school builds stronger children, stronger families, and a stronger community.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study is focused on fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators in early childhood education within Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, The study covers children between the ages of 3 to 8 years, which includes those in kindergarten to lower basic three. This age group was chosen because it is the most sensitive and important stage in a child's development.

The study is delimited to early childhood education within Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. It does not include other levels of education or other locations in Nigeria.

Operational Definition of Terms

- **Child Development:** The gradual growth and change in children's physical, emotional, intellectual, and social abilities from infancy through early childhood.
- **Communication in ECE:** The exchange of ideas, feedback, and information between parents and educators through formal and informal means (such as meetings, reports, messaging apps, and daily conversations).
- **Collaborative Leadership:** A shared approach to decision making and responsibility where parents and educators work together as partners.

- **Early Childhood Education (ECE):** Formal and informal educational experiences provided to children from birth to about eight years of age.
- **Educators:** Educators and caregivers responsible for guiding children’s learning in early childhood settings.
- **Family and School Collaboration:** A joint effort between families and schools to support a child’s development, combining home based and school based learning environments.
- **Parent Engagement:** The active involvement of parents in their child’s learning and school activities.
- **Partnership:** A cooperative relationship where parents and educators work together, sharing goals, responsibilities, and resources for the benefit of children.
- **Shared Decision Making:** The process where both parents and educators are involved in making important choices about children’s learning, curriculum, and school programs, instead of one group holding all authority.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews relevant literature on fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators in early childhood education in pre-primary education in Egor Local Government Area Edo state under the following sub headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Early Childhood Education

- Concept of Collaboration
- Concept of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators
- Meaning of Collaborative Leadership
- The Role of Parents in Collaborative Leadership
- The Role of Educators in Collaborative Leadership
- Principles of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators
- The importance of collaborative leadership between parents and educators
- Challenges of Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Strategies for Strengthening Parent and Teacher Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Summary of related Literature Review

Theoretical framework

This study will hinged on two (2) theories, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) and Collaboration (Partnership) Theory (2014)

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979)

This theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how a child's development is affected by their surrounding environment. Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist, introduced this theory in his book titled *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. The theory helps educators, parents, and policymakers understand that a child's development depends not only on internal factors like intelligence and emotion but also on external influences such as family, school, community, culture, and society. The Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), emphasizes that a child's development occurs within multiple layers of environmental influence, each interacting with the other. The theory identifies five environmental systems that influence a child's growth which include: Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem, Chronosystem.

- **Microsystem** emphasizes the child's immediate environment, such as home, school, and peer relationships. Parents and Educators are key players here because they interact directly with the child. The quality of this interaction strongly influences the child's behaviour, attitude, and learning outcomes. when a teacher

encourages a child in class and the parent continues that encouragement at home, the child becomes more confident and performs better.

- **Mesosystem** emphasizes the relationship between two or more microsystems for example, the link between home and school. The communication between parents and Educators forms this mesosystem. When the connection is strong, both parties understand the child better. But when communication is weak, the child may receive mixed messages, leading to confusion or poor performance.
- **Exosystem** includes factors that indirectly affect the child, such as the parent's workplace, neighbourhood safety, or school policies. For example, if a parent's job prevents them from attending school meetings, the child may miss the benefit of family involvement in education.
- **Macrosystem** covers cultural values, beliefs, religion, and traditions that shape how parents and Educators view education. In some societies, parents rely completely on Educators to educate their children, while in others, parents actively participate in school matters. These cultural beliefs influence collaboration.
- **Chronosystem** refers to the dimension of time, how life events and changes affect a child's development. Such as, family relocation, divorce, or changes in school systems can influence how parents and Educators interact and how a child adapts.

In essence, Bronfenbrenner's theory teaches that a child's development depends not only on what happens in school but also on what happens at home and in the broader society. It highlights the need for strong, positive relationships between parents and Educators as part of a healthy mesosystem, which directly supports the child's holistic growth. Therefore, this theory perfectly fits this study because it emphasizes the interconnection between the home and school as two powerful forces that must collaborate for effective early childhood education.

Collaboration (Partnership) Theory (2014)

The Collaboration Partnership Theory was proposed by Stephanie Colbry, Marc Hurwitz, and Rodger Adair in 2014. The theory was first published in the *Journal of Leadership Education* (Volume 13, Number 4, Pages 63–75). It was developed as a grounded theory to explain how collaboration happens among individuals and groups who work together to achieve a common goal without any major power imbalance. According to Colbry and her colleagues (2014), collaboration refers to “any ongoing interpersonal interaction not characterized by a significant power imbalance, with the express purpose of achieving common goals.” In simpler terms, collaboration means working together as equals to reach a shared objective.

The theory distinguishes collaboration from other similar concepts such as cooperation and coordination. While cooperation means helping each other and coordination means arranging tasks in an orderly way, collaboration involves joint effort, shared decision-making, and interdependence among all members. Everyone plays an active role and leadership is shared rather than fixed. The Collaboration Theory (also called Partnership Theory) focuses on the importance of working together toward a shared goal. In the context of early childhood education, this theory explains that Educators and parents are co-leaders in a child's learning journey, not separate authorities. This theory explains how people can work together effectively without a strict power hierarchy. It focuses on mutual respect, open communication, shared goals, and collective decision making. Understanding this theory helps educators, administrators, and parents build effective partnerships for better learning outcomes and child development. The theory has the following principles:

- Mutual trust and respect: Parents and Educators must value each other's roles and expertise.
- Two-way communication: Both sides should speak and listen, exchanging ideas openly.

- Shared goals: They should work toward common objectives the child's academic success and emotional well-being.
- Active participation: Both parents and Educators must be involved in decision-making and problem-solving.

Concept of Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education (ECE) refers to the formal and informal learning experiences that children receive from birth to around age eight. It is often called the foundation stage of education because it shapes the child's lifelong learning, behaviour, and social skills. At this age, children are curious, playful, and quick to absorb new information. According to Harper et al. (2023), the early years form the building blocks for later learning and character development. What a child learns, sees, and experiences during these years plays a huge role in who they become as adults. In Nigeria, early childhood education includes nursery schools, daycare centers, and pre-primary classes. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2021) recognizes this stage as the most critical for cognitive, emotional, and social development. early childhood education is not just about reading and writing it is about nurturing the whole child: mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically.

Concept of Collaboration

The term collaboration means working together with others toward a shared goal. In the context of education, collaboration means parents, Educators, and caregivers joining efforts to support a child's growth and learning. It goes beyond attending Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) meetings or paying school fees. Collaboration is about sharing ideas, responsibilities, and leadership. It requires mutual trust, open communication, and respect. Norheim et al. (2024) explained, true collaboration happens when parents and Educators see themselves as partners not as "school authority" and "outsiders." Both have important knowledge about the child, parents know the child's personality and home behaviour, while Educators understand the child's academic and social progress. When both sides combine their strengths, children receive consistent guidance, making learning smoother and more meaningful.

The role of Collaboration between parents and Educators involves creating a partnership based on shared goals for the child's success. It involves open communication, participation in school activities, and mutual support. A study by Annisak et al. (2023) found that effective collaboration helps Educators understand children's backgrounds better, while parents gain insight into classroom expectations. This two way understanding promotes consistency in discipline and learning habits. Similarly, Harper et al. (2023) emphasized that when parents and Educators communicate regularly, children feel valued and supported, which increases their

motivation to learn. In practical terms, collaboration might involve things like Parents attending class meetings and sharing feedback, Educators updating parents on their child's progress, Both sides agreeing on how to handle a child's behavioural issues.

In the case of parents and educators Collaboration means that both groups share responsibility for decision making, planning, and problem solving regarding children's education. It promotes the idea that education is not a one person task, but a partnership where everyone's voice matters. For example, when Educators invite parents to discuss classroom activities, discipline strategies, or learning goals, both sides feel respected and involved. when parents communicate their concerns or provide input on their child's behaviour, Educators gain a clearer understanding of the child's background. Collaborative leadership builds trust, respect, and shared purpose, ensuring that every action taken whether at home or school supports the child's holistic growth. According to Kambouri et al. (2024), such partnerships increase children's motivation, attendance, and learning achievement, while also improving

Concept of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators

Education is not just the work of Educators or schools alone. It is a shared responsibility that involves parents, educators, and the community. Every child learns best when the people around them, especially parents and Educators, work together

with one mind and purpose. This shared effort is what is known as collaborative leadership.

Meaning of Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative leadership refers to a type of leadership where all the people involved work together as partners to achieve a common goal. It is built on trust, respect, open communication, teamwork, and shared responsibility. In simple terms, it means everyone has an important role to play, and no one feels more powerful or less important than the other.

In the school setting, collaborative leadership between parents and educators means that both groups come together to plan, make decisions, and solve problems that affect children's learning and well-being. Instead of Educators working alone or parents staying on the sidelines, both sides cooperate and contribute ideas for the benefit of the child. According to Colbry, Hurwitz, and Adair (2014), collaboration is "an ongoing interaction among people who work as equals to achieve common goals." This means that collaboration is not a one-time meeting but a continuous relationship built on equality and mutual respect. When applied to education, this theory explains that parents and Educators should work hand in hand as partners who share the same goal, which is the total development of the child.

Collaborative leadership encourages unity, shared decision making, and equal participation. It helps both parents and educators see themselves as one team, not two separate sides. Educators bring their professional skills, such as knowledge of the curriculum and teaching methods, while parents contribute their understanding of the child's background, interests, habits, and emotions. Both types of knowledge are important because they complement each other. When parents and educators collaborate, they create a sense of belonging and togetherness in a child's learning journey. The child grows up feeling supported both at home and in school. This teamwork builds confidence, improves performance, and helps the child develop socially, emotionally, and academically.

The Role of Parents in Collaborative Leadership

Parents are a child's first Educators. They are the ones who teach children how to talk, behave, and relate with others even before they enter school. They form the foundation for the child's learning and values through their daily care, love, and guidance. Because of this, parents play a very important role in collaborative leadership between home and school. In a collaborative environment, parents are not just observers but active participants in their child's education. Their involvement

helps Educators understand the child better and makes learning more effective. Parents can take several roles, such as:

- **Sharing Information about the Child:** Parents know their children more personally than anyone else. They understand the child's personality, behavior, likes, dislikes, and special needs. By sharing this information with Educators, parents help educators plan better teaching methods that suit the child's needs.
- **Participating in School Activities:** Parents should attend school programs such as meetings, open days, and classroom events. Their presence shows interest in the child's education and encourages the child to do better.
- **Supporting Learning at Home:** Learning does not end in the classroom. Parents can support what Educators do in school by helping children with homework, reading together, and encouraging curiosity. When children see that their parents care about their studies, they develop a stronger love for learning.
- **Regular Communication with Educators:** Parents should keep in touch with Educators through phone calls, messages, or school visits. This helps them stay updated on the child's progress and quickly address any challenges before they become bigger problems.

- **Working Together to Solve Problems:** Sometimes, children may face difficulties in school such as poor performance or behaviour issues. Parents should work with Educators to find solutions rather than blaming anyone. This teamwork helps the child improve faster.

The Role of Educators in Collaborative Leadership

Educators and educators also play a major role in promoting collaborative leadership. They are trained professionals who guide children's learning, help them build social skills, and ensure that each child grows in knowledge and character. However, their work becomes more effective when they work together with parents instead of working alone. In a collaborative relationship, educators are not just authority figures but partners who value the opinions and contributions of parents. Their roles include:

- **Recognizing Parents as Partners in Education:** Educators should see parents as equals, not as outsiders. Parents' contributions are valuable because they provide a different perspective about the child that the teacher might not see in school.
- **Encouraging Open Communication:** Educators should communicate regularly with parents. This can be through meetings, phone calls, newsletters, or even text

messages. Communication should be two-way, meaning that Educators give updates on the child's progress and parents share their observations at home.

- **Respecting Parents' Opinions:** Sometimes, parents have ideas about what works best for their children. Educators should listen and respect those ideas. By doing so, they create a learning environment where everyone feels valued.
- **Inviting Parents to Participate in School Projects:** Educators can involve parents in classroom activities, cultural events, or school improvement projects. This helps parents feel part of the school community.
- **Working Together to Solve Problems:** When a child is struggling academically or behaviourally, Educators should not handle it alone. They should involve parents in finding solutions. Joint problem-solving shows unity and ensures that the child receives consistent guidance both at home and in school.

Principles of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators

The main principles of collaborative leadership between parents and educators include trust, respect, communication, shared responsibility, equality, teamwork, openness, inclusiveness, mutual understanding, and commitment to the child's success. Each of these principles plays a special role in making collaboration successful. The principles include:

Principle of Trust

Trust is the first and most important principle of collaborative leadership. It means believing in one another's good intentions and abilities. Parents must trust that Educators have the skills and knowledge to guide their children well. In the same way, Educators must trust that parents care deeply about their children and want the best for them. Without trust, collaboration cannot happen because people will always doubt each other's actions and decisions. Trust grows over time through honesty, consistency, and transparency. When parents and educators trust one another, they feel safe to share ideas, express concerns, and work together without fear of judgment or blame.

Principle of Respect

Respect means recognizing the value and importance of each person's role. Parents and educators may come from different backgrounds and experiences, but both have something meaningful to contribute. Parents know their child's personality, home environment, and emotional needs, while Educators understand learning methods, child development, and classroom behaviour. For parents and educators to work together, both sides must listen to each other without looking down on the other's opinion. Respect encourages positive communication, reduces conflict, and

helps both parties feel appreciated. When parents and educators respect each other, they set a good

example for children on how to relate with others peacefully.

Principle of Effective Communication

Communication is the bridge that connects parents and educators. It involves sharing information, ideas, and feedback openly and clearly. Both sides should make communication regular, honest, and two-way. This means Educators should not only talk but also listen, and parents should not only listen but also talk. Good communication helps in understanding a child's progress, behaviour, and challenges. It can happen through meetings, phone calls, notes, messages, or school visits. When there is open communication, misunderstandings are reduced, and decisions about the child become more accurate and helpful.

Principle of Shared Responsibility

Collaborative leadership is built on the idea that both parents and educators share equal responsibility for the child's success. This means that Educators are not the only ones responsible for teaching, and parents are not the only ones responsible for discipline. Each person has a part to play. For example, Educators create a good learning environment in school, while parents reinforce learning at home. Educators

correct behaviour in the classroom, and parents continue the same guidance at home. When everyone does their part, the child receives consistent support and grows better both academically and emotionally.

Principle of Equality

Equality in collaboration means that everyone's voice matters. No one should feel more important or more powerful than the other. Parents and educators are partners, not competitors. Sometimes, Educators may feel that because they are professionals, their opinions should always be final. At other times, parents may feel that because they know their child best, their view is more correct. True collaborative leadership removes these barriers and promotes equality. Both sides should work together as a team, respecting each other's expertise and experiences.

Principle of Teamwork

Teamwork is what makes collaboration strong. It means working hand in hand, supporting one another, and combining efforts to achieve the same goal. In teamwork, every member understands their role and cooperates with others for the good of the child. For example, if a child is struggling to read, the teacher can teach reading skills at school while the parent practices with the child at home. When teamwork exists, progress becomes faster, smoother, and more enjoyable for everyone involved.

Principle of Openness and Transparency

Openness means being willing to share information, thoughts, and feelings honestly. Transparency means being clear about decisions, plans, and expectations. Parents and educators must be open to each other about the child's progress, challenges, and needs. For instance, if a teacher notices a learning difficulty in a child, they should tell the parents immediately. Likewise, if a parent notices that the child is having problems at home that may affect learning, they should inform the teacher. This honesty builds trust and helps both sides work together to find solutions quickly.

Principle of Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness means involving everyone who plays a role in the child's development. In collaborative leadership, all voices should be heard, including those of single parents, guardians, caregivers, or community members who contribute to the child's education. Schools should create opportunities where every parent, regardless of background or status, feels welcome to participate. Inclusiveness promotes unity and ensures that every child receives equal attention and support.

Principle of Mutual Understanding

Mutual understanding means recognizing and accepting each other's differences. Parents and educators may have different opinions or approaches, but

instead of arguing or judging, they should try to understand one another. a teacher may have professional strategies for managing behaviour, while a parent may prefer traditional or home-based methods. Both sides should listen, learn, and compromise for the good of the child. Mutual understanding builds peace and strengthens the partnership.

Principle of Commitment to the Child's Success

Every collaboration must be driven by one goal the success and well being of the child. Both parents and educators must remain committed to giving the child the best support possible, no matter the challenges. Commitment means being consistent, patient, and dedicated. Even when there are disagreements or busy schedules, both sides should remember that the child's growth is the main purpose of their partnership. This shared commitment keeps the collaboration strong and focused.

The importance of collaborative leadership between parents and educators

Collaborative leadership is important to children, parents, educators. The importance of collaborative leadership includes:

Improved Learning Outcomes and Academic Performance

When parents and Educators share leadership and communicate regularly, children perform better in school. This happens because both sides understand the child's strengths, weaknesses, and learning patterns. When a teacher notices that a child struggles with reading, they can discuss this with the parent, who may then provide extra reading support at home. The child, in turn, feels supported both at home and school, making learning easier and more enjoyable. Research by Harper et al. (2023) found that children whose parents actively collaborate with Educators score higher in literacy and numeracy and show better problem-solving abilities. When home and school "speak the same language," the child learns faster and more effectively.

Emotional and Social Development of the Child

A child's emotional growth depends on feeling loved, understood, and supported. When parents and Educators work as a team, the child senses unity and security. For instance, if a child faces bullying at school, the teacher and parent can work together to handle the situation calmly and guide the child emotionally. This helps the child develop resilience, confidence, and a sense of belonging. According to Rahmadhini (2024), collaborative leadership allows children to see

consistency between home and school rules, which builds trust and emotional stability. It teaches children that adults in their lives are united and care about their well-being.

Stronger Relationship Between Parents and Educators

Collaborative leadership promotes mutual respect and understanding between parents and educators. When both parties communicate openly and share ideas, a positive relationship develops. This partnership reduces tension, eliminates blame, and replaces it with teamwork. Parents begin to see Educators not just as professionals but as partners in raising their children. Similarly, Educators gain a better understanding of children's backgrounds and family values. As Kambouri et al. (2024) noted, trust and mutual respect between Educators and parents are key ingredients in improving school effectiveness and student success. When both sides value each other's input, the child benefits from a consistent and supportive learning experience.

Holistic Development of the Child

Collaborative leadership ensures that children are supported in all areas of their development intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and physical. Educators may focus on academic learning, while parents reinforce moral lessons, discipline,

and cultural values at home. When these two supports work together, the child grows in balance academically strong, emotionally stable, and socially responsible. This balanced growth is vital in early childhood education, where the goal is not just to make children “book smart” but to develop well rounded individuals capable of adapting to life’s challenges.

Increased Teacher Effectiveness and Job Satisfaction

Collaboration also benefits Educators directly. When Educators have the support and understanding of parents, they feel more confident and motivated. They gain insight into children’s home environments, which helps them adapt their teaching methods. For example, a teacher who learns from a parent that a child prefers visual learning can use more pictures or objects in class. This not only helps the child learn better but also makes the teacher’s work more rewarding. Studies by Adeyemi (2021) show that schools with high levels of parent and teacher collaboration experience lower teacher burnout and higher teacher satisfaction. Educators feel valued, respected, and supported in their roles.

Greater Parental Involvement and Empowerment:

Collaborative leadership encourages parents to take active roles in their children’s education rather than leaving everything to the school. Parents who

participate in school meetings, volunteer in class activities, or help with homework feel empowered and more connected to their child's learning journey. When parents understand school goals and teaching methods, they can reinforce them at home, creating consistency. This sense of involvement not only benefits the child but also boosts parents' confidence and pride in their children's achievements. UNESCO (2022) observed, strong family engagement is one of the most powerful predictors of a child's long-term academic success.

Creation of a Positive School Culture and Community

Collaborative leadership goes beyond the child and the family it strengthens the school as a whole. When parents, Educators, and administrators work together, the school becomes a community of shared values, trust, and support. This kind of positive school culture promotes teamwork among staff, improves communication, and builds mutual accountability. It also encourages schools to be more open and inclusive of parents' suggestions and cultural backgrounds. Such collaboration can lead to community development because parents and schools begin to work together to solve local problems, improve facilities, and promote social values. According to OECD (2023), communities that invest in cooperative school and

home partnerships experience improved educational quality and stronger social unity.

Challenges of Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education

Collaborative Leadership between parents, Educators, or educators is essential for a child's growth, although several challenges. These challenges often come from differences in background, lack of understanding, poor communication, or limited resources. When these problems are not addressed, they weaken the partnership between home and school and can negatively affect children's learning and emotional development. As Norheim et al. (2024) noted, successful collaboration requires mutual trust, respect, and consistent communication. Unfortunately, in many early childhood settings, these qualities are often missing due to personal, social, and institutional barriers. These include:

Poor Communication Between Parents and Educators

Communication is the foundation of collaboration, but in many cases, it is weak or ineffective. Some Educators may not take time to talk with parents, while some parents may not feel comfortable approaching Educators. Sometimes, both sides only communicate when there is a problem such as a child misbehaving

instead of maintaining regular, positive contact. Other times, differences in language, attitude, or educational background can make communication difficult. For instance, a parent with limited educational background might feel shy talking to a teacher, or a teacher may use professional terms that a parent cannot easily understand. When this happens, misunderstandings may occur. Kambouri et al. (2024) emphasized that consistent, respectful, and simple communication is key to building strong relationships. Without it, collaboration cannot grow.

Lack of Parental Involvement

Many parents do not participate actively in their child's education, not because they do not care, but because of time constraints, work pressures, or lack of awareness. Some parents believe education is the school's sole responsibility, while others may not understand how to support learning at home. In low income areas, parents may face financial hardship, long working hours, or transportation difficulties that prevent them from attending meetings or school activities. Adeyemi (2021) found in his study on parental involvement in Nigeria, over 45% of parents in early childhood centres attended school meetings less than twice per term due to job and family responsibilities. When parents are not involved,

Educators lose valuable input about the child's home life, and children receive mixed messages from home and school.

Differences in Beliefs, Values, and Expectations

Parents and Educators may come from different cultural, social, or religious backgrounds, which shape their ideas about how children should be raised or educated. For instance, a parent might believe that strict discipline is the best way to raise a child, while a teacher may follow a child-centered approach that encourages freedom and exploration. These differences can lead to conflict or mistrust. Some parents may see Educators as “too soft,” while Educators may view parents as “too harsh.” When both sides do not share common goals or expectations, collaboration becomes difficult. According to Harper et al. (2023), mutual respect and cultural understanding are crucial for effective partnerships in early childhood education.

Lack of Trust and Mutual Respect

Trust is the heart of collaboration. When parents and Educators do not trust or respect each other, working together becomes almost impossible. Some parents may doubt the teacher's competence or feel their opinions are not valued. On the other hand, some Educators may see parents as "uneducated" or "uninvolved." These negative perceptions create emotional distance and discourage open dialogue. A teacher who does not listen to a parent's concern sends a message that the parent's voice doesn't matter and a parent who constantly criticizes a teacher's methods damages morale and cooperation. Norheim et al. (2024) noted that when trust is missing, both sides begin to protect their image instead of focusing on the child's well-being.

Limited Resources and Overcrowded Classrooms

In many early childhood centers, especially in developing areas, schools face a shortage of qualified Educators, learning materials, and infrastructure. Educators who are overworked or underpaid may not have enough time or energy to engage parents. Large class sizes also make individual communication difficult. For example, one teacher managing 40 children may find it hard to hold meaningful conversations with every parent. Also, schools with limited funds cannot organize regular parent workshops, home visits, or joint learning events all of which are

essential for effective collaboration. According to OECD (2023), inadequate funding and lack of teacher support systems are major barriers to building sustainable home and school partnerships.

Lack of Training for Educators on Parent Engagement

Many Educators in early childhood education are not trained on how to build strong relationships with parents. Their training often focuses on classroom management and child development but not on community relations or family engagement. As a result, some Educators may unintentionally create distance by using a professional tone that parents find intimidating or unwelcoming. Rahmadhini (2024) argued that teacher education programs should include courses on family and school collaboration, communication skills, and emotional intelligence to prepare educators for real world partnership challenges.

Economic Hardship and Social Inequality

Poverty can make collaboration difficult. Families struggling to meet basic needs may find it hard to prioritize school involvement. For example, a parent working two jobs may not attend meetings, not because they don't care, but because they are trying to put food on the table. Educators sometimes misunderstand this absence as "laziness" or "disinterest." In reality, social

inequality limits how much some parents can contribute. Adeyemi (2021) and Harper et al. (2023) both agree that schools must adopt flexible strategies such as home visits or weekend meetings to accommodate parents with economic challenges.

Technology Barriers and Digital Divide

In today's digital world, communication between Educators and parents often happens through online platforms, such as WhatsApp, school apps, or emails. However, not all parents have access to smartphones, data, or the internet especially in rural areas. This "digital divide" creates gaps in communication. Some parents may miss important updates or announcements, while others may find it difficult to engage with online learning tools for their children. OECD (2023) emphasized that equitable access to technology is essential for inclusive parent and teacher communication in the modern era.

Institutional and Policy Barriers

Some schools lack clear policies or administrative support for parent and teacher collaboration. Meetings may be irregular, or leadership may not encourage teamwork. In some cases, administrators focus mainly on academic performance and neglect emotional and social collaboration aspects. Without a supportive

system including time, funding, guidance, Educators and parents are left to manage on their own, which weakens the structure of partnership. Kambouri et al. (2024) suggest that school policies should make collaboration part of their culture, not just an occasional activity.

Strategies for Strengthening Parent and Teacher Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Education

Effective Collaborative Leadership between parents and Educators does not happen automatically it must be intentionally built, nurtured, and maintained through continuous effort, trust, and open communication. Strengthening this partnership is one of the most important steps in improving children's early learning experiences and emotional development. Kambouri, Petrov, and Ellis (2024) noted, a strong home and school partnership promotes children's confidence, social adjustment, and academic performance. Both parents and Educators play unique but complementary roles in this process. Therefore, collaboration should be viewed not as a onetime event, but as an ongoing

relationship that evolves as the child grows. Below are some key strategies for strengthening parent and teacher collaboration:

Build Open and Honest Communication

Communication is the foundation of any successful partnership. For collaboration to work, Educators and parents must communicate regularly, clearly, and respectfully. Educators should use simple, friendly language when talking to parents, avoiding technical or academic terms that may confuse them. Similarly, parents should feel free to express their opinions, concerns, or suggestions without fear of being judged. Communication can take different forms such as phone calls, text messages, WhatsApp groups, newsletters, or parent and teacher meetings. Schools should make sure information is delivered in ways parents can easily understand and access. According to Norheim et al. (2024), regular two-way communication helps prevent misunderstandings, builds trust, and keeps parents updated on their child's progress.

Encourage Active Parental Involvement

Parents should not be seen as visitors but as partners in their child's learning. Educators can encourage parents to participate in classroom activities, storytelling sessions, school events, and educational workshops. When parents engage in their

children's school life, they understand what is being taught and can reinforce learning at home. For instance, if a teacher introduces counting or storytelling in class, parents can continue similar activities during family time. Adeyemi (2021) observed that when parents are more involved, children show greater interest, discipline, and academic achievement. Even simple acts like checking a child's homework, attending meetings, or asking about their day can make a big difference.

Organize Regular Parent and Teacher Meetings and Workshops

Schools should organize interactive meetings and workshops where parents and Educators share ideas and learn from each other. These sessions should not only discuss a child's academic results but also focus on their emotional, social, and physical development. Workshops can teach parents practical skills like helping children read, managing behaviour positively, or creating a learning-friendly home environment. When Educators and parents exchange knowledge, they build a common understanding of the child's needs. Rahmadhini (2024)

emphasizes that such collaborative sessions help both sides develop empathy, respect, and shared responsibility.

Promote Mutual Respect and Trust

For collaboration to succeed, both parents and Educators must respect each other's roles. Educators should appreciate that parents know their children best, while parents should recognize Educators' professional training and experience. Trust grows when both sides listen to one another, value each other's input, and avoid criticism or blame. If a child misbehaves, the teacher should discuss it calmly with the parent and seek solutions together, rather than accuse. Similarly, parents should trust that Educators have their child's best interests at heart. Norheim et al. (2024) noted, mutual respect and emotional trust form the heart of sustainable collaboration.

Develop Home and School Learning Connections

Learning should not end at school. Educators can share simple learning activities that parents can do with their children at home, such as storytelling, drawing, number games, or short reading exercises. This strengthens the bond between home and school and ensures continuity in learning. Schools can also create "learning take home kits" or weekend assignments that encourage parent

and child interaction. Harper et al. (2023) found that children perform better when learning is consistently supported both at home and in school.

Use Technology to Enhance Communication

In today's digital world, technology can help bridge the communication gap between Educators and parents. Educators can use social media groups, mobile apps, or school websites to share updates, reminders, and photos of classroom activities. For parents with limited time or distance challenges, virtual meetings via WhatsApp, Zoom, or Google Meet can make collaboration easier. However, Educators should also be sensitive to parents who lack smartphones or internet access and provide alternative communication channels. OECD (2023) recommends integrating digital communication with traditional methods to promote inclusion and consistency.

Provision of Teacher Training program on Family Engagement

Many Educators are well trained in teaching children but not necessarily in working with parents. Schools and education authorities should provide professional development programs that teach communication skills, conflict resolution, and family engagement strategies. Such training helps Educators approach parents more confidently, handle sensitive issues with empathy, and

create welcoming environments for families. Rahmadhini (2024) noted that Educators who receive training in partnership-building are more effective in involving parents and resolving challenges cooperatively.

Create a Welcoming and Inclusive School Environment

Parents are more likely to get involved when they feel valued and welcome at school. Educators and administrators should greet parents warmly, listen to their concerns, and make them feel like part of the school community. Schools should also ensure their environment reflects inclusivity using posters, pictures, and materials that represent children's cultures and backgrounds. When parents see their culture and language respected, they feel more confident participating. As Kambouri et al. (2024) observed, inclusion builds belonging and belonging strengthens partnership.

Summary of related Literature Review

This chapter reviewed important ideas, studies, and theories that explain why collaboration between parents and Educators is essential in early childhood education. The review showed that early childhood education (ECE) plays a vital role in shaping a child's foundation for learning, behaviour, and social growth. It is during this early stage that children develop key life skills, values, and attitudes that influence their

future success. The chapter explained that collaborative leadership in early childhood education means teamwork, shared decision making, and mutual respect between parents and Educators. It promotes an atmosphere where everyone works together with one goal to support the total development of the child. Through collaboration, parents and Educators combine their knowledge, experience, and efforts to create a strong and supportive learning environment.

However, the review also identified several challenges that often affect effective collaboration. These include poor communication, lack of parental participation, cultural and social differences, time constraints, and inadequate understanding of each other's roles. Such problems can weaken trust and limit the positive impact of home and school partnerships on children's development. To overcome these barriers, several strategies were highlighted such as building strong communication channels, organizing regular parent and teacher meetings, offering training on family engagement, encouraging parental involvement in school activities, and using technology for better communication. When these strategies are practiced effectively, they strengthen cooperation and build lasting partnerships between parents and Educators.

The review also discussed key theoretical frameworks including Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory, and Epstein's Model of Overlapping Spheres of Influence. These theories explain that children grow and learn better when both home and school environments work together. They emphasize that learning is a social process, influenced by interactions, support, and consistent guidance from both parents and Educators. In simple terms, the reviewed works show that children achieve more when parents and Educators share ideas, trust each other, and work hand in hand. Collaboration not only supports a child's academic success but also promotes emotional security, confidence, and positive social behaviour. Therefore, the overall implication of this review is that collaboration is not just a support activity but a necessary foundation for quality early childhood education. Schools should create structures that allow parents to actively participate, and Educators should see parents as true partners in the educational process. When this partnership is strong, children benefit the most, they grow, learn, and thrive in a healthy and supportive environment.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the method and procedure of the study under the following sub-headings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and sampling techniques
- Research instrument
- Validity of instrument
- Reliability of the instrument
- Method Of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The research design used in this research is the descriptive survey research design. The research will enable the researcher to study a representative sample of the target population.

Also, it has been found to be suitable for analysing a phenomenon, situation, problem, and attitude or issues considering a cross-section of the population at one point in time. In this study, the researcher aimed to find out how parents and educators collaborate in early childhood education and what factors affect their partnership.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consisted of all early childhood educators (Educators and head Educators) and parents of children in nursery and pre-primary schools within Egor Local Government Area. This includes Educators working in both public and private early childhood education centres and parents whose children are enrolled in these schools.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample of 60 respondents was selected from the total population in this study. This sample included 30 Educators and 30 parents from 6 selected schools in Egor local government area Edo state.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a structured questionnaire tagged, “fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators in ECE in pre-primary Education in Egor local government Edo state”. Together with the research question raised. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A aimed at obtaining demographic data from the respondents while the section B and C contained questions on fostering collaborative leadership between parents and educators in ECE in pre-primary Education in Egor local government Edo state. Section B and C comprises of 20 items geared towards gathering data on parents and educators. the respondents were to provide necessary response by ticking one out of the four options structured in a four point scale of:

Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points.

Agree (A), 3 points.

Disagree (D), 2 points.

Strongly Disagree (SD), 1 points.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was determined by the researcher's supervisor and two other lecturers in the institute of education, University of Benin, Benin City. Their concept was incorporated into the final draft of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

To check on the internal consistency, the researcher made use of the test re-test method and made a comparison between answers obtained in the test re-test of questionnaires. Twenty copies of the instrument were administered to schools outside the one used in the study. On the occasions within an interval of two weeks, the Cronbach's Alpha correlated was calculated which yielded a value of 0.812.

Method Of Data Collection

The researcher personally handed out the questionnaires to Educators during school visits. Some Educators and parents completed the questionnaire immediately, while others returned them within few days.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for the study was analysed using frequency distribution, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter discussed the analysis of data, presentation of results and discussion of the findings.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One

To what extent do parents and educators collaborate in early childhood schools in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Extent of Parent–Educator Collaboration in Early Childhood Schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Parents and educators in early childhood schools work together to support children’s learning.	3.57	0.75	Agree
Parents are actively involved in school activities and programmes.	3.33	0.95	Agree
Educators communicate regularly with parents about children’s academic and behavioural progress.	3.17	1.06	Agree
The school provides enough opportunities for interaction between parents and educators such as open days.	3.30	0.93	Agree
Parents participate in school meetings and discussions concerning their children.	3.08	1.14	Agree
Educators guide parents on how to help their children academically and socially.	3.58	0.72	Agree
Parents support children’s learning at home as part of the collaboration process.	3.68	0.62	Agree
Educators take an active role in creating a supportive environment for parent–school collaboration.	3.53	0.72	Agree

Table 1 addresses the extent to which parents and educators collaborate in early childhood schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The responses indicate that parents and Educators are perceived to work together in supporting

children's learning, and active parental involvement in school activities and programmes further reflects a shared commitment to children's educational experiences. Regular communication between Educators and parents regarding pupils' academic and behavioural progress also appears to be sustained. In addition, schools are reported to provide opportunities, such as meetings and open days, that enable interaction between parents and educators, thereby strengthening school-home relationships. Parental participation in meetings and discussions concerning their children reinforces this collaborative culture.

Furthermore, educators are perceived to play a guiding role by supporting parents on how to assist children academically and socially, while parents, in turn, extend this collaboration into the home by supporting learning activities. Educators' active involvement in creating a supportive environment for parent-school collaboration underscores institutional efforts to maintain productive partnerships. Overall, the findings suggest that parent-educator collaboration in early childhood schools within the study area is evident and moderately well established.

Research Question Two

What roles do parents and educators play in collaborative leadership in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Roles of Parents and Educators in Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Parents are actively involved in school activities and programmes.	3.52	0.75	Agree
Educators communicate regularly with parents about children's academic and behavioural progress.	3.38	1.01	Agree
Parents participate in school meetings and discussions concerning their children.	2.85	1.01	Agree
Educators guide parents on how to help their children academically and socially.	2.67	1.06	Agree
Parents support children's learning at home as part of the collaboration process.	2.58	1.12	Agree
Educators take an active role in creating a supportive environment for parent-school collaboration.	2.55	1.14	Agree

Table 2 examines the roles played by parents and educators in collaborative leadership within early childhood schools. The findings indicate that both parents and Educators contribute meaningfully to shared leadership practices. Parents are actively involved in school activities and programmes, reflecting their participation beyond passive engagement. Educators' regular communication with parents further demonstrates educators' leadership role in sustaining collaboration and keeping parents informed about children's progress.

Participation of parents in meetings and decision-related discussions concerning their children highlights their involvement in shared responsibility for educational outcomes. Educators are also seen to guide parents on how to support children academically and socially, which reflects a mentorship-oriented leadership role. Parents' support for learning at home complements educators' efforts within the school environment, indicating role interdependence.

Additionally, Educators are perceived to take deliberate steps in fostering a supportive climate for collaboration, reinforcing their role as facilitators of collaborative leadership.

Research Question Three

What challenges hinder collaborative leadership in early childhood education in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Challenges Hindering Parent–Educator Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Poor communication between parents and Educators reduces effective collaboration.	3.52	0.75	Agree
Parents' busy schedules make it difficult for them to collaborate with educators.	3.38	1.01	Agree
Educators' heavy workload reduces their ability to effectively collaborate with parents.	2.85	1.01	Agree
Inadequate resources in the school affect effective parent and educator partnership.	2.77	1.06	Agree

Table 3 presents the challenges that hinder effective collaborative leadership between parents and educators. The findings reveal that communication difficulties between parents and Educators constitute a major barrier, as ineffective communication limits coordination and shared understanding. Parents' busy schedules are also identified as a

challenge, suggesting that time constraints reduce opportunities for active engagement with schools.

Educators' heavy workload further affects their capacity to collaborate effectively with parents, indicating that institutional demands may limit sustained partnership efforts. In addition, inadequate school resources are perceived to constrain effective parent–educator partnerships, as limited facilities and materials can restrict collaborative initiatives.

Research Question Four

What benefits can be derived from fostering collaborative leadership for children, parents, and educators in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Benefits of Parent–Educator Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Collaborative leadership improves children’s learning and development.	2.55	1.20	Agree
Parents better understand their children’s needs when collaboration is strong.	2.81	1.22	Agree
Collaborative leadership strengthens trust among parents, educators, and children.	2.75	1.04	Agree
Collaboration creates a positive and supportive learning environment.	2.66	1.14	Agree

Table 4 highlights the perceived benefits of fostering collaborative leadership among parents and educators. The findings indicate that collaborative leadership contributes positively to children’s learning and overall development, suggesting that shared efforts between home and school enhance educational outcomes. Strong collaboration

also enables parents to gain better understanding of their children's needs, which supports more responsive parenting practices.

In addition, collaborative leadership is perceived to strengthen trust among parents, educators, and children, thereby improving relationships within the school community.

The creation of a positive and supportive learning environment further reflects the value of collaboration in promoting emotional security and effective teaching and learning.

Research Question Five

What strategies can be adopted to strengthen parent and educator collaborative leadership in early childhood institutions in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on Strategies for Strengthening Parent–Educator Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Schools in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Regular parent and teacher meetings should be organised to improve collaboration.	3.67	0.74	Agree
Parents should be trained on how to support children’s learning at home.	3.38	0.93	Agree
Multiple communication channels should be used to share important information with parents.	3.16	1.01	Agree
Clear policies should be developed to guide collaborative practices in early childhood schools.			

Table 5 focuses on strategies that can be adopted to strengthen collaborative leadership between parents and educators. The responses indicate strong support for organising regular meetings between parents and Educators as a means of enhancing

collaboration and shared understanding. Training parents on how to support children's learning at home is also identified as a key strategy, suggesting the need to build parental capacity for effective involvement.

The use of multiple communication channels is viewed as important for ensuring timely and effective information sharing between schools and families. Furthermore, the development of clear policies to guide collaborative practices is recognised as a necessary step toward institutionalising collaboration and providing structured direction for parent–educator partnerships.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that collaborative leadership between parents and educators in early childhood schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State is moderately established and generally perceived as beneficial to children's learning and development. The results indicate that parents and educators work together to support children's academic, social, and behavioural growth, with evidence of regular communication and shared responsibilities. This suggests that early childhood institutions within the study area recognise the importance of partnership between the home and the school in promoting effective learning outcomes.

The study further shows that parents are actively involved in school activities and programmes, attend meetings concerning their children, and support learning at home, while educators play a guiding and facilitative role by communicating regularly with parents and providing direction on how to assist children academically and socially. Educators' efforts in creating a supportive environment for collaboration highlight their leadership position in sustaining parent-school partnerships. However, although collaboration exists, the findings suggest that it is more educator-driven than parent-led, indicating that parents' participation in collaborative leadership is present but not fully maximised.

In terms of collaborative leadership roles, the findings demonstrate that both parents and educators contribute to shared leadership practices, though at varying levels. Educators appear to assume a more dominant leadership role by initiating communication, coordinating collaborative activities, and mentoring parents. Parents, on the other hand, contribute mainly through participation in school programmes and supporting learning at home. This imbalance suggests that while parents are involved, they may not be sufficiently empowered to participate actively in decision-making processes within early childhood institutions.

Despite the positive level of collaboration observed, the study identifies several challenges that hinder effective collaborative leadership. Poor communication between parents and educators emerged as a major barrier, limiting mutual understanding and effective coordination. Parents' busy schedules also pose a significant challenge, as time constraints reduce their availability for active participation in school-related activities. Similarly, educators' heavy workload affects their ability to maintain consistent collaboration with parents. Inadequate school resources further constrain collaborative efforts, as limited facilities and materials restrict opportunities for meetings, training, and joint programmes. These challenges suggest that while there is willingness to collaborate, structural and contextual factors limit the full implementation of collaborative leadership practices.

The findings also highlight the benefits derived from fostering collaborative leadership in early childhood education. Strong collaboration between parents and educators was found to improve children's learning and overall development, as consistent support from both home and school enhances educational experiences. Collaborative leadership also enables parents to better understand their children's needs, thereby improving their ability to provide appropriate guidance and support. Additionally, collaboration strengthens trust among parents, educators, and children,

contributing to a positive and supportive learning environment that promotes emotional security and effective teaching and learning.

The study also identifies several strategies that can strengthen parent–educator collaborative leadership. Regular parent–teacher meetings were strongly supported as a means of improving communication and shared understanding. Training parents on how to support children’s learning at home was also identified as a crucial strategy, as it builds parental capacity and confidence. The use of multiple communication channels was perceived as essential for ensuring timely and effective information sharing, while the development of clear policies to guide collaborative practices was seen as necessary for institutionalising collaboration and providing structured direction for parent–educator partnerships.

Overall, the discussion of findings suggests that collaborative leadership in early childhood education within Egor Local Government Area is evident and beneficial but still faces challenges that limit its effectiveness. Strengthening communication, empowering parents, reducing institutional constraints, and providing clear policy frameworks are essential steps toward enhancing collaborative leadership and maximising its impact on children’s learning and development.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study investigated how collaborative leadership can be fostered between parents and educators in early childhood education within Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The study also sought to find out the level of collaboration between parents and educators, identifying the challenges affecting this collaboration, and exploring strategies that can strengthen parent and educator partnerships for the benefit of young children. The study was guided by five research questions and anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and the Collaboration Partnership Theory. These theories helped to explain how children's development is influenced by the interaction between the home and school environments and why shared responsibility between parents and Educators is important.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. 30 parents and 30 educators from 6 schools, 5 parents and 5 educators in Egor Local Government Area formed the sample of the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators in Early Childhood Education In Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local

Government Area” The instrument was validated, and its reliability was established using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.812, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Findings from the study revealed that collaborative leadership between parents and educators exists to a moderate extent in early childhood schools within the study area. The results also showed that both parents and educators play important roles in collaborative leadership, though educators tend to assume a more dominant role. Several challenges, including poor communication, parents’ busy schedules, educators’ workload, and inadequate resources, were identified as factors hindering effective collaboration. Despite these challenges, collaborative leadership was found to offer significant benefits for children, parents, and educators. Strategies such as regular meetings, parental training, effective communication, and clear policies were identified as means of strengthening collaborative leadership.

Conclusion

The following conclusion have been drawn from the study;

collaborative leadership between parents and educators is essential for the success of early childhood education. When parents and Educators work together,

children receive consistent support, improved learning experiences, and better emotional development. effective collaboration does not happen automatically. It requires deliberate efforts, mutual respect, trust, and clear channels of communication. Challenges such as lack of time, limited commitment, and communication gaps need to be addressed for collaboration to be successful. The study also concludes that schools must take responsibility for promoting structured programmes that encourage family participation. When communication is open, expectations are shared, and both parents and Educators see themselves as partners, children become the greatest beneficiaries.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- **School administrators** should create more structured opportunities for parents to participate actively in school leadership and decision-making processes, rather than limiting their involvement to meetings and programmes alone.
- **Educators** should adopt flexible communication strategies that accommodate parents' schedules, such as the use of phone calls, messaging platforms, and periodic feedback reports, to improve parent–teacher interaction.

- **Parents** should be encouraged and motivated to take greater responsibility in supporting collaborative leadership by attending meetings regularly, participating in school activities, and engaging in their children’s learning at home.
- **Training programmes and workshops** should be organised for parents to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to support children’s academic and social development effectively.
- **Government and school proprietors** should provide adequate resources and supportive policies that promote parent–educator collaboration in early childhood institutions.
- **Clear school policies** should be developed to guide collaborative leadership practices, outlining the roles and responsibilities of parents and educators in fostering effective partnerships.

Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, the following suggestions are made for future research:

- Future studies should examine parent–educator collaborative leadership in early childhood education across multiple local government areas or states to allow for broader generalization of findings.
- Researchers may conduct a comparative study between public and private early childhood institutions to determine differences in collaborative leadership practices and outcomes.
- Further research could adopt a qualitative or mixed-methods approach, using interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observations to gain deeper insight into the nature of parent–educator collaboration.
- Studies may investigate the impact of collaborative leadership on specific aspects of child development, such as social skills, emotional development, language acquisition, or academic performance.
- Future research could explore parents’ perceptions of leadership roles in early childhood education to understand factors influencing their level of participation and decision-making.
- Researchers may examine the role of school administrators and proprietors in facilitating or hindering collaborative leadership between parents and educators.

- Further studies could assess the effectiveness of training programmes designed to improve parents' capacity to support children's learning and participate in school leadership.
- Future research may investigate the use of digital communication tools (such as messaging platforms and school management systems) in enhancing parent–educator collaboration.
- Researchers could explore the relationship between educators' workload and collaborative leadership effectiveness in early childhood institutions.
- Further studies may focus on identifying policy frameworks and institutional structures that best support sustainable parent–educator collaborative leadership.
- Future research could examine cultural, socio-economic, and religious factors influencing parents' involvement in collaborative leadership in early childhood education.
- Longitudinal studies may be conducted to assess the long-term effects of collaborative leadership on children's academic and social development.

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APPENDIX

Institute of Education,
Early childhood Education
University of Benin
Benin city, Edo State

Dear Respondents

The purpose of this questionnaire is to know the level of Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators in Early Childhood Education in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government Area. Your information will be treated with confidentiality. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully.

Igbele Faith
(Researcher)

Instrument Title: Collaborative Leadership Between Parents and Educators in Early Childhood Education in Edo State, Benin City, Egor Local Government Area

Section A: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) in the appropriate option.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age Range: 18–25 years 26–35 years 36–45 years 46 years and above

3. Role in School: Parent Educator/Teacher

4. Teaching Experience (for Educators only): 10 years and above Below 10 years

Section B

Instruction:

Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the collaborative leadership between Parents and Educators in your school.

Response options:

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Parents and educators in early childhood schools work together to support children's learning.				
2	Parents are actively involved in school activities and programmes.				
3	Educators communicate regularly with parents about children's academic and behavioural progress.				
4	The school provides enough opportunities for interaction between parents and educators such as open day.				
5	Parents participate in school meetings and discussions				

	concerning their children.				
6	Educators guide parents on how to help their children academically and socially.				
7	Parents support children's learning at home as part of the collaboration process.				
8	Educators take an active role in creating a supportive environment for parent and school collaboration.				
9	Poor communication between parents and Educators reduces effective collaboration.				
10	Parents' busy schedules make it difficult for them to collaborate with educators.				
11	Educators' heavy workload reduces their ability to effectively collaborate with parents.				
12	Inadequate resources in the school affect effective parent and educator partnership.				
13	Collaborative leadership improves children's learning and development.				
14	Parents better understand their children's needs when				

	collaboration is strong.				
15	Collaborative leadership strengthens trust among parents, educators, and children.				
16	Collaboration creates a positive and supportive learning environment.				
17	Regular parent and teacher meetings should be organised to improve collaboration.				
18	Parents should be trained on how to support children's learning at home.				
19	Multiple communication channels should be used to share important information with parents.				
20	Clear policies should be developed to guide collaborative practices in early childhood schools.				