

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROVISION OF QUALITY
BASIC EDUCATION IN THE LAWRA DISTRICT OF THE UPPER WEST
REGION

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:

Date:

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Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature:

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Name: Dr. Y.A. Ankomah

ABSTRACT

The study was on the participation of communities in the provision of quality basic education in the Lawra District of the Upper West Region. The study assessed the contribution communities make towards basic education delivery. Sensitization of community members towards development of the school was an area of concern. The perception on the impact of community participation in bringing quality basic education to the district was also looked at. The population covered GES personnel and traditional leaders whereas the sample was made among parents, chiefs, teachers and other stakeholders.

A questionnaire that comprises both open-ended and close-ended instruments was used for data collection. The statistical method adopted for the study was the descriptive survey design. The data were tallied using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Percentages were calculated for the summary of the various responses.

The main findings of the study were that communities in the Lawra district offer their support to improve basic education. It was also discovered that a form of sensitization forum aimed at educating communities on the need to support basic education, took place in the district.

The study made clear recommendations: Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC) should be revived and their contributions acknowledged. Community participation should also be strengthened. The key roles that communities are to play as stakeholders of education should be clearly outlined.

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I also want to thank all my respondents for offering their useful contributions and suggestions to enrich my work. To all authors whose works I have made references to, and to all my lecturers, friends and comrades of M.ED Administration (2009) batch, I pay floral tribute to all of you.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my late father, Mr. Oscar Dapilah, my mum, Mrs. Lydia Dapilah, my wife, Mrs. Lilian K Dapilah and my son, Kelvin W. Dapilah.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Many policies have been promulgated towards enhancing basic education delivery in the country. Basic education serves as the hall mark for socio-economic development of a nation. It appears to many people that education is passing successfully through secondary education and getting university degree. An educated man is one whose form of life as exhibited in his conduct, the activities to which he is committed, his judgments and feeling is thought to be desirable.

In recent time government has embarked on structural adjustment programmes towards reforming the country's educational system. In 1995, the government of Ghana passed a legislation putting in place the Free, compulsory, universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy which is aimed at increasing access, improving quality and improving education management. Ideally, economic growth and social development of every nation are linked with a purposely planned investment in human beings. This kind of investment may take the form of intensive schooling and training. The best result is attained when education is suitably designed to actually prepare and develop the totality of the individual to achieve consistency and harmony of the kind that is geared towards the

development of the right caliber of personality traits that are desirable for living peacefully in every society. Education is expected to equip the individual with knowledge, valuable skills, attitudes, values and competencies that will make it possible for the person to function properly in the society.

Human capital is the wealth of nations and it is made possible through investment in human beings. In pursuit of these, a general restructuring process of education is going on over the years and the aim of which is to make education suitable and in addition, have a great potency for national development. Antwi (1992) indicates that, “as far back as 1852 and 1882 the colonial administration for British coastal settlements in the Gold Coast had enacted an ordinance to provide better education for the inhabitants” (p. 57), the role the communities have to play is emphasized.

The Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) of education of 1951 and the Education Act of 1961 in Ghana also made attempts to involve communities in the provision of education. Communities are urged to participate fully in the implementation of quality education throughout the country. There exist an equally shared responsibility between the central Government and the local Government. The Local Education Authorities are charged with the responsibility of sensitizing the communities to participate in the provision of education facilities and to support the total delivery of education.

Agyeman (1986) laments the extent at which communities participate in basic education implementation. This is significantly captured in the Education Review Committee Report of 1967. Furthermore, the Education Act of 1961(Act

87) that was propounded to address the weaknesses associated with the ADP of 1951, the establishment and management of basic schools were to be solely in the hands of Local Education Authorities (LEAs), parents and the government. The 1987 Education Reform that was introduced outlined the new structure and content of Education. The intended aim was to make the education system in Ghana relevant to the needs of societies and the country as a whole.

The communities were on this note expected to participate in the implementation process so that they could incorporate their desired needs in the curriculum. This is captured in the New Education Reform of 1987, “for proper financial management and accountability and cost recovery in the educational system by involving parents or guardians and communities in funding and participating in the education of their children” (P.1). The above assertion however, made it very prudent for us to note that for education at Basic levels to be very vibrant and effective, there should be a great demand of parents, communities, stakeholders and chiefs who are concerned about education to exhibit commitment, dedication and play their fervent civic roles towards supporting the complete delivery of quality basic education. The Ministry of Education and Culture, (1987) stresses that, “the successful implementation of the junior secondary school programme, for instance, will depend on the close moral, financial and material involvement of the local communities” (P.1)

It is noted that some communities are able to lobby to win some favours and sponsorship packages from Non Governmental Organizations, philanthropists and similar benevolent societies. This growing generosity however, does not rest

the onus on such societies alone. The parent and communities who are the direct beneficiaries of education should be made to provide at least labour force for some projects that are being funded by such organizations. Some valuable contributions that the communities can make towards the development of education include, provision of furniture, demarcation of school land and boundaries, provision of accommodation for teachers, putting up of toilets and urinals for the school, supplementing the provision of teaching and learning materials, rehabilitation of school buildings, and embarking on enrolment drives such as awards and scholarship packages for pupils. The communities cannot perform these duties without hitches of any kind. There might be weak interaction with education authorities at the District Education Office which may thwart their good efforts.

Lack of knowledge on the roles that communities are supposed to perform, poverty and other challenges may be fraught the good intentions of parents and the communities towards contributing their quota in the provision of quality basic education in the district. Community participation in the provision of basic education has taken place over the years in many different ways. The government has put up some formal structures and organizations to monitor and encourage communities to participate fully in the provision and delivery of basic education in the communities. The community- School Alliances (CSA), Community – School Improvement Plan (C-SIP), Child School Community Process in Education (Child Scope) initiated by UNISSEF, the Analysis, Assessment and Action programme` (Triple‘A’), Community-Teacher,

Association (CTA), and Participatory, Rural, Appraisal (PRA) are a few of the measures taken to demarcate the roles and responsibilities of the communities in the execution of their duties (GES, 2001). The research person on this note is mandated to look into some communities in Lawra District and assess the nature and magnitude of contribution communities make towards basic education delivery in the district.

Statement of the Problem

Although government has been encouraging and urging communities to be actively involved in education, it is uncertain as to the extent of people's participation in the District. Besides, there appears to be very little research carried out in this area. It is therefore pertinent to conduct a research to provide the appropriate answers to the questions raised. The problem to be investigated is therefore to find out and document what some selected communities in the Lawra District of the upper West Region are engaged in by way of contributing fully, to the delivery of basic education. My research work would be also look at what actually make the communities to participate in basic education delivery in the District. In carrying out research of this nature, it is the anticipation of the researcher that some members of the communities may raise questions such as; We pay taxes promptly and for several years government has been the sole provider of basic education through out the country. Which ways could poor parents also contribute towards the education of their wards? We even need the services of our wards in the farm and in keeping our animals safe. The young

girls are to marry early and give birth so that we interact with our grand children before we die. How could education benefit us so that we would waste money and resources educating our children? The above issues raised should however prompt the researcher that community sensitization and capacity building exercises could be conducted on the need for communities to generously contribute towards the education of their children. An accurate assessment of these thus forms the basis for the study.

Purpose of the Study

The study mainly made attempts at examining the various ways that some selected communities in the Lawra District support in the provision of quality Basic Education. It specifically looked at:

1. The extent at which some communities in the Lawra District participate and collaborate with education authorities in adopting different strategies and approaches towards quality basic education delivery.
2. The level at which community members could be sensitized to fully participate in basic education delivery.
3. The impact that community participation could have on basic education delivery.
4. Basic ways that communities could improve academic performance in the district.
5. Challenges that beset communities in offering their support towards improving basic education.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the study are as follows:

1. How do communities in the Lawra District participate in carrying out activities towards provision and development of Basic Education?
2. How are members of the community sensitized to support provision of quality education in the district?
3. What impact can community participation have in the provision of basic education in Lawra District?
4. What are some ways that communities help basic schools in the district to improve their academic performance?
5. What challenges do communities face in their quest to support the provision of basic education in the district?

Significance of the Study

This research work is purported at vividly studying the involvement and participation of communities in the Lawra District of Ghana in the provision of Basic Education. The study is also conducted to ascertain the magnitude and quantum of quality Basic Education delivery at the community level. This research work succinctly exposed stakeholders and communities to support the implementation of education projects and programmes that would propel the delivery of quality basic education. Prudently, education authorities and stakeholders could also benefit from this dissertation. The write up may add to

their rich knowledge and experiences and thus enable them determine how effectively communities participate in the provision of quality basic education.

Another rationale behind this study is to throw light on the effects of the neglect of the community in basic education delivery, which may also affect the younger generation in the society. The study is also to improve the patronage of members of districts and the community- based organizations to contribute their quota towards basic education delivery.

The study would also assess the training needs of communities and organizations which are concerned with the provision of quality basic education. This would enable government and stakeholders to organize collaborated capacity building activities that could equip them with requisite knowledge and skills that are necessary and up to the task of providing satisfactory quality basic education.

It also rekindles the general awareness that communities' contribution in Basic Education delivery would sensitize and change the perception that government alone should bear the full cost of education.

Furthermore, it would serve as a guide to policy makers when making decisions that would improve basic education management. The study would contribute to existing knowledge on what roles communities play in basic school development activities. This could help strengthen basic education provision in Lawra District. It is noted that majority of people have little knowledge about the role the communities play in improving basic education management. This work therefore seeks to educate the general public on the problems that

community – based organizations face in their bid to improve basic education management.

Delimitations of the Study

The scope of this study is very broad and as such is delimited to some specifics. The study was restricted to only some selected communities within the Lawra District of the Upper West Region. The study was also conducted in only some selected Basic schools within the area of study even though community participation in education cuts across all levels of education such as the second cycle and tertiary levels. The research was carried out in only some selected public schools within Lawra District.

Limitations of the Study

The culture of the people influenced the study especially, where chiefs had to speak through their linguists could distort vital information through misinterpretation and personal biases.

The researcher made concerted efforts to retrieve all the questionnaires that were distributed but to no avail. A few respondents constituting farming population were busy at their farms and could not submit their completed questionnaires. However, about 90% were completed and returned.

It is also regrettable to state that in spite of the sensitization that was given to respondents on the purpose of research, some were still stricken by fear that their responses may implicate them in future and thus, refused to answer

and return their questionnaire. These circumstances may place some restrictions on the conclusions and could affect the quality of the final work.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In recent times, government has launched a trenchant attack on quality education towards the restructuring of the education system in Ghana. The restructuring is manifested in the reduction of the previous sixteen (16) years of pre-university education to 12 years. Among the numerous effects that loom large as a result of this restructuring is the increase in demand for basic education. The implications arising from this increased demand are varied and diverse. Whilst government felt that the increase was necessary and could lead to a situation where a lot of highly skilled human resources would be developed, it was also agreed that government alone could not be the sole provider of education in the country. There is the need for communities to contribute in the provision of quality basic education in the country.

In Ghana, definite attempts have been made over the years to make communities have influence on their schools but unfortunately however, this has not fully been achieved (Aseidu-Akrofi, 1975). In the 1951 Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) for education and the Education Act of 1961, communities were called upon to contribute to the provision of education in the country. Introduction of the Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in 1997, communities are still being urged to support

education provision in the country at the basic level. The main aim of government seeking communities' support in the provision of basic education is to enable the (FCUBE) programme achieve its three main aims of improving the quality of teaching and learning, improving efficiency in management and increasing Access and participation.

This chapter reviews the concepts, theories, and relevant available literature on the topic under review. The researcher has included depth findings on the history of Ghana's education before and after independence, primary education in Ghana, constitutional provision and components, organizations within the community that support quality education delivery and sensitizing communities on the need to join in providing quality education in the country. Specifically, the literature review in this chapter would cover the areas below;

1. History of Education in Ghana
2. Effect of Educational system on the society.
3. Effective community participation in Education Delivery.
4. Mobilization of Internal Generated Fund (IGF) in support of education within the community.
5. School and community relationship and development.

History of Education in Ghana

The word education refers to formal structure in European type of schools. Most Africans who received formal education or have gone through formal school teachings are categorized as educated elites. Furthermore,

individuals who are trained in the acquisition of knowledge and skills in trade may be referred to as uneducated elites. The word education is however restricted to formal processes in organized institutions by well trained professionals.

The situation is different in the traditional African set up. The whole community is responsible for the education of the child. From the early sixteen century, various missionaries took up the provision of formal education in Ghana. The first of these missions was then followed by the Basel mission and Wesleyan Methodist Missions who also took up the provision of formal education in the country. The Philosophy behind these mission schools is not far fetched. (Antwi, 1992, pp.6 – 7) postulates that, “different denomination missionary societies began to establish schools at their own expense and to convert indigenous people in the face of obstacles and difficulties.”

The inadequacies of the colonial system of education were observed by Antwi when he stated that the colonial system of education was found to be singularly ill-suited for the needs of an independent nation. The concerns of nationalist governments become the need to adopt education to local environment to satisfy the needs of an independent state. A formal state of education structure modeled on the British system was set up during the colonial period. This formal system of education has gone through series of reforms since Ghana gained independence in 1957. Education in Ghana has made enormous strides since colonial days and independence. It has spurred the desire to satisfy the human rights of all citizens to education.

Effect of the Educational System on Society

Education is indeed to help satisfy the requirements of societal and economic development. The quantum of formal education delivery systems has been impressive. Society tends to accord a lot of respect and recognition to Africans who had attained the Western form of training. Society also expected that with this kind of training acquired, the individual is opened to a lot of opportunities in the colonial administration and also in the European economy (Antwi, 1992). A replica of the previous situation seems to be what we are witnessing presently in our society regarding our educational system. The attainment of university education would automatically raise one above board and among other people in society who have not had access to university education irrespective of what one is contributing to society.

The unfortunate situation however is that, at times there may be people in the society who have not had formal education, yet have knowledge in skills oriented jobs that might be very beneficial to the society. All that such people get is the relegation in the presence of the university scholar. The current Junior High School system has incorporated vocational, technical and apprenticeship education which will offer ready employment to its scholars.

This sad situation still writs large in present day education where emphasis is laid on the kind of certificate one holds and not what one is able to contribute to existing knowledge. It is undeniable that universities churn out products who when confronted with practical problems pale into insignificance. Men and Women who shun working on the land, and who fail to render their

services to the needs and aspirations of the community are what the education system is producing. Available records of the first half of the nineteenth century indicated that, it took great efforts before the Wesleyan Missionaries persuaded some chiefs to appreciate the need for school. In due course, the chiefs began to make concerted efforts by contributing their quota to providing quality education through communal labour.

This contribution compelled them to site with government initiatives from colonial times to the present by ensuring that education had spread to almost every part of the country. Yet if the goal of Education for all is to be fulfilled by the year 2015, a generous rationalization of resources by all concerned citizens is indispensable. It is worthwhile stating that Ghana's national policy which is purported at reducing poverty and increasing democratic participation in governance is ultimately dependent on an educational system in Ghana which provides children and the youth with basic skills for participation in economic, social and political activities.

The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) emphasizes the role of education in national development by making increased education access and improved quality of educational outcomes, a key priority. To support investment in education, the GPRS also increased government spending on education than that proposed for any other social sectors. Currently, government of Ghana allocates 35% to 40% of its national budget to education (National budget statements of 2004). In addition, the education sector receives large amounts of funding from donor and other agencies. However, these inputs appear to be

inadequate as all levels of the sector continue to suffer from low achievement and a lack of financial resources.

Notwithstanding the enormous role that education plays in national development, the sector is seriously bedeviled with many teething problems. These problems include; poor planning and ineffective management strategies, inadequate teaching and learning as well as shortage in qualified educational personnel, insufficient research personnel. In spite of these challenges that have been itemized, effort of the greatest magnitude is made to uplift education to more bearable and more appreciable standard.

The 1987 education reform in Ghana was introduced to mitigate some of the headlock issues that affect education in Ghana such as low enrolment, low achievement and inadequate trained professionals. The reforms emphasized practical life skills training as part of the formal system to equip students with some form of trade at each terminal point.

Apparently, successive governments, upon governments make tremendous determination to ameliorate the educational systems quantitatively and qualitatively, in pursuit of developmental projects. The commencement of the 1987 educational review has put the whole educational system into a new era of meaningful restructuring processes. The restructuring brought in FCUBE programme and subsequent revision of the academic curricular across board. The purpose of which is to reflect the developmental needs of the economy. Education and development cannot be decoupled. Top-rated among government developmental projects is the solemn issue of making basic education more

meaningful and directed towards the needs of children and the needs of society. The children in the system are clamouring for employment skills. Education is however, designed to equip the youth with the desired requisite skills necessary for our local industries.

Currently, efforts are concentrated on community – based plans as well as developing the central government’s capacity to inform and support all communities and districts in planning and budgeting for their service needs. Measures are also taken to ensure that school communities have sense of ownership to the school processes. Efforts have been made towards minimizing central imposition of ideas on quality education on communities and also ensuring that communities and districts do not impose such decisions on schools either.

Community participation in the provision of quality education for their wards creates equal opportunities for members of the society to contribute their quota in the running of administrative processes of the school system. The community may contribute in divergent ways towards the running of the school. Among the many ways may be the provision of labour force for school building projects, weeding and cleaning the school environment, contributing funds towards school projects through community levy. They could also help in the promulgation of rules and serve as sub-committee members for school based-disciplinary committee to solve misbehavior cases and immorality in the school. Furthermore, the community may also provide welfare services for teachers. It is argued that when parents invest in the education of their wards, it makes the

parents very responsible and their wards would have value for education under the pretext that education is not free. The more financial resources we put in education, the more we turn to benefit from education. However, communities that are genuinely poor should have their education funded by government, churches, Non Governmental Organizations, philanthropists and other well wishers.

Another growing corpus of knowledge that has taken education to the door-steps of the communities is the decentralization policy. Governments have experienced the short falls of centralized education service provision, the poor quality processes, the inefficiency and mainly opaque administrative decisions taken by central administration, serves as the backdrop for the introduction of decentralization in education management processes (Graham, 1976). To ensure transparency, accountability, efficiency and to better still, make education reflect the needs of every society and to bring about responsiveness, a more central way of planning education so that communities can be involved at the micro level should be enforced.

The flow process of decentralization in education delivery is indicated below;

1. Central or macro, (Headquarters)
2. Regional directorate
3. District Assembly
4. Chiefs, opinion leaders and all stakeholders.
5. Community members

Decentralization of educational planning better reflects local priorities, encouraged participation and improves coverage and quality education. Deciding on who controls what, there is an ongoing debate about the appropriate locus of decision making within the education sector. The debate remains unresolved because the process requires that policy makers rationalize and harmonize a complex set of complementary function, mainly; curriculum design, teaching methods, student evaluation, text books production, and distribution, teacher recruitment and payment, school construction and rehabilitation and financing parent – teacher linkage progresses. The crowning achievement of decentralization is to allow private sector and all concerned citizens to participate in the provision of quality education.

Effective Community Participation in Education

The 1992 Forth Republican constitution of Ghana enjoins the Government to come out with an educational programme which would strengthen basic education delivery in the country. In chapter six Article 38 section 2 of the 1992 constitution, it is indicated that; The government shall, within two years after parliament meet after the coming into force of this constitution, draw up programme for implementation within the following ten years, for the provision of free, compulsory and universal basic education” (p5). This leads to the formation of FCUBE. The Ghana Education Service, GES (2001) reveals that the FCUBE is a comprehensive sector wide programme

designed to provide good quality basic education for all children of school – going age in Ghana by the year 2005.

According to the GPRSP (2005), the government in collaboration with its partners would continue to provide free education at the basic level as one of the means of reducing poverty in Ghana. Several groups are empanelled to mobilize the community to make the FCUBE programme a success. Such groups are to:

1. Ensure that all children of school – going age have access to school.
2. Set performance targets and try to achieve them.
3. Ensure participation of all stakeholders in school activities and programmes.
4. Ensure gender balance in the enrolment and retention of pupils in school.
5. Ensure that enough resources are mobilized for schools development (GES, 2001, P.5).

The above quoted source also reveals that Parent Teacher Association (PTA), School Management Committee (SMC) and District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC) are called upon to help provide support that would augment government’s attempts to provide basic education and to improve upon the quality of basic education delivery by communities. This aspect of the literature perused thus presents information on these bodies and what roles they have to play towards community participation in the provision of basic education. According to the GES (2001), the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) “is an

association of parents and teachers in a particular school or cluster of schools” (P.9). This source adds that it is non – governmental, non – sectarian, non–partisan and non–commercial. Subsequently, membership of this association includes parents, guardians and teachers who are interested in children’s education.

PTA’s are voluntary associations. Their aims includes; forging strong link between the home, the school and the community. The PTA is also to unite parents and school authorities to work jointly towards development of the school. It is also to assist in fund – raising activities to cater for basic needs like furniture, sports equipment and library books and to supplement school requirements (GES, 2001). Similarly, other primary function of the PTA includes:

1. To assist in school maintenance and the repair of infrastructure.
2. To see to children and teachers’ welfare by providing accommodation, textbooks and other facilities for both teacher and pupil.
3. To help in appraising the performance of both teacher and pupil
4. Solving disciplinary related issues among pupils and teachers, land encroachment disputes, teacher and pupil lateness to school, truancy and other acts of indiscipline. The PTA members should however execute their duties diligently, devoid of encroaching upon duties of the school authorities. They should cooperate with other

organizations or agencies that have common interests regarding the provision of quality education (GES, 2001, P.10).

School Management Committee (SMC)

It is a committee under the Ghana Education Service Act of 1994. The SMC 'is a school community-based institution aimed at strengthening community participation and mobilization for education delivery" (GES, 2001, P.9). The SMC is a component that represents the entire school community in a particular school or among cluster of schools. According to GES (2001), the job of the SMC; 'is to promote the best interests of the school and make sure that the children receive the best education possible" (p 13).

It is however incumbent upon the committee to make their last-ditch effort to assist the head of the school to organize and manage school activities in a more effective and efficient way. The SMC should not in any case usurp the position of the school in their efforts to propel academic work in the school. The GES (2001) clearly indicates that, "the day-to-day running of the school is still very much the responsibility of the head teacher" The SMC on the other hand "guides the head teacher about school policy and the direction of the school" (GES, 2001, P. 13). Additionally, the SMC contributes to school policy promulgation such as; contact hours, religious policies, dress code, and learner's code of conduct, child labour, and administration of punishment and school goals achievement. Other major functions of the SMC are discussed as follows:

School Development

As part of their civic roles, it is very imperative for the SMC to design development plans for the school. They form partnership with the community and also serve as a link between their school and other schools.

School Administration

The SMC should join hands in directing, controlling, supervising \ steering and overseeing the overall running of the school. Renovation of school building, taking care of school lands and other property, controlling the usage of school property, organization of general meetings and reporting to school authorities the status and progress of the school.

In a study report on 'New Resources for Education' with particular reference to school committee and institution management, Bray (1987) found out that the head teachers are responsible for the diurnal activities of the school. The study reveals however, that communities such as PTAs and SMCs are responsible for;

1. Generating local support for the school.
2. Representing their communities and making views of members known to the school authorities.
3. Linking the school and the community.
4. Presenting the concerns and problems of teachers to the communities.
5. Checking on the performance of teachers and pupils (p.35).

Bray (1987) drew the conclusion that where head teachers and committees make genuine efforts to co-operate, very successful relationships could be developed between the schools and their communities (p 36). Teaming up of the school and community could significantly help provide the needed basis for quality basic education for the children. Thus, community participation could help bridge the gap between what governments can provide and what the community wants to be provided.

The quality of education a community's children receive would depend on the level of interest and involvement of that community in the management and governance of its schools. If the communities are willing to participate in the provision of education for their youth, then they must have the right to take active part in determining the kind of education their children should receive. If the community is assisting in provision of education, then it must also have the right to hold educational personnel accountable for the smooth running of educational institutions.

District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC)

The DEOC is expected to meet once every quarter, that is, four times every academic year. It is one of the committees that have been put up to assist communities in the management and supervision of basic schools in the District (GES, 2001). The key responsibilities of DEOC includes; the supervision of effective teaching and learning, resolution of conflicts in school, the provision of infrastructure and also ensuring the proper disbursement of budgetary allocation

from the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). The main functions of this committee are outlined to include: Provision and maintenance of school building and other infrastructural facilities, provision of teaching personnel, monitoring the regular and punctual attendance of both teachers and pupils at school, monitoring the performance of duties by staff and pupils on matters relating to general discipline, overseeing the environmental sanitation of the school building and other facilities.

The GES (2001) agitates that if these roles outlined above are pursued and effectively implemented, it could lead to improved learning, increased access and participation of all stakeholders, efficient management and supervision of schools and a sense of joined ownership in educational issues. These expected outcomes could ameliorate the basic education provision and delivery with specific reference to some selected communities in the Lawra District of the Upper West Region. Other sub-community based organizations that help in the provision of quality basic education are discussed below.

Child Community Participation in Education (Childscope)

The analogy which states that, the school is built by the community and for the community is a very relevant statement in outlining the aims and objectives of Childscope. The community is enjoined to develop the school in order for the school to appropriately develop the child in the community. This policy makes every parent a shareholder of the school system in the community

and is expected to contribute generously towards the smooth running of the school.

Triple 'A' Policy (3' A')

Triple 'A' stands for Analysis, Assessment and Action. The community is expected to involve itself in diagnosing the school situation to identify the challenges that be fraught the school. This would enable the community to know successes and failures that the school system has attained. The quantum of teaching materials and teaching personnel available, the gaps to be filled and general overview of the school climate that would permit effective teaching and learning in its school. After analyzing and assessing the school situation to identify the needs, pragmatic steps are taken towards getting solutions to peculiar problems.

School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM)

Stakeholders in education hold meetings to assess the performance of the pupil, the teacher and the whole school in general. Such meetings are held quarterly and the main objective is to assess the general progress of teaching and learning in the school. Here, the teacher is supervised alongside the pupils' performance and the school environment as well to make sure that it is very conducive for teaching to take place. The interplay of all these factors should bring quality education to the district.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)

Community members and stakeholders in the community involved in designing the teaching and learning experience that would meet the needs of the

community. The curriculum is adjusted to meet the local environment but it is done in such a way that it does not contravene GES rules and regulations as enshrined in the GES code of ethics. It is noted that some pupils do not attend school early on Lawra market days. The reason being that most parents are poor and pupils are per forced to involve in “Kayayo” to make their ‘chop money’ and also raise extra money to pay their school fees. Such a case had however prompted stakeholders in the District to meet with the school authorities to re-design the school calendar and adjust the reporting time on market days to arrest the situation.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

This is similar to the participatory Learning Action (PLA) but the only difference here is that, participatory, Rural, Action dwells much on rural schools. Schools that are located in the hinterlands are mostly neglected to their own fate because of difficulty in reaching such schools. Stakeholders of education are deployed to such schools to identify the difficulties that affect effective teaching and learning. Incentive packages are given to deserving pupils and GES personnel who accept postings to such places. The aim of which is to raise academic performance in such areas to meet national education demands.

District Education Planning Term (DEPT)

The DEPT concept is intended to build the education planning capacity of the district for the achievement of FCUBE objective. The DEPT was formed as an access and participatory drive which could adopt an integrated approach to addressing issues relating to the implementation of intervention measure under

the FCUBE programme as they evolve at the district and community levels. The general aim of the District Education Planning Team (DEPT) is to enable districts and their communities to identify their educational problems and find solutions to them. It is also to fill the education planning gaps and structures as a means of optimizing the impact of intervention.

Mobilizing Funds in Support of Education

Writing on financing education in the district, Asiedu-Akrofi, (1978, p.124) states that, “one of the progressive things about Education in Africa is the general belief that money invested in education would yield great dividends in the future”. In his view, it is expected that we surely derive maximum benefits when education contributes to nation building, industrial development, scientific and technological improvement by using the skills and expertise they would have acquired during the process of education. It is also indicated in the ADP for education of 1951 and the Education Act of 1961, that the Government of Ghana (the then Gold coast) made provision for a fee-free elementary education. Also, in the 1992 Fourth Republic Constitution of Ghana, provisions were made for the right of children to education. Chapter Five (5) of the constitution (Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom) indicated at Article 23 (1) on education rights that all persons shall have the right to education opportunities and facilities (P.27) and that basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all.

The bulk of the funding for basic education comes from government grants. However, almost all African schools are grossly under funded, thus making it very difficult for government to effectively run basic education. Money is not readily available to procure needed equipment and build facilities. What is needed in the area of improved basic education is that communities should absorb part of the cost of education and solicit more aggressively for funds. This could be from Parent Teacher Associations, philanthropists, and corporate bodies. Students too could be made to pay a special levy to improve funding which could be used to procure furniture and other teaching and learning materials.

Asiedu-Akrofi (1978:126) argues that, “as our population increases, more children of school – going age have to be given opportunities for education as a matter of right”. He goes further to postulate that, “a situation where the population grows younger and younger, the per-pupil cost becomes higher” making it difficult for government alone to bear the full cost of education.

It is also argued that part of the cost of education should be borne by the individual beneficiary of education. However, the individual beneficiary of education hitherto compares the cost of investing in education and the long term benefits. Where the benefits outweigh the cost, then the individual is likely to invest heavily in education, even though the gestation period for retrieving the benefits is often long. Where the state absorbs the private cost and the private benefit goes to the individual is the situation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). The question that looms large here is whether the

state can guarantee the quality of education if the chunk or totality of the cost is absorbed by the government. The departure part of this topic will raise the question of who should bear the cost of education so that the quality of education is not compromised. Should the government set aside large portion of national budget for education or the individual should be made to share cost with the government?

It is a tall fact that money is very essential in the pursuit of quality basic education delivery and the ability to finance those educational programmes that are consistent with our needs is a great investment (Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978 P. 126). It is necessary for government to set aside a large portion of the national budget for education in order to provide a constant growth in education. Basic education for all is a necessary condition for poverty reduction because it empowers the poor and the vulnerable. There is the urge for government to generously fund and promote education throughout the country. Parents often anticipate that investment made today should yield high returns to children and the society in future. Wattenberg (1971, P.153) points out that, “public policy requires that all students should be educated for the good of the society in general and to give equal opportunity for education available to all and that education at all levels is a social responsibility”.

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who in his seven-year Development plan, as Antwi (1992) points out, state expenditure on education is a social investment whose returns would be the creation of well educated, skilled and productive manpower to meet Ghana’s needs. Appiah (2004) also postulates that the 1992

constitution upholds the principle that, “Education is a fundamental human right and therefore, mandatory for the government to provide Education for all its citizens” (P.7). Friedman (1963) opines that education is a private enterprise for which the benefit goes to the entrepreneur. It sounds however unfair for the state to fund the education of children when the individual and his or her family are the direct beneficiaries of education. Parents must be made responsible for the education of their wards. Governor Guggisberg in his renowned sixteen principles of education states that, “Education cannot be compulsorily free” Annoh, (1989 P.18).

In the view of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, education between the state and the individual is reasonably appropriate in view of the joint private and public benefits that accrue. The principle of “cost-sharing” is in operation in Ghana while communities are urged to support community schools (GES, 2001). In a foreword to the PTA and SMC Handbook, Ameyaw Akumfi (2001), cited by the GES, 2001) indicates that education is a social enterprise.

School and Community Relationship and Development

According to Atakpa and Ankomah 1998, the effectively managed basic schools usually have strong PTAs which meet regularly to discuss issues affecting the welfare of the schools. Parents are expected to show concern for the schools and ensure that the schools maintain their high standards of performance. There should be a very cordial relationship between school authorities and their communities. Such good interaction between the

community and the education authorities will create the needed environment for support to flow between the two bodies. This would also notably allow heads of schools to gleefully allow some social events like market days, funerals, farming and religious functions to go on without contravening GES rules.

Musaazi (1982) suggests that the school is a well planned social institution which acts as a vehicle for social cohesion through which we teach the young ones. Hill (2001) on the other hand postulates that formal education should serve as a good supplement to the family and community type of education which only socializes the youth and moulds them on the values and norms of the society, Hill again made the assertion that school generally should teach basic facts about the social and political nature of a society” (p.95), he goes further to say that schools should focus on the fundamental obligations of citizenship”. If the school – community relationship support is effectively managed, it would result in the formation of strong and functional PTA system, there would be involvement in local national social programmes and would lead to regular visits from District circuit officers to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Asiedu – Akrofi (1978), deliberating over the African dilemma, indicates that, “the school is one of the Western tools of change in Africa”. He goes further to indicate that, “the school and our traditional societies developed like twin brothers traveling such that ,if one of the functions of the school is to act as an agent for the transmission of the culture of the society in which the school is situated then the school has failed in Africa”. In particular, he decries the

situation in which the school in Africa has disparaged our customs, norms and beliefs and could not prepare nor allocate children to their places in our societies. The school has alienated the socio-cultural ethos for which it was purported to achieve.

Asiedu–Akrofi (1978) indicates that it takes the school one responsibility to organize a strong school and community relationship but it needs another extra responsibility to reach out to community members and involve them in the running of the school system. The channel of communication between the school and community is a wide gap and clamor for serious attention. Asiedu – Akrofi again says that, “A good relationship depends upon adequate understanding of the people” (P.49).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The chapter examined the procedures and techniques employed by the researcher to collect data on how communities in Lawra District support the provision of quality basic education. It specifically looked at the research design, the population, sample and sampling procedures, the instruments used in collecting data, the administration of the instruments and the limitations and delimitation of the study.

Research Design

To obtain answers to the research questions and to effectively test the research hypothesis, a cross sectional descriptive survey design was used for this study. Descriptive survey is a research design which specifies the nature of a given phenomena. It determines and reports the way issues occur. Descriptive research, thus, involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study (best & Khan, 1989).

This design was chosen because it presents information that can be observed, described, and documented as it naturally occurs. It serves as a starting point for hypothesis generation and theory development and is very

suitable for this research. In descriptive research, accurate description of activities, objects, processes and persons is the objective. The researcher, by the use of this research design collected the needed data (Babbie, 1990). The findings were then generalized from the sample to the target population in order to make deductive inferences regarding the extent to which communities contribute to the provision of basic education delivery in the district.

A possible weakness of this design is that the data collected could produce results that may be questionable due to biases of respondents in expression their views on sentimental and private issues. Notwithstanding, the researcher found this design most appropriate for this research.

Population

The study was performed in some selected communities in Lawra District. The population comprises some selected members of the communities in the District and the respondents included; chiefs, PTA members, SMC members, parents, teachers, unit committee members and some stakeholders.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher collected data from 10 selected communities in the District. These communities are; Lawra town, Doweni, Baasing, Boo, Tokuuu, Nandom town, Eremon, Ko, Zombo, and Tansil. The study was also conducted in five primary schools and five Junior High Schools (JHS). The researcher made use of chiefs, PTA members, SMC members, parents, unit committee

members, teachers and other stakeholders to ascertain vividly the magnitude of community participation in the provision of quality basic education in the district.

The category of respondents that were used for the study is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Category and Number of Respondents

| Category of Respondent | No. of Respondents |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Assistant Director (S&M) | 1 |
| Circuit Supervisors | 10 |
| P.T.A Members | 6 |
| GNAT Secretary | 1 |
| Parents | 20 |
| Unit Committee Members and Assembly | 10 |
| Teachers | 10 |
| Chiefs and traditional rulers | 10 |
| DEPT Members | 4 |
| DEOC Member | 10 |
| Total | 82 |

The sampling technique that best suits this study is both probability and non-probability sampling procedures. Probability sampling is a technique that makes use of random selection of respondents. All members of the population

have equal chances of being selected. This technique was appropriately used to select schools and the teachers in the schools as respondents for the study.

A list of all the schools and teachers within the area under study was provided to make sure that every member was given equal chance of being selected. Numbers were assigned to each school and put in a bowl and picked randomly until the sample size was attained. Non-probability sampling on the other hand was purposively used to select the Assistant Director for Supervision and Monitoring, the GNAT Secretary, head teachers and chiefs. The purposive sampling technique was designed for respondents who were to answer specific questions due to the fact that such people could provide in-depth knowledge on some key issues on community support for education.

Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was the major tool for data collection in this research. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and close-ended questions for respondents to answer. The close-ended questions included appropriate options for respondents to choose those that were applicable in their localities where as the open-ended type did not restrict the respondents to options.

Section 'A' of the questionnaire contained information on biography of respondents; Status, Rank, Sex, Age and Position held in the community or within the Ghana Education Service. Section 'B' sought divergent views of respondents on the ways that communities involve themselves in the provision of basic education in the district. Section 'C' invariably talked about

sensitization of the community members towards development of the schools. Section 'D' was purposed at soliciting the perceptions on the impact of community participation in the provision of quality basic education, while section 'E' unfolded communities' efforts to improve academic performance in the district. The problems that hinder community participation in the provision of quality basic education are succinctly discussed in section 'F'. Section 'G' served as the departure point of the instrument and it drew the curtains down with some inherent suggestions and conclusions on how to improve quality basic education delivery in the district.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire on a similar population to detect weaknesses in the items and thus re-designed them so that the final results were not distorted. The researcher also explained the rationale behind the research to all respondents, the academic essence, the political benefits and its subsequent benefits to the stakeholder, the community and the government as a whole. This enthused respondents to willingly and honestly answer questions with all their might. Both face and content validity were considered to provide valid and reliable results

Data Collection Procedure

Due to time constraints and the intensive nature of the exercise, there was the need for the research person to orientate some personnel to assist him in

the exercise. A total of six research assistants were orientated to assist the research person in his work. The six research assistants were people with knowledge about the locality and with basic ideas on research work and have conducted similar research work on their own. In addition to the above stated personal qualities, the researcher trained the research assistants on the specific purpose of the study, approach of the respondents, the use of probing questions to elicit detail responses, ensuring confidentiality for respondents and observing other research ethics.

The researcher also obtained an introductory letter from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration copies of which were made for the research assistants before the commencement of the exercise. Upon reaching the various respondents, the researchers first established good rapport with them and declared the essence of the research to them. They were also assured of confidentiality and finally given copies of the questionnaire to complete. They were asked to go through the questionnaire item by item in the presence of the researchers so that they could ask questions for clarification. The researchers then agreed with the respondents on a day for the collection of the completed questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed based on the research questions. The responses from the respondents were tallied using the computer Software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequencies were then

used to interpret the information collected from the respondents. Descriptive statistics were computed to present the data. The discussions were logically done according to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The chapter discusses the results of the study focusing on the information provided by the respondents. The discussions and submissions on this chapter are presented in line with the research questions raised.

Background of Respondents

Responses were drawn from various categories of people from the communities in the district who were holding various occupations. They included teachers and head teachers, accounts officer, farmers, procurement officers, nurses, chiefs and traditional rulers, disease control officer, and unemployed and retired officers. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the literate respondents to complete on their own. For the non-literate respondents, the researcher and his assistants read the items to them and their responses written down (See Table 2)

Table 2: Occupations of Respondents

| Occupation | No | % |
|---------------------------------|----|------|
| Teachers and head teachers | 33 | 44.0 |
| Accounts officer | 1 | 1.3 |
| Farmers | 16 | 21.3 |
| Procurement officers | 3 | 4.0 |
| Nurses | 2 | 2.7 |
| Chiefs and traditional rulers | 5 | 6.7 |
| Disease control officer | 1 | 1.3 |
| Unemployed and retired officers | 14 | 18.7 |

Among the respondents were teachers and head teachers that constituted 44% and formed the majority, as well as farmers constituting 21.3%. The unemployed and retired service personnel represented 18.7% while traditional rulers were the least constituting 6.7% of the total respondents.

Table 3: Positions held by respondents

| Position | No | % |
|-----------------------------------|----|------|
| Teacher | 6 | 8.0 |
| Head teacher | 10 | 13.3 |
| Parent | 19 | 25.3 |
| SMC member | 10 | 1.3 |
| PTA member | 7 | 9.3 |
| Political and Traditional Leaders | 10 | 13.3 |
| DEOC and Circuit superiors | 7 | 9.3 |
| GNAT Secretary | 1 | 1.3 |
| Departmental members | 5 | 6.7 |

The research covered 25.3% of parents which supports the saying that ‘he who feels it knows it best’. Parents are very familiar with all that is entailed in the education of their wards. Of these, 13.3% of the respondents are head teachers and political or traditional rulers respectively. These categories of respondents belong to the group who see to the implementation and supervision of the school activities and thus, their responses are very relevant for the study. The remaining groups of respondents included people who are directly involved in issues of education.

How Communities Participate in Activities towards Education

Provision

Research Question 1: How do communities in Lawra District participate in carrying out activities towards provision and development of Basic Education?

The research question sought to find out how members of the Lawra District participated in the provision and development of basic education. The responses are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Activities that Communities Perform Towards Basic Education Delivery

| Response | No | % |
|---------------------------------------|----|------|
| Putting up of school building | 60 | 82.2 |
| Building of staff bungalows | 40 | 53.3 |
| Building of toilet and urinals | 58 | 77.3 |
| Weeding of school compound | 24 | 32.0 |
| Fencing of school compound | 13 | 17.3 |
| Planting of trees within the compound | 27 | 36.0 |
| Building of school library | 30 | 40.0 |

From Table 4, 60 (82.2%) of the respondents stated the putting up of school building as one of the activities they engage in as their contribution towards the provision of basic education in their communities. This shows that the community members greatly offer their support when there is the need for a new school building. Similarly 58 respondents, forming 77.3% of the accessible population also indicated that building of toilet facilities and urinals are highly patronized by community members in the Lawra district. Furthermore, building of school library and donation of library facilities is another key area that the community offers its relentless support. This aspect received 54.7% of the responses.

Another equally important area that is been given a facelift is the building of staff bungalows and provision of accommodation to teachers.

Assistance given to teachers in terms of accommodation received 53.3% accents signifying that the communities are very supportive on the aspect of accommodation for teachers. Weeding and fencing school compound, planting of trees to protect the school land and demarcation of school land are various forms of support the community offers to the school.

In addition, assisting teachers in kind or cash, past students organizing extra classes for students, procurement of teaching and learning materials, putting up of sheds and temporal structures for classrooms are other forms of support that communities in the district offer to their schools. In the view of the researcher, the community hiring and paying for teachers to supplement staff strength could also be of great support to the schools. The discussion of results in Table 4 clearly indicates that all respondents hold the same view which is a strong affirmation of the fact that the communities in Lawra district have positive attitude towards education delivery in the District.

Table 5: Contribution Communities make Toward Maintenance of School Building

| Contribution | No | % |
|------------------------|----|------|
| Money | 53 | 70.7 |
| Labour force | 65 | 86.7 |
| Cement | 7 | 9.3 |
| Sand | 17 | 22.7 |
| Gravel | 28 | 37.3 |
| Transport | 30 | 40.0 |
| Provision of furniture | 15 | 20.0 |
| Land | 38 | 0.7 |
| Wood | 34 | 45.3 |
| Nails | 18 | 24.0 |

Communities support towards maintenance of school building as indicated in table 5 is high. There is 86.7% of labour force that is drawn from the community to maintain school building. Other members who offer little or no support in terms of labour force are prepared to donate cash to facilitate school projects. Of these, a good percentage of 70.7 of the community give cash for building. In order to make adequate sitting arrangement for pupils, 50.7% of community members see it as a bounding duty to procure furniture to facilitate teaching and learning in schools. However, building materials like paint, cement, sand and gravel are areas that are given low attention. Similarly, other forms of support that community members offer include release of land for

school projects, provision of wood and nails for roofing of school blocks. These categories of support received 0.7%, 45.3% and 24.0 respectively. Furthermore, other forms of support that the community offers is repair of broken windows, doors, and roofing of school building during rainstorms. It is prudent and worthy to conclude that any form of support that might be required of parents and other members of the community in Lawra district in terms of school building and projects are likely to be in the form of labour force. Donation of funds may also receive an average support. Investors in education in the district should however be tactical in soliciting support from communities towards school projects.

Table 6: Contributions Communities make Towards Sanitation and General Welfare of Pupils and Teachers

| Contribution | No | % |
|----------------------------------|----|------|
| Provision of dustbin | 25 | 33.3 |
| Provision of incinerators | 9 | 12.0 |
| Clean up campaigns | 49 | 62.7 |
| Provision of good drinking water | 30 | 40.0 |
| Handling of disciplinary issues | 50 | 66.7 |

Table 6 displays a clear case of parents support in resolving various kinds of disciplinary cases between pupils, staff members, and the community itself. It is indicated that, 66.7% of the population pour out their support in

resolving disciplinary issues within the school setup which explains the magnitude of support members of the community offer in line with welfare for pupils and teachers. It is further indicated that 62.7% of the community have interest in general sanitation of the school and do mobilize and take part in clean up campaigns in the school and the community as a whole. Provision of good drinking water, incinerators, and dustbins for the school seems to be given poor attention. The discussion here suggests that some schools in the district have serious sanitation problems.

Table 7: Other Forms of Support that Communities Offer

| Support | No. | % |
|---|-----|------|
| Provision of PTA bus | 22 | 29.3 |
| Donation of jersey and footballs | 33 | 44.0 |
| Donation of computers and their accessories | 26 | 34.7 |
| Donation of furniture | 54 | 72.0 |

The support packages that communities give to their schools are many and varied. They include; materials, labour force, and cash. Donation of furniture is also one of the major support areas. The PTA also supports some schools with means of transport, jerseys, footballs, projectors and computers which should enhance teaching and learning in schools.

Other relevant forms of support that communities could offer to schools include releasing of farmlands to teachers, payment of PTA levies and provision

of free accommodation for teachers. These would serve as motivational packages that should boost teachers' moral to put up their best. Parents should be sanitized and encouraged to make their maximum contribution and donation, especially in the areas indicated in Table 7. It is however daunting to most respondents on the specific roles and responsibilities of such bodies like SMC and PTA in the development of education in the district.

Table 8: Attitude of Community Members towards Meetings

| Attitude | No | % |
|-----------|----|-------|
| Excellent | 11 | 14.7 |
| Good | 31 | 41.3 |
| Fair | 24 | 32.0 |
| Poor | 9 | 120.0 |

Table 8 projects views of community members on their attitude towards meetings. It is very clear that community groups are not so enthused about meetings. This however does not support that they relent in offering their support when contacted. School authorizes and stakeholders of education are only cautioned by this response to be tactical in soliciting support from parent groups. The schools probably may not depend on holding of frequent meetings with parents but to alternatively reach out to members of the community through school pupils, announcement at worship Centers, gong-gong beating and circulating of letters.

**Impact of Community Participation in the Provision of
Basic Education**

Research Question 3: what impact will community participation have in the provision of basic education in the District?

This part of the instrument was designed to elicit views of respondents on their perceptions of the essence of community’s participation in basic education delivery.

**How Members of the Community are Sensitized to
Support Basic Education Delivery**

Research Question 2 How are members of the community sensitized to support provision of quality education in the district?

The research question elicited information on various activities designed by school authorities to inform parents on the need to contribute towards education of their wards.

Table 9: Some Ways by which Schools Sensitize Communities to Obtain Support

| Form of Sensitization | No | % |
|---|----|------|
| Through speech and prize awards dinners | 39 | 52.7 |
| Through SMC/PTA meetings | 50 | 67.6 |
| Through my first day at school | 50 | 67.6 |

Soliciting support from members of the community has always been a difficult task for school authorities. Most schools have however put in place a few mechanisms to enable them canvas for support from the community. The three common ways discussed in table 8 are through speech and prize award dinners, meetings and my first day at school activities. Fifty of the respondents support meetings and my first day at school activities which has a high percentage of 67.6. Speech and prize award dinners are other sensitization forums that pull support from parents. PTA meetings also serve the same purpose. Other avenues which have proved their worth in getting adequate support from parents includes fund raising activities and payment of PTA dues and levies.

Table 10: Various Ways through Which Schools Circulate Information to Members of the Community

| Method of Circulating Information | No | % |
|-----------------------------------|----|------|
| Church announcement | 63 | 84.0 |
| Beating of gong-gong | 68 | 77.3 |
| Radio announcement | 45 | 60.0 |
| Circulation of letters | 43 | 57.3 |
| School pupils | 58 | 77.3 |

Communication is a very crucial element for the smooth running of every human institution. For the school authorities to frequently meet with

members of the community to discuss issues that fall outside their zone of indifference, a form of communication should take place prior to meetings. Reaching out to parents through community worship centres is the most common in the district. This received the highest percentage of 84.0 which implies that announcement in churches, mosques and other worship centers are very effective.

Another reliable way of getting information down to the community is through beating of gong-gong and school pupils. Both means received 77.3% nods which contend that the two are equally reliable channels of communicating with community members. Invariably, radio announcement and circulation of letters are also quite reliable but not perused as much as others discussed earlier on. It is very important to note that school authorities should see members of the communities as development partners of education.

Other options of communicating with community members could be through announcement at busy centers of the community, durbars, funeral grounds, PTA meetings, information centers, and other communication centers. As development partners of education, school authorities should involve and work closely with parents. There should also be transparency in all operations that go on within the school.

Table 11: Community–Based Groups that assist School Authorities in Running the School

| Community – Based Group | No | % |
|-------------------------|----|------|
| SMC | 59 | 78.7 |
| PTA | 70 | 93.3 |
| UCM | 48 | 64.0 |
| DEOC | 43 | 57.3 |
| DEPT | 28 | 37.3 |

Sub-question 4 of research question 2 was designed to probe respondents on the types of parents and community–based groups that assist school authorities in bringing quality education to the district. Table 11 projects that 93.3% of the respondents indicated their approbation that they are aware of the existence and activities of PTA in the district. This draws a strong conviction that PTA is a dominant parent group that performs much of the support activities for the schools in the district. The table further postulates that the impact of SMC is also felt with regards to school development projects. UCM, DEOC and DEPT also assist in the administration and management of the school. The findings are vividly displayed in table 11.

Table 12: Views of Respondents on why Community should be involved in the Administration and Management of the Schools

| Need for Community Support | No | % |
|--|----|------|
| It will encourage teachers to teach effectively | 57 | 76.0 |
| Pupils will attend school regularly | 45 | 60.0 |
| Community will have first hand information on the needs of the school | 41 | 54.7 |
| Community feels they are part of the school and offer their relentless support | 44 | 58.7 |

Involving the community in running the school has been a major concern to stakeholders of education over the years. To effectively explain this, 76.0% of the respondents mooted that it would encourage teachers to teach effectively. It is also worthy to note that when parents are partners of education development, they invest in education with inmost believe that their wards would attend school regularly to enable them reap what is sown in future. A further explanation of this issue is given by 60% of the respondents who expressed their views in support of this verdict. It further opines that the community would be in the known, all challenges that beset the school and would be prepared to put up mitigating measures to alleviate some of the difficulties. The community would also stand the chance of signing pacts with school authorities under the preview that they form part of the school system and should contribute their quota towards school projects. However, the roles of the

community should be defined so that they don't interfere with the duties of school authorities.

Table 13: Views of Respondents on who is More Responsible for the Development and Progress of the School

| Responsibility for Education | No | % |
|------------------------------|----|------|
| Government | 10 | 13.3 |
| Parents | 13 | 17.3 |
| The community | 13 | 4.0 |

The decentralization system has greatly placed the onus on parents to ensure that there is quality education for their wards at all levels of education. The content of education is designed by the government and parents are expected to support with materials and also supervise the implementation processes. The research has revealed that 17.3% responsibility of education should be borne by parents whiles 13.3% go to the government. Only 4.0% responsibilities if education is reserved for other members of the community. This discussion is creating inroads for parents to determine the kind of education they would prefer their wards to receive. This does not impinge government support but it may be argued that government alone cannot provide the sort of education that is required by the Ghanaian child.

The views of respondents were also solicited on the effects of low quality basic education in the district. For responses on this phenomena, see Table 14.

Table 14: Effects of Low Quality Basic Education in the District

| Effect | No | % |
|--------------------------|----|------|
| Illiteracy rate is high | 61 | 81.3 |
| Teenage pregnancy | 49 | 65.3 |
| Mortality rate is high | 26 | 34.7 |
| Poverty levels increases | 45 | 64.0 |

The discussion on this table is to buttress the analogy that education is the bane of socio-economic development of every community. The investigations carried out in this research have presented 81.3% responses to prove that literacy rate declines when education delivery is poor in the district. This definitely comes with its looming calamities of robbery, teenage pregnancy and joblessness in society. The data collected projects that 65.3% of teenage pregnancy occurs as a result of low quality education in the district.

Furthermore, 34.7% of the respondents are of the view that mortality rate could be attributed to poor education delivery in the district. The lack of education in most rural areas of the district has exposed such communities to sanitary hazards and health issues which shorten their live span.

Many people who lack the requisite skills and technology for modern job market are thrown out of job which increases poverty levels. It is also undeniable that good education offers good employment. Low quality education widens poverty gaps in society. To confirm this, 64.0% of the responses were recorded in this regard. Education is therefore very imperative for modern day

economic development. It is however laudable for stake holders and partners of education to raise education to meet national standards. Low education in the district is regrettable and down plays the integrity and culture of the people.

Research question 4 elicited views of respondents on how the community helps the school to improve academic performance in the district. Table 14, sum up the views of respondents with this regards.

**Communities' Efforts towards Improving Performance in
Basic Schools in the District**

Research Question 4 What are some ways that communities help basic schools in the district to improve their academic performance?

Table 15: Views of Respondents on the Various Ways of Improving Academic Performance

| Form of Improving Academic Performance | No | % |
|--|----|------|
| Through patronizing my first day at school | 53 | 70.0 |
| Through patronizing our day | 44 | 58.7 |
| Through patronizing speech and prize dinners | 42 | 56.0 |
| Granting Scholarship to needy & brilliant students | 40 | 53.3 |
| Through patronizing open days | 36 | 48.0 |
| Through debate and drama awards systems | 31 | 41.3 |
| Through patronizing inter – school competitions | 54 | 72.0 |
| Parents visiting schools regularly | 51 | 68.0 |
| Putting up of community library | 64 | 85.3 |

Table 15 cont'd

| Building of an Information Communication | | |
|--|----|------|
| Technology (ICT) centre | 50 | 66.7 |
| Building of science resource centre | 33 | 44.0 |
| Donation of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) | 53 | 70.7 |

A growing corpus of knowledge that is very crucial in this research is access and participation under the preview of enrolment drives purported at dragging the teaming youth who are clamoring for quality education to school. The community has a duty of ensuring that children of school going age are in school. One of the many ways of doing this is to ensure that parents provide the needs of their children and also pay school fees regularly. Parents could further join school authorities to perform “my first day at school” which is an occasion organized to award pupils who attend school for the first time with various gifts. The intension is to motivate them to stay in school. To better explain this, 70.7 % of the population agreed that it is a viable way of putting children in school.

Parents are also entreated to show keen interest in ‘open days’, debate, drama award systems, ‘our day’ and speech and prize dinner activities. Psychologically, pupils are motivated to learn especially, when their own parents visit them at their schools. Essentially, 72.0% of the respondents are in support of inter-school competitions as a measure of encouraging pupils’ school attendance. Equally important is 85.3% of the respondents who are of the view that putting up a community library may not only lead pupils to cultivate the

good habit of reading but to further have interest in achieving high academic laurels.

The researcher further investigated into the provision of teaching and learning materials by the community to facilitate teaching and learning. Of this, 70.7% of the respondents attested to the fact that there is the preparedness of the community to support in this regard. Prudently, 66.7% of the respondents again advanced reasons to support that an ICT centre is a relevant facility towards improving teaching and learning in the district. Furthermore, 44.0% of the respondents felt that a science resource center could also be of help to pupils who have talents and interest to study ICT and science related courses in future. The bench mark here is that occasions that pull pupils, parents, teachers and stakeholders together are good for deliberating over school issues and thus, are propelling forces for excellent academic work in the district.

Even though building of community library, science resource centre and donation of other TLMs are some of the major ways of improving teaching and learning in the district.

Building of additional classrooms to accommodate school pupils, provision of decent accommodation for teachers who are not residents of the community in which they teach, supporting part-time (extra-class), meeting teachers frequently to know their problems, passing of bye-laws to check pupils who roam about at night and during school hours are a few of the many ways of securing good quality education in the district.

In drawing conclusion for this very discussion, it is appropriate to note that the supply of furniture, teaching and learning materials, cash donations, and sponsorship for needy but brilliant pupils are very much perused to improve academic work in the district.

Challenges that Communities Face in Offering their Support towards

Basic Education Delivery

Research Question 5 What challenges do communities face in their quest to support the provision of basic education in the district?

This question which is the departure point of the instrument tried to draw some major setbacks that hinder communities’ efforts to support the provision of quality basic education. (See table 16 for details).

Table 16: Some Problems that Hinder Community Participation in the Provision of Quality Basic Education

| Problem | No | % |
|---------------------------------|----|------|
| Money | 55 | 74.3 |
| Land | 28 | 37.8 |
| Electricity | 55 | 74.3 |
| Good roads | 40 | 54.1 |
| Lack or teachers | 59 | 79.7 |
| Good drinking water | 50 | 67.6 |
| Unemployment or underemployment | 36 | 48.6 |
| Low income | 67 | 90.5 |
| Conflicts | 47 | 4.7 |

The study of the cycle of support that communities offer to the school has an embedded austerity plan for the future of education in the district. The communities' good intentions for education in the district have therefore been bedeviled with a few challenges. This page made a last-ditch effort to give a bird's eye view to some of these glitches and how the district is able to stay glued to achieving its intentions. To buttress the argument, 90.5% of the respondents indicated that a greater portion of the population have low income, probably as a result of unemployment. This stands out as a serious impinging element to the support members of the community offer for education. Also, 79.7% of the respondents also saw lack of teachers as a hitch to education delivery in the district, while 74.3% stated that it is partially money and or electricity which pushes education down the doldrums. The discussion in Table 16 further opines that the lack of good drinking water in some of the hard to reach towns in the district is scaring people who are prepared to invest in education in such areas. A percentage of 67.6 of the respondents indicated their concern for this issue.

Another area that competed for attention was conflict. Its rate was low as captured in the Table 16. The findings indicated that 4.7% of the respondents agreed that conflict could affect quality education in the district. Assessable roads to some schools also hinder the support communities' offer to education in the district. A good portion of the population with 54.1% consented to this.

In the view of the researcher, inadequate furniture for teachers and pupils, large number of unqualified teachers and lack of social amenities among

others could also impinge the delivery of quality education in the district. Other hindrances include non-payment of levies by some members of the community and failure of some members to participate in communal labour. Payment of levies and provision of communal labour are significant components of communities' support towards basic education and are real threats to communities' participation in the provision of basic school. One other challenge could be inability of some parents to assist pupils complete their homework which may be attributed to limited educational background of some parents.

The discussion done so far defeats the assertion made by Ameyaw-Akumfi (2001) that education is, "a social enterprise demanding efforts and contributions from all stakeholders" (P. I). Epstein (1995) calls for teacher guidance and support for family members to help them supervise and assist their children at home with homework, assignments and other school-related activities.

From the foregoing analysis, there is every cause to believe that some factors serve as barriers that inhibit the contribution communities make to support basic education delivery in the district. These include, short notice to inform members of the communities of the schools' programmes and activities, inability of community members to assist pupils with school assignments as well as non-payment of levies and non-participation in communal labour by some members of the communities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussions of this work have been so far trying to look at the worth of contribution that communities in the Lawra District make toward basic education delivery in the District. This chapter presents a summary of the research procedures and findings of the study. It further presents conclusions and some useful recommendations and suggestions.

Overview of the Study

As earlier on indicated in the significance of this study, the dissertation is a modest attempt to generate further studies into the need for communities to support basic education delivery in the district. This study conducted a field survey to investigate the magnitude of contribution that communities make towards education delivery. The research took the form of a descriptive survey design aimed at answering five research questions. The main instrument used in collecting data was the questionnaire. Eighty two (82) questionnaires were given out to respondents and seventy five (75) respondents completed and returned their questionnaire. Validity of the questionnaire was ascertained at the pilot testing stage where respondents gave concrete suggestions and the supervisor offered his contributions to back the study. The raw data collected was

processed using Software for Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The information was then transferred into Percentages and frequencies.

Summary of Research Findings

The findings of this study have revealed that communities in the Lawra district offer their relentless support to improve basic education. Putting up of school building, staff bungalows, toilet facilities, urinals, school library and planting of trees to demarcate school land are a few of the contributions respondents made. It was further discovered that a form of sensitization forum take place in the district which is purported at educating communities on the need to support education in the district. This often take the form of church announcement, beating of gong-gong, radio announcement, circulation of letters, organization of speech and award dinners, meetings and durbars.

The impact of the contribution communities make towards basic education delivery includes encouraging teachers to teach effectively and pupils to attend school regularly which may also lead to access to good education. The discussion further suggested that the government alone cannot provide the quality of education that is required in the district as well as the entire country.

Some problems that hinder communities in their quest to supporting basic education delivery are; money, electricity, good roads, unemployment, conflicts and difficulty in meeting with parents.

Conclusions

This section relates the researcher's inferences and comments about the finding of the study. In the face of the constraints of central government in the provision of effective and efficient management in basic education, reliance is placed on districts and communities in the management and operation of basic schools in the country.

The study has disclosed that communities are aware of their roles in supporting education delivery and are offering their quota. It is however not enough as expected. The communities are educated into understanding that their collaborated efforts towards supporting education would expose their wards to the very best of education as desired.

The creation of DEOC, DEPT, SMC and PTA's has tremendously improved basic education delivery at the community level. These bodies have taken it upon themselves to visit schools to supervise how teaching and learning go on. They also interact with school authorities to identify areas that need development. This exposure has increased access and participation thus enrolment figures of basic schools in the district have shot up. The study has recommended the involvement of PTA in basic education delivery. The keen interest and commitment of parents towards education of their children and activities of the school is appreciable. If these remarkable contributions from parents are sustained and improved upon, it is anticipated that basic education delivery in the district could be compared with national standards.

Recommendations

Taking into cognizance the important roles communities play towards education delivery in the district, the following suggestions could be considered:

1. PTA and SMC should be revived and their contributions acknowledged.
2. Community participation should be strengthened through regular education and sensitization programmes.
3. Educational authorities should incorporate valuable aspects of the culture of the people into the school curriculum and the perception held by some people that it is the sole prerogative of the government to absorb greater part of the cost of education, should be disabused.
4. Government should intensify education campaigns on the key roles that parents and community members are to play as share holders of education.
5. Refresher training workshops should also be organized to give more exposure to SMC, PTA and other community- based interest groups to sit up in matters of education.

Suggestions for Future Study

In order to make projections and guide scholars who have interest in related topics, some salient areas that the research work was unable to cover are catalogued below:

1. Conflicts between school authorities and the community. Colleague researchers may look at the causes of such conflicts and how these conflicts affect the support that communities offer to the school.
2. The specific roles of SMC, PTA and parent groups towards Basic Education delivery may also be of interest.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONARE FOR SOLICITING VIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON THE CONTRIBUTION THEY MAKE TOWARDS EFFECTIVE BASIC EDUCATION DELIVELYIN THE DISTRICT

I am conducting a study in the Lawra Traditional Area on communities' involvement in the provision of quality basic education. I would be grateful if you could offer your useful contribution to enable me complete the exercise.

Date.....

SECTION A

BACKGROUND OF RESPONENT

1. Age
2. Sex [] MALE [] FEMALE
3. Occupation
4. Number of children
5. How many of your children are in school?
6. Position held in society

SECTION B

INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITIES IN THE PROVITION OF BASIC EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT

1. What are some of the activities your community performs towards provision of quality basic education? (select as many as applicable)

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Putting up of school building []

- b. Building of staff bungalows []
- c. Building of toilet and urinals in the school. []
- d. Weeding of school compound []
- e. Fencing of school compound []
- f. Planting of trees within the school compound []
- g. Demarcating of school land []
- h. Building of school library []
- i. Others (specify)

2. How often do you join your community to undertake school development projects?

Tick one

- a. Always []
- b. Once in three month []
- c. Not at all []
- d. None of these (specify)

3. How does the community contribute towards maintenance of school building?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Money []
- b. Labour force []
- c. Material []
- i. Paint []
- ii. Cement []

- iii. Sand []
- iv. Gravel []
- v. Transport []
- vi. Provision of furniture []
- vii. Land []
- viii. Wood []
- xi. Nails []
- x. Others (specify).....

4. What ways does community contribute towards sanitation and general welfare of pupils and teachers?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Provision of dustbin []
- b. Provision of incinerators []
- c. Clean-up campaign []
- d. Provision of good drinking water []
- e. Handling of disciplinary related issues among pupils, teachers and community members. []
- f. Others (specify)

5. What other forms of support does the community offer the school?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Provision of PTA bus. []
- b. Donation of jerseys and footballs []
- c. Donation of projectors, computer and other gargets. []

- d. Donation of furniture []
- e. Release of land for school project []
- f. Others (specify).....

SECTION C

SENSITIZATION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS TOWARDS

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL

1. Through what means does the community pass information round concerning development projects for the school?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Church announcement []
- b. Beating of gongong []
- c. Radio announcement []
- d. Circulation of letters []
- e. Through school pupils []
- f. Others (specify) []

2. How often does the community meet to discuss issues affecting your school?

Tick one

- a. Frequently []
- b. Occasionally []
- c. Not at all []

3. How does the school get support form the community? []

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Through speech and prize award dinners []
- b. Through meetings []
- c. Through donations []
- d. Others

(specify).....

3. What is the attitude of community members towards meetings?

Tick one

- a. Excellent []
- b. Good []
- c. Fair []
- d. Poor []

5. How do chiefs assist schools towards schools towards development projects?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Donation of cash []
- b. Release of land []
- c. Providing accommodation for teachers []
- d. Giving award schemes to needy but brilliant students []
- e. Motivation packages for teachers and deserving students []

SECTION D

PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE PROVISION OF QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION

1. Why is it important for the community to involve in the administration and management of the school?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. It will encourage teachers to teach effectively []
- b. Pupils will attend school regularly and punctually []
- c. Community will have first hand information of the needs of the school []
- d. Community feels they are part of the school and offer their relentless support []

2. Who is more responsible for the development and progress of the school and education of the children?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Government []
- b. Parents []
- c. The community []
- d. The pupils themselves []

1. What are effects of low quality basic education in the community?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Illiteracy rate is high []
- b. Teenage pregnancy increases []

c. Mortality rate is high []

d. Poverty levels increase []

2. Why should the community help in the development and progress of the school?

Tick all cases that apply

a. for their children to have access to good education []

b. The government alone cannot provide quality education. []

c. The community should take part in designing the school curriculum. []

SECTION E

COMMUNITIES EFFORTS TO ASSIST SCHOOL AUTHORITIES TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

What measures have your community put in place to ensure that children of school going age are in school?

Tick all cases that apply

a. Through patronizing my first day in []

b. Through patronizing our day []

c. Through patronizing speech and prize giving days []

d. Granting of scholarships []

e. Through patronizing open days []

f. Through patronizing debate and drama award systems []

g. Through patronizing inter-school competitions []

2. How does the community monitor teachers' school attendance? []

Tick all cases that apply

- a. By visiting school regularly
- b. Securing accommodation in the community for teachers []
- c. Seeking the general welfare of teachers []
- d. By observing teacher-school attendance []

2. How often do community leaders and stakeholders visit the school?

Tick one

- a. Always []
- b. Frequently []
- c. Once a month []
- d. Not at all []

3. What ways can the community improve academic performance in the schools?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Putting up a community library []
- b. Building of an ICT centre []
- c. Building of a science resource centre []
- d. Donation of teaching and learning materials (black board, chalk, text books etc) []

Other (specify).....

SECTION F

**BROBLEMS THAT HINDER COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE
PROVITION OF QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION**

1. What problems do your schools face?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Money []
- b. Land []
- c) Electricity []
- d. Good roads []
- e. Lack of teachers []
- f. Good drinking water []
- g. Others (specify)

2. What are the problems that hinder communities in their effort to support school developmental projects?

Tick all cases that apply

- a. Land acquisition []
- b. Unemployment underemployment []
- c) Low income []
- d. Conflicts []
- e. Others (specify)

What difficulties do you face in getting assistance form community members towards school projects?

SECTION G

**CONCLUSION/SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO IMPROVE QUALITY
BASIC EDUCATION DELIVERY**

1. Give your suggestions on how community participation in basic education in the district can be improved?
2. What are other school development agencies that assist the community toward quality basic education delivery?
3. What other ways can the government assist communities to support quality basic education delivery?