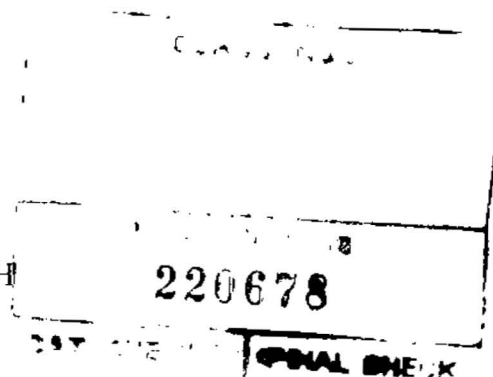


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
IN THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM – THE SMC FACTOR
IN THE SHAMA-AHANTA EAST METROPOLITAN AREA

BY

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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 Name Robert Kwame Mensah Signature [Signature] Date: 18-02-04

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

Supervisor's Name E.T. Kodzi (prof.) Signature [Signature] Date: 18-02-04

ABSTRACT

At a time in the nation's history when government policy was in the direction of community participation in the educational delivery process, this research was undertaken to establish the effect the attitudes of School Management Committee members have on the academic performance of their respective basic schools. The study centred on school communities in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan area of the Western Region of Ghana.

The metropolitan area has quite a good number of basic schools. The 18 school committees sampled for the study were spread equally over the three sub-metros of Takoradi, Sekondi and Shama. The descriptive approach formed the design for the research. Structured questionnaires, the return rate of which stood at 88.2 percent were used to collect data for the project. These questionnaires were distributed among SMC members, Headteachers/teachers (secretaries), GES personnel at the Education office.

In the analysis of the data collected, simple percentages were used.

The findings were that the attitudes shown by members of School Management Committees had an effect on the academic work of basic schools.

It was further revealed that SMC members in the urban parts of the metropolis had a better attitude to their work than their counterparts in the rural setting, while male SMC members showed a more positive attitude than the

female members.

Though achieving a fifty-fifty parity of male-female members on School Management Committees could be an uphill task difficult to accomplish, well-planned workshops to educate SMC members were recommended to improve their attitudes. Also it was recommended that some stipend paid to SMC members would go a long way to improve upon their performance.

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I would like, first and foremost, to express my appreciation and profound gratitude to my supervisor, Professor E. T. Kodzi, without whose magnanimity and encouragement this project would not have seen light of the day.

Most of the Headteachers of the schools sampled co-operated marvelously in the collection of data, that is, completed questionnaires. To these Heads of schools I am indeed very, very grateful.

The typist Ms Christine Acquaye of the Sociology Department, University of Cape Coast played no mean role in getting the handwritten report assembled and typed for the final presentation and deserves to be thanked abundantly.

DEDICATION

To my dear wife, Rosemond and children – Anne-Marie, Robert and Emmanuel.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In this chapter it is necessary to show the importance of education to a nation as well as to the individual himself. In the world today where changes in systems and situations have been so kaleidoscopic that one is apt to bewilderment, the educational system too cannot remain untouched, especially when it is strongly felt that innovations in the system will produce desirable results – help to improve the lot of its recipients and move the country forward. Indeed, whenever there is the need for a system to change, it should be effected. So it was with Ghana's educational system in the ninth decade of the twentieth century.

That education is the key to the progress or development of a country cannot be overemphasized. It is not only the country that stands to gain from the education of its people but the individual himself gains a lot (Curle, 1970). Education is a supreme socialising agent: it takes the individual from one social ladder and places him on another, a higher one thereby enhancing the image of the individual.

Governments, especially, of developing economies, have striven over the years to, in proportion with their resources, give educational matters the attention they deserve. Invariably, such matters have been very expensive to deal with. It is

equally a fact that the moment economies begin to perform very badly, the effort to educate the people for the purpose of achieving progress is seriously affected. The effort may then either be completely abandoned or cut down considerably. Alternatively, an answer may be for governments to begin scouting for partners to help keep educational programmes on course. Such partners could be foreign or local. When this happens, unavoidably, the partners have some say in the execution of educational programmes.

The idea of communities playing a role in the educational process is not a new phenomenon. Indeed the concept in the history of this country, is not a by-product of the current Education Reform. That is it was not brought into being by the Education Reform of 1987.. It has long been an undeniable fact that people take a stronger interest in the nature of services when they directly contribute finance or labour, however small in amount (Bray, 1987). Strengthened by that age-old truth, the government of the Gold Coast era made an early attempt to involve communities in the educational system (The Accelerated Development Plan – 1951). Again in the immediate post-independence era, the government of the day (the Convention People's Party) saw the need to get communities to participate in the educational process of the country (Education Act of 1961). These early efforts failed, as the communities were unable to make meaningful contributions, because they lacked the requisite resources to play their part.

These two early attempts at involving the communities in the education of the people of the land clearly suggest that the idea of partnership is in itself beneficial, if only proper measures are put in place to make it work as it should. It

was therefore not surprising that when the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) found the political will and courage to implement the Education Reform Programme in 1987, the government never lost sight of partnership with communities. There were no two ways: the communities were needed to help the programme succeed in view of the enormous financial burden the programme carried, while the economy itself was an ailing one. "For a start, Ghana's educational system which was once the envy of the whole of the West African sub-region and even beyond, like other sub-structures failed to escape the drudgery and pains of a bad economy" (Spectator, Jan. 24, 1987). Indeed the poor state of the economy, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s can never fail to be mentioned as the main contributing factor to the woes that Ghana's educational system went through before 1987.

The Education Reform Programme to make education relevant to the needs and aspirations of the country surely needed the participation of communities to yield positive dividends, and various pronouncements by government officials on different platforms amply proved this assertion. For instance, the then secretary for Education and Culture, Dr. Mohammed Ben Abdallah regretted that communities had not had much say in the administration of schools (Daily Graphic, 28 Oct. 1986). Again, speaking on "Challenges Facing Ghanaian Education Today" at the 38th Annual New Year School organised by the Institute of Adult Education in Accra, Dr. Abdallah noted inter alia, 'whatever programme is initiated by way of improvement in the educational sector, we must be willing and able to sustain, through community participation, strict fiscal

probity, creative innovation and patriotic commitment and discipline' (*Daily Graphic*, Jan. 5, 1987). Also in a speech read on behalf of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Director-General at Mumford at a Special JSS Fund Raising Harvest, Professor J. S. Djangmah said, among other things – "If you as a community continue in your effort to develop your JSS, I see no reason why government cannot build on the foundation laid to bring into reality the dreams of the JSS programme". These instances buttress the importance government attached to cooperation with the community in the education industry.

How were the communities to respond immediately to the big challenge thrown by government to see the Education Reform succeed? Should they look on unconcerned and supervise the demise of the policy? The response turned out to be very encouraging. Towns and villages in every part of the country made per head contributions in cash and in kind to get the programme going, especially in terms of construction of buildings. Basic schools were next to form parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management committees (SMCs). Very good reasons underlay the formation of these bodies. While the PTA, composed of parents/guardians who had their wards in the school, was to act as a friend of the school playing a supportive role, the SMC was conceived to control the general policy of the school, though making no attempt to usurp the powers of the Headteacher. This involvement of communities in the running of basic schools, would, for instance, help deal with lateness to school by teachers, as members of the communities live with the teachers, know them and wield some degree of influence over the teachers. In the same way community involvement would help

bring under control bad habits like drunkenness and absenteeism on the part of teachers, it was strongly believed.

Important; as the SMC is to the life of the school, what is its composition, and what are its functions? A GES circular – (Ref. No. EP.2972/13 dated March 15, 1995) made the following specifications which were stipulated in the constitution of SMCs.

Ten members in all, composed of:

- i. District Director of Education or his representative
- ii. The Headteacher of the School
- iii. One member appointed by the District Assembly
- iv. One member appointed by the PTA
- v. One member appointed by the town/village Development Committee
- vi. One member appointed by the chief of the town/village
- vii. One member appointed by the Educational Unit, if it is a school with a religious affiliation.
- viii. Two members appointed by the teaching staff-one from the primary, one from the JSS
- ix. One representative of the Old Pupils' Association.

The ten-member Committee whose tenure of office lasts for a maximum of two terms of three years in each case (making a total of six years) has as its main function control of the general policy of the school (just like the Board of Governors in second cycle institutions). This function includes ensuring that the premises of the school are kept in a sanitary and structurally safe condition and

generally in a good state of repairs. Such a function, in order to be perfectly carried out, would require the committee to bring to the notice of the appropriate authorities and committees, the state of the premises of the school. The task facing the School Management Committee is quite onerous as evidenced from the constitution that set it up and this enjoins that body to meet ordinarily for the despatch of business at least once a term. Even when Junior Secondary School candidates in form three wilfully refuse to attend classes, after they have been registered for the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), as was recently seen in the Twin-City and its environs, it is part of the SMC's duties to go about getting such candidates back to the classroom.

A section of the Constitution governing SMCs which could be described as 'potentially dangerous' is the part dealing with qualification for membership'. That section specified, to some extent, people who are disqualified from becoming SMC members – like being insolvent, facing a sentence of death or imprisonment, or having been convicted of fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude, among others. However, the section is silent on the actual academic qualification of members. To control the general policy of the school, would no doubt, require that each member on the committee have some basic education to enable him/her better understand educational issues, say, possessing a Middle School Leaving Certificate. Yet the constitution that gave birth to SMCs does not say anything about the basic academic requirement of members that form the august body. This silence on academic qualification would suggest that an illiterate person, or a semi-literate one can become a member of the School Management Committee,

and even become a chairman. How can such a calibre of person understand fully or even partially what happens in the classroom, so that he/she will be able to contribute to the control of the general policy of the school?

Another area which the constitution placed no value on is the level of enthusiasm of members in educational matters. People who can respond to the call of the school at any short notice, provided they are sound in health, are those considered as being enthusiastic about school or educational matters. Such persons may even be ready to support the school financially, if the need arises.

Since the above-mentioned requirements – level of education and enthusiasm – were not categorically taken care of, all manner of people rushed in to become members of School Management Committees. And as the financial reward they were expecting continued to elude them, these persons became disillusioned. The result is what is seen today with many SMCs, several of which exist only in name; many have failed to live up to expectation.

Perhaps, one could also talk about the level of sensitization that went with the whole Education Reform Programme. Though the idea of community participation was not entirely new, a large number of the populace did not really know or understand the extent of their involvement. The efforts required to get the people tuned to the idea of participation were grossly under-estimated. It was clear just before the programme started that not much time had been spent. To get the people to accept the reform process, let alone the practicality of their contributions. Being an effective SMC member requires a lot of sacrifices in terms of time. It is not a one-man committee, as it is gradually turning out to be in

many cases, where only the chairman is active, while other members sleep or sit on the fence. The successful execution of roles certainly requires the collective effort of all members.

In sum it can be said that new occasions teach new duties. Therefore, the government, certain of the importance of education to a country, faced with the progressive decline of the economy in the last three decades of the twentieth century, was compelled to invite the community to participate in the educational programme of the country. The step taken by the PNDC was in the right direction, as there was something beneficial in the whole project of government working hand in hand with the governed to make education relevant to the needs of the country. Yet community involvement has not been without problems which must be overcome. They are not problems to be solved in a matter of one year or two. Like any other problem, when suggested solutions are implemented, such problems emanating from community participation will definitely get their answers.

Statement of the Problem

The notion of SMC has become an integral part of the country's educational system. Every basic school in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolis (and for that matter the whole country) is supposed to be operating with an SMC. Even though the constitution governing the operations of SMCs does not specify the number of males and females on each committee, every School Management Committee has both men and women on it. What then is community participation in the Education Reform?

Governments the world over work hand in hand with the people or the governed. The phrase 'community participation in the Education Reform' simply refers to the government's efforts to get the adult population of the country especially parents, philanthropists, organisations such as churches, commercial houses, non-governmental organisation (NGOs) to contribute in cash or kind to the education of the children in the country, as structure and content of education have changed.

At the onset, men and women from the various communities offered themselves with glee to become members of school management committees. Men and women of varied calibre, unless otherwise disqualified by clauses of the Constitution, accepted to form a Body that would control the general policy of the school for at least three years. If a member was appointed for another term, then he/she would help control the policy of the school for six years.

It often happens that some SMCs, after they had been inaugurated, could not live through the initial three years. They disintegrated completely or they have become 'a one-man show': only the chairman finds some time to meet and talk about issues with the headteacher. Thus, there is nothing like a meeting of SMC members; so no minutes are written and sent to the District Director, as the Constitution spells out. Under such circumstances, what will be the fate of schools without SMCs, when other schools have their SMCs playing their expected roles? All such schools have Ghanaian children attending them!

There is no denial that before the 1990s SMCs for basic schools were non-existent. The general policy of schools was not controlled by any group of people

There is no denial that before the 1990s SMCs for basic schools were non-existent. The general policy of schools was not controlled by any group of people selected for that purpose. Heads of schools managed their schools in line with directives from government or GES Headquarters. Things went on smoothly; teaching and learning went on as expected.

With the collapse or near-collapse of several School Management Committees in the three sub-metros of the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan Area (and the country at large) especially in the rural parts resulting largely from the poor attitude of members, the problem to be investigated in this research is: The attitudes of members of School Management Committees and the effect on the performance of basic schools in the metropolitan area.

Major Research Question

The major research question for the project is as follows: Does the kind of attitude shown by members of School Management Committee have any significant effect on the academic performance of basic schools in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan area?

Sub Research Questions

The sub-questions that the research will in addition find answers to are:

- i. What are the attitudes of male and female members on the School Management Committees?
- ii. Do the attitudes of SMC members in the urban parts of the metropolitan area vary from those in the rural parts?

- iii. Do the older members on School Management Committees have a better attitude than the younger ones?
- iv. Does the level of education affect attitudes of members?

Purpose of the Study

The fortunes of Ghana's educational system deeply started sinking in the 1980s. The damage caused to the system seemed irreparable, as government's weak financial stance saw no positive change. Some hope emerged when communities were brought on board to be partners in the education industry instead of government doing it all alone. But, what cautious steps needed to be taken in this educational journey to bring about the desired goals? Such steps were left to the common sense of communities in the form of School Management Committees, with little direction from the government. As a result, some SMCs have been performing creditably, while others are performing woefully, each case seemingly having an impact on the school.

There is a dying need to bring School Management Committees at par in terms of performance, having got a full and very clear picture of the attitudes of members composing such bodies vis-avis performances of their schools. The study therefore, can provide very relevant information that could be used to achieve parity.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this study will be: There will be no relationship between the attitudes of SMC members and performance of schools at the basic level.

Significance of the Study

Community participation in the educational process has become a government policy, and there is no turning back. Everywhere in the country the cry is 'educational standards have fallen'. Improving the situation is not the responsibility of government alone. The communities – the towns, the villages, the cities – can all help reverse the situation, if proper measures are put in place. Those in the villages and towns especially can be said to be more close to, and see better, what happens in the schools than the 'distant' government.

The researcher, in fact, has been deeply touched in his rounds as Circuit Supervisor by the lamentable performance of many School Management Committees and thinks that the trend must be halted and the situation improved.

The research project being carried out, therefore, can influence government policy greatly, in that it will unearth the problems militating against the efficient performance of SMCs, and set forth what could be done to make such important bodies in the system function properly. In other words, the question boils down to: why are many SMCs dying and what must be done to make them live up to expectation, as partners of government controlling the general policy of schools?

Undoubtedly, not much research (if there has been any at all) has been done in this area of study. It may even be said that the topic for research is very 'young'. Yet Ghanaians want educational standards to improve. This goal cannot be achieved by magic. School Management Committees working effectively with teachers who show job satisfaction will in no small way bring about the improved standards yearned for in Ghanaian basic schools.

Limitations

In all human undertakings, there are bound to be problems. So it is with a nascent study of this kind.

Apart from the dearth of rich literature on the subject, there is the obvious difficulty of finance. The project requires a wider financial base than the researcher possesses and this condition could be a stumbling block. A way therefore has to be found to fill in the gap.

Next is the problem of collecting data. Certainly, a lot of trips have to be taken to distribute questionnaires and conduct interviews. The more tiring and frustrating part is the collection of questionnaires from respondents. Not all the questionnaires could be returned in the long run. However, it is hoped that as many as possible should be collected from respondents.

Delimitation

The 'community' is made up of more groups than the SMC. The churches, opinion leaders, PTAs and so forth, all come under the umbrella of 'Community' when the Education Reform and school situations are being discussed. They each

play their diverse roles in the educational system of the country. Nevertheless, the searchlight is on the SMC only. For one thing, the SMC has a legal backing: “The school shall have a management committee (hereinafter called the Committee) which shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal and may sue and be sued in its corporate name” (SMC Constitution). Controlling the general policy of the school, the SMC is therefore, the most powerful body in the community, its actions or omissions must be carefully looked at.

Definition of Terms

The researcher has explained the underlisted items according to the context in which each of them is used in the study.

Community

A number of people living in one big area who are taken as a whole or single group.

Partnership

Government working hand in hand with a group or groups of people to achieve a common goal in education.

Metropolis

An area inhabited by people that is large enough to be described as a city.

Sub-metro

One of the main divisions which put together, form the city or metropolis. In the current study, there are three such divisions – Takoradi, Sekondi, Shama.

Educational programmes

Series of activities planned (by government) to be followed by teachers and learners.

Educational Reform Programme

Changes that were made in the existing educational system of the country by the PNDC from September 1987 affecting the structure and content.

Sensitisation

A conscious effort made by an Authority to get people to understand an idea/project or programme and move along with it.

Absenteeism

The practice among teachers by which they refuse to present themselves in the classroom to perform teaching duties for which they are paid.

Participation

Involvement of individuals or groups in programmes so as to be encouraged to contribute to the achievement of goals.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

It is almost ten years now when the Ghana Education Service Act (1994) brought into being the School Management Committee concept. With the birth of these community-based bodies, it was apparent that education delivery could no longer be the burden of government alone; the education industry would have government and other 'stakeholders'. While strengthening community participation in the otherwise financially burdensome enterprise, the SMCs were also to help mobilise resources for the education industry – all pointing to the soundness of, and the wisdom in the old adage 'Two heads are better than one'.

A cursory glance at their functions readily confirms the fact that SMCs are bodies worth establishing:

1. helping the headteacher to govern the school well;
2. ensuring that the premises of the school are kept in a sanitary and structurally safe condition, and are generally in a good state of repair;
3. presenting periodic reports to the Director-General of Education through the District Education Office;
4. helping the headteacher in solving conflicts;

5. referring dismissal or suspension cases to the District Director for action, among others.

Yet the success or otherwise of any undertaking depends largely on the attitude of the people involved – which is the subject of this research. This chapter will therefore address itself to the following issues as they relate to the problem of study.

- i. The human attitude to situations.
- ii. Building a strong school-community relationship
- iii. Community participation for good results
- iv. Sensitization for effective community participation

The Human Attitude to Situations

In all human undertakings the level of success is directly linked to the attitude of the people involved in them. Thus, two different groups taking up the same project would achieve different results, because of the attitudes shown by the members of each group. It would not be unusual to find one group failing to achieve its target, while the other reaches its goal with distinction.

According to George (1966), 'Attitude' is the degree of positive or negative feeling associated with some psychological object. And Andreyev (1980) describes 'Attitude' as a unique predisposition of a person to some kinds of object which expects the person's exposed in real action. He further affirms that attitude influences a person's behaviour. Putting these two similar explanations together, it is clear that before a person actually behaves, a special state exists in him that directs or influences him to act positively or negatively.

Consequently, it is easy to understand why given a particular situation, attitudes of people differ, bringing about dissimilar results.

The issue of attitude has affected in no small manner the object of School Management Committees in many a Ghanaian school. That is, each SMC in its efforts to achieve the goals for which it was set up is confronted by the question of attitude of its members. Throughout the country, citizens have voluntarily offered themselves to serve on School Committees in whose hands lies the general policy direction. Some of these committees, since their inception have been doing well, chalking successes for their schools; others have become 'living dead' or have even evaporated from the communities. This picture would seem to suggest that those School Management Committees whose members have positive attitudes are doing well, and will continue to do well, while those that have failed to perform had members with negative attitudes.

Both Andreyev (1980), Remmers and Gage (1955) recognise that one of the characteristics of attitude is that it is learnt. It is a fact that anything that is learnt can be unlearnt; hence attitudes change, they cannot be constant. It becomes clear then that if the performance of SMCs depends on the attitudes of members that compose them, then such a performance, or better still the result, will differ from one setting to another. The reasoning here could even be extended to 'Mood'. That is, the level of performance, or results achieved by SMCs would be in direct proportion to the mood swing of members that constitute the SMCs.

Another characteristic of attitude which Remmers and Gage (1955) recognise is that it has direction. It is either for or against an object; or it

influences a favourable or unfavourable reaction towards the object. With respect to SMCs, the object that would invoke reaction of members is the issue of reward or the kind of motivation. There is no gainsaying the fact that if members should see clearly reward for their work, attitude would definitely be positive. On the other hand, if members have no clear picture of what they stand to gain from the enterprise, attitude would be negative, affecting results in either case.

It is certain then that attitude is not static, it changes in accordance with situations. The more favourable the outward object attitude is directed towards, the better the responses. Therefore, relating the situation to SMCs, members would tend to act more impressively, if the object of reward is clear as well as lucrative.

The Need for Building a Strong School-Community Relationship

The school, as a place where people have gathered for the purpose of giving and taking instructions, under carefully laid down rules and regulations, does not exist in a vacuum. The physical structures themselves planted at a particular spot, have an area they cover – that is, the immediate locality which could be called the school community. The school community could also be the whole village or town with its people, or the school community could extend to villages and towns further on.

Thus a basic school like Gethsemane Primary School located at Kweikuma, a suburb of Sekondi, has as its community the village of Kweikuma (which is the immediate locality), then Fijai village, Nkotonpo, Adiembra, Sekondi further on, as pupils from these places attend that school. Whether the

school community is the immediate locality or the whole town or village, the fact still remains that the school serves the interests of a number of people living in one area who therefore have some influence on it. In other words, the community can determine, however slow the process may be, or affect the behaviour of people in the school. Needless to say, a very good relationship must exist between the school and the community.

Midwinter (1975) says that school is and should be the microcosm of society and it is "... the medium for transmitting the heritage of a society to that society's novitiates, in order to prepare them for it and thereby preserve the status quo" (p.96). This idea is echoed by Asiedu-Akrofi (1978); he says 'the school is a social institution built to perpetuate a society's values, ideas and beliefs' (pp. 45-46). Both Midwinter and Asiedu-Akrofi had their focus on the co-operative system of relationship between the school and the community. This means the school allows itself to be influenced by the community; the community involves itself in the affairs of the school. No effective transmission of a society's values -- what the community cherishes -- can be done, if the school closes its boundaries to the community.

If, for example, during a school's Open Day' ceremony, the community is prevented from participating in activities for the occasion; or during the Kundum festival of the community, the school is cut off from the activities of the period, then the two entities -- school and community -- would be heading towards that condition which Asiedu-Akrofi again aptly describes as "developing like twin

brothers on parallel rails. They never met and will never meet unless a bold beginning is made to bring them together” (p. 30).

The need for the school and community to develop close relationship hinges mainly on the fact that the children in the schools all come from the community. These very children are the ones to assume the reins of leadership in the community and so they need to be prepared sufficiently for that role, hence the community becomes a part of the whole learning process.

Strong school community relationships, however, cannot be built without the school understanding the community and vice-versa. The more one understands a situation, the better the one is place to perform. In fact according to Kindred, Bagin and Gallagher (1990) understanding the community makes it possible to plan more intelligently and to reduce substantively the guess work that would otherwise take place. Kindred et al list some pertinent data to be considered in a bid to amply understand the community:

- i. The geographical setting
- ii. The occupational groupings
- iii. The standard of living of the area and changes, that are occurring in patterns of community life.
- iv. The customs and traditions.
- v. Literacy level of the community.
- vi. The existing needs and expectations of the people regarding education.
- vii. Immediate and long-term problems that need attention.
- viii. Situations to be avoided due to a past history of conflict.

- ix. An identification of those individuals and groups that are friendly or unfriendly toward public education.
- x. The channels through which public opinion is built in the community.
- xi. Continuous studies in order to keep knowledge current, since the community is constantly changing.

It is evident from the foregoing that the importance of a solid school community relationship cannot be overemphasized. The school needs the community in much the same way as the community needs the school if any generation is to firmly stand on its feet. Nevertheless, this symbiosis can never see maturity, unless there is fundamental understanding, achieved through a conscious effort on both sides. If such an understanding prevailed and there was a close collaboration between school and community, Third World countries would have drifted away from the claim by Houghton and Tregear that “most failures in developing countries have been due to the inability of the school to adapt itself to the needs of the community” (p. 5).

Community Participation for Desirable Results

In the larger community within which the school exists, there are various bodies that cannot look on unconcerned about the vicissitudes of the school. Bodies like the church, Old Students Association, Unit Committees, Parent-Teacher Associations live with the school, but none of them has the legal backing to move shoulder to shoulder with the school as the SMC does have. This is not to say that only the School Management Committee out of the lot from the community plays any role in the life of the school.

Mark Bray (1987) says people value services more highly and take a stronger interest in the nature of the services when they directly contribute finance or labour, however, small in amount. This view is shared by White who thinks that participation leads to a sense of responsibility for a project. He further states that “if a people were involved in planning, decision-making and/or implementation of a project, they would collectively consider the completed project as theirs”. From this point, the importance of communities joining hands with government to undertake projects is derived. If communities work together with government the benefits could be immense. One obvious advantage of this collaboration would be that of savings made by government.

In the case of School Management Committees, members do not receive any salary for the work they do to improve school performance. Considering the number of basic schools in the country and a corresponding number of management committees, large sums of money would be saved by government. That is, monies that should have gone into emoluments of School Management Committee members would be saved. These vast sums saved could be used to improve, say, infrastructure.

Again, in community participation, as the government is not going to do it all alone, the community providing, say accommodation and monetary or other incentives to make teachers work better, government could save a lot of money which could be used to provide other services for the citizens. From these developments it may safely be said that the recommendation by the 9th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in 1984 in Cyprus that a study

be conducted into the possibility of raising alternative funds for education which eventually gave birth to the idea of community resourcing of schools must be seriously implemented to have its rightful place in the educational history of developing countries like Ghana.

The community having the power to see whatever happens or goes on in the school in itself is a very great advantage of participation. It does not stop there. The community then reacts to what goes on in the school to help change situations for the better. In this way learners who are to inherit whatever the community has are assured of the best education possible to prepare them for their future roles.

Sensitization and Community Participation

The key word in this section is 'sensitization' and its impact on participation. Davis'(1986) definition of 'Participation' underscores the need to link it with the keyword 'sensitization'.

Davis (1986) explains 'Participation' as a mental and emotional involvement of persons in group situations that encourage them to contribute to group goals and share responsibilities for them. Such an explanation carries in its trail 'communication' which is an important recipe for excellent group work. That is, people getting the right information on what is to be done brings about excellent group work.

The foregoing largely depends on the mind – ability to focus the mind in the right direction. For, sensitizing is nothing more than making a conscious effort

to get people to understand an idea or a project, including saying how they feel about it so that they readily move along with it.

In the 1951 Accelerated Development Plan that ushered in a compulsory, fee free, six-year basic education for all school-age children, the public was not left out at all in the programme. McWilliam and Poh (1975) mention how the representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly engaged in a lively debate on the subject on 28th August 1951. Before then, the Plan, conceived by the African Administration (government) had been announced to the public and the latter had been asked to air their views on the subject. Furthermore, when the Plan was to be implemented, the people were not left out. This short narrative buttresses the fact that, if people are allowed to tell their minds on any project that affects them, even if indirectly, the project is most likely to succeed, because the beneficiaries would have fully grasped the implications, advantages, as well as the disadvantages of the project.

That sensitization can perform wonders in motivating people to work together to achieve set objectives can also be illustrated in the case of rural Malawi from an FAO report in 1986. In that particular situation, the people learnt to build decent accommodation through the joint efforts of the government and the people themselves. The secret of the wonderful performance was sensitization of the people to become aware of the project. There was nothing like imposing things on the people. In contrast with the success case of the Malawian rural people, the implementation of a housing scheme in south India (1982) failed miserably. The underlying cause of failure was that the community was not

actively involved. The lesson from this case is that if the community is not fully sensitized on a project from the very beginning, the likelihood of the project seeing maturity is an obvious impossibility. Sensitization of the community is a panacea that should run through a project from the beginning to the end.

Could a similar thing be said of the communities in their participation in the Education Reform? Did the communities fully understand the implications, advantage and disadvantages of the invitation to select their members to form School Management Committees to help in the policy direction of basic schools? Were communities given the chance to express their feelings on their participation in affairs of schools before being swept en masse to form School Management Committees?

From the way members of these committees behave, it would seem that sensitization was not effectively done for them to understand the issues at stake. Therefore, if they are to work to produce desirable results, members of School Management Committees should basically understand the tasks which they face.

Summary

It is not an exaggeration that relevant literature on participation of the community in education is very scanty in the Ghanaian situation. Therefore not many theories in this regard are readily available. The approach to analysing the subject of this chapter was to begin looking at the role of attitudes in this matter. As communities are essentially human beings, and attitudes are key to the performance of human beings, it was necessary to go into some depth and show that where conditions are favourable, human attitude will definitely be positive

towards an object, bringing about desirable results, whereas lack of motivation or unfavourable conditions result in or induce negative attitudes.

Quoting authorities to support the basis of theories, it was firmly established that there was great need for the community and school not to exist along parallel lines but to forge a sense of belongingness, a form of wedlock, in other words. The community needs the school for very vital reasons just as the school needs the community to function effectively, especially in this era of economic strangleholds faced by many developing countries, Ghana included. The close collaboration of school and community, it must be emphasized, could best be catalysed by only one thing: understanding.

The discussion concluded on the note that very desirable results are attainable if people engaged in an enterprise are given the chance to tell their minds and feelings about the enterprise. For, it is only when that stage has been reached that people show great enthusiasm in the project and even share responsibility for its failure or success.

With reference to this study, SMC members should be tutored, therefore, to the level where they would realise that they have a stake in the school which they help to manage; that the school is the property of the community; the fortunes of the school have a direct bearing on those of the community – the school and the community rise and fall together. This realisation on the part of SMC members would rouse them into action and make them work with the required zeal and commitment.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Mobilizing the community to make people aware of educational issues is a key to improving teaching and learning situations in schools. The community eventually sees itself as owning the school and thereby school improvement efforts are sustained.

Under this heading the investigator has targeted the School Management Committee as an aspect of the Community's contribution in the effort to achieve higher standards or at least maintain existing standards, since the Education Reform was introduced in 1987.

The purpose of this study was to help improve the performance of School Management Committees to parity levels or around parity levels in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan area, having identified the roots of the poor performance by some of the Management Committees, and the reasons for the brilliant output by other management committees. The net could even then be spread wider to cover SMCs in the country as a whole.

Accordingly, the chapter will explain how the research project is going to be conducted. It will deal sequentially with the Research Design, Population and Sampling, Instruments and Pilot Testing, Collection of Data, and Data Analysis.

Research Design

The investigation required the descriptive approach. In this type of research the conditions already exist and so it is up to the researcher to merely select the relevant variables for an analysis of their relationship. The data thus collected was for the purpose of answering questions concerning the current state of the phenomenon.

The research had as its main concern the attitudes of School Management Committee members and their effect on performance of basic schools. Hence the independent variable – the current attitudes of members of SMCs were accurately described to determine the corresponding impact these attitudes had on the performance of schools at the basic level.

Population and Sampling

The Shama-Ahanta East Metropolis, the area where the research was to be carried out, was chosen because it was so familiar to the researcher. The researcher had been working in the metropolis with the Ghana Education Service for eleven years. He had been interacting with many of the members of the various School Management Committees in the metropolis.

The metropolis itself is divided into three sub-metros: Takoradi, Sekondi, Shama. Of the three sub-metros, Shama is the most disadvantaged in terms of teaching and learning outcomes. Nevertheless, each sub-metro has both rural and urban parts. At the time of the research, the metropolis had in all two hundred and sixteen basic schools (216). Out of these, one hundred and twenty-three (123) are primary schools, while ninety-three (93) are junior secondary schools.

The terms generally used to describe School Management Committees, based on their performance, are 'strong' and 'weak'. In the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan area, some SMCs qualified under the term 'strong' while others were termed 'weak'. Aware of these facts, therefore, the researcher had the sample for the project six SMCs from each of the three sub-metros. Three strong SMCs and three weak ones were selected from each sub-metro. In addition, six Headteachers and six teachers (from the schools whose SMCs had been selected) formed part of the sample for the study. There were also GES officials from the Metro Education Office in the sample.

Even though Headteachers and teachers (acting as secretary) are by statute members of the SMCs, their responses to the questionnaires were treated separately from those of the other members of the SMCs, because of their position of 'serving two masters'. That is, they were in the school all the time helping to make pupils perform creditably in the eyes of the public. At the same time they ensured that the SMC did efficient work. Furthermore, teachers worked closely with their Headteachers, taking instructions from them, but at the same time they had to help succeed policies evolved by the SMC of which they would become part as soon as they were appointed secretary. The responses of the Headteacher and the teacher/secretary were meant to help check on the veracity or otherwise of some of the responses given by the SMC members, since the Headteacher and the teacher/secretary were on the school campus most of the time.

Taking out the Headteacher and teacher/secretary, each School Management Committee would be composed of at least six members. Based on

this calculation, then, the sample for investigation was one hundred and fifty-two (152). This total figure was composed of one hundred and eight (108) SMC members; thirty-six (36) Headteachers and teachers; eight (8) GES office personnel. (Table 1).

Table 1

The Sub-metros/Status of SMCs/Expected Membership

i.	Takoradi Sub-metro	Status	Membership
a.	Bethel school	Strong	8
b.	Nana Brempong yaw school	Strong	8
c.	Anaji Estate M/A school	Strong	8
d.	Monsignor Ansaah school	Weak	8
e.	Apremdu Catholic school	Weak	8
f.	Nana Baidoe-Bonsoe school	Weak	8
ii	Sekondi Sub-metro		
a.	West Ridge school	Strong	8
b.	Rev. Osam Pinanko school	Strong	8
c.	Ketan Catholic school	Strong	8
d.	Bethany school	Weak	8
e.	Kansaworado school	Weak	8
f.	Nkotompo AME school	Weak	8
iii	Shama		
a.	Inchaban Methodist school	Weak	8
b.	Dwomo Methodist school	Strong	8
c.	Shama Junction school	Strong	8
d.	Assuoko Essaman M/A school	Weak	8
e.	Komfueku M/A school	Weak	8
f.	Shama Catholic school	Strong	8

A School Management Committee is considered 'strong' if the members discuss school issues with the Headteacher and combine their efforts with those of the Headteacher to move the school forward. They may number between six and nine members. A 'weak' SMC may have a total membership ranging from two to nine. The members do not work together effectively with the Head of the school to move the fortunes of the school forward. The members are not active, and in most cases, it is the chairman alone (or with one other member) who is seen doing the work for the whole group.

The method of sampling was the non-probability type known as Purposive Sampling. That method was most appropriate, since the investigator, who had worked for a considerable length of time as a Circuit Supervisor in the metropolis, had previous knowledge of the population, and assuredly, this 'asset' suited the specific purpose of the study.

Instruments and Pilot Testing

The area covered by the study has a population made up of literates, semi-literates, starkilliterates. In fact the SMCs of the rural communities have a significant percentage of semi-literate members, while the urban parts of the metropolis have a good number of people with very good formal education.

In the light of the foregoing, the researcher considered questionnaires as the best form of instruments to be used. Where need be, interviews were also used.

There were three separate questionnaires for the three sub-samples: SMC members, Headteachers/teachers, GES officials. The research items to serve as

questionnaires were a blend of close-ended and open-ended questions, with some multiple-choice questions. In order to make the illiterate members among the sample feel confident and comfortable to give meaningful responses, their questionnaires were administered in the form of interviews or as “a recording schedule” (Moser, 1958, p. 177).

Each type of questionnaire had two sections – A & B, except the type meant for GES office personnel. While Part 1 dealt with items eliciting personal information like age, sex, educational status, occupational status, etc. Part 2 was designed to obtain all the information that was relevant to the main body of the research.

In the first two questionnaires meant for SMC members and Headteachers/teachers, the research items were very similar: all the items bordered on opinions on, or experience with the performance of School Management Committees, though the numbering was not the same.

Pilot testing of questionnaires before administration to the selected population were done. The subjects of the pilot testing were three schools whose SMCs did not fall within the sample selected for the research. The pilot test was to help to bring out the effectiveness of the questionnaires as research instruments and thereby ensure the reliability of the instruments.

Collection of Data

In this investigation, the researcher required the services of an assistant, preferably a teacher. The assistant was first trained to acquire the skills of interview through mock interviews. Trips were then taken by the researcher and

the assistant to distribute questionnaires to respondents personally. Working with an assistant was a safeguard against any natural mishap, especially during the period of collection or return of questionnaires. The assistant was also of great help during unscheduled interviews which were held with some influential community members who fell outside the sample, in order to gauge their views on the subject under investigation when they were available.

One advantage for the researcher is that the area covered by the research were not so large, and accessibility to subjects was not a problem. Hence the time set for the questionnaire administration and collection was one month, or even less, unless the exercise happened to fall within the vacation period.

There was every hope and expectation that a lot of co-operation would come from the subjects of the study.

There was an urgent need for the researcher to ensure that all returned questionnaires had been answered in accordance with instructions that went with them. Attention was also paid to questionnaires whose responses showed any traces of inconsistencies. Such data were not analysed.

All returned questionnaires were grouped and responses to each item were summarised, put into frequencies of responses and worked out into percentages. In this way the researcher knew how each question had been answered. Frequent references were made to the section entitled 'Appendices'.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS/FINDINGS/DISCUSSIONS

General Overview

In this chapter the researcher's concern is the analysis of the various responses from the categories of persons on whom questionnaires were served. Then a discussion of the findings follows. But before then there is the need to give an elaborate description of the characteristics of the respondents. It therefore means that the chapter has two main parts: the characteristics of respondents and a discussion of findings.

Characteristics of Respondents

In the study one hundred and forty-four SMC members and eight GES office personnel stood as the target. Of the one hundred and forty-four, thirty-six were Headteachers and teachers (secretaries) from eighteen basic schools. They all responded, giving a return rate of one hundred percent. The number of SMC members left therefore was one hundred and eight. However, of this figure, ninety responded; thus giving a rate of return of 83.3%. The eight GES office personnel also gave a return rate of 100%.

Table 2

Respondents from Communities Targeted

School	Condition	Sub-metro	SMC members	Headteacher/ Teachers	GES Office
Bethel	Urban	Takoradi	6	2	
Nana Brempong Yaw	Rural	Takoradi	6	2	
Anaji Estate M/A	Rural	Takoradi	6	2	
Apremdu Catholic	Rural	Takoradi	1	2	
Monsignor Ansah	Urban	Takoradi	3	2	
Nana Baidoe Bonsoe	Urban	Takoradi	5	2	
West Ridge	Urban	Sekondi	7	2	
Rev. Osam Pinanko	Urban	Sekondi	6	2	
Nkotompo AME	Urban	Sekondi	3	2	
Bethany	Rural	Sekondi	4	2	
Ketan Catholic	Rural	Sekondi	5	2	
Kansaworado M/A	Rural	Sekondi	2	2	
Inchaban Methodist	Urban	Shama	7	2	
Shama Junction M/A	Urban	Shama	7	2	
Shama Catholic	Urban	Shama	7	2	
Dwomo Methodist	Rural	Shama	6	2	
Assuoko Essaman M/A	Rural	Shama	3	2	
Komfueku M/A	Rural	Shama	6	2	8
Total			90	36	8

Altogether 18 schools at the basic level were selected from both the rural and urban parts of the metropolis. In other words, all the three sub-metros of

Takoradi, Sekondi, Shama were fairly represented. That is, six schools with equal numbers of strong and weak SMCs were selected from each sub-metro. The rationale for the inclusion of the eight GES office personnel was to ensure reliability of responses given by SMC members, as the Education office is a repertoire of information about basic schools in every district. Officers cross-check information from the schools with actual situations on the ground. Similarly, though the items on the questionnaires for other SMC members and Headteacher/teacher converged on the same issues, they were numbered differently and treated separately. The purpose was to check the seriousness with which the other SMC members answered the questions.

These facts having been established, calculations of responses had the 126 members as the basis.

Table 3

Educational Background of SMC Respondents

Level	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	12	0.8
MLSC	45	35.6
Secondary School Leavers	30	23.8
Cert. 'A'	33	26.2
Specialist	1	0.8
Diploma	12	9.6
Degree	4	3.2
Total	126	100

Ascertaining the educational background of respondents was important, as that would determine the level of understanding of educational issues by members of SMCs, as well as the efficiency with which questionnaires were responded to.

There was only one illiterate SMC member and he happened to be the representative of a chief. That was less than one percent of the sample. The percentage stood at 0.8.

Middle School Leaving Certificate holders were forty-five in number (35.6 percent), while secondary school leavers were 30 (23.8 percent). Certificate 'A' holders were thirty-three (26.2 percent).

In addition there were one Specialist (0.8 percent), twelve Diploma holders (9.6 percent) and four Degree holders (3.2 percent).

Table 4

Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	No. on Committee	Percentage
Male	96	76.2
Female	30	23.8
Total	126	100.0

The responses revealed that there were ninety-six men forming 76.2 percent of the population and thirty females forming 23.8 percent. It was the expectation of the Ghana Education Service, and for that matter, government, that as many women as possible sat on School Management Committees. This hope

was directly in line with the efforts towards gender equity in institutions and organisations.

Table 4

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	No. on Committee	Percentage
Young	59	46.8
Old	67	53.2
Total	126	100.0

All the respondents were grouped into two: 'young' and 'old'.

Respondents that fell within ages 21 and 50 were classified as 'young', while those above 50 were described as 'old'. Fifty-nine of the population came under the category 'young'. This number formed 46.8 percent of the SMC members used in the study. Sixty-seven were in the category 'Old' which formed 53.2 percent of the population.

The Age Distribution was significant to the research, since attitude differed considerably between young people and the old ones in life situations. Hence it would go a long way to suggest which of the two groups could perform better on School Management Committees.

Table 6

Urban/Rural Distribution of Respondents

Setting	No. on Committee	Percentage
Urban	69	54.8
Rural	57	45.2
Total	126	100.0

The whole metropolitan area was divided into the urban and rural parts. Respondents constituting the urban parts were sixty-nine and formed 54.8 percent of the population used in the study. Fifty-seven of the respondents, forming 45.2 percent, were from the rural parts. This dichotomy became necessary, as it is well known that setting has some effect on the individual and can make the individual develop a positive or negative attitude towards situations.

The Main Results of the Study

All questionnaires returned had been coded according to the three sub-metros. Before the research questions were treated in the order in which they were arranged, it was deemed proper first to go into the kind of relationship that existed between SMC members and Headteachers. The reason is that time and again there had been reports of 'clashes' between SMC members and Heads of schools in the metropolis. Therefore it was necessary to establish the true state of affairs. That was what item 20 of 'Questionnaire for SMC members' (Appendix A) and item 22 of 'Questionnaire for Headteacher/Teacher (Appendix B) sought to do.

The responses clearly showed that all the SMCs of the sampled school committees had cordial relationships with the Headteachers. The position was confirmed by the eight GES office personnel, each of whom responded 'cordial' to question three (Appendix C).

This was a good development. For, it is only when a harmonious relationship existed that the SMC as the governing body, in line with its statutory functions, would be able to work hand in hand with the Headteacher so as to ensure that all activities organised by the school were done in an efficient and effective manner.

Major Research Question

Does the kind of attitude shown by members of School Management Committees have any significant effect on the academic performance of basic schools in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan area?

To determine positive or negative attitudes of the population the following specific items of questionnaire for SMC members (Appendix A) were used: 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19.

Human beings with their subjective inclinations are definitely well-disposed to situations where their interests are mostly affected. Item 5 therefore sought to confirm this notion; that is, an SMC member having a child or ward in a school would have a positive attitude in his dealings with the school. The responses showed that of the ninety SMC members, sixty-three forming 70 percent had their children/wards in their respective schools, while the remaining twenty-seven representing 30 percent had no children/wards in their schools.

This finding only points to the fact that more of the School Management Committees should be doing good jobs, as the members had something to lose if things did not go well in the schools. In this case the interest at stake is their children/wards' good performance. Certainly they would put in everything to make sure that their children/wards came out successfully at the end of the basic school course.

Item 7 (Appendix A) which touches on receiving some education before becoming an SMC member had interesting results. Forty-six of the respondents answered 'Yes', meaning they had had some education on the subject of School Management Committees before they became members. This figure formed 51.1 percent of the sample of ninety used for the study. Forty-four of the respondents, that is 48.9 percent, did not receive any education on SMCs before becoming members.

What was learnt from this revelation is that almost half the number of Ghanaians who chose to be members of School Management Committees in the Shama-Ahanta East metropolitan area had not had their minds prepared for the assignment they were going to take up. Consequently the number of SMCs that suffered from the problem of lack of orientation would be sizeable, and this deficiency would affect their ability to deliver in no small way. The obvious remedy would be stepping up the education of SMC members either through seminars or workshops to enable them deliver to expectation levels. Attitude in this respect, therefore, is only slightly positive. This attitude would have a parallel

effect on the performance of the basic schools; significantly about one half of the schools sampled showed a poor performance.

As to whether members had attended any workshops since they joined their respective School Management Committees (item 9) the results were that fifty-seven, forming 63.3 percent answered 'Yes' while thirty-three of the members or 36.7 percent responded in the negative.

Aware of what workshops can do to improve performance of personnel in various sectors, it could be concluded that SMC members were getting clear understanding of their roles in the education industry. This then would result in more positive attitudes on the part of SMC members. The more positive attitudes were the better the rate of delivery.

Questionnaire item 12: How many times does your SMC meet in a year? And the related item 13. How many times do you attend SMC meetings in a year? The following were the responses: To item 12, seventy-eight of the responses, a percentage of 86.7 had 'at least three times'. Nine, that is, 10 percent of the sample had 'Twice' while three, which is 3.3 percent had once in a year. With respect to item 13, individual responses were as spectacular as responses to item 12. Seventy-five of the members attended all three meetings. This number was 83 percent of the sample. Ten of the respondents attended meetings twice a year, which was 11.1 percent of the sample. Two members who answered the questionnaire attended meetings once a year. They formed 2.2 percent, while three indicated that, though they were SMC members, they never attended any meeting. They formed 3.4 percent of the sample.

It can be seen from these results that SMC members generally have a positive attitude to meetings in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolis.

Items 14 and 15 (Appendix A) were also taken together, still on attitudes. The two questions dealt with frequency of visits to school by SMC members and the purpose of such visits. To question 14, sixty-one of the ninety sampled responded that they visited their schools at least three times a term. This was 76.7 percent of the population. Nine members representing 10 percent visited their schools once a term; another nine visited their schools twice a term, also representing 10 percent of the sample. The rest, that is, three members, forming 3.3 percent never visited their schools. The last group of three can be seen as an example of Ghanaians who have consciously contributed to the collapse or near demise of several School Management Committees. Without visiting schools to find out the existing conditions, how can such members help direct the destiny of the school? Invariably performance of such schools would be nothing to write home about.

On the purpose of the visits, thirty-nine of the respondents gave 'interaction with pupils and teachers. This figure formed 43.3 percent of the sample. Twenty-seven representing 30 percent visited their schools to discuss matters with the staff. Fifteen members, or 16.7 percent visited their schools to attend meetings, and the remaining nine, representing 10 percent visited their schools for purposes other than those stated on the questionnaire. For example, discussing the issue of some pupils found roaming aimlessly in town during school hours. Each of the above listed purposes is indicative of positive attitude

and if SMC members can hold on to these good goals underlying their visits to schools the impact on the schools will, no doubt be great.

The tests for positive attitudes on the part of SMC members ended with item 18 and the allied question 19 (Appendix A). Responses to the two items were to be confirmed or dismissed by responses to items 20 and 21 of Appendix B (Questionnaires for Headteachers and Teachers (Secretaries) and items 1 and 2 of Appendix C (Questionnaires for GES office personnel). To the question (18) "How often the SMC submits reports to the Metro Education Office" thirty-six responses had "once in a year"; eighteen responses had "twice in a year". The corresponding percentages in these cases were 40 and 20. Still twenty out of the members sampled responded "three times in a year". They formed 22,2 percent. Twelve, representing 13.3 percent, responded 'Nil', which means no report was sent throughout the year. Two of the respondents were not sure or did not know if reports were sent at all. That represented 2.2 percent. Two of the responses were rejected because they showed inconsistencies – responses to item 18 were at variance with the responses to item 19.

It was evident from the analysis that SMC members with a negative attitude to work were those who sent no reports to the Education Office, or did not know if reports were sent at all. Assuredly, it is only through reports submitted that the Metro Education office could determine which SMCs were working. It is not surprising then that GES office personnel, on the average from their responses gave between 20 percent and 40 percent as the percentage of School Management Committees submitting termly or yearly reports (Appendix C).

Item 19 yielded very interesting responses; that is, the central points of the reports to the Metro Education Office. Forty-two of the respondents, that is, 46.7 percent of the population mentioned areas that did not touch on the performance of pupils. They mentioned 'infrastructure, furniture, textbooks'. Forty of the respondents, representing 44.4 percent had their reports covering the performance element; that is to say, they mentioned infrastructure, performance of pupils, textbooks. Eight of the respondents, or 8.9 percent of the population did not know what the reports were about. This state of affairs suggests that some members of School Management Committees either do not care to read reports prepared by the secretary, or the Secretary does not make the reports available to members to read before such records are sent to the Education Office. Whatever the reason, an SMC member being ignorant of the committee's report only points to the fact that such a member has a poor attitude.

As the analysis showed, more than half of the sample used in the study did not concern themselves with school performance; accordingly pupils would not be motivated enough to put more efforts into their academic work. In such circumstances, overall academic performance would be adversely affected. Since the questionnaires were coded in line with the three sub-metros, it could easily be traced that the 'strong' School management Committees showed very positive attitudes which reflected in the academic performance of their corresponding schools to a large extent.

It must be reiterated that in terms of learning outcomes the Shama sub-metro cannot be compared to the two other sub-metros, namely Takoradi and

Table 7

Performance Based on Attitudes of SMCs (JSS) BECE Results – 2001; 2002; 2003

School	Sub-metro	2001			2002		P
		No. Presented	Passes	Percentage	No. Presented	Passes	
Anaji Estate (st)	Takoradi	77	59	77	76	65	
Bethel (st)	“	133	133	100	147	147	
Nana Brempong Yaw (st)	“	139	116	83	151	126	
Apremdu Catholic (w)	“	79	50	63	84	25	
Nana Baido Bonsoe (w)	“	43	13	30	38	12	
Monsignor Ansah (w)	“	32	19	59	37	26	
Ketan Catholic (st)	Sekondi	56	53	95	77	58	
Rev. Osam Pinaako (st)	“	70	55	80	53	46	
West Ridge (st)	“	81	81	100	75	75	
Betany Meth (w)	“	49	23	47	44	22	
Kansaworodo MA (w)	“	32	27	84	63	27	

It must be reiterated that in terms of learning outcomes the Shama sub-metro cannot be compared to the two other sub-metros, namely Takoradi and

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of SMCs (JSS) BECE Results – 2001; 2002; 2003

No. Presented	2001		No. Presented	2002		No. Presented	2003	
	Passes	Percentage		Passes	Percentage		Passes	Percentage
77	59	77	76	65	86	102	77	75
133	133	100	147	147	100	149	149	100
139	116	83	151	126	83	167	128	77
79	50	63	84	25	30	53	30	57
43	13	30	38	12	32	52	14	27
32	19	59	37	26	70	22	17	77
56	53	95	77	58	75	48	48	100
70	55	80	53	46	87	74	56	76
81	81	100	75	75	100	84	84	100
49	23	47	44	22	50	42	21	50
32	27	84	63	27	43	84	49	58

It must be reiterated that in terms of learning outcomes the Shama sub-metro cannot be compared to the two other sub-metros, namely Takoradi and

Table 7 Cont'd

School	Sub-metro	2001			2002	
		No. Presented	Passes	Percentage	No. Presented	Passes
Nkotompo AME (w)	Sekondi	52	39	75	48	34
Shama Cath (st)	Shama	73	39	53	117	70
Shama Junction (st)	"	86	60	70	67	40
Dwomo Meth (st)	"	31	11	36	23	13
Inchaban Meth (w)	"	76	23	25	85	26
Assorku Essaman MA (w)	"	66	22	33	74	28
Komfoeku MA (w)	"	36	11	31	30	12

St – Strong SMC; W = Weak SMC

It must be reiterated that in terms of learning outcomes the Shama sub-metro cannot be compared to the two other sub-metros, namely Takoradi and

... are beyond the scope of this project.

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No. Presented	2002		No. Presented	2003	
	Passes	Percentage		Passes	Percentage
48	34	71	76	30	39
117	70	60	83	31	37
67	40	60	83	31	37
23	13	57	30	16	53
85	26	31	74	36	49
74	28	38	31	16	52
30	12	40	54	18	33

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It must be reiterated that in terms of learning outcomes the Shama sub-metro cannot be compared to the two other sub-metros, namely Takoradi and Sekondi. The reasons for this state of affairs are beyond the scope of this project. Suffice it, therefore, to state that poor staffing and poor attitude of parents to education are the underlying causes. Disadvantaged as that sub-metro is, it is with extreme difficulty that the minimum good performance level of 75 percent (for the metropolis) for a school can be obtained by many schools in the Shama Zone. From this background, 50 percent, 60 percent are considered good performance levels for schools in that zone.

In the two other sub-metros of Takoradi and Sekondi it is clear that six schools with strong SMCs which have shown positive attitudes to their roles have been consistently obtaining 75 percent and above (that is, the metro minimum). These schools are Anaji Estate, Bethel, Nana Brempong Yaw in the Takoradi sub-metro; Ketan Catholic, Rev. Osam Pinanko, West Ridge in the Sekondi sub-metro. The case of a seemingly high performance of one of the schools in the Takoradi sub-metro with a weak SMC is attributable to its usually low number of candidates presented for the BECE (Basic Education Certificate Examination). Less than forty pupils often find themselves in the JSS 3 class.

Sub-Research Question 1 – What are the attitudes of male and female members on the School Management Committees?

Questions 15, 16 of Appendix B – questionnaire for Headteachers and teachers (secretaries) addressed the issue. The analysis of the results revealed that twenty-nine of the respondents who formed 80.6 percent confirmed that men were

more interested in School Management Committees' affairs. Only seven of the respondents, that is 19.4 percent represented women's interest in SMC affairs. Accordingly, in the related item 16 the same percentages: 80.6 and 19.4 stood for the membership or composition of School Management Committees. That is, 80.6 percent or twenty-nine of the respondents indicated that there should be more men than women on SMCs which proves that men had a more positive attitude than women.

Sub-Research Question 2 – Do the attitudes of SMC members in the urban parts of the metropolitan area vary from those in the rural parts?

The findings from returned questionnaires were that sixty-nine of the responses came from the urban sector. Those formed 54.8 percent of the population, while the rural sector had 57 responses, representing 45.2 percent. The original number of questionnaires distributed to SMC members in both the rural and urban sectors was 72 apiece. Nevertheless, it turned out that the urban sector returned 69 of the 72 questionnaires, while the rural sector returned 57. These responses gave sufficient proof of a difference between the rural and urban attitudes. They established that members of urban SMCs had a better attitude than their counterparts in the rural areas.

Sub-Research Question 3 – Do the older members on School Management Committee have a better attitude than the younger ones?

Items 14 of questionnaire for Headteachers and teachers (Appendix B) provided the answer to that question. The respondents gave their opinion on which of the two groups – those under fifty years of age; and those above fifty

years was more active with SMC work? Their responses indicated that those above fifty had a more positive attitude. For, twenty of the respondents, representing 56 percent of the population were in favour of age fifty and above, while sixteen representing 44 percent were on the side of ages below fifty years, which group was treated as “younger members” of School Management Committees. For one thing, Headteachers and teachers are more or less the permanent members of SMCs. They work with different people who join and leave the School Management Committee at one time or another. Their information, therefore, in this regard can be very reliable.

Sub-Research Question 4 – Does the level of education affect attitudes of members?

Items 3 and 19 of Appendix A provided the answer to the question. The level of education had an effect on the attitudes of SMC members. Item 3 dealt with the respondent’s educational background, while item 19 sought from respondents the content of SMC reports to the Education office. Those who did not care to find out what the reports contained, and they numbered eight, which was 8.9 percent of the sample, were all MSLC holders. The only illiterate among the population, whose questionnaire was administered in the form of an interview, had not visited any of his schools. These two separate instances concretely show a poor or negative attitude. So then, a lower level of education brings about a poor attitude which affects a member’s performance on a School Management Committee, it can safely be said.

Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter the purpose was to seek answers to one major research question and four sub ones. Put together the five questions centred on attitudes of School Management Committee members vis a vis performances of their respective schools. The analysis and discussions were based on three different questionnaires: for SMC members (Appendix A); for Headteachers and teachers (Appendix B) for GES¹ office personnel.

In arriving at the answers to the questions, the researcher conveniently grouped the population under age; sex; setting; level of education and described the attitude of each group at a time to show the level of positivity or negativity. The responses were put into frequencies and converted into percentages

It was amply demonstrated in the major research question that a strong SMC with members being positive in attitude, has in turn a good school which ultimately leads to high academic achievements. Yet in so far as School Management Committees were constituted of individuals, there was the need to probe further into the attitudes of these individuals. At the end of the exercise it was established that older members of society had more positive attitudes than the younger ones to the SMCs. In addition, men showed a better attitude to SMC work. Also people from the urban centres did better jobs as SMC members than their counterparts in the rural areas.

Finally it was found that education plays a significant role when it comes to the question of attitude: the attitude displayed by members whose educational

background was not so strong could never match that of highly educated persons when the two groups are put on a scale.

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

From the last decade of the twentieth century basic schools have been described as 'community owned' or community based. This description therefore requires increasing commitment, dedication or even sacrifice on the part of villages, towns and cities, indeed wherever schools are located to the realisation of the FCUBE objective of Quality Education. From this background, the research had as its goal, the relationship between the attitude of school Management Committee members and performance of basic schools. In finding answers to this problem some allied issues come up for attention, namely, the attitudes of male and female members, attitudes of rural and urban members on school management committees, attitudes of old and young members on school Management Committees, and level of education and corresponding attitude.

The questionnaire method was used for the collection of data for the project. Three different questionnaires were designed: for SMC members, for Headteachers/ Teachers and for GES office personnel. The population consisted of one hundred and thirty-four subjects made up of eight GES office personnel, thirty-six Headteachers/teachers; ninety other SMC members. With respect to questionnaires for GES office personnel and Headteachers/teachers, the return

rate of responses was 100 percent in each case. However, in the case of SMC members there was a return rate of 83.3 percent – ninety out of one hundred and eight responses were returned. From these figures, therefore, the overall return rate of responses was 88.2 percent.

All questionnaires were hand-delivered and retrieved directly and personally from the respondents. There was only one case of an illiterate SMC member, who happened to be the representative of a chief. His questionnaire was explained and administered in the form of an interview.

In analysing the data, responses to each item on the questionnaire were put together to determine frequencies and these were then worked into percentages.

The findings of this study were that:

1. There is a positive relationship between the attitudes of School Management Committee members and performance of their respective basic schools.
2. Male members of School Management Committees showed a better attitude to work than their female counterparts.
3. Individual members of urban School Management Committees have a better attitude to their tasks than the rural members.
4. Older members of School Management Committees have a more positive attitude than the younger ones.
5. Members with sound educational background showed better attitudes to work than Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC) holders and illiterate members of School Management Committees in the Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan Area.

Conclusion

It became necessary for government to work closely with the community in the educational process in the last ten years. From the analysis and findings it can be concluded that the idea of community participation has gained grounds. Both urban and rural communities have accepted the new era that has dawned on them albeit still in the embryonic stage.

The participation component of the FCUBE needs a little strengthening in the rural parts of the metropolis as compared with the urban sections. Yet a lot of progress can be made in any attempt to make all School Management Committees improve upon their performance, to become vibrant, that is to say. For one thing, a basic requirement for good work exists in all the schools: There is a cordial relationship between SMCs members and Headteachers. It is hence left with only flesh to be added to bones to turn their fortunes round, and this is in the form of getting a few more members to be added to the existing ones. Happily for the education system, many members of existing SMCs are becoming very much aware of their roles and the need to improve upon their performances.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are put forward on the basis of findings and conclusions arrived at to make School Management Committees stronger, if they are already strong; and strong, if they are weak.

In the first place, systems thrive best on reports that are prepared and forwarded. School Management Committees should submit annual reports to the Metro Education Office for onward submission to the Director General at

Headquarters. The reports should be responded to with despatch either from the Metro Education office or from Headquarters.

Next, SMCs by themselves do not generate funds for their work in schools. It will therefore be proper, if not necessary for a percentage of PTA contributions, between 5 and 10 percent, to be set aside to facilitate the work of this all important body in the school.

As School Management Committees are not formed to remain static or grow stale, their composition should strictly be limited to people who are committed to work.

Furthermore, in common parlance there is this maxim: cheap things are not good. Applied to SMCs, these bodies should not continue to be labelled as voluntary, otherwise there would be a problem. What needs to be done is that at the national level there should be some monetary motivation, using budgetary allocations by the ruling government. At least funds should be allocated for the payment of T & T claims for members who attend meetings.

In places where efficient people cannot be found to serve on SMCs, it is strongly suggested that only the chairman's position should be changed when his tenure of office expires. So that other members would continue to be on the committee. The Chairman who is thus changed would be able to continue to be a member of the Committee, as another one assumes the chairmanship.

In addition SMC workshops should become an annual affair so as to awaken members from any lethargy that may creep in.

Currently attaining parity level, with regard to gender, will be extremely difficult or even impossible. Therefore it would be safe to make do with the current composition where woman are greatly dominated by men,

Suggestions for further Research

In an era of gender balance or gender equity in all our endeavours, a study on “Women in Community Participation” would be a very good follow-up for this project that has been completed. That is, more women taking part in the affairs of the community, especially matters relating to the education of the young ones.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SMC MEMBERS

PART I – Background Information

This part seeks to gather personal information on the respondent. Please complete the following items as accurately as possible by ticking the most appropriate letter.

1. What is your gender? a. Male b. Female
2. Your age is.....a. Below 30 years b. 31 to 40 years
c. 41 to 50 years d. Above 50 years
3. What is your educational background? a. Illiterate b. MSLC holder
c. Secondary School Leaver d. Diploma holder
e. Degree holder
4. For how long have you been an SMC member? a. Less than 2 years
b. 2 to 5 years c. More than 5 years
5. Do you have a child/ward in the school? a. Yes b. No.

PART 2

The questions relate to views of SMC members on participation. Please give a response to each of the following items by making a tick against one of the letters unless otherwise directed. Be accurate as possible.

6. How did you become a member of the SMC? a. Invitation by the Headteacher [] b. Appointment by the Community []
c. Election at a meeting [] d. Any other means.....
7. Did you receive any education on SMC's before becoming a member of that body? a. Yes [] b. No []
8. If yes, in what form? a. A talk given by the Headteacher/Resource person [] b. Attended a workshop for that purpose [] c. Reading relevant materials [] D. Any other form.....
9. Have you attended any workshop since you became a member? a. Yes []
b. No []
10. Before you became a member of the SMC, were you expecting members to receive some financial reward? a. Yes [] b. No []
11. What is your position on the matter now? A. It should still be sacrificial work [] b. Members should receive some financial reward monthly []
12. How many times does your SMC meet in a year? A. Nil-that is, it does not meet [] b. One [] c. Twice [] d. At least three times []
13. How many times do you attend SMC meetings in a year? a. Nil []
b. Once [] c. Twice [] d. At least three times []
14. How often do you visit the school when it is in session? a. Never []
b. Once a term [] c. twice a term [] d. at least three times a term []

15. What is the purpose of your visit(s) to the school? a. To attend a meeting [] b. To see your child/ward [] c. to discuss matters with staff [] d. To interact with teachers and pupils [] e. Any other purpose
16. When your term expires as a member of the SMC, will you take up another term? a. Yes [] b. No []
17. Give a reason for your response to 16 above. a. Precious time is wasted [] b. Money spent on T & T is not refunded [] c. Members are not committed [] d. School performance has improved and it must be kept up [] e. No good results are forthcoming from the school [] f. The work is very challenging, so a lot is thereby learnt [] g. Any other reason.....
18. How often does your SMC submit reports in writing to the Metro (district) Education Office? A. Once in a year [] b. Twice in a year [] c. Three times in a year [] d. Nil []
19. On what are your reports mainly centered? (Tick on three) a. Infrastructure [] b. Non-payment of levies [] c. Furniture [] d. Lateness and Absenteeism [] e. Performance of pupils [] f. Indiscipline among staff and pupils [] g. Textbooks []
20. What is the relationship between the SMC on the one hand and the Headteacher on the other? a. Cordial [] b. Tense
21. State one step that your SMC has taken to improve pupil performance.
.....

22. Suggest any measure(s) that will make your SMC strong(er)

.....

.....

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHER/TEACHER

SECRETARY

PART 1 – Background Information

This part seeks to gather personal information on the respondent. You are required to complete the following items as accurately as possible by putting a tick (-) against the most appropriate letter.

1. What is your gender? a. Male b. Female
2. What is your age? a. 21 to 30 years b. 31 to 40 years
c. 41 to 50 years d. Above 50 years
3. What is your educational background a. Cert 'A' b. Diploma
c. Degree
4. For how long have you been a member of the SMC? a. Less than 2
years b. Between 2 and 5 years c. More than 5 years
5. If there were any alternative, would you opt out of the SMC? a. Yes
b. No

PART 2

The questions relate to views of respondents on participation. Please respond to each item by making a tick () against one of the letters, unless otherwise directed. Be accurate as possible.

6. Have you ever had any education on School Management Committees?
a. Yes b. No
7. If yes, what form did it take? a. Talk(s) given by resource persons
b. Attending workshops c. Reading relevant materials
d. Any other form (state it)
8. Before you became a member of the SMC, were you expecting members to receive some financial reward for their work? a. Yes No
9. What is your position on the matter now? a. It should still be sacrificial work b. Members should receive some financial reward monthly
10. How many times does your SMC meet in a year? a. Nil – that is, it does not meet b. Once c. Twice d. At least three times
11. How many times are you present at such meetings? a. Nil
b. Once c. Present at all meetings
12. Do some SMC members have their children/wards in the school?
a. Yes b. No
13. If 'yes' how would you describe their performance as SMC members?
a. Very active b. Lukewarm c. Not active
14. Which of the two groups below is more active with SMC work? a. Those below 50 years b. Those above 50 years
15. Which one group of people below shows more interest in SMC work? a. Males b. Female
16. You would like your SMC to be composed more of a. Men
b. Women

17. How often do members of the SMC visit the school when school is in session? a. Never b. Once a term c. Twice a term
d. At least three times a term
18. The purpose of such visits to the school is a. To attend a meeting
b. To see their children/wards c. To discuss matters with teaching staff
d. To interact with teachers and pupils e. State any other purpose.....
19. What reason do members give either for continuing their membership or NOT of the SMC? Tick only one a. Precious time is wasted
b. Money spent on T&T is not refunded c. Members are not committed
d. School performance has improved and it must be kept up e. No good results are forthcoming from the school
f. The work is very challenging, so a lot is thereby learnt
g. State any other reason.....
20. How often does your SMC submit written reports to the Metro (District) Education Office? a. Once in a year b. Twice in a year
c. Three times a year d. Nil
21. On what are your reports mainly centered? (Tick only three)
a. Infrastructure b. Non-payment of school levies c. Furniture
d. Lateness and Absenteeism e. Performance of pupils
f. Indiscipline among staff and pupils g. Textbooks

22. What is the relationship between the SMC on the one hand and the Headteacher on the other? a. Cordial [] b. Tense []
23. State one step that your SMC has taken to improve pupil performance
.....
24. Suggest any measure(s) that will make your SMC strong(er)
.....

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GES OFFICIALS

This questionnaire seeks the views of respondents on the subject 'Participation'. Please make a tick (✓) against one of the letters under each item unless otherwise directed.

1. What percentage of SMC's under you submits termly or yearly reports?
a. 100% [] b. Less than 20% [] c. Between 20% and 40% []
d. About 50% [] e. Between 60% and 80% []
2. On what are the reports mainly centered? (Tick only three) a.
Infrastructure [] b. Non-payment of school levies [] c. Furniture
[] d. Lateness and Absenteeism [] e. Performance of pupils []
f. Indiscipline among staff and pupils [] g. Textbooks []
3. Generally, what is the relationship between SMC's on the one hand and
Headteacher on the other? a. Cordial [] b. Tense []
4. Which of the two categories below regularly submits reports? a. SMC
from the town centers [] b. SMC's from the rural parts []
5. Do SMC members complain of financial resources as an obstacle to their
efficient performance? a. Yes [] b. No []
6. Do you think monthly monetary incentives will make SMC members
perform better? a. Yes [] b. No []

7. The Metro Education Office responds..... to the reports from SMC's a. Swiftly b. Slowly c. Rarely
8. Suggest any measure (s) that will make SMC's strong(er)
 - i.....
 - ii.....
 - iii.....