

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**ASSESSING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A CASE
OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS WITHIN
SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY**

ALHASSAN KISSMATU

2025



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SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
AND POLICY STUDIES, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY FOR
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL
MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

MARCH, 2025




DECLARATION

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere:


Signature:  Date: 10-03-2025

Candidate's Name: Alhassan Kissmatu

Candidate's ID: UDS/MEP/0022/22

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised following the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

Signature:  Date: 10-03-2025

Name: Prof. Issah Mohammed



ABSTRACT

This study set out to examine community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. It assessed the overall effectiveness of SMCs in school governance within the municipality. The study is grounded in the theoretical framework of Community Participation Theory, which advocates for the active involvement of community members in the decision-making process, problem-solving, and the development of initiatives that influence outcomes. An interpretivism paradigm, under the qualitative approach and a case study design was adopted to analyse the experiences from the participants of the study. Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were used to gather data from the 16 participants sampled for the study. The data collected were analyzed using the deductive thematic analytical method. The study revealed that SMCs are active in monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of school performance. It also found that SMCs engage in various functions, such as participation, accountability and resource management for the schools. However, the study identified significant challenges, including some members' poor understanding of their roles and responsibilities. It further revealed that the lack of role clarity among members leads to a diminished sense of ownership and commitment in school management, thereby affecting their effectiveness. Recommendations of the study include the following: the Ghana Education Service (GES) should provide continuous training and capacity-building opportunities for SMC members to enhance their understanding of their roles and commitment to school management. Additionally, school managers should ensure the selection of qualified community members as SMC members in the Junior High Schools in the Municipality.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely husband and daughter.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, significance, delimitation of the study, limitations, operational definition of key terms, structure of the study, and summary of the chapter.

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is a fundamental pillar of development in any society. In Ghana, like many other countries, ensuring the quality of education is a top priority. One crucial aspect of quality education is the involvement of the community in school management (Jason, 2023). In Indonesia, community participation has been regulated in Article 4 of Law Number 20 of 2003. It states that the community is entitled to participate in the stages of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating educational programmes. Community participation in school management according to (Ela, Ismanto, & Iriani, 2023) has been recognized as a key factor in improving the quality of education and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among stakeholders in education.

The importance of education has never been doubted or contradicted in any part of the world. Hence, it is treasured in every society because it provides the tool for imparting knowledge and skills. It cultivates values, morals, character and develops the intellect of individuals (Afolabi, & Medu, 2023). However, the strategies and methods required in imparting knowledge are many and varied. One of such strategies was the coordinated effort provided through the partnership activities of the school and community participation via School Management Committees (SMCs). The activities of SMCs are critical at the basic school level where teachers and school management have to cope with young children and adolescents in the development of their intellect and





personality. Thus, the SMCs play critical roles in enforcing standards, developing and maintaining school infrastructure, and creating a partnership between teachers, pupils and district authorities to bring about needed changes (Ghana Education Service [GES], 2001, Adu, (2016).

According to Akyeampong (2005), after the new structure of Education Reform had been put in place in 1987, government introduced an education sector policy in 1996 known as “Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in line with Article 25 of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana. The FCUBE represented the effort to ensure that all children of school-going-age received free and compulsory ‘quality’ primary education by 2005. The new policy helped to create a motivation for a coordinated sector programme providing a framework for donor support to education, and a drive for educational decentralization with greater recognition of the important role of community participation in school management for school improvement. FCUBE was developed on the basis of three cost components: i. Improving the quality of teaching and learning, ii. Improving the management efficiency of the education sector, iii. Improving access to and participation in basic education. Improving quality of teaching and learning through the review and revision of teaching materials, new measures on teacher incentives, and a focus on in-service teacher training. ii. Strengthening management at both central and district levels; and iii. Improving access and participation especially through schemes that encouraged girls’ participation at primary level. Ironically, there has not been a commensurate improvement in quality teaching and learning at the basic schools since the introduction of the policy. Increased funding has not in any way contributed to improvement in quality in terms of literacy and cognitive abilities of the basic pupils (Owolabi, 2028). Owolabi further observed that the present level of quality basic education in many schools is insufficient to impart sustainable literacy and knowledge, skills and habits required for full social and economic participation in society. To stem



the tide of low-quality teaching and learning which often results in low school performance, School Management Committee has been identified as a strategic intervention towards improvement in school performance Andoh-Robertson, et. al. (2020).

In this regard, various initiatives and interventions have been made so that the basic schools really benefit from the policy. It is for this reason that the community which has immediate contact with pupils in the school is ever called upon to assist in school management; hence, the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) for schools by an Act of parliament in 1994 alongside the introduction of FCUBE policy in Ghana, (Yamoah, 2023).

To achieve the group goal of preparing the next generation of leaders through education and schooling, the provision of essential human capital requires effective management and operation of schools. This underscores the need to examine the role that communities play in the management and operations of schools at the basic level, as community involvement significantly enhances the management and outcomes of basic education systems (UNESCO, 2018). In Ghana, the Ministry of Education (MOE) supports the operations of schools basically through the Ghana Education Service (GES). Also, the development partners, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), have all made several efforts to make school-based management efficient and effective. Usually, it takes the combined efforts and contributions of stakeholders involved in the process to work towards making the school systems functional (Fidan, & Balci, 2017). However, one area of school level management activities that stands out relates to partnerships and collaborations between the school and the community.

One of the characteristics of effective institutions depends on the extent to which their administrative, governance and management strategies make a practical contribution to the organization (Arnwine, 2002). Historically communities have played a vital role in the



development and provision of education to children worldwide, and Ghana has not been an exception in this experience (Miller, 1995; Roekel, 2008). The community partnership in educational provision became even more functional in Ghana particularly during the era of the Whole School Development (WSD) project (MacBeath, 2010; UNESCO, 2005). Most basic schools in Ghana were initiated by communities, which willingly provided pieces of land for the construction of the schools and also supported the upkeep of those schools and the children in them. Most of those schools were absorbed into the public system with the government taking over their management (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975), thus shifting the management and regulation of the schools to Ministry of Education structures and making communities loosely involved in the process. The centralised control model of education management often had the tendency of weakening the extent of community commitment and participation in the management of education in the country (Adesina, 2013).

The concept of community participation in school management is widely acknowledged as a pivotal factor in elevating the quality of education and nurturing a sense of ownership and responsibility among various stakeholders (Hmina, 2022). The Sagnarigu Municipality, nestled within the Northern Region of Ghana, boasts a diverse educational landscape, comprising several junior high schools. Community involvement in school management can wield a substantial influence over the academic performance and overall well-being of students (Hussein et al, 2018).

The Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) marks the culmination of basic education and serves as a gateway to higher education. Access to primary and junior high schools has expanded significantly in recent years, largely due to government initiatives such as the "Free Senior High School" policy (Nyadzi, , Achari, Tawiah, Koomson, , & Mensah, 2024). This policy aims to make secondary education more accessible to all, irrespective of socioeconomic status



(Stenzel et al 2024). However, while access to education has improved, challenges persist. Quality remains a pressing concern. The quality of education is determined not only by the physical infrastructure of schools but also by the curriculum, teaching methods, and community involvement in school management (Framz, 2022).

The Ministry of Education (MOE), as well as its other major agencies including the Ghana Education Service (2011), recognises the importance of mutual partnership between community leadership and school level leadership for effective school governance. The MOE and GES over time have developed systems that are intended to make community input in school management efficient and effective. The introduction of the Whole School Development (WSD) project was thus “viewed as a strategy to counter the paralysis that had come to characterise local decision-making in basic education by devolving control of education to districts, schools and communities” (Akyeampong, 2004a, p.4). The WSD attempted a strategy to improve the partnership that should exist between District Education Office (DEO) structures, head teachers, teachers and the community. Consequently, individuals who attended training programmes to introduce the WSD concept were taught approaches in developing a “Whole School Action Plan” that emphasises the aforementioned partnership arrangement in addressing teaching and learning needs and school-based management issues in general.

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In recent times, School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) has become an integral part of the life of basic public schools in Ghana. Its preparation has been tied to the propensity of schools to receive capitation grants¹, which makes it easy for every public school to own one. It is apparent that until this time, most public basic schools in Ghana operated without any school level plans to guide their actions. The SPIP was therefore meant to ensure that schools would be conducted in their operations. The WSD effort supported the drawing of action plans that educated participants on target preparation and appraisal of structures of schools. It also helped with designing and preparing school budget for inclusion in District budgets. The same effort supported the planning of activities to promote community involvement in the work of the school (Akyeampong, 2004a; WSD Training Programme Document, 1999). One need that WSD programme thus addresses is that it brings about community ownership of schools and as well as influence the extent of community participation in school activities. Akyeampong argues that the WSD programmes have sought to sensitise the school community to help address such problems as poor pupil learning and achievement outcomes usually apparent in primary schools but more profusely in the rural areas. Ghana’s Ministry of Education has established governing structures at the various levels of education as a result of the WSD efforts. For instance, at the basic school level, these structures,

either formally instituted or recognized include the District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC), School Management Committee (SMC), Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), District (Municipal, Metropolitan) Assembly, District Education Office, Development Partners and Non-Governmental Organizations. In support of these structures to enable them to function more effectively, handbooks have been developed to guide their operations and various forms of training organized by different interest groups to the members of the DEOC and SMC which are expected to play leading roles in these governance processes.

The establishment of District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs), School Management Committees (SMCs) and to some extent Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) is all directed towards rejuvenating the status of communities and their members in school level management (Akyeampong, 2004a). This essentially springs from the fact that communities assist the school in following ethics and compliance aimed at promoting management efficiency and effectiveness. Changes and reforms in education are warranted since Sustainable Development Goal 4 aimed at ensuring the provision of inclusive quality education for all and is situated at the heart of effective school-based management.

School Management Committees (SMCs) are the managerial hand of basic public schools in Ghana, and these are governing agencies of the school, and their roles are central to the main activities and operations at the school level. The SMC is supposed to work for the enhancement of the school and its community by working in the interest of the school. By law, the SMC is the governing body of basic schools in the various communities in Ghana and are supposed to promote the interest of the school and its learners for the children to receive the best education. Every public school has such a committee constituted based on state agreed for formation and operations of the SMC.



In recent times, the education sector in Ghana has been fraught with such issues as teacher absenteeism, lateness to school, and refusal to give proper attention to teaching and learning activities. Many of these problems are some of the major causes for low student learning outcomes (Basiru, 2013; Gyansah, Esilfie, & Atta, 2014). Some training opportunities have been provided in the past to head teachers and SMC members to enable them to adequately and effectively perform their expected functions. Various incentive packages such as teachers' quarters have been given to teachers deployed to remote areas so that they will be closer to the environment of the school (Casely-Hayford & Ghartey, 2007). However, this problem still exists as a core challenge in the education sector in Ghana.

In the Ghanaian context, the formal educational system designed to provide students an environment for learning has three phases; basic education (kindergarten, primary (grades 1-5), secondary education (grades 6-12, and technical and vocational education), and higher education/tertiary education (technical universities, colleges, and universities). According to Abreh (2017), local communities started most of the basic schools by providing lands for the construction of the schools and teacher accommodation. Over time, the government took over most of the operations of the schools. The management and operations of public schools are in the hands of the Ministry of Education (MOE) through the support of Ghana Education Services (GES), School Management Committees (SMC), Parents Teachers Associations (PTA), local community, and other stakeholders. Various scholars have tried to give a working definition of what a community is. Macqueen (2002) defined a community as a group of people with diverse characteristics linked by social ties. Battez (2013) also described a community as a group of people sharing the same values, beliefs, and worldviews. Others such as Amsden, Stedman, and Kruger (2011), Capece and Costa (2013), and Stone (1992), have also defined a community in terms of



boundaries shared, whether physical or imaginary and the interactions between people, whether near or far. In this research, a community is defined as a group of people bounded by a physical boundary linked by social and cultural ties and shares the same values, beliefs, and worldviews.

Learning outcomes of private school pupils are high as compared to those of public schools (Ankomah, & Hope, 2011; Etsey, Amedahe, & Edjah, 2005; Ntim, 2014; Okyerefo, Fiaveh, & Lamptey, 2011). Furthermore, parents of children in private schools are noted to be very actively involved in school management whereas parents of pupils in public schools are in general not motivated to actively take part in school level management (Ankomah, & Hope, 2011). Weak supervision from district education offices tends to weaken the commitment of school head teachers and teachers in carrying out their duties (Mensah, 2008). The provision of Capitation Grant to schools, the preparation of School Performance Improvement Plan and the organization of School Performance Appraisal Meetings are all geared towards improving school management and performance. However, there has not been corresponding visibility regarding school level management output and improvement in learning outcomes for pupils in public schools. This low-performance issue raises concerns about how the school management structures are functioning. For instance, are activities carried out as planned? How are the processes of implementation monitored and evaluated? Who are the custodians of the benchmarks and how do they carry out their benchmarking work? These and other issues create an opportunity for auditing and interrogating how accountable the existing structures in public schools are and of course how the community supports the realisation of it.

Mauraru and Patrascu (2017) noted that there are six models practiced globally when it comes to school management. These include the formal/centralized model, collegial model, political model, subjective model, ambiguity model, and cultural model. As practiced in Ghana, the centralized



model often weakens community commitment and participation in education management (Abreh, 2017). Placing educational decision making and governance solely in the government's hands and neglecting the local community's participation often leads to a lack of a sense of ownership and commitment to schools (Allen & Mintrom, 2010; Ofori, 2017; Alhassan, 2020). This phenomenon's effects are damaging as research shows this leads projects not well executed and appropriately managed (Ahwoi, 2010).

Given this, there is a growing interest to improve education delivery by revamping community participation (Maier, Daniel, Oakes, & Lam, 2017). As it stands now, solely trained teachers or lecturers and school leaders in schools do education delivery. The government controls all affairs related to education through the Ministry of Education. This paper discusses community participation in school management, a concept that is of prime concern for educators across the globe, including Ghana. Additionally, a review of school management in the Ghanaian context, the challenges of practicing community engagement activities and the importance of community participation for effective school management was done. Literature, forming data for the paper were collected from a wide variety of sources that included library and electronic sources.

The researcher has examined the procedures that the School Management Committees (SMCs) in Ghanaian basic schools², employ in varied contexts to see the differences. From these studies, it became evident that Ghana inherited decentralisation as one of the legacies of the British Policy of Indirect Rule. Furthermore, the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana contends that power and decision-making should be transferred to the decentralised authorities³ (Opare, Egbenya, & Kaba, 2009). Opare, et al. supported the argument that one of the surest means to increased decentralisation is the guarantee of democratic governance at various levels of operations. Legitimate provision has been made in the constitutions of Ghana since independence to allow for



this to occur. The quest for decentralisation was to help accelerate growth and equitable spread of development in rural communities and to urge the participation of the communities in decision making that relate to the overall management of development in their localities (Egbenya, 2009). However, how this process of harnessing community resources with the view to speeding up growth and equitable distribution of development to communities in Ghana are confronted with challenges and especially in the education system. Snapshots of some reviewed empirical accounts on the Ghanaian context are presented in the following paragraphs.

Community participation in school management entails the active involvement of parents, guardians, community leaders, and other stakeholders in decision-making processes and the day-to-day affairs of schools (Jamilah et al., 2022). It extends beyond fundraising and volunteerism to encompass roles in governance, policy formulation, and the development of school improvement plans. Communities can mobilize resources, both financial and material, to supplement government efforts in providing necessary infrastructure, teaching aids, and learning materials. This can help bridge resource gaps in schools. When communities are actively engaged in school management, there is greater transparency and accountability (Bushra, 2022).

School administrators and teachers are held accountable for their actions, leading to better performance and responsible resource utilization. Communities are better positioned to understand the unique needs and challenges faced by their schools. Consequently, they can make informed decisions that cater to the specific requirements of their students. Active participation fosters a sense of ownership and pride among community members. They see the school as their own, leading to increased support for its growth and development. According to Eden et al (2024) schools with strong community involvement tend to achieve better academic outcomes. The collective effort of parents and community members positively impacts student learning experiences.



In the context of the Sagnarigu Municipality, community participation in school management has been embraced to varying degrees across the numerous junior high schools in the Municipality. However, there is a need for a comprehensive assessment of the current state of community involvement and an evaluation of its effectiveness. However, the extent and effectiveness of community participation in school management at these schools need to be assessed and improved if necessary. The involvement of communities in school management can have a significant impact on the performance and overall well-being of students (Aryeh-Adjei,2021).

Community participation in school management is an indispensable element in the quest for quality education in Ghana, particularly in the Sagnarigu Municipality. While challenges exist, the potential benefits are immense. By actively engaging parents, community leaders, and stakeholders in the educational process, schools can access vital resources, foster a sense of responsibility, and ultimately elevate the quality of education for the students of the region. Efforts to enhance community participation should be approached with sensitivity to the local context and a commitment to equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Through collaborative initiatives involving schools, communities, NGOs, and government bodies, the Sagnarigu Municipality can pave the way for a brighter educational future for its youth, thereby contributing to the broader development of Ghana as a whole.

Akyeampong (2004b) in contextualising decentralisation in Africa found that decentralisation in systems that are not appropriately adjusted to its fundamental requirements for effectiveness can lead to outcomes that undermine the very reason why they were introduced. Akyeampong (2004b) further contends that decentralisation practiced in developed countries where their socio-economic status and pace is advanced may require just grappling with parity and equity issues as warranted by the government. This is not the same in sub-Saharan Africa where circumstances differ broadly.



For instance, personnel, material and technology are usually considered basic variables before issues of equity and parity come into the picture. The Ghanaian situation is not any different. It is characterised by imbalances including those related to the “so called – base, secondary and tertiary” variables. In a study conducted by Tayi, Anin, and Asuo (2014), District Education and Assembly Officers asserted that inadequate funds/resources, difficult terrain and lukewarm attitudes on the part of the community level stakeholders were the major challenges adversely affecting community participation in the District Education Sector Planning (DESP) process.

In their assessment of factors affecting the standard of education Upper region, Nsiah- Peprah and Kililiyang-Viiru (2005) revealed that SMCs were operationally non-existent in 14 of the schools visited to formulate policies, ensure environmental cleanliness in schools, monitor regular attendance of teachers and pupils, as well as ensure adequate supply of teaching and learning resources. The absence of SMC and ineffective PTAs were found as the possible cause of the increasingly poor performance. The researchers noted that the capability of communities to participate should be distinguished from their willingness to participate. On the economic and social factors that underpinned the variations in community involvement and participation, they found the educational background of the school community, as well as social conditions and economic factors as important influencing agents. Kamaludeen (2014) examined the influence of the Ghana School Feeding Programme on access and retention and found that the SMC and its School Feeding Sub- Committee (SFC) directly managed the programme at the school level. The author found that each school had an SMC made up of the head teacher as the secretary, a chairperson who is a parent, and other members. Although the study could not pinpoint how operational the SMC was, it revealed the extent of SMCs participation in the administration of the school-feeding programme.



The role of collaboration among critical stakeholders in the provision of educational services cannot be overstretched since it provides the route to higher performance and achievement. The persistent widening gap in achievements of public and private basic schools is not merely due to large stocks of a variety of teaching and learning resources in the private schools as against the public schools alone, but also due to the visible concern and collaboration parents and children in private schools show in the education process. Educational provision and management cannot be undertaken by the school head and teachers in the school alone but by all the wider stakeholders together to ensure effectiveness and eventual success. This is the essence of the decentralisation concept in education seeking to bring stakeholders on board to play their varied and collective roles to promote efficiency and effectiveness toward improved learning outcomes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Community participation in school management has been recognized globally as a significant factor in improving the quality of education, fostering accountability, and promoting inclusive decision-making (Abreh, 2017). In Ghana, particularly at the junior high school (JHS) level, School Management Committees (SMCs) have been instituted as part of efforts to enhance governance and encourage local involvement in education (Osei-Owusu & Kwame Sam, 2012). The role of SMCs is crucial, as they serve as a bridge between schools and the communities they serve, allowing for greater input from parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders in the educational process. However, despite the establishment of these committees, there are ongoing concerns about SMCs effectiveness (Akom, 2016).

Various educational reviews and reforms and the desire of the community to be involved in school management culminated in the introduction of systems, interventions and structures from the Municipal Education Office to the school community. Most of these strategies were to ensure



effective school management that will yield high accountability and improvement in quality education delivery in the country. Amongst them is the School Management Committee (SMC).

The SMC is a committee designated under the Ghana Education Service Act of 1994. It is a school community-based organization aimed at strengthening community participation as a means of facilitating quality education delivery (Osei-Owusu and Sam, 2012). The SMC is a representation of the entire school community of a particular school or cluster of schools. The school community therefore becomes its constituency. Azeem (2010) on school management systems in Ghana showed that school governance was generally weak. For instance, few parents and SMC/PTA members involved themselves in school financial management, though the opportunities for participation existed. SMCs lacked knowledge of financial issues.

Challenges such as lack of adequate training and capacity building for committee members, insufficient resources to support the activities of the committees, and limited engagement from community members usually constrained SMCs (Nkansa & Chapman, 2016).

The low level of participation from community members in the management of schools may be attributed to several factors, including socio-economic challenges, a lack of awareness of the importance of community involvement, and possible cultural or traditional barriers that limit the engagement of certain groups, such as women and the youth (Dadey & Harber, 2017). Also lack of effective communication between schools and the communities they serve could be a contributing factor to the poor performance of SMCs. This problem is compounded by inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of community participation on school management and educational outcomes (Nkansa & Chapman, 2016).

Another critical issue is the unclear delineation of roles between the SMCs, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and other school management bodies, which may lead to conflicts or



overlapping responsibilities (Akom, 2016). This ambiguity often leads to a lack of accountability, making it difficult to measure the success or failure of SMC initiatives. It also raises concerns about the sustainability of community participation efforts in the long term, as these challenges may discourage community members from continuing to engage in school management activities.

Despite the government's push for decentralization and community involvement in education, SMCs frequently face issues such as lack of training, inadequate resources, poor communication, and limited decision-making power. This limited engagement hampers the effectiveness of school management and the ability to address the specific needs of students and teachers. Moreover, there is a lack of proper mechanisms to ensure the active involvement of SMCs in key educational decisions, such as budget allocation, curriculum development, and policy implementation. Understanding the barriers to effective participation and finding solutions to strengthen the role of the SMC is critical for improving educational outcomes in Ghana.

Moreover, a significant number of researches have been conducted pertaining to School Management Committees' participation in school management time. Asare, & Boakye, (2016). conducted a study on the Role of School Management Committees in Enhancing School Governance in Ghana. Agyemang, & Amoako (2018) focused on the School Management Committees and Their Role in School Improvement in Ghana. Furthermore, Opoku-Agyemang, (2013) investigated on the Decentralization and Education: The Role of School Management Committees in Ghana. Amoah & Osei (2017). Researched into the Effectiveness of School Management Committees in Improving Primary Education in Ghana: A Case Study of Selected Regions. Boadu (2015). Equally conducted a study on the Challenges of School Management Committees in Ghana: A Study of Selected Districts. However, there is a limited information on the participation of School Management Committees in the management of Junior High Schools.

It is against this background and observation that motivated the researcher to find out the extent of community participation of School Management Committees in the management of Junior High Schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to assess the participation of School Management Committees in the management of Junior High Schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality.

Specific Objectives

The specific objective of the study was to:

1. evaluate the effectiveness of the roles of School Management Committees (SMCs) in Junior High School Management within the Sagnarigu Municipality
2. assess the effectiveness of the responsibilities of the School Management Committees (SMCs) in Junior High School Management within the Sagnarigu Municipality.
3. identify the challenges School Management Committees (SMCs) faced in the participation of Junior High School Management within the Sagnarigu Municipality

1.4 Research Questions

- 1.5
2. What is the effectiveness of the roles of School Management Committees (SMCs) in Junior High School management within the Sagnarigu Municipality?
3. What is the effectiveness of the responsibilities of the School Management Committees (SMCs) in Junior High School management within the Sagnarigu Municipality?



4. What challenges are School Management Committees (SMCs) faced in the participation in Junior High School management within the Sagnarigu Municipality?

1.5 Significance of the Research

It is hoped that the findings of this research will add quality to scholarly literature of this research work for scholars to review the recommendations and apply them to other SMCs in other regions and Municipalities in and outside the country to evaluate their effectiveness as a school management strategy. Researchers may also use the findings of this work to find out whether there is the need for additional structure at all for the effective management of schools and what about schools that are effective without the SMCs. It will also be useful to stakeholders and policy makers in education to review their educational policy in relation to community participation in improving quality teaching and learning. Findings will generate interest on quality of education in Ghanaian schools and hopefully lead to further funded qualitative studies of classroom-and school-level processes.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This study is primarily delimited to the Sagnarigu Municipality. While the Municipality offers a valuable context for examining community participation in school management, it does not encompass other districts or regions in Ghana. This geographical delimitation ensures that the study maintains a manageable scope and remains feasible within the available resources and timeframe.

Furthermore, the study is narrowly delimited to Junior High Schools (JHSs) within the Sagnarigu Municipality. This study does not extend its scope to include primary or secondary schools. The primary focus of the research is on assessing the effectiveness of roles, responsibilities School Management Committee (SMC) in the participation of the Junior High School Management and



the challenges faced in the participation in the schools' management. Other aspects of school governance that fall outside the direct purview of the SMC may not be extensively explored.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to certain limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research relies on self-reported data obtained through interviews, and document analysis. As with any self-reported data, there may be the potential for response bias subjectivity. Respondents may provide information based on their perceptions or experiences, which could affect the accuracy of the findings. External factors such as political or economic changes could impact the stability and effectiveness of School Management Committees (SMCs) over time. These external influences may not be fully accounted for in this study, and their potential effects should be considered when interpreting the results.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research is structured into five chapters, each serving a distinct purpose and contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Chapter one serves as the foundation of the research, providing an introductory overview of the study. It includes a clear statement of the problem, study objectives, study question and the overall relevance of the research. This chapter also outlines the scope, limitations and delimitations of the study. In the second chapter, a comprehensive review of existing literature related to the research topic is presented. This chapter delves into the core concepts and theories pertinent to community participation in school management. It critically examines the contributions of various authors and scholars, placing their work in context and highlighting the key findings, trends, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge. Chapter three focuses on the research methodology employed to conduct the study. It provides insights into the chosen research approach, design, and methods.



Chapter four is dedicated to the analysis and presentation of data collected during the research process. It showcases the results of data analysis, employing qualitative methods. The fifth and final chapter begins with a summary of the key findings and their significance. The chapter then draws overarching conclusions from the research. Further the chapter provides practical recommendations based on the research findings, offering actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders in the field of education.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews existing literature on community participation in school management. It also presents and discusses the theoretical Review, the conceptual framework, school management committees (SMCs) facilitation of community participation in school management, the roles and responsibilities of the School Management Committee (SMC) in enhancing the quality of education and school governance, the challenges and barriers hindering effective community participation in school management in the Sagnarigu Municipality and conclusion.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.2 Community Participation Theory

The Community Participation Theory, articulated by Arnstein (1969), posits that involving community members in decision-making processes empowers them and leads to more equitable outcomes. It envisions a ladder of participation, ranging from tokenism to full citizen power. In the context of this research, community participation is operationalized through School Management Committees (SMCs). These committees serve as a platform for community members, educators, and stakeholders to collaborate in the management of junior high schools. According to this theory, as community participation increases, there is a corresponding rise in a sense of ownership and responsibility, which ultimately enhances the quality of education. In the context of this research, community participation is operationalized through SMCs, which serve as a mechanism for facilitating collaboration among community members, educators, and stakeholders in the management of junior high schools. According to the Community Participation Theory, increasing community participation through SMCs can lead to a greater sense of ownership and





responsibility among stakeholders. As community members become more actively involved in decision-making processes related to school management, they develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the schools within their community. This increased engagement fosters a sense of ownership over the outcomes of these decisions and a greater commitment to the overall improvement of the schools. Theory suggests that increasing community participation can lead to more equitable outcomes in education. Therefore, involving a diverse range of stakeholders in decision-making processes, can ensure that the needs and perspectives of all members of the community are taken into account.

This inclusive approach can help address disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes by ensuring that decisions are made with the best interests of all. Community Participation Theory provides a theoretical basis for understanding the importance of involving community members in decision-making processes related to school management. By operationalizing community participation through SMCs, my research aims to examine how increasing community involvement can lead to a greater sense of ownership and responsibility among stakeholders, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of the quality of education in the Sagnarigu Municipality.

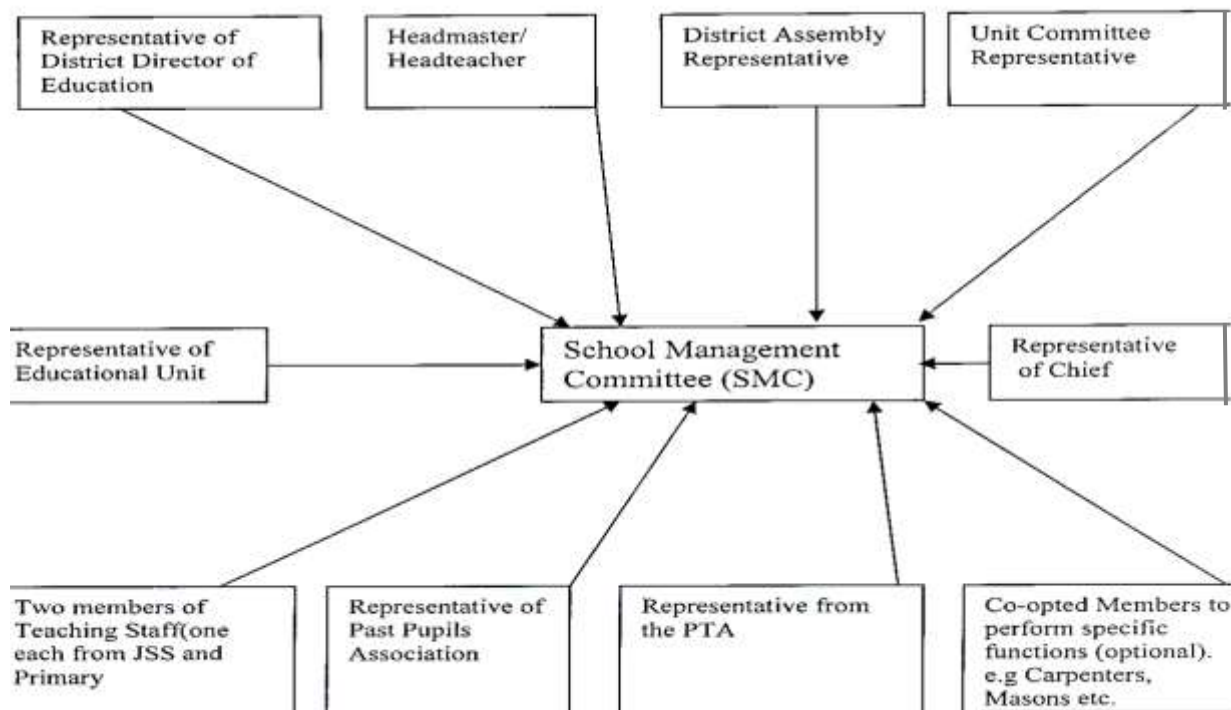


Figure 1 Diagrammatic Representation of the Membership of the SMC

2.2 Concept of Community Participation

Community refers to a group of people from a common geographic area, caste, sex, religion.

According to Word Bank (1999), Communities can be defined by characteristics that the members share, such as culture, language, tradition, law, geography, class, and race. Participation can be referred in various ways depending on the context that clarifies different level of participation such as participation in „real decision making at every stage, attendance at meeting, services etc.

According Mark Bray (2000), a community has at least some features such as: a network of shared interests and concerns; a symbolic or physical base; extension beyond the narrowly-defined household; and something that distinguishes it from other similar groups. Community participation in education helps to identify issues and problems in school education. School is a part of community and community supports school to give quality education to every student for the

development of the society. According to Tanka Nath Sharma (2008), Community participation and involvement follows as First, the community should have an access to be in the school, learn about the school and observe what goes on in school. Second step would be to make community aware of the situation and make them realize the importance of their involvement in schools where their children are receiving education. Third step would be involvement in the management process of the school where their children are learning, they will be ready to get into the process of involvement. Fourth step would be decision making and be a part of school governance.

Community participation is a concept that attempts to bring different people together for community problem solving and decision making. Community participation is a way to take responsibility and accountability, to identifying the problem, to design and implement programme for the development of the society. Its members include from different groups, caste, religion, and sex etc.

2.2.3 Benefits of community participation for school education

Most of the educationists are realizing the significance and benefits of community participation in school education and also recognized community participation is one of the ways to improve educational access and quality. Community participation is significantly correlated to school community relation (Hamdan 2013). Report of “save the children” (2013) also emphasis the importance of community participation in the school education. Community-based approaches to educational development have the potential to enhance ownership, accountability, and efficiency. Community involvement in education facilitates the identification of community-specific education issues and informs the development of strategies to remove barriers to access and quality in education within a given community (Shilpi Sharma et. al.2014). Deka A. (2016) found that the overall effect of community participation in school was positive.



2.2.4 Policy Review on Community Participation

The B.G. Kher Committee (1953) emphasized the need for decentralization of management to attract community involvement at the grassroots level and involvement of all types of local bodies to promote and manage education in the interest of mass education. Subsequently, the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) recommended that primary education should become the responsibility of the Panchayats. Kothari commission (1964-66) emphasized the importance of community participation in the school education. It recommended that it is essential to establish intimacy between local communities and school to develop quality education in the school. It also recommended that decentralization of education at all levels. It also says that only decentralization of administration and to vest it in the local authority is not enough but also provides local leadership and trained officers to prepare their duties and make the necessary resources available to the local authority. This will be a major task for states education department.

According to National Policy on education 1986, District boards of Education will be created to manage education up to the higher secondary level. Within a multi-level framework of educational development, Central, State and District and Local level agencies will participate in planning, co-ordination, monitoring, and evaluation. Local communities, through appropriate bodies, will be assigned a major role in programmes of school improvement.

The importance of community involvement has also been highlighted in National Policy on Education 1986 (programme of action 1992). It emphasized establishment of district boards of education, district institutes of education and training, and village education committees will go a long way towards the school improvement programme, the involvement of the community with the educational process, and creating a new form of accountability of the educational system.



The ministry of human resource development GOI, 1993, a committee on decentralization of educational planning was set up with Veerappa Moily as its chairman. This report proposed Panchayati raj structures for management of education and their responsibilities. According to this report there should be three level for management of education and their responsibility as 1) Panchayat level where Panchayat comprises single village and village level where panchayat comprises a group of villages, 2) Panchayat Samiti at the intermediate level, Zilla Parishad at the district level.

National Curriculum Framework 1975, 1988, 2000, 2005 have also strengthened the importance of involvement of community members for curriculum development and management of the school. It also focuses the importance of communities for providing local resource materials.

The Right to Education Act 2009 came into force on April 1, 2010. It was an important act in the Indian education. One of the important provisions of the RTE Act 2009 is to constitute school management committees. According to this act, at least 75 percent of the SMCs are to comprise parents, disadvantaged groups, and weaker sections of society and also there is a representation of minimum 50 percent representation of women in the committee. The role of SMCs in the school is assigned to monitor the working of school and grants received by the governments or local authority or any other source and preparing a plan for the school development which fostering quality education. So that it is clear that role of community participation is to establish democratic value and ensuring the right to education is a fundamental right.

Ninth to five years plan says that it is equally necessary that the problem of universal elementary education and literacy is tackled through a strong social movement with clearly perceived goals and involving the State and Central Governments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Local Bodies, voluntary agencies, social action groups, the media and every supportive element in

society. The tenth to five-year plan also emphasized to the involvement of the community and it will be made more systematic by involving the panchayat raj institutions (PRIs) and urban local bodies. VECs, Mother-Teacher Associations (MTA) and Parents' Teacher Associations (PTA) would have a formal role in the management of schools in the village. Twelfth to five years plan also emphasis involvement of parents in the school management to bring quality education. Effective functioning of SMCs and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) is essential for quality education in the school. Special efforts and innovative approaches should be required to enable illiterate, semi-literate or less-educated parents to partner with schools in their children's learning process.

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched in 1994 with the assistance of World Bank, European Commission, and Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the United Nations International children's emergency Fund (UNICEF). Its aim was to operationalize successful total literacy campaign in a favorable climate. DPEP has provided training to over three million community members and about one million teachers

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, 2001) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education. It also ensures that involvement of community participation for the success of the programme. Many kinds of community-based institutions have been involved such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Village Education Committee (VEC) and Gram Panchayat.

The government of India has initiated a programme for universalization of secondary education, 'Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan' in 2009. According to RMSA, Involvement of Panchayati Raj and Municipal Bodies, Community, Teachers, Parents and other stakeholders in

the management of Secondary Education, through bodies like School Management Committees and Parent – Teacher Associations will be ensured in the planning process, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

After independence, time to time, Government of India has been made policy and Act for decentralization of education. Many programmes have been initiated to achieve the goal of decentralization of education.

2.2.5 Community Participation in education

According to Melvin (2010) different practices are going on in Japanese elementary and junior high schools for the improvement of quality education such as partnerships between teachers and parents and among parents through parental involvement.

Japanese schools provide great involvement of parents in the school. It provides information about school norms and policies, children's work. Japanese school also provide parental participate as volunteers. For example, parents gather for cooking classes, recycling activities and story tellers.

Schools in Japan also provide seminars for parents to improve their own efficacy in educating and rearing their children. In elementary school, parents are provided to attend skills training on various areas such as ironing, sewing, cooking, reading etc. it also provide a seminar on proper use of mobile phones and the internet etc. it makes parents be aware of how such technologies can negatively affect their children. Parents play a pivotal role in parent teacher associations as decision makers in Japanese schools. Parents have more power than teachers to make decisions about the affairs of the association. Parents are initiated PTA activities and not by the teachers. Parents have also decided the disbursements of funds. PTA meeting is also called by PTA officers from various schools to discuss matters which are needed to school children. Apart from those types, there are two other important roles of parents as partners of teachers and other parents. There



are open and available communication channels between teachers and parents in the Japanese school. Teacher visit to his/her students' homes to talk with the parents about school concerns, child's talents and abilities, and child's safety. The teacher also uses another communication channel to convey messages to parents about school events and student's performance. The other role of parents is partners of other parents. It is used to convey information to parents regarding school-related matters over the phone. Schools are also provided a network-type directory to parents containing children's names, their corresponding contact numbers, and chain/order of communication. There is also children association which is a community-based group consisting of school children and parents. It is another platform where parents can interact and exchange ideas pertaining to their children's education. Children associations are also involved garbage recycling and camping activities organizing by parents.

Tanka Nath Sharma (2008) reviewed international practices of community participation in school education. Based on this reviewed community participation of some countries are presented in the following section.

In Denmark, Parents have played a huge role in running of schools. In 1990, Boards of school governors was created for the role of parents which is to strengthen decision making in the school governance. Five – seven members are in each board among parents, including two members from school and two from students. The boards are responsible for developing guidelines for school's activities, approving the school budget and making the curriculum. Danish parents are very responsible for their children's schooling.

In England, the governance of schooling provided power or greater autonomy of decision-making by schools. 9-20 members are in governing body in each school which are elected by parents and staff members and governing body nominated additional community governors. The main role of



the board of governors are to provide direction for school governance, ensure accountability, participate in decision making, control of the school budget for purchase of books, equipment, stationary and other goods and service. The governing boards also play a core role for new appointments of teachers and, staff member.

In Finland, New Basic Education Act of 1999 provides a significant role of co-operation of parents for school education development. Schools have right to design their own curricula based on the National Framework of Core Curriculum with the help of parent-teacher meetings, parents' meetings, discussion events and one-to-one discussions between individual teachers and parents.

In Spain, there are two parents' association: Spanish Confederation of Parent Associations (CEAPA) and National Catholic Confederation of Parents (CONCAPA) which take part in the management of schools.

In Austria, since the 1980s a schools autonomy scheme was introduced school management. The main role of this scheme was to enhance the involvement parents. A board is constituted by a representative of parents and students in each class by voting. Since 2000, boards and other community representatives control the management of schools.

In Brazil, the school board has the authority and responsibility of school management under the decentralized framework of education. At present, the principal has not authority utilizing the resources of school without the approval of the board. The teachers, students, and parents are the members of the school board. Involvement of the community in school management more significant to increasing enrolment, retention of the children.

In Nepal, new provision for the SMC in the 7th Amendment has wide implication in the implementation of educational programs and plans for enhancement of quality education. The



School Management Committee have a significant involvement in improving the management efficiency, efficiency related to planning, monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of the schools. There is a legal process for electing four representatives from guardians or parents including one female member in the management committee. Nepal has another community involvement which is Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The main role of PTA is to strengthen the quality of teaching learning, advice, the school about fees structure and communicate the parent and community about the educational programs of the school.

According to Nancy Kendall (2007), a number of states of South Africa (Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) has adopted fee-free or fee-reduced basic education. A wider group of stakeholders, including sub-national government personnel, teachers, and principals, parents, and occasionally students are involved in the construction of frameworks for improvement of quality education. Parental and community involvement in schools has been affected quality in a number of ways such as providing an oversight of school budgeting and teacher attendance and performance; managing student attendance and homework; providing resources (labour, money, etc.) for school building, teacher hiring, and other school infrastructure and services; and advocating at local and national levels for changes that may improve educational access, retention, and completion.

According to Gamage (1993), in USA, Annual Conference of State Governors, education reform was made in 1986. Two broad strategies were emerged, school site-based governance and choice. Site-based management was a plan for improving schools governance. It proposed two key strategies for achieving this goal. a) The transfer of power to make decisions regarding budget, staffing, and instruction, from the central/regional offices to the individual schools. b) Participation of all stakeholders such as administrators and staff, teachers, parents, and the local community in

decision making at the individual school level. Different strategies were adopted by each state to improving the education system. The Education Improvement Act enacted by South Carolina in 1984, the following had seven main components which affect the operation of schools. i) raising student performance by improving academic standards; ii) strengthening the teaching and testing of basic skills; iii) elevating the teaching profession by strengthening the training, evaluation, and compensation of teachers; iv) improving the leadership, management, and fiscal efficiency of schools at all levels; v) implementing strict quality controls and rewarding productivity; vi) creating more effective partnerships among schools, parents, communities, and business people; and vii) providing school buildings conducive to student learning. In Chicago, comprehensive legislation introduced decentralisation from 1990 for governance of the school. Each school should be governed by an elected council consisting of eight representatives of the parents and community, two teachers with the principal as an ex-officio member. Each council is authorised to appoint the principal on a four-year contract, allocate budgetary resources, and prepare long-term plans for school improvement. The principal is entitled to appoint teachers on merits.

Community participation in the school education is not a new term in the developed country. It has been initiated to achieve the goal of decentralization of education in the 1980s. It has been also initiated in the many developing countries to bring the quality education. It has a great impact to bring quality education. Many developed and developing countries have been made policy and Act for decentralization of education.

2.2.6 Community Participation Initiatives

Decentralisation process was initiated under the Kerala Panchayat Act Amendment 1999. Members of PEC are Panchayat Education Committees and Ward members. The school plan is developed by the PEC and all the funds are routed through the Panchayat and some of the Panchayat use their

own resources for the school. Special efforts are made by PTA and teachers to enroll all children with special focus on gender equity and promotion of education of the girl child include all migrant children—most of them from Orissa and Bihar. All HMs under that Panchayat are presented report of PEC in monthly or bimonthly meetings which is chaired by Sarpanch.

In Bihar, Bihar Vidyalaya Shiksha Act of 2000 provides for the election of Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti. VSS roles are for supervision of civil works, oversee financial transaction, organise campaigns to enroll out of school children and girls, ensure that they are retained. But VSS are not involved in any academic matters of inside the classroom.

In Karnataka, Village Education Committees have been formed through a special government order 2001. The Chairman of VEC is from the elected Panchayat. The government introduced the Namma Shale (My School—a School-community connect programme) in 2007 which run in four clusters in four districts. This programme has 7 important stakeholders—teachers, parents, children, SDMC members, CBO members, GPs and government education department. All are involved in all the school development issues from monitoring to capacity building.

Nagaland Government had brought an enactment Nagaland education Institution and Services rule 2002, on 15 April 2002 for communitisation of elementary education. The VEC has certain administrative, academic and financial power and function to manage elementary education in the village. The VEC has the administrative functions to disbursing salaries and granting casual leave to teachers and the staff of the school, procure furniture, stationery, etc. and select/recommend the appointment of substitute teachers against long term vacancy. The academic functions of the VEC include to ensuring universal enrolment and retention of all children aged 6-14 years, implementing annual plans and programmes of the government, and ensuring free textbooks reach the children and the mid-day meal is well managed.

In Madhya Pradesh, Jana Shikshan Adhiniyam promotes decentralisation of school education. The Jana Shikshan Adhiniyam (JSA) act provides for PTA and Teachers Association which has a responsibility to ensure enrolment of all children, monitor regular attendance of teachers, mobilise local resource persons for teaching, monitor ongoing learning of children and organise remedial education and mobilise resources for small requirements at the school level. Inclusiveness is promoted through community member.

In Gujarat, VEC and Ward Education Committee was enacted in 1996 and approved in approved by the legislature in 2003. There is also a different level of decentralised structures—District, Taluka, and Village. District Panchayat has a vest to recruit primary school teachers through a staff selection committee. The funds for Meena Manch, Residential Alternative Schools, payment of Bal Mitra salaries, Civil Works, Disbursement of teacher and school grant and IED grant for CWSN have now been transferred to the village level or the school level. In 2008, the Government of Tamil Nadu had made the roles and responsibilities of the Village Education Committees. Local bodies/school committees also look after the maintenance of school buildings.

Andhra Pradesh, Academic Monitoring Committees have been created under RTE act 2009. They are involved to monitor the quality of education such as teacher absence, teachers have to take permission of AMC to take leave, civil works, and other infrastructure and student progress. Time to time, about all states have initiated community participation in the school education. Accordingly, they have made policy and plan for the community participation in the school and it has positive impact on the education system.

In Rajasthan, Shiksha Karmi project and Lok Jumbish project, these two projects are externally aided projects for basic education for universalization of education with a quality education in the remote and socially backward villages with a special emphasis on community participation in these

projects. Shiksha Karmi Project of Rajasthan was initiated in 1987. The village communities (VECs) have a great contribution to the improvement of the school environment, infrastructure and facilities, enrolment of children through school mapping and micro-planning in the Shiksha Karmi School. The project covers 2,708 villages in 147 blocks spread over 31 districts (10th planning commission report).

Lok Jumbish was launched in 1992 by GOI and GOR with support from Sida. Lok jumbish project has been set up for innovative management structures on the principal of decentralization. It aims is to build a partnership with local communities and the voluntary sector to improve quality education. It has a positive contribution to the development of improving MLL based textbooks for class I-IV. It has conducted school mapping in 8,921 villages, opened 2,560 Sahaj Shiksha Centres covering 47,000 children and started 529 new primary schools and 268 upper primary schools, 239 pre-school centres of anganwadis and formed over 7,600 Mahila Groups. (10th planning commission report).

2.3 Community Participation in the management of schools

Community participation can be defined as community members' total involvement in tasks or projects that directly or indirectly affect them (Ahmad, 2011). Juxtaposing this with the school management systems would mean their involvement in the day-to-day running of the schools in their various communities. However, it should be noted that people cannot be forced to 'participate' in projects, which affect their lives but rather should be given the chance where possible to engage in the project. This is particularly important in cases where their inputs are needed, and community ownership is sort to increase the eventual use of projects being brought to the community (Kimengsi , Azibo , & Gwan , 2016).



Judging from the above, community participation should emphasize the involvement of locals with similar needs and goals in decisions affecting their lives, in this case the smooth running of schools in their community. Mansuri and Rao (2013) share in this view by explicitly explaining community participation as active involvement of the community in project design and implementation of key objectives based on the incorporation of local knowledge into the project's decision-making process to bring about development. This view of development has also been succinctly put by Weyers (2011) to mean how the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural condition of communities. This implies integrating these communities into the life of the nation, to enable them to contribute fully to national progress. It should therefore be noted that for any community project to succeed, there needs to be the full participation of community members.

In line with the shared responsibility of ensuring development in the community, the advocates of community participation argue that a local community should be given active roles in programs to ensure improvement in outcomes that directly affects them (Abrams, 1971). Thus, the educational sector is no exception. The main reason for this advocacy is that it gives the control of affairs and decisions on projects of the community to people mostly affected by them (Lachapelle, 2008). Moreover, it is believed that community participation brings forth buy-in and lasting benefits to the people involved than just ensuring that things are getting done (Zaden, 2010). Arnstein (1969), posits that community participation encourages citizen participation and citizen power and control and that "...the redistribution of power enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from political and economic process to be deliberately included in the future" (p. 216). Since individuals in the local community are actively involved in decision-making process, it helps promote a sense of ownership and control among them (Ahwoi, 2010).



In addition, community involvement in school management is essential in promoting development in the Ghanaian education system. This is because parents have the right to be involved in the management of schools that their wards attend and the school can learn from the intimate knowledge parents have about the kids. Also, communities can provide resources such as volunteer support, free labor, and financial support for the schools, community involvement has the tendency of increasing student outcomes and also the improvement of school accountability (Kusumaningrum, Maisyaroh, Ulfatin, Triwiyanto, & Gunawan, 2017; Sharma, 2008). There is, therefore, the need for the decentralization of governance of the educational system to the community level to assist in addressing the needs of the learners and the schools. The school is in charge of enhancing the knowledge, skills, and values of individuals, but this can only be achieved through effective collaboration with parents, the community, and other stakeholders. This sentiment is well echoed by Mishra (2015), whose view is that efforts are to be made in involving them (parents, community, stakeholders) in order to maximize their contributions since each group plays different roles in influencing children's education. Schools she continued, are built by and for the community and when the community as a whole does not own the school it cannot be declared as a good school. Therefore, the involvement of the community members in various activities of the school is important for the development of the school (Mishra, 2015). Through community participation, schools and communities will be brought closer to ensure effective management and successful development. There is a need, therefore for an effort to collaborate with each other to effect change and maximize their contribution towards school development.

Studies such as Shaeffer (1992), Heneveld and Craig (1996), Givinda and Diwan (2004), and Asare (2011) have over the years shown the presence of various forms of community participation in school management. Community involvement could be incorporated in research and data



collection, school construction, curriculum design (culturally responsive), financial and material support, among others. Therefore, members of the community could be involved in school management, likewise, individuals who attend or attended educational institutions in that community.

2.3.2 Community participation in culturally responsive Curriculum Design

Communities' and parents' involvement help develop to curricula and learning materials that reflect children's everyday lives in society. It is a well-known fact that children are able to relate to what is being learnt when they are able to associate it with everyday happenings, thus contents of textbooks and other materials that exemplify their own lives in their community is easy to grasp by these students and effective learning takes place (Hussein, Muturi, & Samantar, 2018). In Papua New Guinea for example, community schools set the goal to link the culture of the pupils' home community with the culture of the school (Guthrie, 2018). Accordingly, the schools consider the community as the center of learning as well as the focus of education. As a result, the community schools have become central to the national curriculum development which enables community life, such as festivals, customs, musical instruments, and local business activities, to be reflected in the curriculum (Uemura, 1999; Offorma, 2016; Yang & Hui, 2020). A teacher, administrator or a principal who is aware of the important role the community can play in shaping the learning experience of students would as much as possible design a community-wise, family-wise and a student-wise curriculum, with an emphasis on the community's involvement as well as its implementation (Laurence, 2010) with the social setting taken into consideration.

2.3.4 Importance of Community Participation in the management of schools

It is of great benefit to involve community members, families and parents/guardians of pupils in school management. According to Cornwall (2008), community involvement improves the



educational delivery so that children learn better and are well prepared for the changing world. Numerous benefits come with involving the community in school management. Research shows that community participation could lead to strengthening and increasing accountability in school management (Ahiabor, 2017). For example, parental involvement in education, particularly in school governance, is seen as a means of making schools more accountable to the society that funds them. This has been witnessed in some places such as England and Wales, Canada and the United States (Burns & Wilkoszewski, 2012). Accountability is developed through routine parents' meetings and reporting systems on student progress. When parents contribute their time, labor, materials, land, and funds, they tend to be more involved in school activities, including participating in meetings with teachers and monitoring teachers' performance. Teachers and school staff, in turn, feel more obliged to deliver better education for the students in order to respond to the needs of parents and communities (Uemura, 1999). Abreh, (2017) also observed that effective community participation leads to improvement in students learning in the rural communities in Ghana. For example, a World Bank report (2012) emphasized that one benefit of community participation is the maximization of limited resources in education delivery. Community members, families or parents can provide resources such as human resource, local knowledge for their children, assist in material and financial resources, and assist in research and data collection (as stated above as one of the examples of community involvement) to review factors that contribute to lower enrollment, absenteeism and poor performance in their schools.

2.3.5 Community participation in Effective and Efficient Use of Resources

When people participate in projects, they are granted the opportunity to have a say in deciding the objective and strategies by which the objective would be achieved. This is most likely to make the project more effective because by participating in the planning and implementation, they ensure



the effective utilization of available resources. Community involvement in school management is most desirable because there is a planned and judicious use of community resources to the benefit of all. This is because there is communal spirit and ownership and members are willing to ensure that available scarce resources are not wasted. In a study conducted by Asare in 2011 in the Kwabre District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana on community participation in basic schools' management, the researcher found out that an overwhelming majority, 80.8% out of the sampled 146 community members supported and participated in the building of their community school by providing supports. This includes the payment of levies, the provision of communal labor and leasing of land for school projects. The author had observed that 16 out of the 24 sampled schools built by the community had classroom structures that were still in good shape (Asare, 2011).

2.3.5.1 Community Self-reliance

The harsh realities of the economic situation in many African countries have compelled communities to seek solutions to pertinent problems that have plagued them over the years. The inability of the government of the day to fully support most community schools in the country has necessitated the coming together of community members who have a common aim to find solutions to both the infrastructure and management problems of these schools. Being self-reliant in this context means communities will focus on solving problems themselves and not depend solely on the government to solve it for them. Participation allows people to think about solution instead of focusing on their problems thereby sustaining the project. It actually removes the mentality of being dependent, but rather people become aware of the problems and they become more confident and this foster greater independence.

The continuous widening of the gap in the developmental levels of urban and rural areas and the inability of governments of the day to provide structures for education in various rural areas has



necessitated the setting up of these schools by community members so as to help educate indigenes. Most government programs do not reach out to all those in need hence participation of non-state actors especially community members will reach and provide services to underserved areas (Oakley, 1991 as cited in Ahiabor, 2017). Thus, communities give potential support to supplement and reinforce government action and can support schools in ways government cannot (Uemura, 1999) thereby increasing the coverage of educational facilities nationwide. In addition, concerns of parents and the reasons why they send their children to school can be addressed and this helps in creating a nourishing

2.3.6 School Management Context in Ghana

The Education Act of 1961 established the policy of compulsory and free education for children between the ages of four and fifteen (basic education) in Ghana. The main instruction language is English. Education in Ghana is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Ghana Education Service (GES) supported by three autonomous bodies; the National Inspectorate Board (NIB), National Teaching Council (NTC) and the National Council assume the implementation of education policies (Ministry of Education, 2012). The Ghana Education Service is responsible for the coordination of national education policy on pre-tertiary education and is headed by a Director General (UNESCO, 2010). The Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), established by Act No.718 of 2006 is to coordinate and oversee all aspects of TVET in the country.

The educational data collection and analysis is handled by the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Policies are implemented in collaboration with local offices. The regional and 138 district education offices which represent the Ministry of Education in the local areas and implement the policies set at the Central level (UNESCO, 2010). The Ghana Education



Decentralization Project (GEDP) has increased the influence of local authorities over management, finance and operated issues when it comes to education matters (Ministry of Education, 2012). As of 2019, the number of regions in Ghana has increased from 10 to 16 hence the possibility of a corresponding increase in the number of district education offices in the near future.

The financing of Ghanaian education is by the government and donors like World Bank, United States via United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Kingdom via Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union. The donors' participation is usually project focused and granted under certain conditions, giving them certain influence (Kumi, 2019; Thompson & Casely-Hayford, 2008).

Many attempts over the years have been made by government to ensure community participation in school management. They include Acceleration Development Plan (ADP) of 1951, 2003, Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and District Education Strategic Plan (DESP) (Ministry of Education, 2003). The Government of Ghana made provisions for community participation in the 1994 Ghana Education Service Act, section 9 and sub section 2 (Ahiabor, 2017). The reason for the introduction of these Acts was to ensure full participation and ownership of local stakeholders in school management in their own communities (Addae-Boahene, 2007).

The establishment of District Education Oversight Committees (DEOC), School Management Committees and PTAs are all directed towards rejuvenating the status of communities and their members in school level management (Abreh, 2017). This essentially springs from the fact that communities assist the schools in the ethics and compliance aimed at promoting management efficiency and effectiveness. School Management Committees (SMC) are the managerial hand of basic public schools in Ghana and these are the governing agencies of the school. Their roles are central to the main activities and operations at the school level. The SMC, by law, is the governing

body of public schools in the various communities in Ghana and are supposed to promote the interest of the school and learners to receive the best education. Every public school is supposed to have a School Management Committee.

Despite efforts made by government to ensure multiple stakeholder involvement in school delivery, it is argued that the involvement of some communities in the Central Region of Ghana in improving basic education delivery has not been encouraging (Abreh, 2017). Thus, it is imperative for community members together with other stakeholders to improve the quality of schools through school management. And so the quest for decentralization of school level management is to help accelerate growth and equitable spread of development in rural communities and to urge the participation of communities in decision making that relate to the overall management of development in their localities (Egbenya, 2009).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

In this expanded conceptual framework, we provide a detailed description of each research objective and its relationship within the context of community participation in school management at Junior High Schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. This framework aims to elucidate the multifaceted dynamics at play in the research:

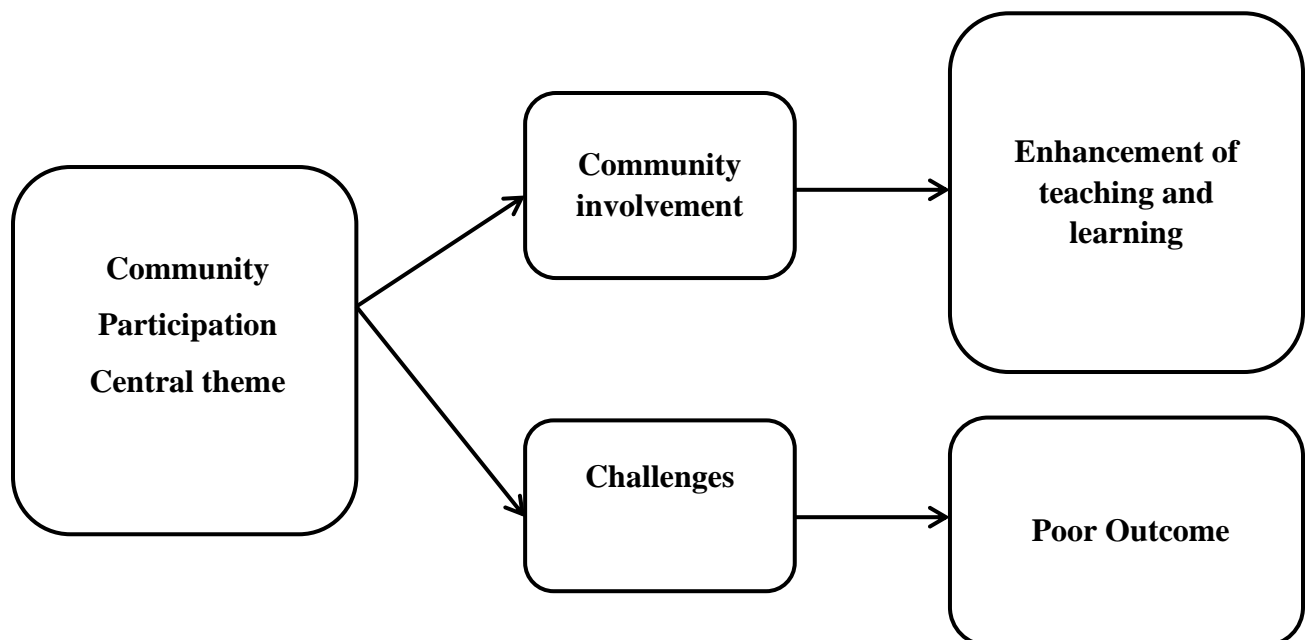




Figure 2 Visualizing the Interconnectedness of the Research Objectives within the Conceptual Framework. Source: Author's construct, 2024.

This primary objective serves as the cornerstone of the research. It involves a meticulous assessment of the depth and breadth of community involvement in school management through School Management Committees (SMCs). This evaluation encompasses various dimensions of participation, including the degree to which community members actively engage in decision-making processes, their contributions to resource allocation, and their effectiveness in overseeing school activities. Essentially, it gauges the pulse of community participation within the educational landscape of the Sagnarigu Municipality.

2.4 Facilitation of Community Participation in School Management

According to Ahmad (2011), community participation is the active involvement of community members in tasks or initiatives that influence their lives, either directly or indirectly. This notion refers to school management systems' engagement in the regular operations of schools in their communities. It is essential to stress that people should not be compelled to take part in initiatives that have an impact on their lives. They should be given the chance to voluntarily participate in these activities instead. When establishing a feeling of community ownership is needed to ensure the ongoing use of projects brought to the community and when their thoughts and contributions are critical, this method becomes more important (Kimengsi, Azibo, & Gwan, 2016). Based on the foregoing, community participation should stress the engagement of locals with comparable needs and aims in choices that have an impact on their lives, in this instance the efficient operation of schools in their neighborhood. Community participation is defined by Mansuri and Rao (2013) as the community's active involvement in the design and execution of projects that aim to achieve



certain goals by incorporating local knowledge into the decision-making process of the project to foster development. This description is consistent with the perspective held by Mansuri and Rao (2013).

Weyers (2011) defined this perspective on development concisely as the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are combined with those of the government to enhance the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities. For such communities. The proponents of community involvement contend that a local community should be given active roles in programs to ensure improvement in results that directly impact them (Abrams, 1971). This is by the shared duty of ensuring community development. The educational sector is thus not an exception. The major justification for this advocacy is that it empowers those who would be most impacted by community initiatives to manage their affairs and make decisions about them (Lachapelle, 2008). Furthermore, it is thought that community involvement results in buy-in and long-lasting advantages for the individuals participating rather than merely ensuring that things get done (Zaden, 2010). According to Arnstein (1969), community involvement promotes citizen power, control, and participation. He also claims that "the redistribution of power enables the have-not citizens, who are currently excluded from political and economic process to be deliberately included in the future." The fact that residents actively participate in the decision-making process aids in fostering a sense of ownership and control among them (Ahwoi, 2010).

Community participation in school management is internationally acknowledged as a strategy to enhance educational quality and foster community ownership. This approach envisions that community stakeholders actively engage in decision-making, mobilize resources, and monitor school activities. In their article on the effectiveness of community involvement in schools, Sharma (2016), Ahiabor (2017), and Adam (2005) claimed that community involvement is becoming more



and more encouraged because it is seen as a useful tool for ensuring school effectiveness and functionality through accountability, monitoring of relevant curriculum, and ensuring resource mobilization and maximization. Parent-teacher associations, School Governing Bodies, and School Management Committees have been established and given duties in nations like Ghana, India, Nigeria, and South Africa to ensure community involvement in education. These initiatives aim to improve educational delivery and incorporate community input into school management and governance (Adam, 2005; Ahiabor, 2017).

In Ghana, the establishment of School Management Committees (SMCs) represents a significant leap towards promoting community engagement in education. Nonetheless, studies indicate that the efficacy of SMCs is influenced by various factors, including the level of community participation, capacity building, and resource availability.

Community participation encompasses a multifaceted process wherein stakeholders in communities guide and influence developmental initiatives, decision-making processes, governance, and management in schools (Fusheini, 2006). Beyond mere involvement, it entails parents ensuring their children attend school, actively participating in school meetings, offering financial and material support to schools, creating teaching and learning materials, assisting teachers to achieve positive outcomes, and serving as resource persons (Sharma, 2016).

Furthermore, community participation in school development extends to engaging in dialogues with policymakers and school administrators, donating land for school infrastructure, contributing to curriculum design, and developing learning materials (Kusumaningrum, Ulfatin, Triwiyanto & Gunawan, 2017). This holistic involvement enriches the educational landscape by integrating diverse perspectives and resources.

Kenneth (2009) reiterated the significance of community participation in school development, emphasizing that empowering communities to participate in school affairs enables students to assert their rights and access quality education. Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) emphasized the pivotal role of community participation in ensuring the delivery of quality education in schools. Sumarsono et al. (2016) emphasized a shared responsibility among the government, parents, and communities in developing schools and molding the future generation within the education system. Moreover, Sharma (2016) highlighted the growing importance of community participation in enhancing school effectiveness. It serves as a valuable tool for ensuring accountability, monitoring curriculum relevance, and maximizing resource utilization. Countries such as Ghana, India, Nigeria, and South Africa have institutionalized mechanisms such as Parent-Teacher Associations, School Governing Bodies, and School Management Committees to enhance education delivery and integrate community inputs into school governance and management practices (Ahiabor, 2017). These initiatives underscore a global recognition of the indispensable role communities play in shaping educational outcomes

2.5 The Roles and Responsibilities of the School Management Committee (SMC)

SMCs assume a pivotal role in community participation in school management in Ghana. They are entrusted with diverse responsibilities, including the formulation of school improvement plans, budgeting, and the monitoring of school operations. Since times past, when parents and guardians gave young generations informal education, community engagement has existed for a very long period (Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021). When the agency of education was willingly involved in the regulation and administration of finance and supply of education systems in the 18th century, the historical views of community involvement in school developments in Africa began (Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021). Through the donation of land for the building of schools and teacher bungalows,



communities in Ghana were the first to open most of the basic schools (Aryeh-Adjei, 2021). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of SMCs is contingent upon factors such as the capacity of committee members, their comprehension of their roles, and the depth of community engagement. Participating in school administration as community members, families, and parents/guardians has several advantages. According to Cornwall (2008), community participation enhances educational delivery, resulting in higher learning outcomes and better equipped students for an ever-changing global environment. Involving the community in school management has several advantages. According to research, community involvement might reinforce and increase responsibility in school administration (Ahiabor, 2017). For instance, parental participation in education, especially in school governance, is viewed to increase schools' accountability to the public that finances them. Some places, including England and Wales, Canada, and the United States, have seen this (Burns & Wilkoszewski, 2012).

Abreh (2017) also noted that in Ghana's rural areas, improved student learning is a result of successful community engagement. For instance, a World Bank report from 2012 underlined that one advantage of community involvement is the optimization of scarce resources in the provision of education (World Bank, 2012). To examine what elements, bring about diminished enrollment, absenteeism, and low academic achievement in their educational institutions, community members, families, or parents can offer funds such as human resources and local expertise for their children, help with material and financial resources, and assist in research and data collection.

2.6 Challenges Hindering Community Participation in School Management

While community participation in school management holds the promise of numerous benefits, it is not devoid of challenges. Common hurdles include limited financial resources, low literacy levels among community members and bureaucratic complexities. Recognizing and addressing



these challenges is essential for optimizing the effectiveness of SMCs and elevating educational standards. Despite the importance placed on the realization of community participation and involvement in the lives of school developments in all educational systems, there is evidence of insufficient community participation in the lives of school developments because of certain constraints and restrictions. In Ghana, a study by Adam (2005) revealed that communities occasionally face numerous challenges, including schools' lack of eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvements in school developments. For instance, Inusah et al., (2023) noted that few constraints and restrictions to effect community participation in school developments are lack of resources and strong incentives. It is crucial to emphasize that under-resourced communities are unable to participate in educational activities because they are constantly constrained by a lack of funds, which makes it difficult for them to fully engage in school life (Adam, 2005). According to Lauwo and Mkulu (2021), low-income groups in Tanzania find it challenging to participate in educational activities because of a lack of funding. According to Kanau and Haruna (2013), the issues associated with poverty are preventing communities in Nigeria from appropriately responding to involvement in school improvements.

In her examination of community participation in school development in Indonesia, Nirmala (2013) highlighted that apart from the lack of resources, another significant hurdle is the absence of strong incentives. Similarly, Fusheini's (2006) study in Ghana underscored the challenges communities face, including schools' reluctance to actively engage them in development endeavors.

Additional insights from Sub-Saharan Africa, as elucidated by Watt (2001), emphasized the detrimental impact of high illiteracy rates among community members, which leads to heavy reliance on teachers for information. In South Africa, Prew (2012) observed that while middle-



class members perceive shared responsibilities in school development, lower-class members tend to defer such responsibilities.

Furthermore, inadequate resources pose a major barrier to community participation, as Fusheini (2006) highlighted in his study. Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) echoed this sentiment in Tanzania, where they emphasized the challenges faced by low-income communities due to financial constraints. Similarly, Aliyum and Haruna (2013) pointed out poverty-related challenges hindering community response to school development initiatives in Nigeria.

In Australia, Oppenheim (2008) noted community members' reluctance to engage in both manual and intellectual school activities. Fusheini's (2006) findings in Ghana also revealed reluctance among community members to participate in school development initiatives, mirroring Lauwo and Mkulu's (2021) observations in Tanzania regarding skepticism about government-funded construction projects.

Despite official expectations for heightened community involvement in school management, various constraints persist, leading to community members viewing their roles as supplementary rather than central (Prew, 2012). Fusheini (2006) further identified role conflicts between Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) as inhibiting effective partnerships.

Moreover, Watt (2001) and Onsomu and Mujidi (2011) argued that schools' reluctance to incorporate community input, lack of trust between schools and communities, and limited community roles contribute to challenges on participation. Additionally, Watt (2001), Prew (2012), and Nirmala (2013) highlighted parents' unwillingness to engage in school initiatives as a significant barrier. Nirmala (2013) stressed the importance of assisting parents in cultivating a zeal

for change and fostering a sense of involvement in school activities to enhance community participation in school development efforts.

Community participation is a hallmark of various educational programs but there are many challenges that lead to ineffective participation. Most basic schools' successes in Ghana depend on the existing community participation. Some of the challenges of community participation in school management in Ghana include the following:

Parents and guardians seem not to care about anything that concerns the school. They feel reluctant to attend PTA meetings. This confirms Ankomah and Hope (2011) claim that parents of pupils, especially those in the public schools, are generally not motivated to actively take part in school level management as compared to private schools in Ghana.

Structured meetings for SMCs, PTAs, and other stakeholders to discuss issues confronting schools are not fully attended. Membership attendance at these meetings is not encouraging, rarely forming a quorum. This does not help in addressing the issues of the schools for effective school management (Abreh, 2017).

Most SMCs and DEOCs are quite dysfunctional and there is a need to activate and breathe life into them. Again, the roles and functions of DEOCs and SMCs structures are available but capacity building for members on these roles and functions does not seem to be well situated (Abreh, 2017). According to Abreh (2017), there is a delay in the arrival or unavailability altogether of the capitation grants by the Ghanaian government hence the schools are not able to carry out the activities planned in the School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) as scheduled.



Weak supervision from district education officers tends to weaken the commitment of school heads, teachers and community members in carrying out their duties (Mensah, 2008 cited in Abreh, 2017).

Recognizing that community participation is a nuanced endeavor, these objective endeavors to uncover the intricacies involved. It aims to identify and elucidate both the challenges and opportunities that arise in the realm of community participation in school management. This multifaceted exploration extends to examining the obstacles faced by both SMCs and community members, as well as the potential facilitators of effective participation. Through this objective, the research uncovers the barriers that impede community engagement while also highlighting avenues for improvement.

Educational Outcomes

At the heart of this research lies the ultimate goal: understanding how community participation in school management influences educational outcomes. Educational outcomes serve as the yardstick for assessing the impact of community involvement. These outcomes encompass a wide array of measures, including academic achievement, student attendance rates, overall school improvement, and the quality of the learning environment. They offer a tangible and quantifiable means to gauge the effectiveness of community participation in enhancing the educational landscape of the Sagnarigu Municipality.

Schooling and learning outcomes are at the crossroads in Ghana. Several factors have either been accused or excused at one point in time or the other. The persistent widening gap in performances among state approved schools (characterised by the public and private schools; endowed and less endowed schools; resourced and under resourced schools) is alarming. It is due to large stocks of teaching and learning resources in the private schools as against the public schools. Also, ongoing

collaborative partnerships parents and guardians show in private schools are different from what happens in the public schools.

Education and training play a unique role in human capital development that tends to have a considerable effect on the economic development of nations (Abreh, 2011; Venkatraja & Indira, 2011). Besides, formal education is a social institution that seeks to equip individuals with essential cognitive, psycho motor and affective abilities which in turn influences the economic wellbeing of nations. Thus, schools become the hub for training and graduating enrollees. At the school level, some activities capitalized as either school management or operation issues as denominators of school effectiveness and efficiency. The formative years of future leaders, technocrats and indeed human capital needed for accelerated economic development is contingent on foundations of education and schooling. For instance, lifelong learning processes of the child begin from the early years where basic literacy, numeracy and essential life skills are acquired. Furthermore, Colclough (1996) and Blaug (1970) confirm the need to manage education and schooling well as education is both beneficial to the individual undergoing it and the society as a whole where the person resides or operates from.



To achieve the group goal that education and schooling present to the next generation of leaders, provision of essential human capital demands for effective management and operations of schools makes the need to examine the role that communities play in the management and operations of schools all the more important. The hard truth is children spend the majority of their time at home than in schools. In Ghana, the Ministry of Education (MOE) supports the operations of schools basically through the Ghana Education Service (GES). The development partners, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), have made several efforts to make school-based management efficient and effective. One area of school level management activities that stands



out relates to partnerships and collaborations between the school and the community. Usually, it takes the combined efforts and contributions of stakeholders involved in the process to work towards making the school systems functional.

One of the characteristics of effective institutions depends on the extent to which their administrative, governance and management strategies make a practical contribution to the organization (Arnwine, 2002). Historically communities have played a vital role in the development and provision of education to children worldwide, and Ghana has not been an exception in this experience (Miller, 1995; Roekel, 2008). The community partnership in educational provision became even more functional in Ghana particularly during the era of the Whole School Development (WSD) project (MacBeath, 2010; UNESCO, 2005). Most basic schools in Ghana were initiated by communities, which willingly provided accommodation for teachers and pieces of land for the construction of the schools and also supported the upkeep of those schools and the children in them. In time, most of those schools were absorbed into the public system with the government taking over their management (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975), thus shifting the management and regulation of the schools to Ministry of Education structures and making communities loosely involved in the process. The centralised control model of education management often had the tendency of weakening the extent of community commitment and participation in the management of education in the country.

The Ministry of Education (MOE), as well as its other major agencies including the Ghana Education Service (2011), recognises the importance of mutual partnership between community leadership and school level leadership for effective school governance. The MOE and GES over time have developed systems that are intended to make community input in school management efficient and effective. The introduction of the Whole School Development (WSD) project was



thus “viewed as a strategy to counter the paralysis that had come to characterise local decision making in basic education by devolving control of education to districts, schools and communities” (Akyeampong, 2004a, p.4). The WSD attempted a strategy to improve the partnership that should exist between District Education Office (DEO) structures, head teachers, teachers and the community. Consequently, individuals who attended training programmes to introduce the WSD concept were taught approaches in developing a “Whole School Action Plan” that emphasises the aforementioned partnership arrangement in addressing teaching and learning needs and school-based management issues in general.

In recent times, School Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) has become an integral part of the life of basic public schools in Ghana. Its preparation has been tied to the propensity of schools to receive capitation grants¹, which makes it easy for every public school to own one. It is apparent that until this time, most public basic schools in Ghana operated without any school level plans to guide their actions. The SPIP was therefore meant to ensure that schools would be conducted in their operations. The WSD effort supported the drawing of action plans that educated participants on target preparation and appraisal of structures of schools. It also helped with designing and preparing school budget for inclusion in District budgets. The same effort supported the planning of activities to promote community involvement in the work of the school (Akyeampong, 2004a; WSD Training Programme Document, 1999). One need that WSD programme thus addresses is that it brings about community ownership of schools and as well as influence the extent of community participation in school activities. Akyeampong argues that the WSD programmes have sought to sensitise the school community to help address such problems as poor pupil learning and achievement outcomes usually apparent in primary schools but more profusely in the rural areas. Ghana’s Ministry of Education has established governing structures at the various levels of



education as a result of the WSD efforts. For instance, at the basic school level, these structures, either formally instituted or recognised include the District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC), School Management Committee (SMC), Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), District (Municipal, Metropolitan) Assembly, District Education Office, Development Partners and Non-Governmental Organizations. In support of these structures to enable them to function more effectively, handbooks have been developed to guide their operations and various forms of training organized by different interest groups to the members of the DEOC and SMC which are expected to play leading roles in these governance processes.

The establishment of District Education Oversight Committees (DEOCs), School Management Committees (SMCs) and to some extent Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) is all directed towards rejuvenating the status of communities and their members in school level management (Akyeampong, 2004a). This essentially springs from the fact that communities assist the school in following ethics and compliance aimed at promoting management efficiency and effectiveness. Changes and reforms in education are warranted since Sustainable Development Goal 4 aimed at ensuring the provision of inclusive quality education for all and is situated at the heart of effective school-based management.

School Management Committees (SMCs) are the managerial hand of basic public schools in Ghana, and these are governing agencies of the school, and their roles are central to the main activities and operations at the school level. The SMC is supposed to work for the enhancement of the school and its community by working in the interest of the school. By law, the SMC is the governing body of basic schools in the various communities in Ghana and are supposed to promote the interest of the school and its learners for the children to receive the best education. Every public



school has such a committee constituted based on state agreed for formation and operations of the SMC.

Learning outcomes of private school pupils are high as compared to those of public schools (Ankomah, & Hope, 2011; Etsey, Amedahe, & Edjah, 2005; Ntim, 2014; Okyerefo, Fiaveh, & Lamptey, 2011). Furthermore, parents of children in private schools are noted to be very actively involved in school management whereas parents of pupils in public schools are in general not motivated to actively take part in school level management (Ankomah, & Hope, 2011). Weak supervision from district education offices tends to weaken the commitment of school head teachers and teachers in carrying out their duties (Mensah, 2008). The provision of Capitation Grant to schools, the preparation of School Performance Improvement Plan and the organization of School Performance Appraisal Meetings are all geared towards improving school management and performance. However, there has not been corresponding visibility regarding school level management output and improvement in learning outcomes for pupils in public schools. This low performance issue raises concerns about how the school management structures are functioning. For instance, are activities carried out as planned? How are the processes of implementation monitored and evaluated? Who are the custodians of the benchmarks and how do they carry out their benchmarking work? These and other issues create an opportunity for auditing and interrogating how accountable the existing structures in public schools are and of course how the community supports the realisation of it.

The researcher has examined the procedures that the School Management Committees (SMCs) in Ghanaian basic schools employ in varied contexts to see the differences. From these studies, it became evident that Ghana inherited decentralisation as one of the legacies of the British Policy of Indirect Rule. Furthermore, the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana contends that power



and decision-making should be transferred to the decentralised authorities³ (Opare, Egbenya, & Kaba, 2009). Opare, et al. supported the argument that one of the surest means to increased decentralisation is the guarantee of democratic governance at various levels of operations. Legitimate provision has been made in the constitutions of Ghana since independence to allow for this to occur. The quest for decentralisation was to help accelerate growth and equitable spread of development in rural communities and to urge the participation of the communities in decision making that relate to the overall management of development in their localities (Egbenya, 2009). However, how this process of harnessing community resources with the view to speeding up growth and equitable distribution of development to communities in Ghana are confronted with challenges and especially in the education system. Snapshots of some reviewed empirical accounts on the Ghanaian context are presented in the following paragraphs.

Akukwe (2003) found that with dynamic leadership backed by robust community member support in planning processes and effective communication, school improvements were achieved. However, in well-performing and underperforming communities, there was underachievement of transparency and accountability objectives. This was found to be largely due to passive parental involvement that was typical of PTAs and SMCs. The study further noted that the lack of capacity on the part of many SMCs made them feel unable to understand the expected decision-making as well as protocols for deploying those set strategies.

Akyeampong (2004b) in contextualizing decentralisation in Africa found that decentralisation in systems that are not appropriately adjusted to its fundamental requirements for effectiveness can lead to outcomes that undermine the very reason why they were introduced. Akyeampong (2004b) further contends that decentralization practiced in developed countries where their socio-economic status and pace is advanced may require just grappling with parity and equity issues as warranted



by the government. This is not the same in sub-Saharan Africa where circumstances differ broadly. For instance, personnel, material and technology are usually considered basic variables before issues of equity and parity come into the picture. The Ghanaian situation is not any different. It is characterised by imbalances including those related to the “so called – base, secondary and tertiary” variables. In a study conducted by Tayi, Anin, and Asuo (2014), District Education and Assembly Officers asserted that inadequate funds/resources, difficult terrain and lukewarm attitudes on the part of the community level stakeholders were the major challenges adversely affecting community participation in the District Education Sector Planning (DESP) process.

In their assessment of factors affecting the standard of education Upper region, Nsiah Peprah and Kililiyang-Viiru (2005) revealed that SMCs were operationally non-existent in 14 of the schools visited to formulate policies, ensure environmental cleanliness in schools, monitor regular attendance of teachers and pupils, as well as ensure adequate supply of teaching and learning resources. The absence of SMC and ineffective PTAs were found as the possible cause of the increasingly poor performance. The researchers noted that the capability of communities to participate should be distinguished from their willingness to participate. On the economic and social factors that underpinned the variations in community involvement and participation, they found the educational background of the school community, as well as social conditions and economic factors as important influencing agents. Kamaludeen (2014) examined the influence of the Ghana School Feeding Programme on access and retention and found that the SMC and its School Feeding Sub Committee (SFC) directly managed the programme at the school level. The author found that each school had an SMC made up of the head teacher as the secretary, a chairperson who is a parent, and other members. Although the study could not pinpoint how

operational the SMC was, it revealed the extent of SMCs participation in the administration of the school-feeding programme.

The role of collaboration among critical stakeholders in the provision of educational services cannot be overstretched since it provides the route to higher performance and achievement. The persistent widening gap in achievements of public and private basic schools is not merely due to large stocks of a variety of teaching and learning resources in the private schools as against the public schools alone, but also due to the visible concern and collaboration parents and children in private schools show in the education process. Educational provision and management cannot be undertaken by the school head and teachers in the school alone but by all the wider stakeholders together to ensure effectiveness and eventual success. This is the essence of the decentralisation concept in education seeking to bring stakeholders on board to play their varied and collective roles to promote efficiency and effectiveness toward improved learning outcomes.

The expectation has been that with these structures in place, there would be more effective supervision of teaching and learning, effective management of resources and facilities, all culminating in improved learning outcomes for pupils. This would be further evidenced by high performance in various examinations, particularly in the public schools. Thus, to promote effective governance and supervision at the basic level and ensure improved general learning outcomes, formal structures of educational governance have been set up within the communities. Pieces of training have been given to the members of these formal structures by the MOE/GES and other organizations like Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to enable them to understand their roles and discharge them effectively. Various supports and incentive packages have been provided in various forms for the schools; and their teachers and head teachers in the basic public schools. These include the giving of capitation grants to schools, the preparation of school



performance improvement plans, the introduction of school feeding programme, as well as the provision of staff bungalows for teachers in remote areas, among others. In spite of all these, however, the realisation of the key expectation of improved learning outcomes seems to be only a mirage.

This comprehensive framework underscores the intricate relationships between each research objective and their collective contribution to the broader understanding of community participation in school management within the unique context of the Sagnarigu Municipality.

SMCs are formalized committees consisting of community members, educators, and stakeholders. They are tasked with overseeing various aspects of school management, including budgeting, policy formulation, and resource allocation. The effectiveness of SMCs directly aligns with the first research objective.

2.7 Empirical Review

2.7.1 School Management Committees helps in improving school management

As indicated by World Bank (2008) sets that to a great extent studies have exhibited that keeping and the nature of Education depends principally in transit school lodging are overseen, more than the bounty of accessible assets, the capacitance of tutoring to improve instructing and learnedness is unmistakably impacted by the nature of the pioneers given by the head educator. Coordinated exertion to improve school pioneers is a standout amongst the most encouraging purposes of intercession to raise maintenance, the quality and proficiency of optional twisting training crosswise over Sub-Saharan Africa.

In South Africa, authority arrangement for auxiliary school question was to improve nature of Didactics. Senegal's Improvement Plans (SIP) made in 1996 energizes pioneering aptitudes of



head educators to revelation support for school extends that upgrade instructive quality. According to Republic of Kenya (2012) in Kenya, all head instructors are now experiencing a bearing course at the Kenya Management Institute (KEMI) to enhance their administration aptitudes.

Feeble supervision from locale training government office will in general weaken the dedication of school head educator and instructors in completing their obligations. The providing of Capitation Grant to schools, the readiness of school performance enhancement intends and the associations of school performance appraisal meetings are altogether outfitted towards improving school heading and working. In any case, there has not been comparing deceivability with respect to class stratum the executives' turnout and amendment in grant impact for students in masses schools, Mensah (2008).

This Low execution posterity lift worries about how the school the board social structures are working. For delegate, are exercises done as arranged? How are the summonses of execution observed and assessed? Who are the overseers of the benchmarks and how would they do their benchmarking work? These and other posterity make an open door for inspecting and investigating how responsible the current structures in state funded schools are and obviously how the general public supporting its acknowledgment.

2.7.2 School management committee facilitates citizens and parent's participation in the management of the schools

McLoughlin et al., (2003) argue that parental contribution has been related with scholastic accomplishment of understudies by making a high caliber instructional condition as a mutual objective, guardians change from detached supporters to dynamic individuals from the instructive network. At the point when youngsters see the help, fervor about learning, and collaboration among home and school, they also turned out to be energized.

They sense the incentive in learning, and their characteristic inspiration for learning develops. Boal, (2004) and Sundet, (2004) likewise been noticed that when guardians are associated with the training of their kids, understudy accomplishment, participation, wellbeing, and order show checked improvement.

Meanwhile, Gorton and Schneider (1991) suggest four things at once regarding the objectives of involving parents in school activities, namely: (1) to give better information about what students are learning in school, to give greater support to school renewal program, to give parents a broad understanding on the various problems faced by the school; (2) to encourage parents to provide school facilities to support children's learning activities at home including the development of students' personal and social skills; (3) to give parents chances in giving input of ideas, expertise, and human resources for school reform, and (4) to realize democratic and transparent school in the effort of realizing effective school management. The research result by Duke and Canady (1991) shows that the involvement of the school community including parents is very positive in supporting the successful implementation of a school policy.



Berg and Noort (2011) explain that in usage of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda under MDGs, it was assumed that parental association needs to happen in various regions; child rearing and learning at home, conveying, volunteering, basic leadership and teaming up with the network, so as to include all guardians in school. Each school in Uganda should have a school the board panel, which assumes liability for dealing with the school.

The advisory group speaks to the nearby government, guardians and educators. A few exercises include the guardians inside the system of instructor relationship, where the two guardians and educators are spoken to. The guardians are associated with a few exercises including setting up fundamental abilities preparing for all understudies, and bolster salary producing exercises to meet



the school scholastic needs and supporting needs of powerless understudies including vagrant kids. What's more, the guardians are associated with raising money related assets to the schools.

Reinforcing the administration system in school the board councils will results in a progressively proficient obtainment of school assets, and is a fundamental advance to improving the conveyance of value training. The Ministry of Education ought to present more grounded responsibility standards. In particular, clearer and increasingly strong standards for keeping school records are required, combined with progressively visit assessments to guarantee that these guidelines are regarded.

The Ministry of Education and common society must put initially in preparing to guarantee school supervisors and guardians have the ability to comprehend the school acquirement approach to manage and regulate spending plans, and besides in open mindfulness crusades to instruct guardians about their rights (MoEST, 2005).

The school executives' board of trustees in Kenya is the lawful trustee of the school. Its capacities and duties to the extent obtainment is concerned are spelt out in the Education Act (1980). The SMC comprises of eight guardians, two individuals from the District Education Board (which is the nearby training expert) and three individuals from the school support (which ordinarily is the congregation that begun the school). The SMC individuals serve for a base time of one year and a limit of eight years as expressed in the Education Act (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

2.7.3 School Management Committees and teachers' motivation

Various studies have discovered that characteristic inspiration and outward inspiration can perfectly affect practices and how individuals seek after goals. Okumbe (1998) clarifies Inspiration as a procedure that begins with a physiological insufficiency or need that enacts conduct or a drive



that is gone for an objective or motivating force. Inspiration along these lines comprises of necessities which set up intentions which help in obtaining the objectives.

Hacket, (1998) explains that, characteristic inspiration happens when individuals take part in movement without outer motivating forces. They get roused when they can control the measure of exertion they put on an action since they know the outcome they will get. Extraneous inspiration had to do with motivators; impetuses are outside to an individual and are given by the administration so as to urge laborers to perform errands.

In most creating nations, instructors' inspiration has been examined and tended to essentially. For instance, the author Kadzamira, (2006) contends that, educators in Malawi are exceedingly disappointed with their compensation and other administration conditions, for example, poor impetuses and working conditions, which have brought about low ethical quality and along these lines lackluster showing. In Malawi, truancy and whittling down, inspirational factors, for example, low compensations, and poor working conditions impacted educator inspiration.

All partners in instruction concurred that, the inspiration of educators relies upon an assortment of variables, for example, compensation levels, school area, accessibility of reasonable lodging, open doors for further preparing and working conditions, remaining burden, advancement and profession way, understudy conduct, association with the network, school quality factors, for example, showing accessibility and learning assets.

Employee requirements are affected by an assortment of individual variables and this is so on the grounds that people have their very own preferences. Instructive executives must devise better techniques for deciding available resources of remunerating instructors in the event that they anticipate that the reward should affect execution. In such manner, this segment looks at working

conditions, organization and supervision, acknowledgment, obligation, progression just as relational as some of persuasive variables that impact educators' activity execution (Kivaze, 2000).

2.7 Summary of chapter

This part two of the thesis has reviewed existing literature on community participation in school management. The part has also presented and discussed the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, school management committees (SMCs) facilitation of community participation in school management, the roles and responsibilities of the School Management Committee (SMC) in enhancing the quality of education and school governance in the Sagnarigu Municipality, the level of community involvement in decision-making processes and the challenges and barriers hindering effective community participation in school management in the Sagnarigu Municipality.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the research paradigm, research methods, research design, study population and sampling, data type and sources, data collection procedure, data analysis, ethical considerations of the study and trustworthiness of the study.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Research paradigm according to Bertram and Christiansen (2020) is an illustration of a particular worldview that informs what is acceptable to research and how it should be done. It could be said that the research questions and objectives with the choice of methods and data collection approach set for the study is largely determined by the paradigm to follow. To this end, Creswell (2014) concludes that it is a guide premised on a scientific belief system based on assumptions as to how knowledge is constructed and the sources of such knowledge. According to Shuttleworth (2014) in its most basic form, a scientific paradigm is a framework that encompasses all of the widely held beliefs about a subject and establishes guidelines for the direction and methodology of research. A paradigm outlines the procedures that, at a certain moment in time, characterize a scientific subject. Distinct and rooted in culture are paradigms. A paradigm determines what is investigated and researched, what kinds of questions are asked, how those questions are phrased and structured, and how research findings are to be evaluated. According to Dowd (2014), a paradigm is a perspective that expresses a researcher's ideas about information and the most effective ways to obtain it.

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) explain that a research paradigm constitutes a way of looking at the world; interpreting what is seen; and decoding which of the things seen by the researcher are





real, valid and important in its most basic form, a scientific paradigm is a framework that encompasses all of the widely held beliefs about a subject and establishes guidelines for the direction and methodology of research. A paradigm outlines the procedures that, at a certain moment in time, characterize a scientific subject. Distinct and rooted in culture are paradigms. A paradigm determines what is investigated and researched, what kinds of questions are asked, how those questions are phrased and structured, and how research findings are to be evaluated. According to Dowd (2014), a paradigm is a perspective that expresses a researcher's ideas about information and the most effective ways to obtain it.

Two basic assumptions have been identified in research as positivism and interpretivism or most recently constructivism. While the positivist believes that knowledge is out there and is based on some abstract investigations, the interpretive accepts the fact that knowledge resides in the people (Creswell, 2014).

This study is undertaken from the methodological perspective through the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive paradigm attempts to describe and understand how people make sense of their worlds and how they make meaning of their actions as indicated by Bertram and Christiansen (2020). The interpretive prioritises how people construct and understand their daily experiences through their perceptions and intentions and how they make sense of what they do (Creswell, 2014).

The interpretivist paradigm is a research approach where interpretivists do not assume that there is a single unitary reality apart from our perceptions. Instead, they emphasize a realistic ontology that posits that there is no objective reality but endorses multiple realities socially constructed by individuals from within their contextual interpretation (Karin, 2008).



Cryslar (2011) explains that the interpretivist research paradigm involves more in-depth investigations to establish a verdict, data gathered within the interpretivist research paradigm is primarily descriptive and the emphasis is on exploration and insight. Interpretivist paradigms are grounded in subjectivity personal experiences and human interactions than the traditional paradigm of positivism (Dowd, 2014).

This paradigm will give opportunity to the researcher to observe and gather information on community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. The position of the researcher is that knowledge and reality exist within and can only be derived from people through the use of vigorous interrogations.

3.3 Research Approach

The research methodology adopted for this study is predominantly qualitative in nature. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue and also helps to provide information about the “human” side of an issue that is, the often-contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (Mack, Cynthia, Kathleen, Greg, & Emily, 2011).

Johnson and Christensen (2008) state that when dealing with the issue of understanding a social phenomenon, the best way of conducting this is to use the qualitative method. It is based on the aforementioned that the researcher decided to use the qualitative method in this study. This study adopted the qualitative method to explain social activities that require a substantial appreciation of the perspectives of the participants about the roles and effectiveness of School Management Committees (SMCs) and the extent of community involvement.



Creswell (2003) states that open-ended information obtained by the researcher from participant interviews is qualitative data. The participants are free to respond in their own word, and open-ended interview questions were used.

Qualitative data can be gathered through many methods such as participant or research site observation, document collection from public or private sources (e.g., meeting minutes), or audiovisual materials acquisition (e.g., videotapes or artifacts). The process of aggregating words or images into informational categories and showcasing the variety of concepts obtained during data collection is the standard procedure for analyzing qualitative data, which includes words, text, or photographs (Creswell, 2003). One kind of social research that generates non-numerical data is qualitative research. Reporting an event or phenomenon as it occurs in the real world as opposed to a lab environment is the goal of qualitative research (Lee, 2006). Thus, the primary goal of qualitative research is to provide answers to the researcher's questions, typically through words, deeds, or visual symbols (Neuman, 2006).

The suitability of qualitative research for this particular study was determined by its ability to yield comprehensive data on social phenomena. The best way for comprehending social phenomena, particularly when it comes to abstract concepts like "perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, world views, and culture," is the qualitative approach, claims Johnson and Christensen (2008). Intangible elements including religion, ethnicity, gender roles, socioeconomic position, and norms can also be identified and measured through qualitative research (Mack, Cynthia, Kathleen, Greg, and Emily, 2011).

Qualitative research is well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena, such as community participation in school management, in-depth and from multiple perspectives. This approach facilitates an in-depth examination of the roles and responsibilities of the School Management

Committees (SMCs) and the extent of involvement in the Junior High School management. This qualitative approach offers the flexibility needed to explore the multi-faceted nature of community participation in school management comprehensively. It enables the collection of rich, context-specific data and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, it empowers the study to uncover challenges, opportunities, and potential pathways for enhancing community participation in school management within the Sagnarigu Municipality.

3.4 Research Design

A case study design was used in this investigation. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), a case study is a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest." Through case studies, researchers can analyze a topic from multiple perspectives, taking into account not only the opinions of one or two individuals but also those of other important groups and their interactions. It provides the opportunity to give voice and authority to those who lack it, such as underprivileged groups or children (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).



An individual unit as a group or community is subjected to a thorough and in-depth analysis in a case study (Oshunrinade, 2016). A qualitative case study is a type of research methodology that uses a range of data sources to enable the examination of a phenomenon within its context, such as the functions and efficacy of School Management Committees (SMCs) and the degree of community involvement. This guarantees that the problem is examined from a range of perspectives, allowing for the revelation and understanding of the phenomenon's various components (Pamela & Susan, 2008). A case study is an organized investigation that tries to characterize and clarify the phenomenon of interest through an incident or series of connected events. A case study's scientific qualifications and evidence base for professional applications are

its primary characteristics (Judith, 2004). According to Judith (2004), the case study approach is especially suitable for lone researchers since it enables a single component of an issue to be examined in-depth in a condensed amount of time. It has been said that the word "case study" refers to a group of research techniques that all decide to center their investigation around a particular topic. In a case study, the methodology is planned, the relationship between factors is examined, and the data is gathered methodically. While case studies primarily employ observation and interviews, other methods are also employed. Information gathering techniques are chosen based on their suitability for the task (Judith, 2004).

3.5 Profile of the Study Area

The Sagnarigu Municipality is located in the Northern Region of Ghana. It is situated near the regional capital, Tamale, which is one of the major cities in the country. Tamale serves as a significant economic, cultural, and administrative center in the Northern Region. The Sagnarigu Municipality is adjacent to the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly, with Tamale serving as the closest major city and urban center.



Geographically, the Northern Region is characterized by savannah vegetation and is known for its diverse ethnic groups, including the Dagombas, Mamprusis, and Gonjas, among others. The region experiences a distinct dry season and rainy season typical of the West African subregion. Sagnarigu Municipality is likely to benefit from its proximity to Tamale in terms of access to infrastructure, services, and economic opportunities. Tamale provides various amenities, including transportation hubs, markets, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and government offices, which may have implications for the socio-economic dynamics and development prospects of the Sagnarigu Municipality.

Figure 2

Map of Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly



Source: Ghana Statistical Service

3.6 Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the result of the study. This group is also referred to as the target population or universe (McMillan, & Schumacher, 2010). A population is a group of things, occasions, or people that have certain traits that the study's researcher is interested in. The researcher's target population differs from the general public's perception of the population in a given nation and city (White, 2005). The population of the study included all members of the community, parents, teachers, administrators, and heads of all junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. There are 1354 teachers in the municipality 925 males and 429 females.

3.7 Sampling

A sample is a group of subjects or situations selected from a larger population. A sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. A sample is also described as a portion of the elements in a population.

A key concept in sampling is representativeness. Unless the sample from which one will generalize, truthfully or faithfully represents the population from which it was drawn one has no reason to believe that the population has the same properties as those of the sample. If a selection procedure is responsible for the un-representativeness in the sample, the sample is biased by the selection procedure (White, 2005).

Neuman, (2007) says that in research terms, sample is a group of people, objects or items that are taken from a larger population for measurement. The sample should be representative of the population to ensure that we can generalize the findings from the research sample to the population as a whole. The author further maintains that a sample is a subset of the population one is studying that is selected for the actual research study.

3.7.1 Sampling Technique

In this study, the sampling method used was the convenience sampling. The method was used to select four (4) parent, four (4) school management members and four (4) head teachers from four different junior high schools. Convenience sampling elements are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available. It is usually quick and cheap (Neuman, 2007). Convenient sampling is useful in explanatory research where the researcher is interested in getting an inexpensive, quick approximation of the truth (Maree, 2007).

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method where units are selected for inclusion in the sample because they are the easiest for the researcher to access which can be due to

geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or willingness to participate in the research (Nikolopoulou, 2022). Convenience sampling is a kind of non-random sampling that is often referred to as inadvertent sampling (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

3.7.2 Sampling Size

The sample size of 12 participants in a qualitative study was appropriate and reliable, as data saturation in qualitative studies can typically be reached within a range of 9 to 17 interviews (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Similarly, Yin (2018) stated that using two to ten samples in qualitative research is generally sufficient to achieve saturation.

3.8 Research Instrument

In-depth information from respondents was gathered through in-person, in-depth individual interviews. An open-ended interview schedule was created by the researcher and utilized to gather information from the parents. An interview is a two-way discussion in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to gather information about their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, news, and behaviors (Maree, 2007).

Semi-structured interview was used to capture depth information from the key respondents, thus face-to-face interviews with the respondents or telephone interview was used (Creswell, 2014). Another technique that used was audio-recording, this helped to capture useful information that missed during the interview, hence to back up the information (Creswell, 2014)

In-depth information regarding the perspectives and opinions of the respondents regarding the functions and efficacy of School Management Committees (SMCs) and the degree of community involvement was gathered through in-person, in-depth individual interviews. In-depth and interactive discussions between the researcher and the respondents were made possible by open-





ended face-to-face individual interviews, despite their drawbacks (time-consuming and interviewer effect), participants' have the freedom to freely express their opinions, ideas, feelings, and perceptions without fear or favor (Neuman, 2003).

As per Joseph et al. (2009), in the phenomenographical tradition, interviews are arguably the most often used method of data collection. Numerous scholarly articles have been authored regarding the principles and applications of collecting data via phenomenographic interviews. Marie (1997) states that qualitative interviews can be used as the main method of gathering data or in addition to other approaches like document analysis and observation. Open-ended questions that allow for individual variances are used in qualitative interviews. Three main categories of qualitative interviewing exist semi-structured interviews, open-ended, standardized, and conversational or informal interviews.

According to Gajendra and Kanka (1990), an interview is a dialogue between two or more individuals in which one or more of the participants is in charge of reporting the main points of what is stated. The interview comprises three components that interact: the interviewee, the interviewer, and the interview setting, which includes the questions posed during the interview. Interviewers and researchers have a difficult job since they have to record responses, ask insightful questions, and make the interview process engaging and valuable for the participants.

3.9 Data Sources

Successful research requires the collection of accurate and reliable data. The data was obtained from both primary study respondents through the use of interviews. and secondary sources. Secondary data is the information that has been collected by other researchers and has undergone at least one layer of analysis and may include books, journals, reports and other public articles. On the other hand, interviews with study participants were used to gather primary data.



3.10 Data Collection Procedure

A letter of introduction was obtained from the head of department prior to gathering field data. With this letter, permission was sought from the various stakeholders of the Sagnarigu Municipality to conduct the study. Those in authority was given a written form that described the research and also asking them to grant the researcher permission to conduct the research. The rationale of the study was clearly explained to the respondents, and they were guaranteed that the information they contribute would be treated in confidence. In order to build rapport with each interviewee, the researcher initially greeted them, ask them how their day were, and provided a pleasant image of a sincere person going about a routine but significant activity. Every interview lasted roughly forty-five minutes.

The data collection encompassed of a variety of qualitative techniques, including semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, such as members of the school management committees. These interviews employed open-ended questions to elicit detailed insights into participants' views and experiences. In addition, document analysis entailed a thorough examination of relevant reports, policies, and meeting minutes to provide contextual background and triangulate findings from the interviews and focus group discussions. Data was collected using tape recorder after participants have granted permission.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

Resnik (2015) explain that various disciplines have different definitions or explanations for ethics and they reflect the standards that have to be abided by to engender trust for the institution. It ensures knowledge, truth and error minimization are upheld.



Ethical considerations in research are a set of principles that guide research designs and practices. Scientists and researchers must always adhere to a certain code of conduct when collecting data from people (Bhandari, 2022). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), research ethics are concerned with what is morally right and wrong while interacting with participants or gaining access to data that has been archived. Throughout the course of the investigation, the perspective of Christian (2000) was taken into account. According to Christian (2000) voluntary participation in research is contingent upon subjects providing full and transparent information, which serves as a fundamental safeguard against unwanted exposure and anonymity.

Maree (2010) draws attention to that crucial ethical consideration, which is the secrecy of the study's findings and outcomes as well as the preservation of the participants' names. This could entail getting consent letters, getting the go-ahead to conduct interviews, promising to erase audio recordings, and so forth. According to White (2005), ethics is a body of moral precepts that are proposed by a person or organization, gain traction through widespread acceptance, and provide guidelines and expectations for appropriate behavior toward respondents, employers, sponsors, assistants, other researchers, and students, as well as toward experimental subjects. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), social scientists typically have a duty to both the subjects they study and their profession in order to obtain information. Therefore, it is crucial that the researcher fully disclose to the subjects the methods they would be using for the research from the beginning.

3.12 Data Analysis

Berg (2004) defines data analysis as the process of interpreting or making sense of the facts or proof gathered from the project's empirical data collection. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define qualitative data analysis as “working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into



manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns. The analysis of qualitative data is aimed at discovering patterns, concepts, themes and meanings.

The data was analysed using the thematic analytical method. In the process, the researcher concentrates on the whole data first, then attempts to take it apart and re-constructs it again more meaningfully (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The investigator arranged the transcribed data into coherent and significant groups and conduct a comprehensive analysis of them. Reexamining the themes, classifying, interpreting, and synthesizing the ordered facts into a broad conclusion or understanding will be the next step (White, 2005). Categorization helps the researcher to make comparisons and contrasts between patterns, to reflect on certain patterns and complex threads of the data deeply and make sense of them (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The interpretative nature of qualitative research means that one cannot avoid the subjective interpretation that is given to the study of qualitative data (Creswell, 2009).

3.13 Trustworthiness and Dependability

Trustworthiness was ensured by the use of a rigorous analytic process appropriate for applied thematic analysis, including questioning of the data, peer debriefing, and prolonged engagement with the data. At the conclusion of each interview, initial impressions of the data were clarified with each participant; this served as member checking (Connelly, 2016). The researcher made sure that biasness was avoided from the research processes and that confidence was established regarding the veracity of the findings based on the research design in order to improve the study's credibility. White (2005, 203) states that the following steps must be taken to make qualitative research trustworthy:

1. Truth value. This demonstrated the researcher's level of confidence in the veracity of the findings based on the context, informants, and research design.

2. Applicability. This indicates the degree to which the findings were applied to other circumstances, locations, or individuals; it is the capacity to extrapolate the findings to a larger population.
3. Consistency of data. In other words, if the investigation were conducted again with the same participants or in a comparable setting, the results would remain consistent.
4. Neutrality relates to the research methodology' freedom from bias.

A thorough analytical procedure suitable for applied thematic analysis, which includes probing the data, peer debriefing, and extended interaction with the data, was used to guarantee reliability. Following each interview, a member-checking discussion of each participant's initial views of the data took place (Connelly, 2016).



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Overview

This study sought to assess community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. For this research study, data were obtained through face-to-face interviews. Analyses of data obtained from interviews were done using thematic analytical strategies where common themes from the respondents' responses based on the research objectives were identified.

Table 1 Demographics Characteristic of Participants

Participants	Sex	Age	Educational Background	Position
HT 1	Female	45	Literate	Headteacher
SM 1	Male	52	Literate	SMC Member
T 1	Male	32	Literate	Teacher
P 1	Female	38	Non-Literate	Parent
HT 2	Male	50	Literate	Headteacher
SMC 2	Male	30	Non-Literate	SMC Member
T 2	Female	28	Literate	Teacher
P2	Female	41	Non-Literate	Parent
HT 3	Female	39	Literate	Headteacher
SM 3	Male	57	Literate	SMC Member
T 3	Male	28	Literate	Teacher
P3	Female	39	Literate	Parent



HT 4	Male	50	Literate	Headteacher
SM 4	Male	35	Non-Literate	SMC Member
T 4	Female	32	Literate	Teacher
P 4	Female	40	Literate	Parent

Source: Field Survey (2024)

4.1 Results and Discussions

Throughout the analysis, the following findings emerged and are discussed and supported with literature based on the study's objectives established:

4.1.1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the roles of School Management Committees (SMCs) in Junior High School Management within the Sagnarigu Municipality

Regarding this objective, SMC are not performing their roles effectively in most schools and that has contributed woefully to the low performance in most schools. The SMC in the municipality is not effective hence inability to ensure joint participatory decision-making by all members in the management of the school. Some SMCs makes attempts for a joint participatory decision, but some school managers make this process difficult. Some voices from HT1, CM4 and P3 were:

SMC members are not functioning at all because they are always unavailable to be consulted and so it's difficult for them to have a proper structure. (HT1)

We are mostly not effective because of the school authorities inability to ensure joint participatory decision-making by all members in the management of the school. (CM4)

SMC are not functioning actively in most schools and that has contributed woefully to the low performance in most schools. (P3)





The quotation indicated that the committee members are not actively engaged and performing their roles in the Junior High schools' management. This suggest their participation in the management of the school is low. The findings have supported the definition of Mansuri and Rao (2013) who explicitly define community participation as the active participation in decision-making of the community in project design and implementation.

It was also revealed that SMCs help in improving learners' performance by making sure the right resource personnel are in the school at the right time, SMCs contribute massively in maintaining minor structural facilities, school management committees (SMCs) helps the school in so many ways, they also help boost the morale of the teaches in the school through their regular visits to the school, they help with the P.T.A to build the academic work in the school by taking part in decision making and administration of school to enhance quality school management to overcome problems in the school. Some comments from SMC2 P2 and HT3 were:

SMCs helps in improving learner's performance by making sure the right resource personnel are in the school at the right time. (SMC 2)

SMCs contribute massively in maintaining minor structural facilities. (P2)

School management committees (SMCs) helps the school in so many ways, they also help boost the morale of the teaches in the school through their regular visits to the school. (HT3)

It was also found that SMCs have a feeling that the school belongs to the community and as such, they give every member a chance to participate in every activity concerning school. It was also found that it varies and also depends on factors like community engagement, empowerment and the structure of the committee itself however, generally speaking SMC aim to enhance inclusively and collaboration amongst stakeholders allowing all members to contribute to decision-making

process regarding the school management by organizing general meeting for all stakeholders at the beginning and ending of the term. Responses from two HT1 and HT2 were:

By inviting members to SMCs meeting and taking into account the suggestions and ideas of members. (HT1)

Making members to feel ownerships of SMCs. For active participations in an attempt in making them feel they are essential part of the SMCs. (HT2)

Still on the objective one, the study investigated to find out if all SMCs members do have a sense of ownership of the schools and also work effectively towards achieving schools' successes. It was revealed that: the communities are the main caretakers of the schools around and therefore the safety and security of staff, learners etc. are paramount, most of them are also parents as well and they must take care of school properties and also participate in relevant school activities and also be concerned about what happens in the school daily, they own the school in many ways because certain things are also provided and maintained by them, they also improve quality in the school by NGOs in the schools, the communities are the main caretakers of the schools around and therefore the safety and security of staff, learners etc. are paramount and yes because the main function of the SMC is to ensure proper development of the education of the child. So, there is the need for all parties to work together and take the SMCs as their own product. Some assertions from SMC1, P4 and T3 were that:

Yes, the communities are the main caretakers of the schools around and therefore the safety and security of staff, learners etc. are paramount. (SMC 1)

Yes, because most of them are also parents as well and they must take care of school properties and also participate in relevant school activities and also be concerned about what happens in the school daily. (P4)



Yes, they own the school in many ways because certain things are also provided and maintained by them. They also improve quality in the school by NGOs in the schools. (T3)

To concur these findings, Ahwoi (2010) claimed that residents actively participate in the decision-making process aids in fostering a sense of ownership and control of school resources.

Negatively, the study found that: SMC in most schools are non-existent or ineffective because of their members have a poor understanding as to their role and authority. They therefore have a poor sense of ownership of the schools, SMC in most schools do not understand their core mandate, not all members of the SMC have this sense of ownership, SMC members no longer care or have time for school hence no sense of ownership and effective work, not all members have sense of ownership of school but greater percentage

of the literate parents/guardians work effectively towards achieving success by working with appropriate school authorities, SMC in most schools are nonexistent or inactive because of their members have a poor understanding as to their role and authority. They therefore have a poor sense of ownership of the schools and SMCs are not up and doing when it comes to the school work. Some of the members do not clearly know their roles. T1, P1 and SMC1 laments that:

No because, SMC in most schools do not understand their core mandate. Not all members have sense of ownership of school but greater percentage of the literate parents/guardians work effectively towards achieving success by working with appropriate school authorities. (T1)

Yes, but not all members of the SMC have this sense of ownership. This may not always be the case in every situation. Factors such as individual motivations, level of engagements and commitments to school's goals can vary. (P1)



No because SMC members no longer care or have time for school hence no sense of ownership and effective work. (SMC 1)

Again, on objective one, the study wanted to find out if all SMCs do effectively carry out the responsibility assigned to them for school functionality. It was revealed that: SMC member do not carry out their assigned responsibility is they don't even know their role in the schools, it is only a few who effectively carry out duties assigned to them, and some members of SMCs will take it upon themselves to do what is expected of them by the school management, some of them even run away with the school money or they just spend it without any question, SMC members do not effectively carry out their assigned responsibilities. There by resulting in the efficient functioning of schools, SMC member does not carry out duties assigned to them they don't even know their roles in the school. HT1, HT4, P1 and SMC4, SMC3, SMC2 raised the following issues:

No this is because for effective execution of responsibilities, there should be active participation of all members. some members are passive in terms of participation and that hinders the carrying out assigned responsibilities. (HT1)

No, some SMCs are reluctant in carrying out their functionalities in school because, national policies that make heads and other stake holders not effective in performing their roles. (HT4)

They do not fully carry out their responsibilities due to financial constraints and they do not also get much time to meet to deliberate on the success of the school. (P1)





Not really, some of them are reluctant about their duties. Other SMCs are very serious in their work towards school. In general SMC are carrying out their work. (SMC 4)

No, I think they need to be educated and trained on their roles and functions in the school management. (SMC 3)

Some SMCs take the responsibilities seriously. In the sense that, some SMCs take time of their busy schedules to come to the school just to see how things are operating. (SMC 2)

This is why Abreh (2017) noted that in Ghana's rural areas, improved student learning is a result of successful community engagement and their participation in school affairs.

Lastly on objective one, the study assessed SMCs effectiveness in schools in the municipality. The findings were that: there is proper monitoring in every school, there is supervision and evaluation performances by SMCs, they assess the various aspects of their functions including participation and representation, transparency and accountability, capacity building, community engagement and resource management, by forming a committee to look after every school and they do regular visits schools to support. Some opinions from a T4 and a P2 were that:

By forming a committee to look after every school SMCs effectively. This will enhance proper monitoring in every school. (T4)

They are effective but still needs training to beef up their roles. (P2)

These findings are supported by Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) when they claimed that the effectiveness of SMC can be traced back to their involvement in the regulation and administration of finance and supply of education systems in the 18th century.

4.1.2 To Identify the Challenges Hindering Effective Community Participation in School Management in the Sagnarigu Municipality

About objective two, the study first assessed how a lack of capacity building of community members on SMCs functions a challenge to community participation in SMCs. The findings were that they don't get educated people to participate, rather get uneducated people who are not enlightened enough to take school management effectively, they lack knowledge in their roles in the school management, lack of capacity building affects the school as the community members do not know responsibilities in the life at the school, they do not have the skill to participate in the management of the school, SMCs may not be aware of their limits if there is no capacity building for members, the lack of it has made SMCs members ineffective in their roles, it is a challenge because some community members might not know the roles they have to take in SMCs and this would affect SMCs because there would not be active and lack of capacity building of SMCs is a big challenge in the sense that some members do not know the roles they play as SMCs. Opinions made by T1, SMC4 and HT3 were:

Lack of capacity building affects the school as the community members do not know responsibilities in the life at the school, Their contributions and the impact on the school and the communities as a whole. (T1)

SMCs may not be aware of their limits if there is no capacity building for members. The lack of it has made SMCs members ineffective in their roles. (SMC 4)

Lack of capacity building of SMCs is a big challenge in the sense that some members do not know the roles they play as SMCs. (HT 3)



Again, the study investigated the extent community's lack of resources (financial and material support) a challenge to their effective participation in SMCs activities. It was revealed that it makes members to be reluctant in carrying out their duties, the community may not be able to provide developmental projects for schools, sometimes it very difficult for SMCs to participate and carry out school's activities, lack of resources hinders the effectiveness as, they cannot organize capacity building training, teaching and learning materials, infrastructural means are not met other educative programs, the lack of resources within a community can significantly hinder effective participation if school management committee (SMC) activities in several ways such as; limited time and availability, financial constraints and limited access to information, lack of resources has prevented the SMC from organizing meetings and also helping to solve problems in the school and Lack of resources is also another major challenge which hinders the effective participation of SMCs. Most things the SMCs would like to carry out would prove impossible due to the lack of funds. Some responses from P4, SMC1 and a T1 were:

Lack of resources has prevented the SMC from organizing meetings and also helping to solve problems in the school. (P4)

Lack of resources has prevented the SMCs from organizing meetings and also helping to fix some problems in the school. (SMC 1)

Lack of resources is also another major challenge that hinders the effective participation of SMCs. Most things the SMCs would like to carry out would prove impossible due to the lack of funds. (T1)

Inusah et al., (2023), and Adam (2005) concur with the above findings when they claim that few constraints and restrictions to affect community participation in school developments are lack of resources and strong incentives.



Still, on objective two, the study evaluated how low literacy levels among community members are a challenge to the effectiveness of SMCs. The findings were that low literacy levels amongst community members is a major challenge to the effectiveness of SMC because this has restricted their participation in meetings organized by the SMC, it affects the contribution of individual members, some members of the community always think negatively to the achievements of the SMCs which is as a result of lack of education and low literacy rate, they find it difficult to understand and appreciate things that have to do with reading and basic arithmetic, the level of literacy can influence the effectiveness of SMCs, the illiterates are very difficult in carrying out activities, they fear to spend money the right because of the belief that such funds might be misused, they do not have the reconceive knowledge in the school management and it resolved in the lack of effectiveness. they feel reluctant to participate because of the language barrier although they might have effective ideas to help the SMCs. Expressions made by some SMC3, T4, HT2 and P4 are:

Yes, low literacy levels amongst community members is a major challenge to the effectiveness of SMC. This has restricted their participation in meetings organized by the SMC. (SMC 3)

Some members of the community always think negatively about the achievements of the SMCs due to a lack of education and low literacy rates. (T4)

Yes, the effectiveness of SMCs can be influenced by the level of literacy because liberal community members would do more of education, and training and employ modern techniques to bring development to the school compared to literate/low-level literacy. (HT2)

Yes, low literacy levels of community members are a serious challenge because they do not have the reconceive knowledge in the school management and it resolved in lack of effectiveness. (P4)

To confirm these findings, Watt (2001), Prew (2012) emphasized the detrimental impact of high illiteracy rates among community members in contributing their part to the functioning of SMC.

It was also investigated to determine whether schools' lack of eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvement in school developments is a challenge to SMCs effectiveness. The findings were that it is a huge challenge as SMC members get fed-up with school bad attitudes, it poses significant challenges to the effectiveness of SMCs in several ways such as limited collaborations in the lack of transparency, lack of eagerness of school to welcome community participation in school development is a major challenge in the functionality of SMCs because members' zeal in volunteering is lost, it has dampened the spirit of volunteering on the part of community members who want to genuinely help develop the schools, it makes community members to start attacking and destroying school properties. Some assertions were that:

It is a huge challenge as SMC members get fed-up with school attitude begin to withdraw from management activities. (T2)

The lack of eagerness or willingness of schools to welcome community involvement in school development can pose significant challenges to the effectiveness of SMCs in several ways such as limited collaborations in lack of transparency. (SMC 2)

This is a big challenge because not all schools are willing to involve the community in the development of the school. This is a major challenge to the



SMCs. because the SMCs come from the community, it is sometimes difficult as most schools prefer to work autonomously. (HT 2)

Based on the above findings, Adam (2005) revealed that communities occasionally face numerous challenges, including schools' lack of eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvement in school developments. While Fusheini (2006) mentioned that the challenges communities face includes schools' reluctance to actively engage them in development endeavors.

The study also looked into how the reluctance among community members to participate in school development initiatives a challenge to SMCs effectiveness. The findings were that community members are the source of financing morale in the development of schools so their reluctance to participate in school development initiatives is worrying because it would deprive the schools of the support the community offers, it reduces performance in other developments, reduces communication and interaction with the school and community, development initiative is a worry because schools are being deprived of support of SMCs, it affects the smooth running of the school, reluctance among community members to participate in school development reduce their interest of the SMCs developmental ideas in order project the developmental agenda as far as the school is concerned, they also feel they are not part of school management so they don't care if school resources are taken away or mismanaged by the community members or outsiders, it makes them un serious towards SMC activities and also oblivious of the roles of SMC in the school. Mentions from T2, HT1 and a SMC1 were:

Community members are source of financing morale in the developments of schools.so reluctance to participate in school development initiatives is a worrying development. This would deprive the schools of the support the community offers. (T2)



Reduces performance in other developments, reduces communication and interaction with the school and community. (HT 1)

Reluctance among community members to participate in school development reduce their interest of the SMCs developmental ideas in order project the developmental agenda as far as the school is concerned. (SMC 1)

To concur these findings, Oppenheim (2008), Fusheini's (2006) noted community members' reluctance to engage in both manual and intellectual school activities are barriers to SMC effectiveness.

The study also found that SMC finds it very difficult to operate on school activities if the community fails to support them. Some of the activities involve communal labor and if members are reluctant to participate it serves as a challenge to the SMC, some community members do not wish to participate in school development because they feel the school do not belong to them and this hinder the effectiveness of school development, the safety and security of the school in the communities is based on collective support of all members, effective SMCs depend on effective interactions between the school and the community, it hinders SMCs effectiveness since there would not be communication between school and community about student development and this affects the effective management of the school and always make SMCs missing when it comes to the day to day activities and effective running of the school. Some comments were:

Effective SMCs depend on effective interactions between the school and the community. Lack of participation of community members might hinder SMCs effectiveness since there would not be communication between school and community about student development. (HT 3)



Most SMCs are always reluctant when it comes the addressing and solving of school's problems. This affects the school's effective management and always makes SMCs missing when it comes to the school's day-to-day activities and effective running. (HT 1)

These is why Watt (2001), Prew (2012), and Nirmala (2013) highlighted parents' reluctance and unwillingness to engage in school initiatives are significant barriers to SMC activities.

4.1.3. Enhancing Community Participation in School Management in the Sagnarigu Municipality

About objective three, the study found the following as recommendations that can help to ensure the full participation of communities in carrying out SMC roles and responsibilities: educating the community about the importance of SMCs, taking suggestions from communities, making communities to understand SMCs roles, giving community members positions in SMCs, inviting community members to SMCs meetings, national policies should give communities more opportunities to manage the schools around, school committees should be formed with greater number being members in the community's sensitization on school management, school administration should always welcome the ideas of SMCs and SMCs should have the school at heart to ensure developments. Some mentions from two T3, T1 and a P3 were:

I think schools must educate the community about the importance of SMCs. (T3)

Schools must take ideas and suggestions from communities. (T1)

We should make communities to understand SMCs is not only for literate people but for all members. (P3)

It was also found that SMCs and teachers should always support each other to ensure school developments, SMC must be given training to function well teachers must work well for students



to perform to motivate the work of SMCs, some scholarships must be given to SMCs to make members of the community feel the need to work hard, members must be motivated with T&T to enable them to survive after work, adequate training should be given to members of SMC, schools should always have welcoming posture, there should be a tenure of members to involve more community members, try to use local dialect in some cases as a medium of communication, assembly members should also be involved, the chief of the community must provide an elder to get involved, the youth must also be involved in SMCs management, there should be transparency.

Some responses from T3, SMC2, and P1 were:

SMCs and teachers should always lease with each other for developments. (T3)

SMC must be given training to function well teachers must work well for students

to perform to motivate the work of SMCs. (SMC 2)

Some scholarships must be given to SMCs to make members of the community

feel the need to work hard. (P1)

Furthermore, it was revealed that there should be the creation of inclusive decision-making, the establishment of feedback mechanism, fostering of collaboration and partnerships, and meetings should not be scheduled during school hours, there should be the scheduling meetings on Fridays, there should be financial support to the SMC, accountability to the community members of their work as SMC in the school, organizing cultural activities in the school to involve community members, the school should make frantic efforts to invite and involve the community in its activities, SMCs should make periodic visits to the school to be familiar with it, SMCs members should make their presence known in the school, SMCs should be able to assist the school when the need arises and SMCs should make sure they pick proactive members to make up the SMC body. The following were some of the assertions presented:

Try to use local dialect in some cases as a medium of communication. (P3)

The chief of the community must provide an elder to get involved. (SMC 2)

Create inclusive decision-making and establish a feedback mechanism. (HT 1)

Schools should foster collaboration and partnerships. (T2)

To confirm the above findings, Arnstein (1969), posits that involving community members in decision-making processes, listening to their views and given them chance as member empowers them and leads to more equitable outcomes of SMC.

4.2 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and discussed the results of the study. These discussions included findings that emerged from the data analysis stage, responses from the participants have been included to confirm the various findings and also relevant literature have also been provided to support, confirm, concur or disapprove the findings where appropriate.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from the points of views of the participants concerning community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. This summary is followed by the researcher's conclusions as well as recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This research project was set out to examine community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. Despite the potential benefits of community participation in school management, there is a lack of effective community participation in some school affairs in some parts of the world. The problem at hand revolves around the efficacy of School Management Committees (SMCs) in the junior high schools of the Sagnarigu Municipality in Ghana. It was essential to evaluate whether these committees are operating at their full potential and to what extent authentic community involvement is occurring within them. Moreover, it also was equally pertinent to investigate whether the diverse voices of stakeholders are being considered and integrated into the decision-making processes within these committees.

The primary aim of this research was to assess community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were pursued:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of School Management Committees (SMCs) in the Sagnarigu Municipality in terms of their roles and responsibilities.



2. To identify the challenges hindering effective community participation in school management in the Sagnarigu Municipality.
3. To make recommendations for enhancing community participation in school management in the Sagnarigu Municipality.

The review of literature was on community participation in school management, the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework, school management committees (SMCs) facilitation of community participation in school management, the roles and responsibilities of the School Management Committee (SMC) in enhancing the quality of education and school governance and the challenges and barriers hindering effective community participation in school management.

In this study, the qualitative research approach was used to provide complex textual descriptions of how the participants perceived community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. The study used case study design. The philosophical assumption in this study was the use of interpretivist paradigm which has the intention of understanding the world of human experience. The population comprised all community members, parents, school heads, the management teams and teachers in all junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality. The sampling method used is convenience sampling. The method was used to select four (4) parent, four (4) school management members and four (4) teachers from four different junior high schools.

Both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data was collected from the field through interviews. The secondary data used for this research were obtained from books, journals and reports. The researcher used face-to-face in-depth individual interviews to gather in-depth information. An open-ended interview schedule was developed to collect data from



the participants. Data were collected using tape recording. Before that, a rapport was established. Each interview lasted for 45 minutes. The deductive thematic analytical method was used to analyses collected data. Participants used in the study had understanding of the purpose of the research.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

Some of the key findings were:

1. School Management Committees (SMC) are not functioning in most schools and that has contributed woefully to the low performance in the schools
2. In some schools, SMCs help improve learners' performance, they make sure the right resource personnel are in the school, they contribute massively in maintaining minor structural facilities and help to boost the morale of the teachers.
3. SMCs members do have inadequate sense of ownership of the schools and also work effectively towards achieving schools' successes
4. A lack of capacity building of community members on SMCs functions has led to uneducated SMC community members not being active, lack knowledge in their roles and responsibilities and are not aware of their limits.
5. The effects of community's lack of resources (financial and material support) include: members being reluctant in carrying out their duties, not able to provide developmental projects for schools, hinders school effectiveness as they cannot organize capacity building training, infrastructural other educative programs are not met, prevent the SMC from organizing meetings and also helping to solve problems in the school.



6. The effects of low literacy levels among SMC community members are: restrict their participation in meetings, thinking negatively to the achievements of the SMCs, very difficult in carrying out activities, they fear to spend money the right because of the belief that such funds might be misused, they do not have the reconceive knowledge in the school management and it resolved in the lack of effectiveness.
7. Schools' lack the eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvement in school developments.

5.3 Conclusion

School Management Committees played a great role in improving school management as they are very effective in helping school management to supervise day to day activities, influencing good relationship between teachers and community, maintaining students' discipline and facilitating citizens and parents' participation in school decision making.

Based on the findings, it was established that, SMCs in many schools were currently not operational, which significantly contributes to poor academic performance. Specifically, in the Sagnarigu municipality, SMCs were completely non-functional, leading to a lack of organizational structure. Moreover, the ineffective functioning of SMCs in this area hampers their ability to facilitate joint participatory decision-making among members involved in school management. Although a few SMCs attempted to engage in participatory decision-making, certain school managers obstruct this process, further complicating effective governance,

The study highlighted several positive impacts of School Management Committees (SMCs) on school functioning. SMCs play a crucial role in improving learners' performance by ensuring timely availability of appropriate personnel. They also contribute significantly to



maintaining basic infrastructure within schools. Additionally, SMCs support school morale by conducting regular visits, thereby boosting teachers' morale. Collaborating with the Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A), SMCs participate in decision-making and school administration, ultimately enhancing overall school management to address various challenges effectively.

Furthermore, the research revealed that SMCs foster a sense of community ownership over schools, allowing all members to participate in school-related activities. This inclusivity varies based on factors such as community engagement, empowerment, and the structure of the committee itself. Generally, SMCs strive to promote inclusiveness and collaboration among stakeholders, facilitating their involvement in decision-making processes through regular general meetings held at the beginning and end of each term.

It was found that communities, as primary stakeholders, play a crucial role in school caretaking, ensuring safety and security for staff and learners. Many SMC members are also parents who participate in school activities and take responsibility for school properties. This sense of ownership extends to providing and maintaining certain school facilities. However, the study also identified significant challenges: many SMCs are ineffective due to members' poor understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This lack of clarity leads to a diminished sense of ownership and commitment among some members, affecting overall effectiveness.

While some members effectively fulfill their duties and collaborate with school authorities, others lack understanding of their roles or neglect their responsibilities altogether. Issues such as mismanagement of school funds were also noted, highlighting deficiencies in accountability and efficiency within some SMCs. The study assessed the overall effectiveness



of SMCs in school governance within the municipality. Positive aspects include active monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of school performances by SMCs. They engage in various functions such as participation, representation, transparency, accountability, capacity building, community engagement, and resource management. Regular school visits by SMC members were noted as supportive actions to enhance school governance.

Community members lack adequate education and training to effectively participate in SMCs, hindering their understanding of roles and responsibilities. This limitation affects their ability to contribute meaningfully to school management activities, including decision-making and resource allocation. The scarcity of financial and material resources within communities impedes effective participation in SMC activities. This includes reluctance to carry out duties, inability to organize meetings or training sessions, and constraints in providing necessary school infrastructure and educational materials.

Low literacy rates among community members restrict their engagement in SMC activities such as attending meetings and understanding educational issues. This hampers their ability to contribute constructively to decision-making processes and school development initiatives. Some schools exhibit a lack of enthusiasm for involving the community in school development efforts. This reluctance diminishes community members' motivation to volunteer and collaborate, leading to limited transparency and partnership between the school and the community.

Reluctance among community members to engage in school development initiatives reduces their support for SMC activities. This lack of involvement can lead to decreased communication, diminished community-school interactions, and a general disinterest in supporting school initiatives. Effective SMC operation often depends on strong community

support. Challenges arise when community members are unwilling to participate in communal activities like school maintenance or security, thereby impacting the overall effectiveness of SMCs in managing school affairs.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher wishes to present the following recommendations. By implementing these recommendations, SMCs can effectively address challenges, capitalize on positive impacts, and enhance their role in fostering quality education and school development within communities in the Sagnarigu municipality.

1. It is recommended that the Ghana Education Service (GES) should establish clear guidelines and training programs for SMC members to understand their roles and responsibilities effectively. Implement mechanisms to revive non-functional SMCs, particularly in areas like Sagnarigu municipality, to foster participatory decision-making and governance. The GES should ensure school managers support rather than hinder participatory decision-making processes within SMCs through clear communication and collaboration frameworks.
2. The school management should continuously ensure the timely availability of qualified community members as SMC members in schools. The GES should work hand in hand with NGOs to establish sustainable strategies for SMCs to maintain basic school infrastructure. There should be regular visits and interactions between SMCs and schools to boost morale among teachers and enhance overall school management effectiveness. School managers should facilitate inclusive participation, organize regular general meetings and community engagements to ensure all stakeholders,



including parents and community members, are actively involved in decision-making processes.

3. The GES should provide continuous training and capacity-building opportunities to SMC members to enhance understanding and commitment to school management roles. The GES should develop educational programs to improve literacy levels and enhance understanding of school management responsibilities among community members. Schools should establish initiatives to secure financial and material resources for SMC activities, ensuring adequate support for school development projects and activities. Schools should make it a point to foster a supportive environment where schools actively welcome and engage community members in development initiatives, enhancing transparency and partnership.
4. Schools should implement strategies to increase community motivation and interest in participating in school development initiatives, schools should emphasize the shared ownership and benefits of active involvement, schools should strengthen communication channels with communities to foster trust, transparency, and mutual understanding in managing school affairs and schools should emphasize the collective responsibility of all community members in ensuring school safety, maintenance, and effective operation of SMCs.
5. The GES should organize capacity-building workshops for all SMC members and all community members to educate them about the importance of SMCs, to understand SMCs' roles, the importance of giving community members positions in SMCs and why national policies should give communities more opportunities to manage their schools. School managers should motivate members with T&T to enable them to



survive after work, they should ensure there is a tenure of members to involve more community members, they should try to use local dialect in some cases as a medium of communication, they should involve assembly members in SMC activities and the chief of each community should provide an elder to get involved.



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APPENDIX A
(INTERVIEW SCHEDULE)

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out a study on the topic “community participation in school management at junior high schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality”. You have been selected to participate in the research by answering the following interview questions. You are required to provide the most appropriate answers in your opinion. Your responses will be kept confidential and used for purely academic purposes.

Thank you.

**1. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (SMCs) IN THE
SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY IN TERMS OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1.1 To what extent do SMCs in this municipality make it possible for a joint and participatory decision making by all members and in the management of the schools?

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1.2 Do you think all SMCs members do have a sense of ownership of the schools and also work effectively towards achieving schools' successes? Explain

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1.3 Do you think SMCs do all effectively carry out responsibility assigned to them for school functionality? Explain

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1.4. How do assess SMCs effectiveness in schools in this municipality?

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2. TO IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGES HINDERING EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN THE SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY

2.1 How do a lack of capacity building of community members on SMCs functions a challenge to community participation in SMCs?

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2.2 To what extent do community lack of resources (financial and material support) a challenge to their effective participation in SMCs activities?

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2.3 Do you think low literacy levels among community members is a challenge to the effectiveness of SMCs? Explain

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2.4 To what extent do schools' lack of eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvements in school developments a challenge to SMCs effectiveness?

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2.5 How do the reluctance among community members to participate in school development initiatives a challenge to SMCs effectiveness?

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3. WAYS FOR ENHANCING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN THE SAGNARIGU MUNICIPALITY

3.1 Could you please list any five recommendations you think can help to ensure full participations
of communities in carrying out SMCs roles and responsibilities.

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