

# **ASSESSING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND QUALITY PRIMARY EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE OF NIGERIA: A CASE OF NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

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## **Abstract**

Quality education plays vital roles at empowering people with the right intellectual development, skill acquisition and social values which catapults any nation to greater heights. It was for this reason that Nigeria, adopted the introduction of School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in the management of her primary and secondary schools. School Based Management Committees, to a large extent enhances availability and affordability of education to greater number of citizens through community participation. Through this medium communities understand why it should owe it as duty to ensure that their children have access to quality education and participating in the management and administration of the schools within their communities. The extent to which SBMCs have impacted in advancing quality education since its inception in Nigeria needs to be determined hence the crux of this paper. From the result of the study, it was discovered that SBMCs have impacted positively in improving quality education at primary school levels in Nigeria. The researcher also made some recommendations that are directed towards improving SMBC effectiveness in the administration of primary and secondary schools in the communities.

## **Background of Study**

School is one of the most indispensable agents of socialization that brings together the teacher, students, instructional materials, learning experiences and the society together through the process of socialization (Onyeke 2015). What happens in the school affects the community, and what happens in community affects the schools. By implication, the community builds school and the school builds their

communities (Bakwai, Yisa and Musa 2014). On any given day, according to (UNICEF 2008), more than a billion children are in primary or secondary school: 689 million in primary school and 513 million in secondary school. Most of these children are in permanent or temporary buildings, tents or under trees – sharing the experience of learning, developing their potentials and enriching their lives. What is pertinent is whether these children has access to quality education. Quality in education according Ogundele and Adelabu (2009) has always been measured on quality of content in curriculum and how well such fits present and future needs of learners. Quality learners according to UNESCO are learners who are healthy and supported in learning by their families and communities. The distortions in the education system due to ineffective implementation of educational policy engendered primarily by lack of political will, lack of continuity of programme and corruption have jeopardized the educational aspirations in Nigeria has become very worrisome (Okoroma 2006). This is because, the above factors impede quality learning and quality education. There is therefore, the need to inspire quality consciousness in school operators and managers for the attainment of total quality education in our schools, create an educational effectiveness and achievement through community participation in school management and administration. This very reason formed part of what gave rise to the evolution of SBMC in the management and administration of schools. The introduction of SBMC therefore became a necessity to salvage the deplorable state of educational resources, instructional material paucity and lack of community consciousness facing secondary and primary schools in Nigeria. This is why in Nigeria, SBMCs are established by government to act as a bridge between schools and the communities they serve and the purpose for their establishment was to achieve effective community participation in the management and governance of primary, junior and secondary schools.

City Hoorns Schools (2016) says that School Based Management Team (SBMT) is a committee comprised of representatives from each of the school stakeholder groups: administrators, parents representing our PTA organization, teachers elected by the school, teacher aides/assistants, students, and community members. According to Khadija (2016), School Based Management Committees involves the decentralization of authority from the government to the school and community level.

The need for establishment of SMBC became imperative due to the existing administrative, infrastructural, financial laxities that surround our public schools. The experience of the past decade has underscored the need for better governance of the education system without compromising efficiency, accountability, transparency and flexibility (Ogundele and Adelobu (2009). Confronted also by the enormity of the scourge of many children that are out-of-school and efforts to build a just society devoid

of discrimination and to clear all hurdles and barriers preventing our children from not only going to school and enjoying being in school, School-Based Management Committee was introduced to increase community participation in school management as part of the efforts of school reform in Nigeria. Such reform in the educational management is urgently needed to move from highly centralized, standardized and command-driven forms of management to more decentralize and participatory decision-making, implementation and monitoring at lower levels of accountability (Ogundele and Adelabu (2009). The establishment of SBMC in all schools throughout the country is in line with the directives of National Council on Education (NCE) in 2005 and in accordance with Dakar Framework of Action 2000 (Okoro 2014). If both quality and access are tackled, children who are enrolled in primary schools are likely to continue, complete the full cycle, and achieve expected learning outcomes as well as successful transition to secondary schools (UNICEF 2008).

### **Statement of Problem**

Children in some schools in Nigeria experience harsh conditions that thwart teaching and learning, such as lack of competent teachers to guide them, non availability of textbooks to learn from and even exercise books to write in. Situations are worse where schools have no toilets, running water or electricity subjecting school children to face other negative conditions in the school. The community environment at times imposes difficult challenges for children to enroll in school, attend school regularly, complete their final year of the cycle or achieve the prescribed level of learning. At home, other difficult conditions which make schooling difficult includes the problem of nutrition and water insecurity, parasitic infestations, unhygienic household chores, harmful traditional beliefs and practices, domestic overcrowding, gender discrimination and community ineptness to matters concerning schools in their communities. To address these challenges effectively, there is need for community participation in the management of our schools hence the introduction of School Based Management Committees.

The SBMCs are to ensure that children of school going age within the communities are enrolled into schools while government/communities provide schools with the enabling environment for teaching and learning as well as eliminate all threats to pupils' participation in classroom activities. In this regard, SBMCs, government and school administration strategize to creating an administrative synergy that guarantees quality education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to find out:

1. The factors necessitating the introduction of School-Based Management Committee.
2. The extent the introduction of SBMC has impacted on the improvement of primary schools in Enugu State.
3. The limiting factors militating against the purpose of establishing SBMC in primary schools in Enugu State.
4. The possible remedies to the problems hindering the functioning of SBMC in Enugu State.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher formulated the following research questions to guide the study:

1. What are the factors necessitating the introduction of SBMC in Nigeria?
2. To what extent has the introduction of SBMC impacted on the improvement of primary schools in Enugu State?
3. What are the factors militating against the realization of the purpose of SBMC in primary schools in Enugu State?
4. What are the possible remedies to the problems hindering the functioning of SBMC in Enugu State?

### **Design of the Study**

The researcher adopted descriptive survey in conducting the study. This is because according to Maduakonam in Amadi (2013), descriptive survey design seeks to collect detailed factual information that describes the nature of existing condition. By this, it assesses the characteristics of the whole population and usually study sample drawn from the population of the study.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The researcher used 200 respondents made up of 5 teachers and 20 students randomly selected from 8 primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Education Authority for the study.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

A four-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which were assigned numerical values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively was adopted and used in designing the questionnaire. The researcher visited

the 8 primary schools slated for the study and distributed questionnaires to the respondents. The respondents were requested to tick on the options that sooth their opinions. 100% of the questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed using mean scores. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as those that agreed while any mean score below 2.50 was regarded as those that disagreed.

Table 1: What are the factors necessitating the introduction of Schools Based Management Committees in Nsukka Local Government Area?

S/N	Questionnaire item	SA	A	SD	D	Mean weight	X	Decision
1.	There is high incidence of gender discrimination in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area	30	15	70	35	390	1.95	Disagreed
2.	There is high incidence of girl child education in Nsukka Local Government Area	50	45	60	45	500	2.50	Agreed
3.	There is high rate of school drop-out in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area	30	20	70	80	400	2.00	Disagreed
4.	Inadequate infrastructural facilities in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area	90	70	28	12	638	3.19	Agreed
5.	School environment does not support safe, healthy learning conditions.	62	83	50	5	602	3.01	Agreed
6.	There is poor funding of primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area	90	70	25	15	635	3.16	Agreed
7.	The host communities do not show commitment to the activities in the primary schools	80	65	43	7	624	3.12	Agreed
8.	During classroom activities, child's interest is not given recognition in Nsukka Local Government Area	50	45	60	45	500	2.50	Agreed

**Findings**

From the results obtain in table 1, items 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 with mean scores of 2.50, 3.19, 3.01, 3.16, 3.12, and 2.50 agreed that there is high incidence of girl child

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education, lack of infrastructural facilities and that the school environment does not support safe, healthy learning conditions; that primary schools in Enugu state is poorly funded while host communities do not show commitment to the activities in their primary schools. The results also show that interests of the school children are not given recognition during classroom as well as out-of-school activities. While items 1 and 3 disagreed that there is high incidence of gender discrimination in primary schools as well as high rate of school drop-out in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area.

**Table Two:** To what extent has the introduction of SBMC impacted on the improvement of primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area?

S/N	Questionnaire item	SA	A	SD	D	Mean weight	X	Decision
9.	The SBMC has been able to sensitize the communities to understand their role in the improvement of primary schools in their localities	90	70	28	12	638	3.19	Agreed
10	SBMC has been able to mobilize communities to provide equipment and facilities like fencing, donation of labour, raising of funds etc.	62	83	50	5	602	3.01	Agreed
11	Communities have provided security to primary schools in their localities.	85	65	43	7	624	3.12	Agreed
12.	There is more enrolment of children into primary schools as a result of mobilization efforts by the SBMC members.	80	95	10	15	640	3.02	Agreed
13	School children now complete their school circles indicating reduction in children dropping-out.	90	70	25	15	635	3.16	Agreed
14	SBMC attracts government and non-governmental agencies to provide projects to primary schools.	25	20	75	80	390	1.95	Disagreed
15	The rights of school children are now protected than before.	50	45	60	45	500	2.50	Agreed
16	SBMC ensures that school activities are performed as stipulated in the guiding policies.	63	37	75	25	538	2.69	Agreed

17	Sanitary facilities are made available to primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area.	25	75	80	20	390	1.95	Disagreed
18.	There are improved school and community relationships in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area	50	45	60	45	500	2.50	Agreed

**Findings**

In table 2, the result shows that items 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 16, and 18 with mean scores of 3.19, 3.01, 3.12, 3.02, 3.16, 2.50, 2.69, and 2.50 agreed that SBMCs have been able to sensitize communities to understand their roles in the improvement of primary schools in their communities, there is improvement in children enrolment in schools as a result of mobilization efforts of the SBMC members, school children now complete their schools cycle, the rights of school children are now being protected than before, school activities are now being performed as stipulated in accordance with the guiding policies and that there is improvement on school-community relations in Enugu State of Nigeria while 14, and 17 with mean scores of 1.95 and 1.95 disagreed.

**Table Three:** What are the limiting factors to realization of the purpose of establishing SBMC in primary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area?

S/N	Questionnaire item	AS	A	SD	D	Mean weight	X	Decision
19.	SBMC members do not understand their roles as a duty to help primary schools in the communities.	63	25	75	37	541	2.57	Agreed
20.	Most members of SBMC find it difficult to raise funds for the primary schools in their communities.	65	43	62	30	543	2.71	Agreed
21.	Most SBMC members believe that schools belong to government and have no to raise funds from their meager resources for public schools.	50	45	60	45	500	2.50	Agreed
22	Most members do not attend SBMC meetings instead they spend such for their private businesses.	63	37	75	25	538	2.70	Agreed
23	SBMC members are not happy with corrupt practices of our political	80	95	15	10	645	3.23	Agreed

	leaders.							
24	There are no funds available in the treasury of SBMC for members to disburse among themselves.	105	45	36	14	641	3.20	Agreed

**Findings**

The results obtained in table 3 show that item 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 with mean scores of 2.57, 2.71, 2.50, 2.70, 3.23 and 3.20 respectively agreed that some members of SBMC do not understand their roles as to help schools in their communities attain its goals. SBMC members believe that schools belong to government and wonder why they are expected to raise funds from their meager incomes for public schools owned by government. Most members find it difficult to attend SBMC meetings as they believe that the time they would spend on such meetings could be used for their private businesses. Most importantly, there is no money in the SBMC treasury for members to disburse among themselves as enticement for their commitment to the school.

**Table Four:** What are the possible remedies to the problems hindering the functioning of SBMC in Nsukka Local Government Area?

S/N	Questionnaire item	SA	A	S D	D	Mean weigh t	X	Decisio n
25	Members of the SBMC should be adequately educated on their roles as contributors and not disbursers of funds	90	70	25	15	635	3.16	Agreed
26.	More campaign should be mounted to educate the communities on their roles in the school within their communities.	80	95	10	15	640	3.20	Agreed
27.	Communities should be made to understand that schools are established in the interests of their children	85	65	43	7	624	3.12	Agreed
28.	Government should take interest in the funding of education primary schools.	62	83	50	5	602	3.01	Agreed
29.	Communities should join hands in providing funds, facilities and infrastructures to the school within their locality.	90	70	28	12	638	3.19	Agreed

In table 4, the results obtain show that items 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 with mean scores of 3.16, 3.20, 3.12, 3.01, and 3.19 respectively. This means that members of the SBMCs should be adequately informed on their roles as contributors and not disbursers



of funds, more campaign should be mounted to educate the communities on their roles to the school within their communities, communities should made to understand that schools within their communities are established in the interest of their children and as such should play active roles in the activities in the schools.

### **Discussion of Findings**

From the results obtained, it was discovered that there are factors that necessitated the introduction of School- Based Management Committees in primary schools in Enugu State. Such factors include the desire of the state to promote girl-child education, provision of infrastructural facilities and improvement of school environment to support safe, healthy learning conditions. Others include: improving the fiscal support for primary schools in the state, sensitizing the communities to show commitment to their activities in the schools within the communities. In addition, the state uses the SBMCs to monitor and teachers and school administration. This is in line with the opinion of Khan (2006) that SMC plays a key role in strengthening relationships between the school and local communities... SMC can bring about positive changes in the school through commitment and consciousness, mutual respect and discipline is given priority. Communities have as well recognized the rights of children as part of the decision-making process especially in the classroom and on the matters affecting the children in line with Chapter Four sub-section 34 of the 1999 constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria which dwelt on the issue of Fundamental Human Rights. All these efforts were designed to pursue the achievement of the Goal 2 of Millennium Development goal – to achieve universal primary education and in compliance with UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which changed the ways children are viewed and treated. The Universal Basic Education Act of 2004 mandates the UBE Commission to cater for the education of children of all classes irrespective of social status, religious affiliation and physical condition of the child. This belief is supported by Thapa (2012) thus “SMC brings to the notice off the local authority any deviation from the rights of the child, in particular mental and physical harassment of children, denial of admission, and timely provision of free entitlements”.

It was discovered also that to a large extent, the introduction of SBMCs impact positively on the improvement of primary schools in Enugu State. It has sensitized and mobilized the communities towards understanding their roles in the management and administration of primary schools in their communities. Consequently, communities have improved their commitment to security as well as development of interest in what is happening in the schools in their communities. Communities now donate labour, funds and facilities and infrastructures to schools in their communities. The relatively

high regard of the communities in what is happening in their schools, children now complete their primary education cycles. It indicated that the reduction in school drop-outs rate is linked to the positive activities of SBMCs the state under discussion. Due to the monitoring and supervision activities of SBMCs teachers and school administrations comply with stipulations in the guiding policies such early and regular attendance to duties, cultivation of on-seat habits, accountability, transparency and other best practices associated with their duties. Government of Enugu state has almost rehabilitated dilapidated school blocks both in urban and rural areas and this has fostered the gradual increase in enrolments in both primary and secondary schools in the state.

In any case, it was discovered that some members of SBMC have not understood their roles as members of the SBMCs as well as the objectives for the establishment of SBMCs consequently, they find it difficult to understand why they should be made to raise funds for public schools owned by government that is perceived to be rich enough to cater for the good education of her citizens. They believe that government which controls the economy should not expect them to cough out from their meager resource to fund public schools. This belief is so strong that some members of the SBMCs avoid SBMC activities. Another heartbreaking factor being stressed by some members of SBMCs is the issue of corruption which has led to embezzlement of school funds by some political leaders and prominent community leaders.

### **Conclusion**

The research has proved that before the establishment SBMCs in Nigeria, school facilities and infrastructures were at deplorable state. The introduction of SBMCs has resulted to a large extent in improving in provision of facilities, effective management of schools and community participation in the activities of schools in their communities. Equally children enrolments and completion of school cycles have marginally improved as SBMC supports inclusive education. There is also noticeable improvement in school-community relationships and improve quality education offered to the children resulting in high level learning outcomes.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the foregoing the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Members of SBMCs should be given regular training on how to implement School-Based Management policies guidelines.
2. Communities should see the public schools in their communities as projects established for the interest of their children and as such should make corresponding contributions to the schools.

3. Government should make funds available for the implementation primary school programmes as it the bed rock of every other level of education.

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