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EXTENT OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING AND PROVISION OF PERSONNEL IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IGBO-ETITI LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY, ENUGU STATE.

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Abstract
This study investigated the extent of community participation in primary school administration in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A., Enugu State with particular reference to decision making and provision of personnel. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area, Enugu state. The population of the study comprised 52 head teachers and 472 teachers in all the 52 public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area. The sample size for the study was 250 respondents comprising of 25 head teachers, 125 classroom teachers and 100 parents (community members). The sample size was drawn through a multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire with a four-point rating scale. The reliability of the instrument was determined by a preliminary survey in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State. Using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate, reliability indices of 0.79 and 0.85were obtained for clusters A and B of the instrument. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that communities to a low extent participate in the decision-making process and in the provision of personnel in public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti

Local Government Area, Enugu State. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that, school authorities should involve the communities in the decision-making process in public primary schools.

Keywords: Community Participation, Decision-making, Personnel, Primary School, Igbo-Etiti Area.

Introduction

The importance of school as an instrument for the provision of education in the society for individual and community development cannot be overstated. As a social and learning agent, the school provides a viable and veritable environment for the child to be formally and adequately educated in order to attain proper and adequate educational objectives. A well-planned educational structure provides the high, middle, and low-level manpower needed by the community for survival and development. Education is a process that integrates an individual into the wider society in which he or she belongs. This implies that education is a means through which man refines his intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical powers so as to become fully participating members of the community. Onuselogu (2007) referred to education as a means of enlightenment and a process of training and preparing an individual for a useful life in the community. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2004), education is a vital instrument for national development. In this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. This implies that education is the process of training and developing the mental potentials, physical knowledge, skill and different characters of individuals through formal and informal schooling.

Education came into most communities in Eastern Nigeria through the activities of Christian missionaries. Education was brought by Christianity, not the colonial government. According to Obomanu (2010), during the early years of education in Nigeria, the then British colonial government focused more on the establishment, control and expansion of political activities hence, abandoning educational activities in the hands of the Christian missionaries. Subsequently, until the middle of the 19th century, the provision and management of education were typically under the control and management of the voluntary agencies. Obomanu stated that these agencies mainly comprised Christian missionary bodies such as the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM), the Church Missionary Society (CMS), and the Wesleyan Methodist Church Mission (WMCM). Nevertheless, the later days of the 19th century witnessed a revolution in attitude towards education, resulting in an increase in incentives being given through financial assistance to the missionary bodies by the government and foreign bodies. This was followed by an accelerated interest in the establishment and management of schools by the government, voluntary agencies, private individuals and communities with the aid of the missionaries. According to Ugwuanyi (2012), the engagement of these new bodies or agencies in educational activities brought about tremendous expansion in the number of schools all over Nigeria, especially in the West and Eastern parts of the country. The basic educational institution at the time was the primary school. It was for this reason that Ibiam, Ake and Uroko (2015), stated that primary school education is the basis and foundation upon which all other levels of education are built.

Primary school is an institution of learning for children. A primary school is a place of formal learning for children between the ages of six and twelve. It is an educational institution where children are given the basic and rudiments of education. Chukwu (2015) maintained that primary school is an educational institution for the training of young children. Brain (2014) insisted that the Primary School is an integrated health and education model serving children, and their families, from birth through the transition to high school. Furthermore, Brain maintained that vision and mission of the primary school are focused on the development of children's learning and understanding of their world through play, exploration, discovery, and creativity. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in the National Policy on Education (NPE) maintained that primary education shall be given in an institution (primary school) for children aged 5-11 years plus and shall be free, universal and compulsory in order to achieve the goals of primary education (FRN, 2004). Primary school is, therefore, a place of integrated learning in which children receive primary or elementary education at the age of about five to twelve, which prepares them for secondary education. In most parts of the world, primary education is the first stage of compulsory education, and is ordinarily available without charge, but may be offered in a fee-paying independent school. Primary school being an establishment for the training of young children has to be located in a community.

A community refers to a social component larger than a small village. A community is a group of organisms staying in the same place or sharing a particular characteristic in common. A community here refers to a group of people sharing the same geographical position and under the same administration. These include parents/guardians, residents, corporate organizations and among others. A community is a social group of any size whose members resides in a specific locality, share the same government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage (Douglas, 2010). According to Ugwu (2000), a community refers to a people obliged to one another, not because of the place of birth, race, sex, religion, but people bound to one another and governed by shared taste, specific needs or common interest. People develop a strong sense of oneness when activities are shared among them in the same setting. This is why Scott (2001) maintained that community is a group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, in relationships that go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some momentous commitment to "rejoice together, mourn together," and to delight in each other, make others' conditions their own. Collaboration and teamwork is the bulwark of a community.

Community participation, on the other hand, refers to community teamwork. According to Greenwood (2009), community participation denotes a course of action by which consultation in decision making, goal setting, profit sharing, teamwork and other such measures through which the community attempts to foster or maintain its members' commitment to collective objectives. This implies that the generality of the people in the community is directly or indirectly involved in the activity. According to Norman (2000), community participation means that a whole lot of people are involved, the activity is not considered to be the special province of a knowledgeable few. From the foregoing, it is clear that community participation is not just limited to taking part in facility construction. Community participation is a collaborative process of using multi-dimensional ways to solve a problem for general good (Lasker, 2003). It is the responsibility of the community to provide social amenities including schools for socialization and education of her members.

Subsequently, since the community takes it upon herself to provide schools for the education of her young members, it is self-evident that the community should be involved in the management and administration of such schools, such as in areas of decision making and provision of personnel. Decision making is a process a finding a solution to a problem by considering different available alternatives. According to Tricia (2017) decision making is an avenue of solving problems through the examination of alternative choices and selecting the best route to take. This implies that when more people are involved in decision making more alternatives will be available and since two heads are better than one, the best alternative will be selected. Personnel on the other hand refer to people who are employed on a particular job. Personnel are, strictly speaking, the individuals or group of individuals that are employed in and organization or engaged in an organized system of enterprise (Whawo, 2014).

The role of the community in the provision of education cannot be relegated to the background. Wedam, Quansah and Debrah (2015) observed that the role of the community in the provision and management of education cuts across the board. They form the Parents – Teachers Association with numerous functions such as fundraising, maintenance of school discipline and also communities now burden themselves by building schools, so as to afford their children the benefits of education. Stressing the need for community involvement in the running of schools in Nigeria, the National Policy on Education, states that, "school system and consequently their management and day-to-day administration shall grow out of the life and social ethos of the community which they serve" (FRN, 2004: 55)

In view of the above assertion, the government in the recent past has encouraged community participation in the administration of schools. On this issue, Obomanu (2010) insisted that the active involvement of communities in the operations and the actualization of the aims and objectives of schools is a recent development. Akinwumi (2004) observed that the majority of parents are keen to help their children to do well in school; this is a resource which the school authority would do well to use. Parents have many opportunities to foster their children's learning and the children are likely to make progress in school if an effective collaboration exists between the home and the school. It is to improve community participation in the management and administration of schools that the government introduced the School-Based Management Committee (SBMCs). According to Onyinloye, Ochuba and Azubuike (2010), the overall goals of SBMCs are: Increasing parents' and communities' participation in school management and administration; empowering school heads; building local level capacities; and improving quality and efficiency of schooling, thus raising pupils'/students' achievement levels. The government takeover of schools helped immensely in improving community participation in the school administration.

The crucial process of repositioning education for efficient service delivery cannot be achieved without the communities' active participation in school administration. Yet despite the efforts of the communities, the citizens seem to be totally in the dark as far as the administration of the schools is concerned. The Federal Republic of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education, (FRN. 2004), accentuated the significance of the communities' involvement in school administration when it insisted that the local people, particularly parents, are encouraged to participate in school management and administration. Thus, stating that government- takeover of schools, where applicable was without bias to community involvement and participation in school management and administration. Hence, the joint school-community participation in school management and administration is now receiving more attention in educational circles in Nigeria. Obviously, this resulted in a healthy collaboration between the schools and the communities.

There is no gainsaying that the school authority will find it difficult if not impossible to handle the responsibility of providing the necessary amenities for the training of the children all alone. According to Whawo (2002), the schools cannot do the job of providing for and training the children alone and parents cannot delegate their responsibility for guiding their children to the school, the two must collaborate. Many situations would be helped simply by the school having knowledge of the home circumstances and the parents knowing more of what goes on in the school. All existing link such as the Parents Teachers Association, Old Boys/Girls Association is extremely valuable. Each of these groups when properly harnessed will be committed to ensuring that the conducive learning environment prevails in the school. However, the extent to which communities are involved and participate in the management and administration of schools such as decision making these days appear to have declined drastically. Moreover, many school heads are not interested in mobilizing the schools' host communities to participate actively in school affairs, while some community members themselves are not kin to what goes on in their children's schools. It is on this note that, Akinwumi (2004) observed that some school heads are at conflict with some parents and rarely summon Parents Teachers Association meetings and consider the parents unnecessary in the school administration. Buttressing this trend further, Obiechina (2006) pointed out that some parents show indifference and disregard for their children's discipline and the activities of the Parents Teachers Association. Some school heads only relate to the community when there are repairs to be done in their schools or levies to be paid. Issues relating to decision making and information about children's school work are not considered useful to such parents. This strains school -community collaboration and the education resource disparities that exist among most schools could be as a result of poor community involvement in school administration. The aftermaths of poor school - community relationship are indiscipline, moral decadence, loss of focus, inadequate staffing, examination malpractices among others, which are becoming alarmingly high, making effective school administration almost an impossible task (Okongu, 2002).

In this era of technological and scientific explosions, globalization, economic meltdown, economic recession, moral decadence, insubordination, and laziness on the part of pupils and teachers, the government or the school heads cannot run the schools alone. This is owing to the fact that the administration of schools has equally become more complex with its own challenges and problems. Some of the complexities are obvious in the areas of increasing cost of education, technological influence, explosive pupils' enrolment, school community conflicts, and staff and learners' indiscipline and insubordination (Obi, 2003). The educational system according to FRN (2004) is very cost intensive and demands adequate funding and adequate specialist personnel. In the schools there are libraries, music and language laboratories, art studios among others to be constructed and experts to teach these specialist courses. A huge amount of capital and human resources are required to achieve these constructions. Nwachukwu (2014) observed that the education policy was made at a time when there was economic prosperity, but its implementation is taking place at a time of economic downturn. Considering the economic situation in Nigeria today, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to implement the education programme satisfactorily in the various communities across the country without the communities being actively involved in decision making and provision of personnel.

It is obvious that primary schools in rural communities are worst hit by the lack of human and material resources than their urban counterparts. According to Obamanu (2010), most schools in the rural areas lack human and material resources for development and maintenance of the existing infrastructures due to illiteracy, inexperience and lack of exposure on the part of the community members and are often neglected by the government, unlike their urban counterparts. This is what lead Abdulkareem (2011) and Imam (2012) to maintain that before and shortly after Nigerian independence, primary schools across the country were adequately founded while available physical facilities were sufficient for staff and pupils, but,

presently due to some numerous challenges in the Nigerian education sector, it becomes necessary for most of the schools to have PTA to assist in solving their problems. In the light of the above, there is the need to critically examine the extent of community participation in decision making and in the provision of personnel in public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Education Authority, with a view to re-engineering primary schools to achieve their educational aims and objective. It is against this backdrop that the researcher focuses on investigating the extent of community participation in maintaining discipline and in the provision of infrastructural facilities in public primary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria.

This study was anchored on Stakeholder's theory which is often credited to Standford Research Institute (1963) because of their earliest definition of stakeholders' theory. The Institute defines stakeholders as those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist. Stakeholders' theory maintains that education is the responsibility of all. In this respect, the management of education should involve and integrate the goals of all stakeholders in the planning and administration of educational programmes. The major stakeholders are the parents, the society (communities), the learners, government, head teachers and teachers. The theory maintains that no stakeholder should act independently.

The rationale for stakeholder's theory which will make it the best approach for the human resource management of education system includes: it contributes to the welfare of the society as a whole, and provides for the welfare of employees and that of the management; it will take care in the long run, of all other organizational objectives such as level of employee turnovers, satisfaction of management staff and others; and shareholders of an organization or a company are not ordinary members just as it is likened to communities in the school system. They are the owners and thus should be given maximum priority in determining objectives. Also the 'Equity shareholders', that is, the host community is the residual investor which means that returns from investment belong to them. Stakeholders' theory promotes a conducive environment in the education industry. Teamwork finds its root in this theory as all the stakeholders are perfectly knitted together and failure of any brings about the failure of others. This is the rationale for this study because human resource management of primary schools leaves much to be desired in the society. This theory is related to this study because, without the active participation of the community in school administration, the schools may find it difficult to achieve the set objectives. Thus, the study was guided by two research questions:

1. What are the mean ratings of community members, head teachers and teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in primary schools in Enugu State.
2. What are mean ratings of community members, head teachers and teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in primary schools in Enugu State.

Besides, two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho_1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of community members, head teachers and teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in primary schools in Enugu state.

Ho_2: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of community members, head teachers and teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in primary schools in Enugu state.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in public primary schools in Igbo Etiti Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State. Igbo Etiti Local Government Authority has 15 towns with 52 public primary schools, 52 head teachers and 472 classroom teachers (Source: Office of the Area Inspector of Education, Igbo Etiti Local government Education Authority, 2019). The population of the study comprised all the members of the 15 towns 52 head teachers, 52 head teachers and 472 classroom teachers. The sample size for the study comprised 250 respondents (100 members of the community, 25 head teachers and 125 classroom teachers). The sample size was drawn through a multi-stage sampling procedure. At the first stage, a stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 25 schools from the 52 public primary schools in the local government Education Authority under study. The schools were stratified based on Urban and rural locations. Secondly, a simple random sampling technique by balloting without replacement was used to sample 5 teachers each from 25 sampled schools making a total of 125 teachers. Finally, a purposive sample technique was used to sample 4 parents (community members) each from the 25 sampled schools making a total of 100 community members. Thus, the whole 25 head teachers in the sampled schools were used for the study making a total of 250 respondents. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire with a four-point rating scale. The

face validity of the instrument was determined by giving it to experts in the fields of Measurement and Evaluation, Childhood Education and Educational Psychology, all in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was determined by a preliminary survey in Nsukka Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State. Using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate, reliability indices of 0.79 and 0.85 were obtained for clusters A and B of the instrument indicating that the instrument was reliable. The researcher with the help of two research assistants administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in primary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviations of the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in schools

Item	Statement	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
1.	Consulting with community development unions on school programmes and activities	Community Members	100	2.34	1.21	LE
		Head Teachers	25	2.28	1.40	LE
		Teachers	125	2.17	1.19	LE
2.	Allowing community-based committees to play an advisory role in the procurement and protection of equipment	Community Members	100	1.17	1.04	VLE
		Head Teachers	25	2.40	.81	LE
		Teachers	125	2.52	1.07	LE
3.	Consulting communities on the disciplinary measures in the school	Community Members	100	1.84	.95	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.72	.93	LE
		Teachers	125	1.92	1.06	LE
4.	Allowing communities to take part on boarding system management and control	Community Members	100	2.15	1.14	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.92	1.11	LE
		Teachers	125	2.04	1.05	LE
5.	Allowing communities to participate in a decision involving the transfer of head teachers	Community Members	100	1.94	.98	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.60	1.00	LE
		Teachers	125	1.83	.99	LE
6.	Allowing communities to participate in expelling students involved in indiscipline in the school	Community Members	100	2.48	1.09	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.96	1.17	LE
		Teachers	125	2.48	.98	LE
Overall Mean		**Community Members**	**100**	**2.14**	**.79**	**LE**
		Head Teachers	**25**	**2.42**	**.64**	**LE**
		Teachers	**125**	**2.36**	**.80**	**LE**

Table 1 shows that the overall mean of community members to the items is 2.14 with standard deviation of 0.79, that of head teachers is 2.42 with standard deviation of 0.64 while that of Teachers is 2.36 with standard deviation of 0.80. This implies that community to a low extent participates in decision making in primary schools in Enugu state.

Ho_1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in primary schools in Enugu State.

Table 2: Analysis of variance of the difference in the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in decision making in schools

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.921	2	.960	1.558	.213

Within Groups	152.219	247	.616
Total	154.140	249	

Table 2 reveals that Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers did not differ significantly on their mean ratings on the extent of community participation in decision making in schools, F (2, 247) = 1.558, p = 0.213. Hence the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Research Question Two: What are the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in primary schools in Enugu State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviations of the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in schools

Item	Statement	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
7.	Allowing the communities to participate in the recruitment of part-time teachers	Community Members	100	2.17	1.14	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.76	1.09	LE
		Teachers	125	2.00	1.07	LE
8.	Allowing the communities to participate in the recruitment of security men	Community Members	100	1.10	1.22	VLE
		Head Teachers	25	1.80	1.04	LE
		Teachers	125	2.23	1.10	LE
9.	Allowing the communities to participate in providing local coaches for sports purposes	Community Members	100	2.25	1.14	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.60	.76	LE
		Teachers	125	2.05	1.14	LE
10.	Allowing the communities to participate in the provision of gardeners/caretakers	Community Members	100	2.27	1.11	LE
		Head Teachers	25	2.12	1.30	LE
		Teachers	125	2.40	1.16	LE
11.	Allowing the communities to participate in the provision of cooks and stewards	Community Members	100	2.19	1.07	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.76	1.01	LE
		Teachers	125	2.28	1.06	LE
12.	Allowing communities to participate in the provision of school counsellors.	Community Members	100	2.05	1.11	LE
		Head Teachers	25	1.68	.94	LE
		Teachers	125	2.16	1.17	LE
Overall Mean		**Community Members**	**100**	**1.69**	**.64**	**LE**
		Head Teachers	**25**	**2.32**	**.58**	**LE**
		Teachers	**125**	**2.01**	**.72**	**LE**

Table 3 shows that the overall mean of community members to the items is 1.69 with standard deviation of 0.64, that of Head teachers is 2.32 with standard deviation of 0.58 while that of Teachers is 2.01 with standard deviation of 0.72. This implies that community to a low extent participates in the provision of personnel in primary schools in Enugu state.

Ho_2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in primary schools in Enugu State.

Table 4: Analysis of variance of the difference in the mean ratings of Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in schools

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.522	2	2.261	1.854	.089
Within Groups	289.048	247	1.466		
Total	119.570	249			

Table 4 reveals that Community members, Head Teachers and Teachers did not differ significantly on their mean ratings on the extent of community participation in the provision of personnel in schools, F (2, 247) = 1.854, p = 0.089. Hence the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

In other to appreciate the extent of community participation in decision making and in the provision of personnel in public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State, the opinions of community members, head teachers and teachers were sought. The findings of the study revealed that community to a low extent participates in decision making in public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Education Authority, Enugu state. This is in line with the study conducted by Ugwu (2000) and Obomanu (2010) which revealed that community participation in decision making in schools is low. As a result of this, Ugwu (2000) and Obomanu (2010) recommended that conferences and workshops for community members and school staff on the need for effective community participation in decision-making processes of schools should be organized. This in effect will also enhance teaching and learning and effective school administration and management.

With respect to the provision of personnel, the result of the study showed that the community members, head teachers and teachers agree that communities to a low extent participate in the provision of personnel in the public primary schools in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Education Authority, Enugu State. The finding is in line with the study conducted by Onu (2007) and Imam (2012) which insisted that communities are not involved in the provision of personnel in public schools.

Conclusion and Implication

The issue of management and administration of primary schools is increasingly becoming more and more complex. To achieve the educational goals of the primary school, more hands are required on the deck in terms of management and administration. To this effect, host communities need to participate actively in decision making in the primary schools for sustainable development in the educational system and consequently, the development of the nation and reduction of hunger and poverty acquisition and development of skills and handwork in primary schools. The implication of the findings of this study is that a proper awareness, orientation and education who may also be members of the School-Based Management Board (SBMB) on the need to get involved and participate actively in the decision making process of the school and in the provision of personnel in the school. This will enable the school to reposition for standard and quality education in teaching and learning process and so, improve the pupils. Again, this will boost the morale of the teachers and the pupils which in turn will benefit the society at large.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend, among others that;

1. Government as well as the State Ministry of Education, State Universal Primary Education Board (SUPEB), should make provisions for constant seminars, workshops and conferences for head teachers, teachers and community members on the need for effective community participation in the administration and management of primary schools.
2. The community should be actively involved in the provision of personnel in the primary schools for better service delivery and achievement of educational goals and objectives.

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