# CONSTRAINTS AND RESTRICTIONS TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE SAGNARIGU MUNICIPAL, GHANA

*Mohammed, I.; Abdulai, R.; Seidu, A. A.*
*University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana*

## Abstract

*This study examines the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments at primary schools in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Ghana. Qualitative research approach was adopted. The design used was case study with an adoption of convenient sampling technique where three (3) primary school heads, six (6) primary school teachers, three (3) School Management Committee Members and three (3) Parents Teachers Association Members were selected. Face-to-face in-depth individual interviews were conducted. Data collected were analysed thematically. Findings revealed inadequate integrations of community initiatives in school developments, poor school-community relationships, inadequate consultation with communities, lack of awareness creation on community roles in school developments and there was inadequate incorporation of community voices into school decision making processes. Some recommendations made were that the Ghana Education Service (GES) should use Radio and Television media to constantly educate both schools and communities on the significance of community participation in school developments. School Management Committees should include influential members from the communities in school governance. Schools should at least in a year have three meetings with communities to inspire them develop a sense of school-community partnership and a sense of ownership. School Management Committees should incorporate community's voices and contributions into their decision making processes.*

***Keywords:*** *Restrictions, Constraints, Community, Participation, Development, Management.*

## Introduction

Community participation is a process in which stakeholders in communities guide and influence developmental initiatives, decision-making process, governance and management in schools (Fusheini, 2006; Kenneth, 2009). The act of community participation in school developmental lives includes parents taking their children to school, parents taking part in school meetings, communities giving out financial and material supports to schools, communities improvising teaching and learning materials, communities supporting teachers in achieving positive outcomes and by acting as resource persons (Sharma, 2016; Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021; Pradhan, Suryadarma, Beatty, Wong, Gaduh, Alisjahbana, & Artha, 2013). Community participation in the lives of school developments does also include getting engage in dialogue with policy makers and school heads, donation of land for school infrastructural development, getting involved in curriculum design and the development of learning materials (Kusumaningrum, Ulfatin, Triwiyanto & Gunawan, 2017).

Historically, Community participation has long been in existence since ancient time where parents and guardians provided informal education to young generations (Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021). In Africa, the historical perspectives of community participation in school developments began in the 18th century when agency of education was voluntarily involved in the control and management of funding and provisions of education systems (Lauwo & Mkulu, 2021).

In Ghana, communities were the first to start most of the basic schools through the provision of lands for the construction of schools and teachers' bungalows (Aryeh-Adjei, 2021). In Nigeria, community participation in education did not end with Christian Missionaries but some efforts came directly from the local communities (Aliyum & Haruna, 2013). In Nigeria, some efforts depended heavily on members of the communities in the provision of learning materials, the training and education of children and some financial contributions for students to study in the Islamic Kingdom of Egypt, United Kingdom and Ireland

(Aliyum & Haruna, 2013).

It is important to highlight here that, access to quality education, retention of students in class and the overall school developments require the collective efforts of teachers and community members (Sumarsono, Imron, Wiyono & Arifin, 2016). Community participation and involvement in the life of education has a dramatic impact as well as an important initiative for the removal of barriers that impede students 'retention and access to quality education (Fusheini, 2006; Sharma, 2016).

In Tanzania, Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) claimed that the role of community participation in ensuring quality education in schools is highly important. Likewise in Indonesia, Sumarsono, et. al., (2016) posited that there is a greater share of responsibilities between the government, parents and communities in developing schools and shaping of the future generation in the education system. Also, Kenneth (2009) reiterated the significance of community participation in school developments by stating that, fulfilling communities' right to participate in school lives will enable students to claim their rights and access to quality education.

Similarly, Sharma (2016), Ahiabor (2017) and Fusheini (2006) in their write up on community participation in schools effectiveness, claimed community participation is increasingly encouraged as it is seen as a useful tool in ensuring school effectiveness and functionality through accountability, monitoring of relevant curriculum, ensuring resources mobilization and maximization. To ensure community involvement in education, countries such as Ghana, India, Nigeria and South Africa have instituted and tasked Parent-Teacher Associations, School Governing Bodies and School Management Committees to ensure an improvement in education delivery and to ensure the integration of inputs from communities in the management and governance of schools (Fusheini, 2006; Ahiabor, 2017).

However, there is evidence of inadequate community participation in the lives of school developments due to certain constraints and restrictions despite all the importance placed on the realization of community participation and involvement in the lives of school developments in all education systems. For example, in Indonesia, Nirmala (2013) noted that, few of the constraints and restrictions to effect community participation in school developments are lack of resources and strong incentives, while in Ghana, a study conducted by Fusheini (2006) reported that communities are sometimes met with numerous challenges including schools' lack of eagerness or willingness to welcome community involvements in school developments.

Further evidence in Sub-Saharan Africa by Watt (2001) and in Indonesia by Nirmala (2013) is that, high illiteracy level in communities is noted to be a barrier to effect community participation in school development, as such; members rely on teachers for information. Evidence presented from South Africa by Prew (2012), is that Middle-class members see themselves as having shared responsibilities while Lower-class members appear to turn over school developmental responsibilities.

It is important to highlight here that, inadequate resourced communities are not capable of participating in school develops as they are always met with financial constraints, thus, constituting a hindrance to their effective participation in school lives (Fusheini, 2006). In Tanzania, Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) have highlighted that low income communities have difficulties in participating in school related activities as a result of inadequate finance. In Nigeria, Aliyum and Haruna (2013) claimed communities are not adequately responding to participation in school developments as a result of poverty related challenges.

In Australia, Oppenheim (2008) claimed community members are always reluctant in performing school activities such as manual work and intellectual work. While in Ghana, a study conducted by Fusheini (2006) revealed unwillingness level of community members to participate in school developments, likewise in Tanzania, Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) in their study believed some community members are reluctant to participate on school constructions on the basis that funds disbursed by government are enough to facilitate such constructions. The number of studies on community participation in schools failed to indicate constraints and restrictions to their realisations, hence the need to study the constraints and restrictions to community participation in the lives of school developments. The question that needed to be answered was: What are the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments at primary schools in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Tamale, Ghana?

This paper examines the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments at primary schools in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Tamale, Ghana. In spite of the important role

communities in the Sagnarigu Municipal play in the lives of school development and effectiveness, there is a phenomenon of inadequacy of community participation in school developments as a result of constraints and restrictions within both the school systems and the communities. An informal conversation with stakeholders revealed some concerns about communities in the Municipal not being proactive in carrying out their developmental responsibilities. It is perceived there is a lack of community sensitization on policies and it is perceived there is a lack of general understanding of the meaning and extent of community participation in school lives in the Municipal.

Given the importance of community participation in the lives of school development, this study was designed to ascertain the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments at primary schools in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Tamale, Ghana. The paper is organized as follows: Section one deals with the conceptual framework and the theoretical background of the study. Section two deals with the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments; it also deals with the benefits of community participation in school developments. The research method and design employed in the study are presented in section three while the results of the study and discussions of the research findings are presented in section four. The last section comprises conclusions and recommendations.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study was based on community-education linkages that serve as a lens through which the experiences of respondents were viewed in relations to the constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments. The conceptual framework was based on three models of community-education linkages: (1) the Traditional Community Based Education, 2) the Government Provision of Education and (3) the Collaborative model.

The perspectives of the Traditional Community Based Education as the first model of the community-education linkages are that education is deeply embedded in local social norms, the government has a minimal role to play, education is a local process, older generations share skills with younger community members, the level of education of people determines their level of development and the success of every school developmental initiatives depends largely on community participation to ensure ownership (Pailwar & Mahajan, 2005; Emmanuel, Joseph & Akobour, 2015).

With the Government Provision of Education as the second model of the community-education linkages, the assumptions are that communities are passive recipients and the Government assumes communities' needs and holds key responsibility for providing, regulating and standardising education (Pailwar & Mahajan, 2005).

The philosophical assumptions of the Collaborative Model as the third model of the community-education linkages are that communities support government-sponsored education, basic education becomes compulsory and a right for all citizens, parents as well as the community as a whole make sure all children of school going age attend school and there is effective collaboration between the state, the communities and schools to ensure children acquire the basic skills, knowledge, values and attitude to shape them for life (Pailwar & Mahajan, 2005; Ahiabor, 2017).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1988) and the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986) are among the earliest and well known provisions on communities rights to participate in the lives of school developments. Based on the above mentioned provisions and declarations, the theory that guided this study is the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). The United Nations High Commission on Human Rights (UNHCHR) defines HRBA as the process of human development in school communities that is based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting communities' rights to participate in the lives and activities of schools (Kenneth, 2009). The HRBA perspectives on development analysis situations based on an education system's initiatives to protect the rights of individual's communities, empower parents and other stakeholders to demand justice and to taking part in school governance and management and to provide communities with a moral basis for claiming entitlements (NyamuMusembi & Cornwall, 2004; Kenneth, 2009).

It is important to highlight here that HRBA puts more emphasis on the right to participation, the right to equality and nondiscrimination and the right to education and development in schools (Green, 2001;

Hellum & Derman, 2004). Community participation in the affairs and developments of schools has the unique role of being both a right and a core principle which underpins the process by which other rights are fulfilled, as such, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights entitles communities to participate in school affairs and decision making processes (UNHCR, 1996).

## Constraints and Restrictions to Community Participation in School Developments

Although communities are officially expected to play a more active role in school management and developments, it is important to state that there are many constraints and restrictions that continue to bar them from such active roles, as a result, community members undermine their own roles and also do see their roles as just providing supplementary supports in school developments (Prew, 2012; Fusheini, 2006). As a constraint and a restriction in community participation in school development, Fusheini (2006) claims there exists a high level of role conflicts between Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and School Management Committees (SMC) on who is legally permitted to carry out certain roles and functions in schools. The existence of such a role conflict does not augur well for school-community partnership in developments (Fusheini, 2006).

As constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments, Watt (2001), Onsomu and Mujidi (2011) are of the view that there is reluctance on the part of schools to incorporate communities' voices, ideas and contributions in decision making processes, there is lack of trust between schools and communities and in some cases communities have limited roles and lack the sense of ownership of schools where their children attend.

Unwillingness on the parts of parents to actively take part in school developmental initiatives and projects has been reported by Watt (2001), Prew (2012) and Nirmala (2013) as one of the barriers to effective community participation in school developments. For effective community participation in school lives, Nirmala (2013) points out that, parents must be assisted to have high levels of zeal for change and a sense of involvement in the lives of school activities.

## Impact of Effective Community Participation on School Developments

Sharma, (2016), Rifa'i (2013) and Hughes, et al. (2002) highlight that community participation in

which educational programmes are been managed by school heads, teachers and parents is an efficient strategy for the sustainability of programmes and for the improvement of students' learning outcomes. Kenneth (2009) mentions that, fulfilling communities' right to participate in school lives has the potential of impacting positively on students' cognitive, psycho-social development and classroom performance. Lauwo and Mkulu (2021) suggested that community participation in school lives ensure a greater impact on students' academic performance.

With the forgoing, it can be established that without community support and involvement, school alone cannot create appropriate learning environment to enhance children's willingness to learn (Sumarsono, et al., 2016). To highlight the importance of community roles in schools development, Fusheini (2006) has noted that the critical challenges of educational reform and development is unlikely to happen especially in the rural areas unless communities are placed at the centre of educational change.

It is important to highlight here that communities participation in school developments have the potential of enhancing ownership and better ways of understanding the true nature of educational problems in schools (Watt, 2001; Fusheini, 2006). To achieve this, community's sense of ownership of schools must be enhanced to make it possible for them to support schools and to take an active interest in what happens in the classroom (Watt, 2001; Fusheini, 2006). As noted by Muthoni (2015) community participation has the potential of ensuring quality education through increasing access to education and retention of students.

## Methodology

Qualitative research approach was used. Case study design was used to illicit respondents' experiences with regards to constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments at primary schools in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Ghana. There are concerns of communities in recent days not being proactive in carrying out some of their responsibilities in the lives of the school developments, there are concerns of low communities participation in the areas of resources mobilization and ownership of the schools and there seemed to be a lack of general participation, understanding, meaning and extent of community participation in the schooling developments in the Municipal.

As a qualitative study, a sample size of fifteen (15) respondents was used. It was confined to only school heads, teachers and parents from three Primary schools of the Sagnarigu Municipal. Through the use of convenient sampling technique, the sample comprised three (3) primary school heads, six (6) primary school teachers, three (3) School Management Committee members and three (3) Parents Teachers Association members each from three different primary schools of the Sagnarigu Municipal. These respondents were selected based on the fact that they were easily and conveniently available in the schools and in the communities and because they were constantly involved in ensuring school-community partnerships.

Permissions were sought from the Sagnarigu Municipal, the school heads, the teachers and parents. Face-to-face in-depth individual interviews were conducted. Questions asked were open-ended which provided an opportunity for the participants to express themselves openly, thus leading to rich information (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Interview proceedings were recorded. Data collected were analysed thematically.

### Results
The results of the study based on the research objective are: (i) school management committees eagerness in ensuring community participation in school developments (ii) lack of incorporation of community's voices and ideas in school decision making process (iii) inadequate creation of awareness of community participation in school developments (iv) corrupt practices in the award and execution of school projects (v) lack of resources by communities for active participation in school developments (vi) benefits of effective community participation in school lives and (vii) predominant constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments.

### School Management Committees Eagerness in Ensuring Community Participation in school Developments
The study revealed that some school management committees are eager to encourage communities to participate and to assume ownership of school developments since they always go extra miles in organizing workshops, durbar, Parents Teachers Association meetings and the building of some kinds of cordial relations with community members. The following expressions came from a parent:

To a significant extent, the school management committees do create some awareness among us during PTA meetings and other engagements concerning our roles in the schools. A teacher also said the following: I think some of our schools through PTA/SMC meetings and the organization of workshops to encourage community involvement in school developmental projects.

To confirm with the above findings Pradhan, et al. (2013) are of the view that School Management Committees are expected to expedite the process of community members' inclusion and participation in the stage of planning, provision of resources and evaluation of school educational and developmental programmes.

### Lack of Incorporation of Community's Voices and Ideas in School Decision Making Process
The study revealed a tendency of some schools not to incorporate brilliant ideas and voices from the communities in the running and decisions making processes in the schools. The study further revealed that decisions making and the running of schools in the communities are mostly done and carried out by the school leadership and management without community's involvement. Some reactions from a teacher were:

What I know is that it is not possible. Decisions are made without soliciting the views of community member in some of the schools. On the same feelings and sentiments, a school head laments as follows: Not entirely true as most decisions are taken without inputs from members of the communities.

This is why Ahwoi (2010) notes that communities will have sense of ownership and participation in school developmental lives when they are actively involved in school decision-making processes. As a result of the lack of incorporation of community's voices and ideas in school decision making process, the study revealed some of the following heart touching comments: schools must know that an entire community has an essential role in educating children and not only the teachers, schools must allow members in the communities to be involved in the lives of the schools and schools must allow members of the communities to participate and to make their voices heard in the development of the schools.

A teacher had the following to say: To educate a child, both the community and the school must all be involved in such important role and not only our schools.

To concur with the findings, Kusumaningrum, et

al., (2017) have lamented that a lack of school's responsibility to give opportunities to a given community can affect their sense of ownership and participation in school developments.

**Corrupt Practices in the Award and Execution of School Projects**
The study surprisingly found the existence of corrupt practices in the management and execution of government projects in the schools. The findings were that school managements do award contracts in the schools without community involvement in the tendering and awarding process and school leadership solely makes decisions with regards to infrastructural developments in schools without community participation.

A school head had the following to say: I think it is the unwillingness on the parts of some schools to not involve the communities in the award of infrastructural developments contracts. A teacher also said the following:
There is corruption because contracts to be executed in the schools are awarded without the involvement of communities.

In line with a sense of shared responsibilities in schools, Aryeh-Adjei, (2021) argued that a local community should be given active roles in school projects execution. Fusheini (2006) also confirms with the findings by stating that there is reluctance on the part of schools to involve communities in schools' project and other decision making process.
As a result of the corrupt practices and exclusion of communities in school projects, the study found community members to lack the zeal and interest in school developmental projects. A teacher's sentiments were that:
As a result of these corrupt practices in the award of school contracts, there is a lack of trust among us and in some areas; communities are unwilling to work with schools and to contribute towards school projects.

Oppenheim (2008) confirms this finding by asserting that, In Australia, community members are reluctant in performing school activities such as manual work and intellectual work when they have been excluded from the happenings in the schools. A voice from a parent was:
Because we are not involved in the award of contract in schools, some of us are unwilling to provide communal labour or contribute money to be used in school developments.

In collaborating with the findings, in Ghana, Aryeh-Adjei (2021) noted that, parents and guardians feel reluctant and seem not to care about anything that concerns the schools when they have been excluded from decisions that affect them as stakeholders.

**Inadequate Creation of Awareness of Community Participation in School Developments**
It was revealed by the study that government has not adequately created awareness among communities with regards to their roles in school developments, as such; some communities just look on while their schools are been destroyed since they do not own such schools.  The study further found that only Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) do sometimes create such awareness in communities.  Some assertions from a parent were:
In this regard, the government has not done well in awareness creation of community participation. A head teacher's remarks were: There is no awareness as to community ownership and participation in school developments.

As indicated by Kusumaningrum, et al., (2017) a lack of community awareness of their responsibilities in school developments can affect their participation.

The study also found communities to exhibit signs of reluctance towards school affairs as a result of government inability to create their awareness in school ownership and developments. A teacher's voice was:
Our government has done not much in creating community ownership and participation in schools.

To confirm this finding, Kusumaningrum, et al., (2017) mention that lack of Government regulations and policies can affect communities' willingness to participate and own school developments. In collaboration with the findings, Muthoni (2015) in Tanzania, reported that community members have been detached from working with schools because there is no clear government policy which ensures their legal participation in school developments.

**Lack of Resources for Active Participation in School Developments**
The study found lack of resources by the communities as a hindrance to their active participation in school developments, as such, members do not to show up in meetings, they are unable to contribute in cash or in kind and they do not voluntarily undertake developmental projects in the schools. A school head lamented as:

Because of lack of money and other resource community members do not attend meetings on school developments where they can contribute and speak with confidence.

To confirm these findings, Aliyum and Haruna (2013) claimed communities in Nigeria are not adequately responding to participation in school developments as a result of inadequate resources and attitudinal problems. A parent said the following:
I think we feel like undertaking projects in the schools but we have no resources to do so.

While from Ghana, Fusheini (2006) corroborates with the findings by indicating that inadequate resourced communities will find it difficult to fulfil their developmental responsibilities in schools.

### Benefits of Effective Community Participation in School Lives

The study revealed the following as some of the benefits of effective community participation in school lives: the provision of land for school infrastructure development, the provision of accommodation for teachers and the maintenance of discipline and reductions in absenteeism. A head teacher expresses the following sentiment:

There is the provision of land for school infrastructure, provision of accommodation for teachers and the maintenance of discipline in schools if our schools could allow communities to be involved in schools' lives. Some words from a parent were:
We will enjoy a peaceful and safe environment for teaching and learning. In some cases, infrastructure may be provided for the school by the community to which the pupils are the end beneficiaries.

Aryeh-Adjei (2021) concurs with these findings by stating that schools would acquire free land for infrastructural developments and the construction of bungalows for teachers when communities are actively involved. Also, Sumarsono, et al., (2016) are of the views that access to quality education, the prevention of absenteeism in schools, the retention of students and teachers in schools and the overall school developments require the collective efforts of teachers and communities.

The study also revealed the following benefits when communities are actively involved in school lives: the realization of students' high academic performance through quality teaching and learning, the promotion of cordial relationships between communities and schools, the development of a

feedback loop for teachers and parents in the areas of learners' shortcomings or progress and the realization of high retention of teachers and high enrolment of pupils. A claim from a teacher was:
I believe there will always be good school-community relations, both students and teachers will be happy and there will always be good academic results in schools.

Hughes, et al. (2002) corroborate with these finding by claiming that effective school-community collaborations ensures students' academic achievements, teacher retention and overall school developments. A parent also said this:
If the schools will allow communities to participate in some of the activities, am sure it will enhance consensus building between the teachers and parents.

Kenneth (2009) also confirmed the findings by elaborating that when communities' rights to participation in school lives are ensured, the benefits do include students' cognitive development and the development of good relations between schools and communities.

Predominant Constraints and Restrictions to Community Participation in School Developments
The predominant constraints and restrictions to effective community participation in school developments revealed by the study include inadequate education on the roles of community members in schools, poor school-community relationships, lack of resources, the feeling that government owns all schools and so must do everything, lack of recognition of parental contributions by schools, lack of skilled labour in communities and lack of funds by parents. In support of these predominant factors, a school head said the following:
There is less community participation in our school developments because of inadequate education on the roles of community members, poor school-community relationships and the lack of resources to assist in school developmental activities.

To corroborate with this finding Onsomu and Mujidi (2011) state that in majority of Africa countries, teachers appear not to accommodate community involvement in school development and productivity. While Nirmala (2013) confirms that one of the constraints to community participation in school developments is lack of resources.
The study also found lack of sensitization of education policies on communities' rights in schools, exclusions of communities in decision making process, community's lack of interest in

school affairs, distractive PTA meetings, mistrust, lack of cordial relationships among stakeholders, illiteracy and language barrier as some of the predominant constraints and restrictions to effective community participation in school developments. A teacher also asserted as follow:

The predominant ones are illiteracy, lack of awareness and mistrust that exists between us and the communities. Then, a parent lamented as follow: We wish to contribute but there is lack of sensitization of community members on new education policies and there is lack of consultation in decision making process in some schools.

Prew (2012) confirms the findings by claiming that in South Africa, Lower-class members appear to have no interest in school affairs, as such, turn over school developmental responsibilities. The study found the existence of centralization principles as opposed to decentralization principles in schools as one of constraints and restrictions to communities' participation in school developments. It was found that centralization of decision making in schools do deny communities the opportunities to participate in various initiatives, activities and developments because when directives come from the national or regional levels school managers usually do not consider contributions from the communities. A school head laments as follow:

When directives are given from the above for a major project to be undertaken, school management usually do not consider the community contribution and ideas.

In relations to this finding, Aryeh-Adjei (2021) suggests that there is the need for the decentralisation of policies in schools for the development of communities' sense of ownership and for communities to assist in addressing the needs of learners and schools. Still on the same feelings, a teacher had the following to say: My opinion is that centralization principles in our schools make it very difficult for our communities to participate even in things that affect them as communities.

Brennen (2002) explains that the use of centralisation principles in schools do act as constraints and restrictive to communities' involvement in such decisions like content of curriculum, controls of budget, employment, the building of educational facilities and discipline policies.

The study unearthed that centralization principle of decision making in schools makes it very difficult to get information to the communities who own the schools, especially information regarding their roles in the development of schools, as such, some communities are discouraged to provide financial and material support to schools. The examples of responses below confirm the said statements: Assertions from a school head was:

Centralized decision making in schools does not encourage and accord communities the opportunities to participate in the development of the schools. On the same sentiment, a parent commented as follow: What I think is that centralization principles make it very difficult to get information to reach the people, especially information regarding their role in the development of the school.

Contrary to these findings, Kusumaningrum, et al., (2017) claimed community participation is one of the school autonomous activities used to uphold the spirit of decentralization and to do away with all forms of centralization principles in the management and governance of schools. Heredia-Ortiz (2007) also calls for the use of decentralisation policies as opposed to the findings on the existence of centralisation policies in this study since decentralization is a process of devolution of fiscal and decision-making authority from higher level of school management to lower level of management and governance that makes provision for communities' participation and involvement.

**Conclusion**

Phenomena of lack of community participation and involvement in the lives of school activities and developments have resulted in the creation of barriers to access to quality education and improvement in our communities.  The absence of community participation in school lives and activities has led to a lack of appreciable level of cordial relations between schools and communities. The phenomena of corrupt practices in school contract bidding process, the exclusion of key community members from such bidding process and the final awards of contracts to favourites have resulted in communities' lack of interest in school affairs and developments. Issues in relations to schools practising closed system of management as opposed to opened system of management  has had effects on the incorporation of community voices and ideas in the running, governance and management of schools, as such, has resulted in mistrust among stakeholders.

The tendency of school management to practice centralization principles as opposed to

decentralisation principles has made it difficult for easy flow of information from the communities to schools and from the schools to communities. The practice of centralisation principles has also led to communities' lackadaisical attitudes in the provision of funds and other materials for school developments. Communities have the tendency of looking on when schools are been destroyed and vandalised because of government's inability to greatly create their awareness on the roles, the need for them to own schools and to render valuable supports to schools in their catchment areas. Resource constraints faced by community members do affect their zeal and enthusiasm to show up in school development meetings, to make their voices heard and to contribute either in cash or in kind towards schools' self-initiated projects. Last but not least, the use of only three selected primary schools in the Municipal was a limitation; there is therefore the need to conduct such a study using all primary schools in all communities of the Sagnarigu Municipal so as to establish the extent of constraints and restrictions to community participation in school developments in the Sagnarigu Municipal, Ghana

## Recommendations

The Ghana Education Service (GES) should use radio and Television as mass media to educate communities on their roles in ensuring functionality in schools. The GES should organize workshop for both teachers and communities where community participation in school lives and developments are emphasized. School management committees should appoint influential members from the communities to serve in the Parent Teacher Associations. The education authorities (both locally and nationally) should work with schools to establish vibrant school committees and Parents Teacher Associations so as to improve community-school cordial relations and to improve education delivery in all schools.

The school management committees should as much as possible solicits local ideas, best practices and contributions from the communities on the implementation of school developmental projects. The tendering process for government projects to be executed in schools should be communicated well with the communities so as to seek their inputs. Leadership and management training should be carried in schools to train school heads and their management teams to drift away from practicing closed system of management to opened system of

management so as to ensure an easy flow of information from the communities to schools and from schools to communities.

Government should enforce an effective implementation of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) that calls for total participation by all stakeholders in all communities. The education authorities should work hand in hand with community leaders and gate keepers to build in them a spirit of community-school ownership, a spirit of togetherness, a spirit of team work and to encourage them to donate in kind or cash towards school developments. Government policies of administrative decentralization in school communities which aims at developing internal capacity for effective carrying out of responsibilities in all schools and to enable communities to participate in the lives of school developments should be revisited to see how they have been implemented.

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