

## **Towards Enhancement of the Functionality of School Based Management Committee and Community Leaders Involvement in Ensuring Sustainability of Educational Interventions: The Case of Esspin in Lagos**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The business of educating the younger generation is no more the exclusive right of the government. Many stakeholders are now involved. The parents, the teachers and the pupils have been substantially-evidentially proven to be factors. More focus is shifting to the community involvement and the influence of school based management committees. This study examines the functionality level of school based management committees and the contribution of community leaders towards ensuring the sustainability of educational interventions like Education Sector Support Program in Nigeria which has Lagos state as one of the six states in Nigeria where the program was implemented. Mixed method research design approach was adopted. Proportionate to Simple size sampling technique was used to select 100 primary schools in Lagos state. Two (2) instruments: an Interview Schedule and SBMC Checklist with high reliability values were used for the study. Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative thematic analysis. The result among others shows that the involvement of community leaders and members of SBMC in the implementation of educational interventions has viable effect on the sustainability of such programs as the community are made to become the custodians and in-house monitoring tool for resources deployed by such interventions. It is thus recommended that educational support agencies should work towards ensuring that adequate community involvement are built into program log-frames to ensure long term sustainability*

**KEYWORDS:** SBMC, community leaders, sustainability, educational interventions, enhancements

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Schools are products of the community. Education is not an activity that can be engaged alone. It has to be in collaboration with the society in this case, the community. Without community participation, education cannot achieve its goals and without education society cannot think of development. Through community involvement in the education process, quality of educational activities in schools can be improved and enhanced (Saeed, 2001). Studies show that participation of various stakeholders from

government to educational professionals and local community members such as, parents, students, and other local community organizations exercises a deeper effect on the performance of educational institutions in terms of improved access, retention of students and classroom attendance (Ahmad and Said 2013).

ESSPIN (2014) show that parents and community are part of the key factors which determine school effectiveness. Effective schools have better access and increased enrolment of students. Parents and community can improve children's readiness for school and also ensure their balanced nutrition and health. This directly positively affects the quality of education. Research has underscored many benefits of community participation in education. For example, in the recent past, Rosen, Murray & Moreland (2004) and Rose (2003) found that community participation improves access to schooling and further explains that participatory initiatives in education in different under-developing countries such as Mali, Ghana, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda have proved that access to schooling has greatly increased as a result of community participation in education.

Educational interventions are programmes injected into the educational sector of any state or country so as to solve some specific problems that have been identified by empirical research. All over the world, such programmes exist. The Federal Government of Nigeria in tackling the phenomenon of poor standard of education has taken steps such as the implementation of the Universal Basic Education policy, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Adopt a School Programme. Other interventions funded by agencies and institutions such as the EKO project which was supported by the World Bank, the Developing Effective Private Education in Nigeria (DEEPEN), funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) and the Girls' Education Project (GEP) which is a joint initiative among the Federal Government of Nigeria, DfID and UNICEF have all focused on improving standard of Education in Nigeria.

Another noble educational intervention is the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria which has the overall goal of achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the use of Nigeria own resources for education and gender quality. The goal of the eight and half years' programme is to facilitate effective and efficient use of Nigeria own resources for education and gender equality. The programme has the following components which were termed as expected outputs: Strengthening the Federal government governance framework; Strengthening the state level governance and management of basic education; Develop and sustain school capacity to provide a quality school learning environment and Strengthening the capacities of communities to support schools and of civil society to effectively articulate demand for basic education services. The programme which was implemented in six Nigerian states started in 2008 and ended in 2017.

The School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) concept is defined as the systematic decentralisation of authority and responsibility to enable decision-making at the school level with the active participation of the community. (Bakwai B 2023; Usman and Kwabakwai 2017). A practically successfully implemented SBMC can yield expected outcomes such as increased parent and community participation;

empowered principals/head teachers and teachers; built up local capacity and improved school quality and efficiency. (The World Bank 2012)

Two fundamental questions have, however, defined the various types of school-based management models globally. The first question is what level of authority and responsibility is transferred to the school level? That is, the degree of autonomy (power/resources) granted the school decision-making process by a higher authority. This has translated into a variety of strategies for implementing the SBM school reform around the world. They range from granting full autonomy to schools over all aspects of educational, financial, and personnel matter, to the more restrictive models which allows only for limited autonomy over school operations. The types of authority transferred to the school level range from budget allocation, hiring and firing of teachers or other staff, curriculum development, procurement of textbooks and other educational materials, infrastructure development, influencing school calendar, monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance and student learning outcomes, involvement in the design of school plans and utilising grants allocated to schools. (Felipe Barrera-Osorio 2009)

The other question is who, at the school level, is entrusted with the devolved authority? That is, to whom, is the decision-making authority devolved? Four models define who is invested with decision-making power in any of the SBM reform according to De Grauwe (2005). This are: Administrative control where the principal is dominant. The school is accountable to a central authority. The model allows for increased efficiency of expenditure on personnel and makes only the principal in each school accountable to the central authority. Professional control: the teaching corps receives the authority. Teachers are assumed to be in a better position to know what the school needs, especially at the classroom level. This is supposed to lead to motivating teachers for better performance, hence improved efficiency and effectiveness in teaching. Community control: the community or the parents, through a board/committee, are in charge. This should lead to the teaching core (principals'/head teachers and teachers) becoming more responsive to parents' and local needs and preferences. Balanced control: the parents and the professionals (teachers and head teacher/principal) are in control. The decision-making process is shared between the two main stakeholders in the school.

Community participation is regarded as a key strategy in ensuring sustainability of projects. Ngugi (2018) opines that the involvement of the beneficiaries in the different stages of the projects ensures that, there is community ownership, capacity building and empowerment, which are key drivers in ensuring that projects continues to run much more after the completion stage and even when the donor or sources of funding has been removed. Although, there are other arguments to this approach as some believes that such method can cause delay to projects due to the amount of time required to mobilize and get the point of view of all the stakeholders, while increasing the human resource requirement but the long term benefits are often time outweighs the shortcomings.

The contributions of community involvement in ensuring sustainability of programs and projects can not be overemphasised. Sook and May (2005) examine the relationship between local communities' involvement and sustainable rural tourism development in the existing tourism industry in Kuching, China.

The findings suggest that local communities' participation in decision making, empowerment, and community knowledge about tourism do affect the sustainability of rural tourism development. Community Involvement and sustainability efforts are so interwoven to the extent that Dominique (2017) declared that there is "there is no sustainability without community engagement". Corroborating this fact, Ghazala and Vijayendra (2013), looked at hundreds of case of community participation development projects. Their research covered topics: local infrastructure delivered through participatory mechanisms, decentralising the identification of beneficiary households and communities in a bid to reduce poverty; social insurance programs; greater resource sustainability and equity; efforts to induce greater community oversight in the delivery of health and education services; and the evidence on the poverty impacts of participatory projects.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) How functional are the School Based Management Committees (SBMC) in the years under review in ESSPIN Schools?
- 2) What is the level of Contribution of Community Leaders in Enhancing Schools Quality?

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research made use of mixed method research design approach. Proportionate to Simple size sampling technique was used to select 50 primary schools in Lagos state. 20 Community Leaders who are Kings and Baales were used for the study. The SBMC Chairmen and/or Secretaries for the 50 primary schools were respondents. Two (2) instruments: Community Leaders Interview Schedule (CLIS) with ScotPi inter-rater reliability value of 0.65 and SBMC Functionality Checklist (SFC) with Cronback Alpha reliability value of 0.70 were used for the study. Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative thematic analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 4.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FUNCTIONALITY CHECKLIST**

S/N	ITEM	Yes with MoV	Yes without MoV	No
1	At least two SBMC meetings took place in each school year under review	22	16	12
2	SBMC conducted awareness raising activities	18	21	11
3	SBMC took steps to address exclusion	21	23	6
4	SBMC networked with Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), traditional or religious institutions, or other SBMCs (written or physical evidence)	38	10	2
5	SBMC interacted with local government education authorities on education service delivery issues (written or physical evidence);	41	9	-
6	An SBMC women's committee exists (written or physical evidence)	15	25	10
7	An SBMC children's committee exists (written or physical evidence);	12	31	7
8	SBMC contributed resources for the school (written or physical evidence);	15	12	23
9	The SBMC chair visited the school at least three times from the start of the current school year (written evidence).	17	19	14
10	At least one woman attended two or more SBMC meetings (written evidence);	42	8	-
11	Female member of SBMC raised at least one issue at SBMC meetings (written evidence or oral evidence from a female member of the SBMC)	46	4	-
12	At least one issue raised by a female member at an SBMC meeting led to action (written, physical or oral evidence from a female member of the SBMC)	31	15	4
13	At least one SBMC women's committee meeting took place.	10	14	26

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14	A child member of SBMC raised at least one issue at SBMC meetings (written evidence or oral evidence from child member of SBMC);	4	6	40
15	At least one child attended two or more SBMC meetings (written evidence);	7	5	38
16	At least one issue raised by a child member at an SBMC meeting led to action (written, physical or oral evidence from child member of SBMC);	5	4	41
17	At least one SBMC children's committee meeting took place and the committee has a trained facilitator.	5	5	40

Source: Onakoya (2021) Field Research

The functionality of the school based management committees is to be defined on whether they are actually active as expected in the school vis a vis the above key performance indicators that were highlighted in the checklist. Table 4.3 above shows that majority of the activities were carried out. While some schools could not provide written evidences as expected, items 5, 10 and 11 shows hundred percent (100%) of actively engaging the local government authorities for necessary approval of their programmes, making sure at least one female member of the committee attended meetings and at least one issued raised by a female member of the committee is attended to by the school authority. The table also shows that 44% of the schools have written evidences that at least two SBMC meetings took place in the school in the year under review. If those who claimed but could not lay hold of the evidences were added, the percentage will increase to seventy-six percent (76%). On the other hand, majority of the sampled schools could not meet up with the children participation indicators of the SBMC standard. For example, children committee meeting did not take place in 80% of the schools and 76% of the schools did not have presence of at least one child attending two or more SBMC meetings.

The SBMC conduct activities to raise awareness in the community (written or oral evidence) The data gathered showed that 78% of the schools sampled meet up to this criterion with either of the written or oral evidences. This means that 22% of communities in Lagos state did not have awareness as to the implementation of ESSPIN and as such the aspect of the parents and other community members' intervention and support for the programme might be indirectly affected. Though there are evidences that the traditional leaders were reached out to, there were no evidences that such traditional leaders made public announcement to the people in their domains to raise awareness.

Data gathered revealed that 88% of the sampled schools took steps to address exclusion. Exclusion in this sense means that the minority side especially female members and children representative of the committee are not left out in decision making. The data gathered also showed that 96% the traditional and or religious leaders in each community were networked. SBMC reached out with Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), traditional or religious institutions, or other SBMCs. Most of the sampled schools

wrote letters to the religious leaders and traditional leaders. Others paid physical visitations and expressed their intentions in words.

The results from the data gathered showed that 80% of the sampled schools meet up with this stated criterion of having an existence of an SBMC women's committee. This further corroborates the earlier position on SBMC taking steps to correct exclusion. The same as explained on issue of non existence of women committee affects that of children committee also. The data showed that 14% of the schools does not have children committee in place.

One of the duties of the SBMC is to support the schools in reaching out to old students and friends of the schools and members of the communities in raising funds that might be used to support some teaching and learning endeavours for the improvement of the school quality. From the data that gathered, only 54% of the sampled schools could meet up to this criterion. The data gathered showed that 28% of the chairmen of SBMC committees did not visit the schools up to the required number of times in a year. Further investigations showed that some schools SMBC chair died and no replacement yet while some travelled while some were handicapped due to illness.

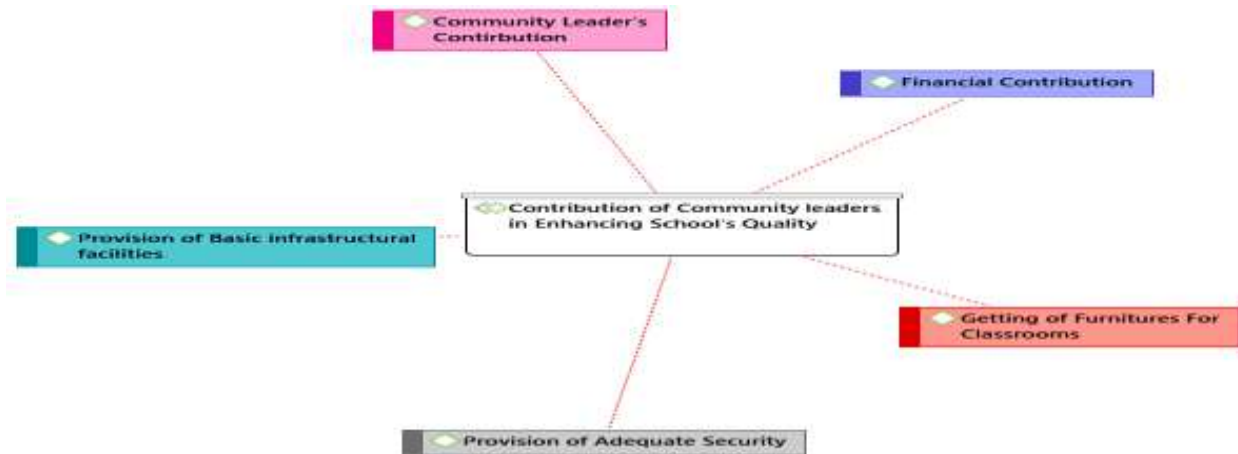
This research is in tandem with the work of Ogundele and Adelabu (2009) which carried out a study to look for ways to improve pupils' quality via community advocacy by examining the role of school-based management committee (SBMC). The research focused on the active involvement of parents and the community in daily sensitization of the importance of a healthy child to a quality school system. It concludes that the parents and the community have a very importance role to play in the provision of a quality education by the school

### **Research Question 2:**

#### **What is the level of Contribution of Community Leaders in Enhancing Schools Quality?**

This is the qualitative data analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted for traditional rulers and community leaders to ascertain the level of the community involvement and the contribution of community leaders in ensuring school's quality. The themes were generated in line with the research questions that was developed to help guide the study.



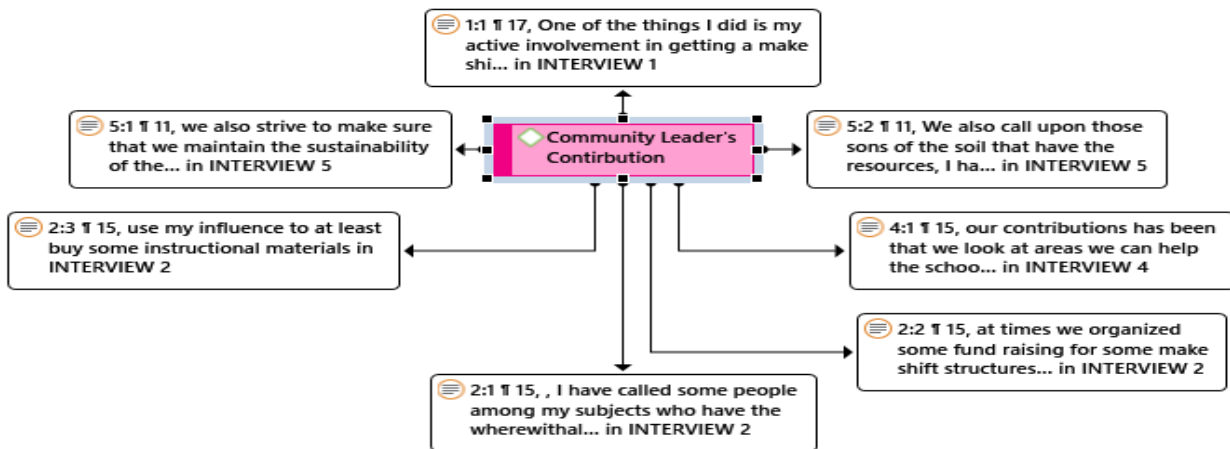


**Figure 4.2.1: Interview of Community Leaders on Enhancing Schools Quality**

The result elicited from the interview guide shows key areas where community leaders have contributed immensely in enhancing the quality of education given to students in their community. The key areas where contribution has been massive are;

- Provision of Basic Infrastructural facilities
- Financial Contribution
- Provision of Furniture’s for classrooms
- Provision of adequate security and
- Other community leader’s contribution

Each of the themes will then be further discussed below.



**Figure 4.2.2: Interview on Contribution of Community Leaders**

The study respondents consist of traditional rulers who serve as the head of each community. The first respondent asserted that “*One of the things I did is my active involvement in getting a make shift classroom*



for the students so that they won't be learning under the tree". The respondent is the community head of Igbonla Town stated that he gets actively involved in ensuring the delivery of quality education in schools in his community by getting everyone in the community actively informed as he leads by example by getting involve himself. Another study respondent asserted that the leaders of the community *"strive to make sure that we maintain the sustainability of the ones provided either by government or donors"*. This community leader asserted that the leaders in the community work hand in hand to endure the delivery of quality education by ensuring that the resources and facilities provided by the government and private individuals which comes in form of donors are well maintained and put to good use.

Other respondent of the study asserted that he *"use my influence to at least buy some instructional materials"*. The community leader uses his influence as the community head to get other members of the community involved especially well to do individuals who help raise funds and other resources which is then used for the purchase of instructional materials which has over time helped endure the delivery of quality education in schools. The respondent also stated that they *"at times we organized some fund raising for some make shift structures that can support government provisions"*.

Summarily, the result of the analysis reveals that community leaders at the grass root level has been very committed to ensuring the delivery of quality education in schools within their domain. Many of the leaders have been able to pull resources together in their community by getting members of the community and society involved as many of the leaders who make up the population study asserted that they have been able to help schools around with the constructing of make shift classrooms which have over time helped prevent students studying in an uncomfortable environment. Other community leaders have been actively involved in the delivery of quality education as they have been able to get other members of the community involved as we can assert that many of the community members contribute and provide funds which the community leaders judiciously in ensuring the delivery of quality education.

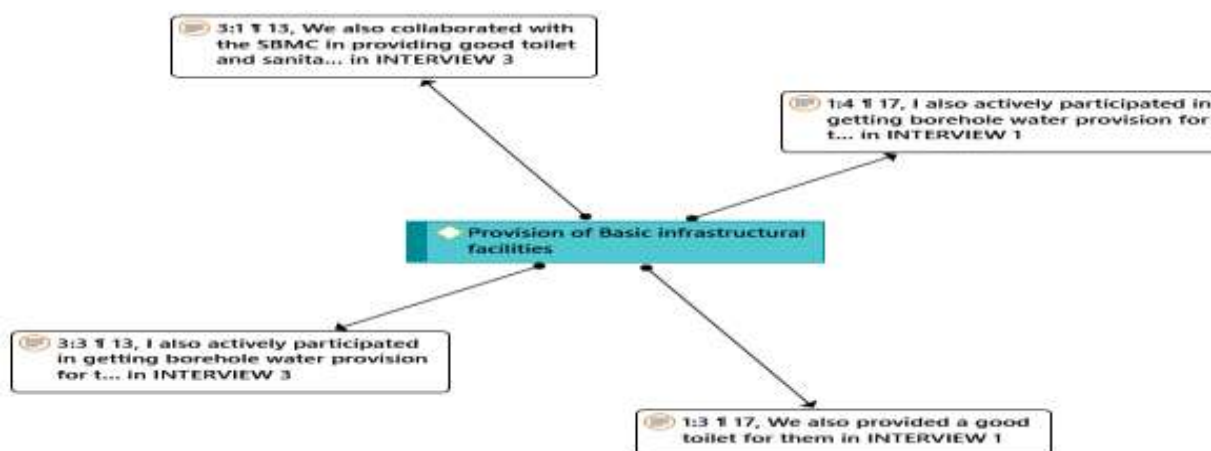


Figure 4.2.3: Interview on Provision of Basic Infrastructural Facilities

The analysis of the result elicited from the study respondents reveals that the community leaders have been actively involved in the provision of basic infrastructural facilities in schools in their community. Infrastructural facilities such as the provision of furniture and tables, water, good toilet facility and other facilities for the use of both students and staff of schools in their community.

One of the community leaders stated that they “*collaborated with the SBMC in providing good toilet and sanitation for them*”. Another respondent also asserted that “*We also provided a good toilet for them*”. Responses elicited from the study respondents reveals that community leaders have contributed to the overall delivery of good and quality education as they have been able to build good toilet facilities for schools in their community.

Other facilities such as the provision of good potable water supply for students in school is also a major basic need the community leaders have been able to provide and this also, has helped in ensuring the delivery of quality education to the children in the community. One of the study respondents asserted that “*I also actively participated in getting borehole water provision for them*” other respondent also asserted that they were involved in getting borehole water available for students and staff In schools in their community.

Some of the community leaders concluded that they were able to provide such basic facilities because they were able to convince their subjects and members of the community to be involved in the provision of these facilities. Through their influence, many of the facilities provided came in form of donations from well-meaning members of the community.



**Figure 4.2.4 Interview of community Leaders on Financial Contribution**

Another very key contribution of community leaders in ensuring the delivery of quality education is through financial contribution by community leaders. Respondents of the study asserted that “*The Kabiyesi in Council is the one paying the salary of the current Sanitation officer in the school*”. The respondent stated that community leaders provide financial support to the school by paying the salary of sanitation officer working in the school.

Other study respondents also highlighted other areas such as the provision of furniture in classrooms and also in providing adequate security for students and staff in schools in their community. One of the study respondents stated that “*i participated actively in getting furniture for the classroom*”. Other community leader has also confirmed the statement as they have been able to provide furniture for students in schools and this has helped to greatly ensure the delivery of quality education in schools in the community. Other community leaders who contributed immensely to study stated that community leaders “*strive to make sure that we maintain the security*”.

In conclusion, responses elicited from study respondents reveals that community leaders have been actively contributing to the overall growth of education in their community and their contributions have been ensuring the delivery of quality education to students in the community

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### **Public Interest Statement**

The report of this study is of immense benefit to the Lagos State Ministry of Education and the Department for International Development as it shows that the school based management committees still have more need of government support for it to achieve full functionality.