



**ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEES' (SBMCs) PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN ANAOCHA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGERIA**

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Abstract:

The responsibilities of the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) include to ensure effective utilization of physical resources and to promote transparency, probity and accountability in school finances. This function becomes more critical in this period of economic recession in Nigeria. This study sought and established the extent of the School-Based Management Committees' promotion of accountability and proper utilization of physical resources in the public secondary schools in Anaocha Local Government Area of Anambra State. The survey research method was adopted. Two (2) research questions guided the study, while two (2) hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level. The population of the study was 362; comprising 330 teachers, 16 community leaders and 16 principals, from which a sample of 236 (220 teachers, 8 principals and 8 community leaders) was drawn through simple random sampling technique. A 10- item Questionnaire, duly validated was used for collection of data. Data collected were analysed using mean score to answer the research questions and ANOVA to test the hypotheses. The study established among other things, that the SBMCs in Anaocha Local Government Area to a low extent contribute to ensuring proper utilization of physical resources, but to a high extent promote financial accountability in the use of school financial resources. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that the government should intensify sensitization programmes to enlighten the SBMC members and stakeholders on the important roles and responsibilities of the community in proper resource management for students' improved academic performance.

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1. Introduction

School-Based Management is the process of ensuring all-inclusive and effective participation in the management and administration of the school system by the local communities. In the views of Caldwell (2005) and Ayeni and Ibekun (2013) School-Based Management is the process of decentralization of power and authority from government to significant shareholders to perform statutory responsibilities in the administration, monitoring, evaluation and review of education policies, ensuring effective teaching and learning among others, for improved learning outcomes. The approval and establishment of School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria is, a democratization process which is designed to work with and through local schools and stakeholders to engender better school management, more effective teaching and learning process and improved student outcome. The SBMCs are the bridges which connect the schools, the local communities and the Government, and enable them work together for improved school management.

In view of the above, the Anambra State SBMC Guidebook (2013) prescribes that SBMCs membership be 12 to 19 people drawn from the following groups in the community: Traditional rulers, Headteacher/ Principal, the PTA, Town Union, Teachers, Students/ Pupils, Old Students Associations, Artisans, Religious Organizations, Town Vigilante, Youth Organizations, Women Organizations, among others. These members are expected to be nominated by their particular associations to represent them, with the Headteacher/ principal as the secretary of the SBMC. Other officers should be elected and should not be actual members of the school. Though illiterate parents may not be barred from the membership of the SBMC in communities where the level of literacy is low, it is important that members have knowledge of statutory matters where they are expected to give advice or take part in decision-making. Ayeni and Ibekun, (2013) note that many SBMC members have limited knowledge of school budget, physical plant, conflict resolution, personnel policy and other matters. This and other limitations pose challenges to effective performance of SBMC functions in schools.

While the day-to-day management of schools is the responsibility of the Headteacher/ Principal, the SBMC acts as pivots of community / school partnership and are expected to perform the following responsibilities (Ejekam, 2011): Collaborating with PTA in the sensitization and mobilization of parents on enrolment, attendance and retention of their children/ wards in school; Monitoring staff with regards to attendance at school and effectiveness in curriculum delivery; Supporting the headteacher in innovative leadership and effective management of schools. It also includes supporting school development, planning, budgeting and utilization of resources in schools; Monitoring of the school physical resources with a view to ensuring their proper

maintenance; Assisting in the procurement of teaching/learning materials and resources; Reporting to the LGEA on a regular basis on developments in the school; Serving as medium of transmission of skills, knowledge, values and traditions of the community. Other duties of SBMCs as enumerated, are assisting principals in treating disciplinary problems in the school; Ensuring adequate security of human and material resources in the school; Rendering annual statements of account, income and expenditure; Identifying staff requirements; Assisting in drawing up action plans for effective participation of all stakeholders in UBE programme; Initiate contact for functional network with other schools, LGEAs and other relevant agencies so as to motivate teachers, improve facilities and ensure learner friendly atmosphere; Collaborate with school authorities to set up sub-committees to handle school improvement projects e.g. Self-help, Home-Grown School Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFHP) etc. Any other issues that can lead to the attainment of quality basic education delivery.

Resources management is an important aspect of SBMCs' responsibilities. According to Uko, Umosen and Caleb (2015) resource management practices is concerned with planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling and that the success of education depends largely on effective handling of educational resources. The present study focused on SBMC's functions of monitoring of school physical resources and proper management of school financial resources which are pivotal for effective teachers' job performance and improved student learning outcome. The need for SBMCs to perform their functions becomes critical in this period of economic recession in Nigeria, characterized by a significant decline in real Gross Domestic Product, real income, employment, industrial production and wholesale-retail sales (NBER, 2007). This economic decline has given rise to inadequate government expenditure in education though school enrolment continues to rise. This makes it expedient for the community, ably represented in the SBMC, to partner with schools to augment and manage school resources for improved student academic performance.

Education is capital intensive and a *sine qua non* for all round national development. It is for this reason that Adeyemi (2011) posited that the importance of adequate financing of education cannot be over-stressed because no organisation can carry out its obligations effectively without it. Unfortunately, Nigeria has been unable to allocate up to 25% of its annual budget to education as recommended by UNESCO/UNICEF. This situation calls for prudence and accountability in the use of limited resources and is of utmost importance, especially during economic hardship. Thomas (1977) posits that in times of depression, there should be accountability by giving explanation to interest groups. To be accountable is to be responsible for one's actions and decisions by adopting laid down principles of financial management. The Anambra State SBMC Guidebook (2013), therefore, mandates that SBMCs promote financial accountability by following basic accounting rules, maintaining clear records, ensuring that their actions are open for public scrutiny, making the best use of funds, spreading authority by ensuring that more than one person are involved in any transaction and to prepare schools' annual budgets. The Principals and SBMC members

must make distinctions between school funds and personal money and endeavour to keep school funds securely as well ensure proper management of the schools physical resources

School physical resources or school plant is the sum total of the buildings, equipment, textbooks, writing boards, laboratory equipment, as well as every structure that is required for effective teaching and learning. Yusuf (2008) viewed school facilities as the space interpretation of school curriculum without which it will be difficult to implement the curriculum. Teachers can effectively implement curriculum to achieve educational objectives if adequate material and physical resources are in place. Studies such as Chan (1996) reported that the condition of physical resources of a school and students' achievement are interrelated. In addition, the state of school facilities can impact on students' attendance to school; improve student's attitude to learning and increase teachers' retention. School facility or plant management is the process of applying good leadership and effective planning and monitoring of both the facilities and their uses (Amamchukwu and Ololube, 2015). In other words, school facility/ plant management includes school facility utilization, school facility planning, facility operations and facility maintenance. The SBMCs are required to help raise funds for education, use direct labour to effect repairs of broken down facilities, help equip laboratories and classrooms; and promote efficient management of limited resources

The Anambra State government has done a lot to improve the physical and material facilities in secondary schools and constituted SBMCs part of whose statutory functions is to manage financial and material resources of the schools for effective teaching and learning.

2. Statement of the Problem

The importance of adequate financing of education and the judicious use of financial resources cannot be overemphasized. Although the government allocations to education continue to rise in monetary terms, due to the explosion in enrolment, allocations have not really increased in per-capita term. Nigeria has consistently failed to allocate up to 20% of its annual budget to education as recommended (UNESCO, 2013). It currently allocates about 7% per annum. This underscores the need for well-to-do members of the communities where public schools are located to help source funds, material and physical resources for schools in their areas.

The effect of devastation on school physical assets due to such incidences as the Nigerian Civil War in the eastern states, coupled with the high rates of school enrolment, have taken their toll on schools physical resources. Until 2011 when the Anambra State government began a serious programme of giving face lifts to the decayed infrastructure in schools, school facilities were badly dilapidated and inadequate. Physical structures for the teeming number of students are inadequate and there is a need for proper management of available resources to ensure their effective utilization, for school improvement.

He who pays the piper dictates the tune is a common idiom. As such it becomes expedient to bring in the stakeholders in the communities through the SBMCs, to play some active role in management of school financial and physical resources in their local schools. Some authors have argued that some host communities are not informed of the role of SBMCs (Ayeni and Ibukun, 2013). To address the problem, the Anambra State government has revised the SBMC Guidebook (2013) and undertaken adequate sensitization of the teachers and communities on the existence and need for SBMCs in schools. So far, there is a lack of information on the extent of implementation of SBMC guidelines in Anaocha LGA. The problem of this study is thus to establish the extent of SBMCs financial and physical resources management functions in Anaocha LGA of Anambra State, Nigeria.

3. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to establish the extent of SBMCs' performance of their managerial functions. Specifically, the study investigated:

1. The extent of SBMCs' management of physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.
2. The extent of SBMCs management of financial resources in Anaocha Local Government Area.

3.1 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do SBMCs' manage physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area?
2. To what extent do SBMCs' manage financial resources in Anaocha Local Government Area?

3.2 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean response scores of principals, teachers and community leaders on SBMCs management of physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals, teachers and community leaders on the SBMCs management of financial resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.

4. Method

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design which was deemed appropriate for collecting information from principals, teachers and community leaders on the extent of SBMCs' performance of their roles of ensuring accountability and proper use of physical and financial resources. This design is deemed suitable as

according to Akuezuilo and Agu (2003), survey research is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group, utilizing tools such as questionnaires, interviews and observation to collect data. The population for this study was 362; made up of 16 principals, 330 teachers of the public secondary schools in Anaocha Local Government Area, as well as 16 community leaders that were on the boards of the local SBMCs. Data was from the Post Primary School Service Commission (PPSSC, June 2016). Simple random sampling technique was used to select 8 principals, 220 teachers and 8 community leaders, giving a sample size of 236.

The instrument for data collection was a ten-item researcher developed questionnaire modelled on the 4-point scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The instrument was duly validated by three experts: two experts in Educational Management and Policy and one in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. It was tested for reliability using the test-retest method on 3 principals and 90 teachers of public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area at two week intervals. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the data collected yielded a sum coefficient of 0.83 which was considered high enough for the study. The researchers administered 256 copies of the questionnaire and 236 copies were retrieved, representing a 92% return rate.

Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Items with mean scores of 2.5 and above were considered High Extent, while those below 2.5 were considered Low Extent. In addition, mean scores above 3.0 and below 2.0 were considered Very High Extent and Very Low Extent respectively. The hypotheses were tested using ANOVA at 0.05 level of significance.

5. Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do SBMCs' manage physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area?

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on the extent of SBMCs' management of physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area

S/N	Items	Principals			Teachers			Community Leaders			Total		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	SBMCs ensure that facilities are maintained in the school	2.63	0.74	High Extent	2.80	0.99	High Extent	3.50	0.76	Very High Extent	2.82	0.98	High Extent
2	SBMCs contribute in the provision	2.38	0.92	Low Extent	2.47	0.85	Low Extent	3.50	0.76	Very High Extent	2.50	0.87	High Extent

3	of water supply in the school SBMCs make provision for books in the library	2.63	0.52	High Extent	2.23	0.61	Low Extent	2.50	1.07	High Extent	2.25	0.63	Low Extent
4	help provide equipment in the school laboratories	2.63	0.52	High Extent	2.16	0.74	Low Extent	2.75	1.04	High Extent	2.19	0.75	Low Extent
5	mobilise funds from well-to-do members of society to fund school projects	2.50	0.76	High Extent	2.23	0.91	Low Extent	2.63	0.92	High Extent	2.25	0.90	Low Extent
	Mean of means	2.55			2.38			2.98			2.64		Low Extent

Table 1 revealed that while the mean of means for the three groups of respondents (principals, teachers and community leaders) showed that the SBMC managed physical resources in schools to a high extent (2.64), the principals and community leaders agreed that the SBMC managed physical resources to a high extent (2.55 and 2.98 respectively). Their standard deviations ranging from 0.63 to 0.98 showed that the scores did not vary much.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant difference in the mean response scores of principals, teachers and community leaders on SBMCs management of physical resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.

Table 2: ANOVA testing of difference in the rating of respondents on the extent to which members of the SBMC participate in the management of physical resources

Variable 1		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Variable 1	Between Groups	2.949	2	1.475	4.605	.011
	Within Groups	73.009	228	0.320		
	Total	75.958	230			

Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in the respondents' mean ratings of the SBMCs' participation in the management of physical resources ($f=4.61$, $p=0.01$). The null hypothesis was rejected and thus it was concluded that there is a significant

difference in the principals', teachers' and community leaders' ratings on the SBMC's management of physical resources in Anaocha Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: To what extent do SBMCs' manage financial resources in Anaocha Local Government Area?

Table 3: Respondents' mean ratings on SBMCs' promotion of accountability in the use of school financial resources in Anaocha Local Government Area

S/N	Items	Principals			Teachers			Community Leaders			Total		
		✱	SD	Decision	✱	SD	Decision	✱	SD	Decision	✱	SD	Decision
6	SBMCs monitor execution of approved school projects	3.25	0.89	Very High Extent	2.61	0.85	High Extent	3.50	0.76	Very High Extent	2.66	0.86	High Extent
7	SBMCs ensure that expenditures are made as laid down by government	3.13	0.83	Very High Extent	2.72	0.90	High Extent	3.50	0.76	Very High Extent	2.76	0.90	High Extent
8	SBMCs ensure that financial dealings are published for the public	2.50	0.53	High Extent	2.51	0.93	High Extent	2.88	1.25	High Extent	2.52	0.93	High Extent
9	SBMCs ensure that school has bank accounts with appropriate signatories	2.63	0.52	High Extent	2.30	0.95	Low Extent	2.38	1.19	Low Extent	2.32	0.94	Low Extent
10	SBMCs maintain clear and accurate financial records	2.88	0.83	High Extent	2.39	0.81	Low Extent	2.88	0.83	High Extent	2.42	0.82	Low Extent
	Total	2.88			2.51			2.83			2.74		High Extent

Table 3 showed that all three groups of respondents (principals, teachers and community leaders) were in agreement that SBMCs manage financial resources in items 6,7 and 8 to a high extent, with means above 2.50. Though respondents have mixed responses in items 9 and 10, their grand means of 2.88, 2.51 and 2.83 show that they are all agreed that SBMCs properly manage financial resources in the area of the study.

Their standard deviations range from 0.82 to 0.94 showing that there was not much variance in the scores.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of principals, teachers and community leaders on the SBMCs management of financial resources in schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.

Table 4: ANOVA testing of difference in the rating of respondents on the extent to which members of the SBMC participate in the management of financial resources

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Variable 2	Between Groups	3.038	2	1.519	3.603	.029
	Within Groups	98.223	233	0.422		
	Total	101.261	235			

Table 4 revealed that there is a significant difference in the extent of SBMCs management of school (f=3.60, p=0.03). The null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that a significant difference exists in the mean responses of respondents that SBMCs manage financial resources to a high extent in Anaocha Local Government Area.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study show that SBMCs support and promote the provision of physical resources to a high extent in Anaocha Local Government Area. This finding does not agree with Mbakwe (2014) who assessed the extent of SBMCs' participation in secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area and reported a low extent of SBMC participation in the management of school resources. This high extent of involvement is in line with the SBMCs stated role of providing a platform for promoting government and stakeholder partnership in the provision of learning facilities in schools (Ayeni & Ibukun, 2013). The importance of such a partnership cannot be overemphasized in the current period of economic recession, coupled with rising school enrolment. The high extent of SBMCs support and promotion of the provision of physical resources recorded in this study could be the reason for improvement in students' academic achievements in both NECO and SSCE examinations in the Anambra State and Njikoka Local Government Area. SBMCs should step up their responsibility of helping the schools to plan, provide and properly utilize their physical resources for sustained and better student academic achievement. In the view of Ayeni and Ibukun (2013), the poor academic performance recorded in Nigeria in both NECO and SSCE examinations could be attributed to the gap between the input-process-output system in secondary schools.

Part of the reason for the high extent of SBMCs promotion of proper financial and facilities management, contrary to Mbakwe's (2014) finding, is the philanthropy of community members who are always working to help equip the schools in their towns

and give scholarships to indigent but gifted students. It appears that people in the rural areas have more sense of community than those in urban areas. Another possible explanation for the high extent performance by SBMCs recorded in this study is that Anambra State Government, since 2013, has been doing a lot to domesticate the SBMC policy in the schools. That acknowledged, more needs to be done.

SBMCs must be encouraged to mobilize more funds for schools especially in the prevailing economic hardship and inadequate government funding for education. Nigeria has not yet allocated up to 25% of its annual budget to education. Many people still feel that the provision of physical resources in schools is the prerogative of the government alone.

This study also found that the extent of SBMC management of financial resources in schools in the area of the study is fairly high, as prescribed by the Anambra State SBMC Guidebook (2013). Though the findings of this study do not agree with Mbakwe (2014) on provision and accountability in use of financial resources in schools which recorded very low SBMC involvement in Awka South Local Government Area, the findings agree with Thomas (1977) who posits that in times of economic depression, there should be accountability to stakeholders. This could be as a result of further intensified effort by the government to enlighten the communities on the important roles of the SBMC in schools.

7. Conclusion

This study established that the extent to which SBMCs discharge their duties of financial accountability and management of physical resources was high, but more needs to be done, especially in view of inadequate allocation to education in Nigeria.

7.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Government of Anambra State through its agencies (the SMOE, ASUBEB and LGEAs) should intensify enlightenment of the public concerning SBMCs and the training of SBMC members to improve on their performance in the area of sourcing and prudent management of funds in secondary schools in Anaocha Local Government Area.
2. Though this study found a high extent of SBMCs in facility management, they will perform better if the State Government institutes reward strategies for SBMCs that perform on high extent in their responsibilities to encourage them to do better.

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