**3.Community**

**Content**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3.1. | Definition of Community |
| 3.2. | Types of Community   * Rural Community * Urban Community * Traditional Community * Solidarity Communication * Neighbourhood Community |
| 3.3. | Key features of Community |
| 3.4. | Relationship between School and Community |
| 3.5. | The role of Community in School |
| 3.6. | Why Community involvement is important in Schools   * Benefits of Community involvement in School * Importance of involvement of community in Schools |
| 3.7. | 5 Great ways Schools can engage the Community |
| 3.8. | Community Participation |
| 3.9. | Types of Community Participation   * Passive participation * Participation in information giving * Participation for material incentives * Interactive participation * Self-mobilization |
| 3.10. | Citizen and Community participation can be facilitated |
| 3.11. | Community Participation in Education |

**Community**

**Definition:**

* A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.
* The condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common.
* A **community** is a social unit (a group of living things) with commonality such as norms, religion, values, customs, or identity. **Communities** may share a sense of place situated in a given geographical area (e.g. a country, village, town, or neighbourhood) or in virtual space through communication platforms.
* A place or geographical area where a group of people live and share common interest and aspiration and have social network of relationship at the local level.
* A group of people with well defined demographic characteristics and power structure.

**Types of Communities:**

1. Rural Community
2. Urban Community
3. Traditional Community
4. Solidarity Community
5. Neighbourhood Community
6. **Rural Community:**

It refers to people residing in a population of 2500 or less, they share the same needs, have common health problems, have the same culture, beliefs, they are more united and have the informal way of interaction.

1. **Urban Community:**

It has a population about 500 or more. They have different ethnic groups They have different ideas, beliefs, taboos, culture etc. Their needs and problems could be the same or different.

1. **Traditional Community:**

They are old established settlement. They have common identifiable traits. Ethnic groupings such as clans, families, beliefs, culture, division in terms of religion, employment, etc. could be found. Important natural bonds such as common leadership, language, traditions and customs hold members of this type of community together. These could provide useful criteria for segmenting such communities into recognisable and practical units to facilitate mobilisation for sustained development activities. On the other the hand the beliefs and customs of some of such traditional communities could hinder the work of health workers as such beliefs and customary practices may conflict with conventionally acceptable health practices. Most rural towns and villages in Ghana typify traditional communities. All community mobilisers must note the varying influences of urbanisation and modernisation eroding the traditional community values and norms of rural communities. In this respect the concepts of solidarity and neighbourhood community have to be understood.

1. **Solidarity Community:**

In the Solidarity Community, people are seen to be living in a common territory because of common heritage such as nationality, ethnicity, religion or language. Since they often define themselves as belonging to that group and fell emotionally loyal to it, the possibility of their working as a community to promote their own health and well-being is high, on the other hand their objection to a type of health information because it contradicts their belief systems could hinder the promotion of health programs

1. **Neighbourhood Community:**

Another territorially bound conception of community, which could be recognised and used to promote community mobilisation, is the Neighbourhood Community. This develops as people live in area together for a period of time and in the process develops familiarity out of which strong loyalty may grow. Examples of such communities are the Workers Estates, Civil Servants Bungalows, SSNIT Flats, Nurses Quarters etc.

1. **Key Features of a Community:**

**Political Structure**: Communities have their own structures around which political activities are organised. It is extremely important to know and understand these structures and how they function when entering the communities with health related activities.

**Traditional Political Structure**: Identify position, roles and responsibilities of the paramount chief, divisional chiefs, elders, spiritual leaders etc.

**Formal political structure:** To enter a community, it is important to identify formal and governmental structures that exist in the community. Some of these structures include the office of the District Chief Executive the District Assembly, Unit Committees Village And Town Development Committees Village Health Committees. TBA etc.

**Family Organisation:** Two family systems exit in Ghana matrilineal and matrilineal. Most families are extended families although the nuclear family system is gradual taking form in the urban communities e.g. in the patrilineal men take decision therefore the need to involve them in program.

**Health institutions in the community:** In every community there are various health institutions that provide health care for community members. It is important to note the existence of both modern and traditional health institution in the community. The modern health institution includes both pubic and private hospitals, health centres and clinics. The traditional structures also include: traditional healers, TBA etc.

**Physical Characteristics of the Community:** Accessibility of various sections of the community will depend on how rocky, mountainous, water logged the terrain is, availability of relevant infrastructure in the community. Knowledge about the road net work, transport.

**Religious groups:** Christianity, Islam, traditional identifies and works with them.

**Cultural institutions:** you need to know about local market days, this can be used for effective dissemination. Identify cultural characteristics of the community such as beliefs, customs, norms, taboos and habits etc.

**Relationship between School and Community:**

Community is a part of the society and education is the counterpart of both the above mentioned elements. School is the social institution where consciously designed learning experiences are provided with the objectives of achieving social aim at large, over a period of time.

**Role of community in school:**

The role of community in schools consists of the connections between schools and individuals, businesses, and formal and informal organizations and institutions that can leverage community resources and assist students in achieving positive outcomes.

**Why Community Involvement in Schools is Important:**

It’s no secret that parental involvement is an integral part of a successful educational framework. Numerous studies have identified parent engagement as a critical factor affecting the success of individual students and the school environment itself. But what many schools and educational institutions overlook is the fact that high rates of student success are generally the result of three groups collaborating to provide the best opportunities for the future—teachers, parents, and the community. In a 2002 research review by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Map – A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement – the researchers concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between school, family, and community involvement and student success.

Oftentimes, the onus for providing a well-rounded educational experience for every student falls directly on the shoulders of the school administrators, teachers, faculty, and staff. However, this limited perspective overlooks the fact that much of a child’s life and education occurs outside the classroom. What happens before the school day starts and after it ends can be just as important and impactful in the lives of your students as what happens during the traditional school day. This is why community engagement and involvement in schools is such an important facet of the educational process.

**The Benefits of Community Involvement in Schools:**

Consistent community involvement and engagement at all levels of the school have been shown time and time again to have significant short and long term benefits.According to a recent policy brief[3] from the National Education Association (NEA), “when schools, parents, families, and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enrol in higher level programs”. With these important benefits in mind, it’s clear that a focus on increasing community involvement programs and opportunities should be a consistent goal for your school.

**Easy Ways to Encourage Community Engagement in Your School:**

Volunteering is one of the most common and popular ways to encourage community involvement in schools. Connect with local businesses, civic organizations, charities, nonprofits foundations, and other groups in your community to enlist volunteers to come in before, during, or after the school day.

Volunteering can come in many different shapes and forms. Invite local leaders and individuals in the community to visit classes and speak about their chosen profession for Career Day. Encourage community members to get involved by volunteering with enrichment opportunities before and after school, such as tutoring, fine arts clubs, and athletic teams.

Not every organization, business, family, or individual in your community is going to have the time or capacity to participate in in-person and on-premise volunteer opportunities. That’s why it’s important to also prioritize community involvement in the form of sponsorship and donation programs.

Does your school need a restaurant to provide food for this year’s field day? Do your teachers need iPods or Smart Boards to engage students with new technologies? Does an extracurricular club or team need supplies, uniforms, or equipment?

Create and publicize sponsorship and donation needs throughout your community, to give local organizations and businesses the opportunity to partner with your school.

**The importance of community involvement in schools:**

According to the recent [MetLife Survey of the American Teacher](http://www.metlife.com/about/corporate-profile/citizenship/metlife-foundation/metlife-survey-of-the-american-teacher.html?WT.mc_id=vu1101), teachers, parents and students all agree that parent engagement in schools has increased over the past 25 years. Given the role that family engagement plays in not only academic success, but life success, that is great news. However, the survey also noted that parent engagement remains a challenge for many schools.

Last weekend, at the [Celebration of Teaching and Learning](http://thirteencelebration.org/), surrounded by educators, representatives from the nonprofit and business worlds, global education experts, academics, and education advocates of all stripes, I found it inspiring how committed the group as a whole was to not just improving family engagement in schools, but expanding engagement beyond the family, to the community in general. Two featured initiatives in particular seemed to embody it: [Reconnecting McDowell](http://www.reconnectingmcdowell.org/) and [Cincinnati's Community Learning](http://www.cps-k12.org/community/CLC/CLC.htm).

**5 Great Ways Schools Can Engage the Community:**

* Organize a curriculum fair and open house. Create a unique opportunity for the **community** to see the high-quality work your **school** is addressing through a curriculum fair or **school** open house. ...
* Send an email newsletter. ...
* Engage with civic groups. ...
* Go to nonschool events. ...
* Use social media to create genuine engagement

**Community participation:**

**Community participation** can be loosely defined as the **involvement** of people in a community in projects to solve their own problems. ... **Community participation** is especially important in emergency sanitation programmes where people may be unaccustomed to their surroundings and new sanitation facilities.

**Types of Community Participation:**

Participation can be viewed from different perspectives and there are several types of participation. They include:

* + **Passive Participation**: People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened through unilateral announcement by administration.
  + **Participation in Information Giving**: People participate by answering questions posted by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches and do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings.
  + **Participation by Consultation:** People participate by being consulted, and external people listen to views and may modify these in the light of people’s responses but do not involve them in decision-making.
  + **Participation for Material Incentives:** People participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash, or other material incentives, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
  + **Interactive Participation:** People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans, and formation or strengthening of local institutions.
  + **Self-mobilisation**: People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and the technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used.

**Citizen and Community participation can be facilitated:**

1. By stressing the benefits to be gained. This will work only so long then the benefits must become obvious. The intangible benefits as well as the tangible should be emphasized. These are frequently omitted and are, by far, the true gains of community action.
2. By adopting online participating model, The Internet facilitates sharing of the key ingredient of participation – information – to assist vision formation, informed decision-making, scenario-building and the like.
3. With an appropriate organizational structure available for expressing interest. This may require organizing a more neutral group than may be in existence in a community. However, in some situations, existing groups are adequate. Situation judgment is required by persons with appropriate experience and competency.
4. By helping citizens find positive ways to respond when their way-of life is threatened. Most people want to act responsibly. Use these situations to help people find positive ways to deal with threatening predicaments.
5. By stressing the commitment or obligation each of us have toward improving the community. However, people will not continue to participate unless the experience is rewarding, or at least not too distasteful.
6. In crisis situations have long been successfully used as a basis for gaining citizen participation. Crises should not be invented but, if they exist, they become powerful motivation. The closing of a major plant, closing of a school, loss of train service, and a major drug problem are examples of threats to a people’s way-of-life that have served as rallying points for citizen participation.
7. The most positive of all approaches to facilitate greater participation is to provide citizens with better knowledge. Obviously, the knowledge has to be in their value system. When it is, experience shows they usually act accordingly. Adequate time and means of diffusing the new knowledge must be employed for satisfactory results.

**Community Participation in Education:**

Community participation gives students great experience in terms of helping others, builds strong character and mental habits, as well as developing relationships between students, teachers, community members, and other organizations.