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The role of community involvement in enhancing infrastructural support and its impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon

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Abstract

Work The study aimed at investigating community involvement in infrastructural support and its impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon. The theoretical underpinning of this study was informed by Michael Shuman's Theory of Community Based Financing (2021) and Epstein'sTheory of overlapping Spheres. The concurrent research design was adopted for the study. The target population of the study was made up of 635 participants teachers, head teachers and community leaders in rural areas in Fako and Kupe Muanenguba divisions. The accessible population consisted of 249 respondents. The sample size was made up of 138 respondents. Participants were sampled using the purposive, stratified snow ball, convenient and simple random sampling. Questionnaire and interview guide were instruments used to collect data for the study. Reliability coefficient values for the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS version 27 with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Findings showed that majority of teachers 78.1% (64) and head teachers 70.8% (17) indicated that the community does not support the school in terms of infrastructure (classrooms, toilets and other physical facilities). Moreover, the lack of infrastructure as revealed by the community leaders could also act as a demotivating factor preventing many trained teachers to stay in rural areas and that community provision of infrastructure have a significant and strong impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas (R-value 0.658**, p-value≤0.001) supported with a very high explanatory power 0f 90.3%. In other words, it was predicted that adequate community provision of infrastructure would go a long way to enhance the quality without involvement of community leaders, lack of communication from school head to factors reported for causing community unwillingness to massively engage in supporting schools in their rural communities. On this note, inclusive decision-making, cordial relationship between school head and community leaders, government empowerment of communities to foster their involvement in supporting schools in their rural communities, good management and communication from school head and motivation of teachers were ways forward to enhance community involvement.

Keywords:

Community, community involvement, infrastructural support, education quality, public primary schools, pupils.

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Introduction

National development in all its ramifications is based on sound qualitative education which requires adequate finances to provide the needed resources. While the foundation of the entire educational system is primary education, it is imperative that education at this level must be of high quality (Okandeji&Ajuar, 2004). This is because quality primary education promotes the well-being of children, equips children with the capability to interpret things rightly, and applying the gathered information in real life scenarios.

Quality primary education is important because it is the foundation of life learning which enables the child to acquire literacy and numeracy skills for better integration in the society and springboard for further learning. The quality of education is however incumbent on a number of factors, one of which is resource availability. Since schools cannot provide all their financial resources alone because education is an activity in collaboration (Ahmad et al, 2013), community involvement now becomes a requirement to improve and enhance the quality of educational activities in schools (Saced, 2001).

Today in Cameroon, many public primary schools in rural areas lack adequate infrastructure. Classrooms are often overcrowded, poorly constructed and inadequately equipped. A study by the World Bank (2020) highlighted that rural public primary schools frequently have limited access to basic facilities such as clean water, sanitation and electricity, which are essential for a conducive learning environment. There is also a significant shortage of educational materials, including textbooks, teaching aids and learning resources. According to a report by UNICEF (2021), many schools in rural areas struggle with insufficient supplies, which hampered the quality of education. Teachers often have to rely on outdated materials or create their own resources. Another critical issue is shortage of trained teachers which affects the quality of instructions. The Ministry of Basic Education in Cameroon has noted that teacher retention in rural areas is low due to factors such as poor salary and lack of professional development opportunities (Ministry of Basic Education, Cameroon, 2022). All the same, community involvement plays a crucial role in resource mobilization for schools. Some rural communities have taken initiative to improve their local schools through fundraising and partnerships with NGOs, but these efforts vary widely in effectiveness (Global Partnerships for Education, 2020).

Despite extensive literature on educational financing and community involvement, a significant research gap exists concerning the specific impact of community contributions to educational financing on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon. Most existing studies focus broadly on the role of government and international donors in educational funding, often neglecting the crucial contributions of local communities in rural settings (Bray, 2003; Lewin, 2007). Additionally, research frequently emphasizes urban educational environments, leaving a paucity of data on rural primary schools where community involvement might play a more critical role due to limited state resources (Akyeampong, 2009). Furthermore, there is a lack of detailed analysis on how different forms of community financial contributions, such as fundraising, volunteer

labor, and material donations, directly influence educational outcomes such as pupil performance, teacher motivation, and school infrastructure quality in these areas (Rose, 2003).

This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence in the enhancement of community involvement in educational financing and its direct impact on the educational quality of public primary school pupils in the rural areas of the South West Region of Cameroon. By filling these gaps, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on education quality and community participation, providing insights that are both contextually relevant and practically applicable.

The focus of this research is to improve the overall quality and efficiency of primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon, through community involvement in the financing of education, specifically providing and improving infrastructure in schools.

Conceptualizing The Role of Community Involvement in Enhancing Infrastructural Support on The Quality of Public Primary School Pupils' Education

In Cameroon, the evolution of community involvement in their children's education begin with the traditional (indigenous) education, through pre-colonial era of the missionaries (1844-1884), the colonial era of the German protectorate (1884-1914), the years of the First and Second World War and peace settlement (1914-1946), French and British mandates (1922-1946), French and British Trusteeship (1946-1960/61), the federation period (1960-1972), education in the United Republic of Cameroon (1972-1984), education in the Republic of Cameroon (1984-2004) till present (Mac-Ojong 2008; Ebot-Ashu, 2020), with much attention to the South-West Region.

The concept of community financing of educational endeavors in Cameroon had its official substantial form through the creation of Parent-Teachers-Associations (PTA) in 1979, ordinance N^{o} G370/477/MINEDUC of 1979, creating the Parent-Teachers-Association in Cameroon for primary schools and colleges for both public and private schools. This was amended by a ministerial circular letter No. 23/11/25 of 14th May 1990 clearly stating the duties or functions of the PTA (Mbu, 2020). We should understand that the PTA is narrow agent and in the larger community, there are many other individuals or group of persons who are not part of the PTA, but might be willing to support the schools as individuals or group distinct from the PTA.

With reference to how community provision of financial assistance to schools could impact infrastructure, personnel availability, and didactic resources/instructional materials. Ajayi (2005) posited one of the ways community involvements in financing education in rural areas benefit the school is improvement in infrastructural resources. Infrastructural resources are those things which enable a skillful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided (Ajayi 2005). Good infrastructures strive to give students a comfortable atmosphere in which they work and learn.

In developing countries, low levels of learning among children have been partly attributed to poor or inadequate infrastructures.

School buildings, libraries, classrooms, computer centres, technology, machinery, tools, laboratories, and equipment are education infrastructures which are crucial elements of learning environment in schools and Universities (Janssen, 2017). Based on this, the term infrastructural resource is comprehensive and there are number of aspects that are included in it and so forth. Janssen (ibid) said there is strong evidence that high quality infrastructural resources facilitate better instruction, improves learning outcomes, reduces dropout rates and among other benefits.

The importance of adequate and well-equipped infrastructural resources cannot be over emphasized. Inadequate infrastructural resources in primary schools in rural areas affect the quality of teaching and learning. In conformity with this, community members/parents need to invest financially to bring about the improvement in infrastructural resources. Bhunia at al. (2012) said when there are adequate infrastructural resources; the individuals (teachers) will be able to carry out their job duties in an appropriate manner that will lead to progression of educational institutions. The government of Cameroon had long understood the importance of community in the participation of education in every given locality.

Statement of the Problem

Quality rural primary education is of paramount importance as it lays the foundational skills necessary for lifelong learning and development, significantly contributing to the overall socio-economic advancement of rural communities. High-quality primary education in rural areas ensures that children acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills, which are essential for their personal growth and future employability (UNESCO, 2015). Moreover, it plays a crucial role in reducing poverty and inequality by providing equal educational opportunities, thereby enabling rural children to compete more effectively in the global economy (World Bank, 2018).

However, achieving quality rural primary education requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various barriers and leverages available resources effectively. This involves ensuring adequate infrastructure, teachers and didactic materials to create a conducive learning environment (UNESCO, 2015). Availability of sufficient teachers and other resources requires finances. In fact, one of the dimensions of quality education is systematic support. This is to say that our primary schools for instance cannot realized quality education without adequate systematic support.

Particularly, the quality of public primary education in rural areas of the South West Region of Cameroon remains a critical concern despite efforts by the government and international organizations to improve educational outcomes. The persistent challenge is partly due to insufficient funding and resources which disproportionately affect rural schools resulting to gross inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teaching staff and learning materials, and under qualified teachers in many cases (World Bank, 2018; UNICEF, 2020). We have to be reminded that these challenges have significantly impacted the quality of education delivered

in these schools and if not addressed, children in rural areas will continue to be deprive of quality education which will further bridge the gap between inequality and poverty.

As one of the ways to address these issues, governments have increasingly called for community involvement in education financing as a complementary strategy to public funding. However, the extent to which community-sourced funds are effectively utilized to improve educational outcomes in rural Cameroon remains unclear and following the legal recognition of Parent Teacher Association in 1979 and the decentralisation law in 2007, we expected a greater community involvement in aiding schools in respective localities to enhance the quality of education for children.

Aim

The aim of this paper was to:

1) To find out the impact of community provision of infrastructure on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Hypothesis

Ho_1: Community provision of infrastructure has no significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Ha_1: Community provision of infrastructure has a significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Rationale

The concept of community financing of educational endeavors in Cameroon had its official substantial form through the creation of Parent-Teachers-Associations (PTA) in 1979, ordinance N^{o} G370/477/MINEDUC of 1979, creating the Parent-Teachers-Association in Cameroon for primary schools and colleges for both public and private schools. This was amended by a ministerial circular letter No. 23/11/25 of 14th May 1990 clearly stating the duties or functions of the PTA (Mbu, 2020). We should understand that the PTA is narrow agency and in the larger community, there are many other individuals or group of persons who are not part of the PTA, but might be willing to support the schools as individuals or group distinct from the PTA. It is on this note that law 1998 in section 33 calls on the community to be well involved in aiding schools.

The involvement of the community in financing education is vital as it provides the necessary resources and support to improve the overall learning environment. In rural areas where the government funding may be limited, community involvement becomes more critical. Local contributions can bridge the gap and ensure that pupils have access to a quality education. When communities are actively engaged in financing schools, there is often a greater sense of accountability and transparency, leading to more efficient use of resources and improved educational outcomes (Shikalepo, 2020).

Review of Related Literature

Community Provision of Infrastructures and its Impact on the Quality of Primary Schools in Rural Areas

Efforts of how community participation could lead to an improvement in educational projects were initiated in the 1980s. Now, a lot of research works have shown that there is a secured link between community involvement and the improvement of educational service deliveries. In support of this, the World Bank has over the years been looking for new ways of interacting with local communities in the provision and delivery of educational projects and programs. Even though the government had long intended at accelerating the development of the nation's human capital; improving access to education for all children is still a major headache (Wedam et al., 2014). To reach its objective of educational accessibility, many countries appealed to the World Bank to provide assistance to local communities in their quest to construct schools in underprivileged and underserved rural communities.

Participation of community members in the planning and management of educational infrastructure is another centre of the study. Even though it does not provide the universal remedy to convalesce the quality of education, it is certainly a course that aids the achievements of quality education and the advancement of social equality and egalitarianism in communities. In Moree, a community on the coast of Ghana, a school built in the centre of the community was abandoned by the community mainly because the community members were not involved in the project (Educational Development Centre, 2004).

In many African countries, responsibility for the provision of primary education has been legally either delegated or devolved to local governments, including the responsibility for school infrastructure. The rational for decentralization is to improve basic service delivery because these services are consumed locally (Ahmad Kamal et al., 2005) as in the case of Cameroon. However, despite the decentralization policy, the effect is still far from felt. Community participation has enormous contribution towards the management of educational infrastructure. In many countries in Africa for example, where system restructuring has been going on, it has come to be regarded as a key part of restructuring management of service delivery (UNESCO, 2004b). The new relationship that is emerging under decentralized governance between central and local government would seem to provide opportunities for how new roles and responsibilities might be conceptualized to provide equitable access to basic education and the management of the infrastructure in the communities within which they are found (Dunne &Akyeampong, 2007).

Again, lack of school infrastructure including teaching and learning materials in some local communities and poor academic performance has raised serious concerns. Developing countries often find it difficult to cope with the growing demand for education and often lag in expanding their educational infrastructure resulting in a state of inadequacy (Sifuna&Sawamura, 2009). This situation was escalated by free and compulsory primary education for all, adopted internationally (UNESCO, 2014). Faced with this challenge, governments often engage the private sector to invest in education and supplement the school

placement vacancies available in public schools (Damon et al., 2016). Another strategy has been involving local communities in the construction of schools in their areas and school infrastructural development activities which is of paramount interest to the study.

School infrastructure policy implementation refers to the aspects of interpreting and applying the policy by regulates on one hand and administration/governance or enforcement of the policy by the regulator on the other (Coglianese, 2012). School infrastructure projects often take the form of construction projects. These are establishment works of physical components of a built environment in a school among them buildings and structures. Coglianese (2012) further warned that infrastructure decisions for schools should not be made based on political opportunism and patronage but based on accurate infrastructure data.

There are several factors that can affect learning outcomes of pupils, which can be grouped into external and internal factors (Bandono&Samino, 2015). The external factors include educational facilities and infrastructure. Educational facilities are the facilities that directly support the education process to achieve educational goals. According to previous research, educational facilities and infrastructure are parts of the determinants of students' learning outcomes. According to previous research, infrastructure is part of the determinants of pupils' learning outcomes. On this note, Nugrahana, and Aeni (2019) state that it is important for policymakers or stakeholders in the education sector be given specific inputs related to the improvement of facilities and infrastructure to improve the quality of education services, especially in the level of primary schools. By this, it implies that schools expect some help from community members who are one of the stakeholders in the education sector to better up the education of children.

According to Asiabaka (2008), infrastructural facilities are materials designed to serve specific purposes. In the school system, there is multiplicity of infrastructural facilities, which facilitate teaching and learning for high quality of education, particularly in public primary schools. They are used, first to illustrate concepts, second to provide opportunity for information/experience, third is for experimentation and demonstration, the fourth is for scientific investigation and discovery, fifth is to provide diversity of thoughts, sixth is for observation and inquiry, seventh is for development of scientific attitudes and skills, eighth to protect the individual and provide comfort. This clearly shows that infrastructure has enormous benefit to the quality of learning.

The better the school infrastructure, the better it can meet the goals of pupils with desirable skills, knowledge and attitudes which enable them to work and live in the society (Ayeni & Adelabu, 2012). The authors also argue that teachers are expected to make teaching learner centered and to create enabling environment for pupils to interact with learning materials to concretize their knowledge and skills. It is equally argued that the provision of school infrastructure by community members has an important impact on teachers' effectiveness in addition to pupils' academic output.

School infrastructure as defined by Ritamazire (2005) is any form of material used to facilitate teaching and learning process in school setting. These include visual aids, water

facilities, toilets, electricity, classrooms, staff common room, head teacher's office, furniture, libraries, inter alia. Therefore, while in rural community communities, many primary schools are severely lacking in infrastructure, it is pertinent that community must mobilize themselves to offer some helping hand to schools. This is so because financial involvement of community to school project can go a long way to help bring about improvement in school infrastructure. As cited in the Sector Wide Approach (2006), communities have been called to participate in the light maintenance of school infrastructures under the notion of decentralized management of educational resources.

Looking at some empirical studies, RuhyanaandAeni (2019) carried out research on the Effect of Educational Facilities and Infrastructure in Primary Schools on Students' Learning Outcomes in Indonesia. This purpose of the study was to assess the effect of educational facilities and infrastructure in primary schools on the students' learning outcomes. The study made use of data from the Education Data Centre (Dapodik-Data Pokok Pendidikan) of 2017/2018 academic year which indicated high level of damage to educational facilities and infrastructure, particularly classrooms. This research employed a quantitative method using logistic regression as the data analysis technique. Raiviatu (2014) conducted a study on the effects of school infrastructure on pupils' academic performance in the Tamale Metropolis. The general objective of the study was to investigate the effects of school infrastructure on pupils' academic performance in public Junior High Schools in the Tamale Metropolis with the view of providing policy recommendations. A cross sectional research design was used, and data were collected using questionnaire, interview and checklist. A probability and non - probability sampling techniques were used to sample respondents from a pool of 11 Public Junior High Schools in seven circuits in the Tamale Metropolis.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinning of this study was informed by Michael Shuman's Theory of Community Based Financing (2012) and Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres (1987). Michael Shuman is an economist's attorney who works on local economies and community development. He advocated for building strong local economies by supporting small businesses, promoting local investments, and fostering sustainable development. Michael Shuman's theory of community-based financing emphasizes the importance of local communities in financing and supporting various initiatives, including education in rural areas. The theory revolves around the idea that communities possess significant untapped resources and potential to fund projects, such as primary school education, without relying solely on external sources (Shuman, 2006).

Shuman theory of Community-Based financing is relevant to the study in that it reiterates on the role that local community can bring to the local development of a rural area. However, when we talk of local development, it equally involves educational development (An example of social amenity). From this perspective of the theory, it made us to understand that when there is collaboration and solidarity between the schools and the communities, members of the community will become more invested in the success of the schools in rural areas and this will lead to increase in financial support through donation or fundraising efforts, as well as volunteering opportunities

Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres (1987) is another important theory for this study. According to Epstein, successful partnerships must be forged between these three spheres in order best to meet the needs of the child. The needs of the child do not only warrant provision of finances or material items by parents but it also implies that the school environment must be made conducive with lot of good infrastructures, didactic materials and sufficient human resources for effective and quality learning for children. Dietz (1997) argued that when a school limits parental involvement to a particular type of involvement (for example, fundraising, committee membership) then only a small proportion of parents become involved.

The theory of Epstein is relevant to the study in the following ways. First, it makes us to understand that schools do not exist in a vacuum and that when communities, families, and schoolwork together, learners enjoy quality learning because the schools will enjoy sufficient support from the community in general. Quality learning in schools requires systematic support which could take the form of financial, infrastructural support, human resource support and material supports.

Methodology

The concurrent research design was used for the study. The study was carried out in rural areas in Fako and Kupe Muanenguba divisions of the South West Region of Cameroon.The sample size composed of 21 public primary schools with 20 head teachers, 111 teachers and 118 community leaders. Amongst the 20 head teachers they were 6 females and 14 males, amongst the 111 teachers, there were 16 males and 95 females. These participants where purposively and randomly selected from: GS Mapanja, GS EwongoWotutu, GS WonyaMavio, GS Mukunda, GS Mabeta, GS Bimbia, GS Edenau III, GS Eyenge, GS Bakingili, GS Ombe Native, GS Essoasoa, GS Lifongo, GS Muabi, GS Ebamut, GS EkonaBajoh, GS EkanjohElung, GS Ebubu Mile 19, GS Kupe, GS Ebonji II, GS Bulutu, and GS Etam I. Questionnaire and interview guide were the instruments adopted for the study and this was influenced by the mixed method approach indicated in the study design. To ensure the reliability of the instruments a pilot study was carried out with 10 schools. The Cronbach Alpha Test of the pilot study was calculated with a coefficient value of 0.7. validity was ensured contently where instruments were designed with the aid of reviewed related literature; constructly where the construct validity index was calculated and then lastly face validity was measured by ensuring a reader friendly appearance of the questionnaire.

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency count, percentages, mean, standard deviation, and multiple responses set which aimed at calculating

the summary of findings for each variable for a quick comprehension of the overall findings.On the other side of the coin, the qualitative data that was derived from the interview guide and open-ended questions added to teachers and head teacher's questionnaire were analyzed using the thematic analysis approach with the aid of themes, and quotations.

Ethical consideration from data collection to analyse was ensured. The researcher collected an authorization letter from the Vice Dean in Charge of research and showed it to the respondents before collecting data. Again, respondents where informed that their responses will be kept confidential.

FINDINGS

This section presents the finding on the impact of community provision of infrastructure on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

The role of community provision of infrastructure on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon

The focus here was to examine the role of community provision of infrastructure on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon. Consider the table below that shows the responses from participants in the study.

Table 1

School Personnel Opinion on Community Provision of Infrastructure

Items	Stretched				Collapsed		Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD		
Community members participate in the planning of educational infrastructure of the school.	4 (3.8%)	30 (28.3%)	25 (23.6%)	47 (44.3%)	34 (32.1%)	72 (67.9%)	1.92	.937
The community support the school with finances to maintain existing infrastructure in the school.	5 (4.7%)	23 (21.7%)	45 (42.5%)	33 (31.1%)	28 (26.4%)	78 (73.6%)	2.00	.851
Some community members participate in the construction of the school by providing labour.	19 (17.9%)	35 (33.0%)	25 (23.6%)	27 (25.5%)	54 (50.9%)	52 (49.1%)	2.43	1.060
Some community members participate in the construction of the school by providing basic construction materials like sand, cement, gravel, etc	4 (3.8%)	20 (18.9%)	33 (31.1%)	49 (46.2%)	24 (22.6%)	82 (77.4%)	1.80	.877
The community sometimes donates books for the school	8 (7.5%)	28 (26.4%)	30 (28.3%)	40 (37.7%)	36 (34.0%)	70 (66.0%)	2.04	.975

library.								
The school has a good administrative building.	3 (2.8%)	11 (10.4%)	51 (48.1%)	41 (38.7%)	14 (13.2%)	92 (86.8%)	1.77	.747
The classrooms are adequate.	8 (7.5%)	18 (17.0%)	36 (34.0%)	44 (41.5%)	26 (24.5%)	80 (75.5%)	1.91	.941
The community provide finances for the school to be fenced	1 (0.9%)	10 (9.4%)	40 (37.7%)	55 (51.9%)	11 (10.4%)	95 (89.6%)	1.59	.701
The community provides the school with sporting facilities such balls, jerseys, etc.	6 (5.7%)	21 (19.8%)	32 (30.2%)	47 (44.3%)	27 (25.5%)	79 (74.5%)	1.87	.927
The community sometimes Provides benches for the school.	7 (6.6%)	19 (17.9%)	39 (36.8%)	41 (38.7%)	26 (24.5%)	80 (75.5%)	1.92	.912
The school has good playground for children.	6 (5.7%)	25 (23.6%)	25 (23.6%)	50 (47.2%)	31 (29.2%)	75 (70.8%)	1.88	.963
The community provides equipment such computer for our school computer laboratory.	5 (4.7%)	14 (13.2%)	29 (27.4%)	58 (54.7%)	19 (17.9%)	87 (82.1%)	1.68	.879
Multiple Response and Mean	**76 (6.0%)**	**254 (20.0%)**	**410 (32.2%)**	**532 (41.8%)**	**330 (25.9%)**	**942 (74.1%)**	**1.90**	**.897**

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.
Std. Dev; Standard Deviation

In aggregate, 25.9% of the respondents indicated that community provides infrastructure for the school in their locality while majority 74.1% disagreed and the overall mean of 1.90 below 2.5 on a mean scale of 1-4 implies that community provision of infrastructure to school is low. Specifically, majority of the respondents 89.6% (95) disagreed that the community provide finances to support construction of school fence while 10.4% (11) agreed. Similarly, 86.8% (92) of the respondents denied that the school has a good administrative building thanks to the community while 13.2% (14) agreed.

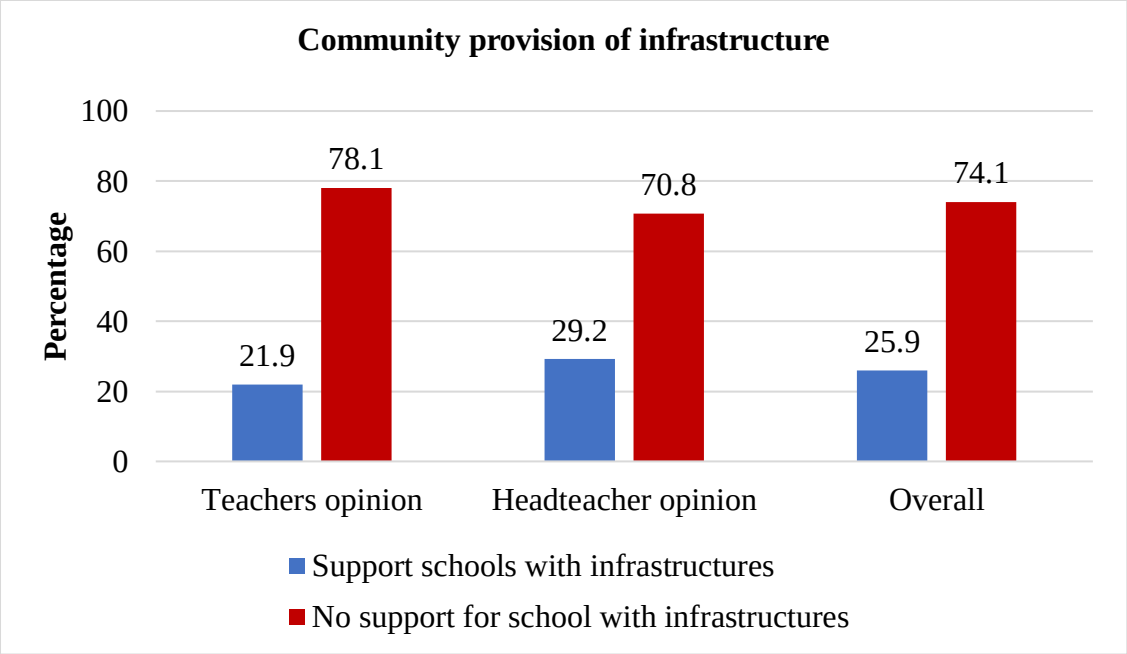
Moreover, 82.1% (87) of respondents disagreed that the community provides equipment such computer for school while 17.9% (19) agreed. Similarly, 77.4% (82) of respondents also disagreed that community members participate in the construction of the school by providing basic construction materials like sand, cement, gravel, etc. while 22.6% (24) agreed. On a similar trend, 75.5% (80) of respondents also denied that community sometimes provides benches for the school and classrooms while 24.5% (27) agreed.

Furthermore, 74.5% (79) of respondents disagreed that the community provides the school with sporting facilities while 25.5% (27) agreed. Findings also showed that more of respondents 73.6% (78) disagreed that community support the school with finances to maintain existing infrastructure in the school while 26.4% (28) agreed. Moreover, 70.8% (75) of respondents disagreed that their school has a good playground supported by the community while 29.2% (31) agreed. Finally, while 50.9% (54) of respondents agreed that community members participate in the construction of the school by providing labour, close

to half of them 49.1% (52) disagreed. The table below shows the opinion of head teachers and teachers regarding community provision of school infrastructures.

Figure 1

Comparing Community Provision of Infrastructure



Specifically, majority of teachers 78.1% (64) and head teachers 70.8% (17) without any significant difference in opinion (p-value > 0.05) indicated that community does not support the school in terms of infrastructure.

Testing of Hypothesis One:

H_{o1}: Community provision of infrastructure has no significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

H_{a1}: Community provision of infrastructure has a significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

The Impact of Community Provision of Infrastructure on the Quality of Public Primary School pupils' education in Rural Areas

Table 2

The Impact of Community Provision of Infrastructure on the Quality of Public Primary School pupils education in Rural Areas

Test	Statistical parameters	Community provision of infrastructure	Quality of primary pupils' education in rural areas	Explanatory power / predicted impact in terms of % (Cox and Snell test)
Spearman's rho	R-value	1	.658**	0.702

p-value		< 0.001	(70.2%)
n	106	106	

Statistically, the findings predicted that community provision of infrastructure has a significant and strong impact on the quality of public primary school pupils education in rural areas (R-value 0.658**, *p*-value < 0.001). This impact is also supported with a high explanatory power of 70.2% indicating that adequate community provision of infrastructure would go a long way enhance the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which states that community provision of infrastructure has a significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon was accepted.

Table 3

Community Leaders Opinion School Infrastructure in their on Rural Locality

Questions	Themes	Quotations
Types of infrastructural support needed by the school in the community	Build classroom	"Building of classrooms "Classrooms" "Classrooms" "Buildings." "The school buildings are dilapidated and need renovation." "We need to build good classrooms for the children." "The classrooms are not that comfortable for learning."
	Toilets	"Building toilets" "Toilets." "Water school building toilets." "The school need a good toilet for the children." "A good toilet because the one which they have is not that good for them."
	Benches	"Provision of benches." "Desks and tables." "Tables chair and chalk." "The school does not have sufficient benches for the children."
	Tables	"Tables." "Teachers lack good tables in their classroom."
	Playground	"Classrooms play grounds and toilets." "Playing grounds and desks."
Opinion if adequate infrastructural support from the community would help improve	Improved quality	"Yes, the quality of education would improve." "Yes." "With much support from the community, the quality of education will be better." "Yes, for example, the school can benefit from adequate number of teachers employed by the community which definitely help to improve on the pupil's quality of education received."

pupils learning in the community		"I think that if the community can support the school with enough infrastructures like classrooms that will go a long way to improve on the learning condition of pupils and subsequently boast the quality of education." "Yes, if the community supports the school with enough didactic materials like book, and others, that will help improve the quality of teaching and learning." "Yes, the quality of learning will be upgraded." "Yes, for instance sufficient financial support from the community to the school will enable the school head to procure didactic materials for teachers and others which help boast the quality of teaching."
	Build infrastructures	"Build classrooms." "Classrooms provisions." 'Building of toilets." "Building of classrooms." "Provisions of classrooms desks and tables."
	Teachers pay	"We pay PTA teachers." 'Payment of PTA teachers." "Paying PTA teachers."
	Pipe born water	"Providing good water source." "Pipe born water."
	Motivate teachers	"Motivating teachers."
	No improvement	"There will be no improvement in the quality of education even when the community support." "No." "To me, there will be no improvement." 'Nothing."

Among the community leaders sampled for the study, when asked on the type of infrastructural support that school in their local communities need from the community, many said building of classrooms as depicted in the statement "*The school buildings are dilapidated and need renovation.", "We need to build good classrooms for the children*." Moreover, the construction of toilets was also mentioned as explained "*The school need a good toilet for the children.", "A good toilet because the one which they have is not that good for them*." Aside those community leaders also mentioned that the school needs support like provision of benches, tables, and playground for the pupils.

Furthermore, when community leaders were asked if adequate community support would help improve pupils learning in the community, many said it would improve on the quality of education as depicted in some of their statements "*With much support from the community, the quality of education will be better.", "Yes, for example, the school can benefit from adequate number of teachers employed by the community which definitely help to improve on the pupil's quality of education received*." Moreover, some said adequate community support

to school would bring about infrastructural improvement, empower the school to pay PTA teachers, motivate teachers, and will enable the school to have good pipe born water.

On the contrary, few of the community leaders indicated that adequate community support will not bring about any improvement in school quality as depicted in some of their statements "*There will be no improvement in the quality of education even when the community support* the school." "*To me, there will be no improvement*."

Discussion

Community provision of infrastructure and quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon.

The findings predicted that community provision of infrastructure has a significant and strong impact on the quality of education of public primary school pupils education in rural areas. This impact is also supported with a very high explanatory power of ninety three percent indicating that adequate community provision of infrastructure would go a long way to enhance the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas. In support of this, the community leaders in their own opinion said adequate community infrastructural support to schools will improve on the quality of education, motivate teachers, and will help school have adequate classrooms. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which states that community provision of infrastructure has a significant impact on the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas in the South West Region of Cameroon was accepted.

However, despite how adequate community provision of infrastructure will be to the quality of public primary school pupils' education in rural areas as revealed by the inferential statistics and model prediction, descriptively, only few respondents indicated that community provide infrastructure for the school in their locality while majority disagreed and the overall mean was below the cutoff point of 2.5 on a mean scale of 1-4 implying that community provision of infrastructure to school was low. In fact, both teachers and head teachers in their majority unanimously revealed that the community does not support the school in terms of infrastructure and community leaders indicated that the public primary school in their locality lack classrooms, toilets, and others physical facilities like benches, playground, and tables for teachers.

With this, the implications were that the quality of education for pupils in rural areas will remain low thus, depriving pupils in rural areas from quality education. Moreover, the lack of infrastructures as revealed by community leaders could also act as a demotivating factor which is preventing many trained teachers to stay in rural areas and teach, thus leading to over dependence on untrained teachers. Every child despite their geographical position needs quality education for the realization of sustainable development of goals. Access to education is not enough but every child must be given the right and opportunity to receive quality education.

This finding tied with that of Echazarra (2019) who carried out a study titled Learning in Rural Schools: Insights from Pisa, Talis and findings from the data collected from 2013 and 2015 in OCED countries revealed that challenges of providing quality education in rural areas are inadequate infrastructure and lack of quality teachers. Moreover, in another study carried out by Kamau et al., (2021) on the influences of community participation on school infrastructure policy implementation and performance of construction projects in Somaliland, the findings revealed that some primary schools reported low levels of community participation in school infrastructural support while some reported moderate and high levels of community participation. In the same study, it was further revealed that community participation doesn't only bring positive influence on projects but negative influence which contradicts our own findings.

Again, in the study carried out by Assoumpta (2020) on the relationship between school infrastructure and students' academic performance in twelve years basic education in Gasabo District- Rwanda, majority of head teachers and teachers reported inadequate educational infrastructures. Moreover, Rafindadi (2016) in his own study on the impact of school infrastructural facilities on the quality of primary schools' education in Katsina Zone Katsina State, Nigeria, findings revealed that infrastructural facilities were available but not adequate while most of the infrastructural facilities were dilapidated.

According to Epstein's Theory of Overlapping Spheres (1987), it makes us to understand that when communities, families, and schoolwork together, learners enjoy quality learning. Quality learning implies that schools will not only benefit financial support from communities and families but also infrastructural support, human resource support and material supports. The theory also makes us to understand that, for effective collaboration to take place between community, family and the school, there is need for mutual trust and effective communication with schools. Mutual trust and effective communication with schools are some of the factors which make some schools to enjoy enormous materials, financial, infrastructural and human resource support from the community. Moreover, in-line with the findings of our study, community leaders actually called on the need for adequate communication and good relationship between head teachers and community.

Recommendation

From the finding, the following recommendation was made.

The community should step up and assist the school in their local area in providing finances to support infrastructural development like construction of classrooms, and other infrastructural facilities to improve on the quality of education being offered to their children. This is because community involvement in providing infrastructures as revealed in the findings of the study is low and it was predicted that adequate community involvement in providing infrastructure would contribute strongly to improve the low quality of primary education in the rural areas.

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