The Contribution of the Community to the Development of School Projects among Ward Secondary Schools in Magu District, Tanzania

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish the contribution of the community to the development of school projects among ward Secondary Schools in Magu District, Tanzania. The study was guided by Social System Theory. The study adopted a mixed research design.The target population of the study was 1061, consisting of 1 District Education Officer, 20 heads of secondary schools, 20 Ward Education Officers and 20 Ward Executive Officers. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample of 276 community members while 5 school heads, 4 Ward Education Officers, 4 ward Executive Officers and one District Education Officer were purposively selected. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in terms of frequencies and percentages while Narrative Analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The findings indicated that despite Fee Free education policy still community members contributed to the development of school projects in Magu District mostly in the form of finances. Secondly, it was found that the method of resource mobilization that exist is mainly contributions from parents. The study recommended that the community should be educated on other forms of contribution to foster school development projects. And once the funds are available they should be used prudently so as to motivate community participation.

Keywords: Contribution, Community Members, Development, School Projects, Ward Secondary Schools, Magu District, Tanzania.

Introduction

Community participation is vital for enhancing education service delivery in schools. In Tanzania, community contribution in the development of school projects can be traced back to 1961 when Tanganyika gained her independence and 1967 during the Arusha Declaration. After independence, the former President "Mwalimu" Julius Kambarage Nyerere introduced the Arusha Declaration with Education for Self-Reliance as one of its components. The major goal was to prepare Tanzanians to become active members in the development of their country. The government through the Arusha Declaration started construction of schools with the help of the community in all villages in order to provide education for Tanzanians. It is here, where community efforts contributed highly to the development of primary schools (Nyerere, 1967).

The contributions from community members benefit schools because schools are not only able to buy teaching and learning materials for students but they also use the contributions to run other school projects such as income generating that help them to generate capital for hiring part time teachers and other school workers (Sharma, 2008).

In developed countries like Canada, community contributions in school developments are very high, as was observed by Preston (2013)who indicated that communities contribute to the development of their schools through fundraisings, volunteering in various school`s activities and attending school-sponsored events. Contributions of community members to the development of school projects have not only benefited schools in Canada but equally in developing countries in the sub-Saharan region like Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. The researchers concluded that, the development of schools in Canada is the result of community participation and contribution toward the development of schools. Communities

recognize work done by both teachers and school administrators in the development of schools and thus they play additional roles in fostering development of schools, especially those in rural areas so as to give students in those schools an opportunity to get quality education (Bregman & Bryner, 2003).

In Nigeria, studies show that community members contribute to the development of public schools (Sarkin-Kebbi & Bakwai, 2016). However, Sharma (2008) points out that community contribution in the development of schools depends on the relationship between the community and schools that is; communities with good relationships with schools contribute much to the development of schools compared to communities with poor relationships with schools. In the same vein, Langhout and Annear (2011) notes that there are positive outcomes for both staff and students when community members respect and value the staff and foster participation in schools and where staff members feel satisfied with the contribution provided by the community members. This may increase their effectiveness in academic development of schools.

In Tanzania, Lyimo, Too and Kipng'etich (2017), revealed that community contributions in schools have been affected by politics since the government announced Fee free basic education from primary education level to ordinary secondary education. This may affect the schools either positively or negatively because in the past previously community members were involved in development of school projects. This notion is more supported by empirical studies done in other districts in Tanzania using either qualitative or quantitative approach have shown a decline of community contribution in school development projects from 2015 when free education policy was introduced by the government (Godda, 2018). Similarly, King (2013) reported that poor community contributions and participation in the development of ward secondary schools is one of the factors resulting in poor performance of students and poor quality of education in Tanzania. Magu is also one of the districts in Tanzania which has been also affected by the Introduction of Fee Free Education policy whereby community members especially parents have

negative perception regarding to any form of contribution by the parent to the school despite the government emphasizing that still community members can contribute so long as permission is sought from local government authorities before parents are asked to contribute. However; no studies have been published in Magu District to reveal the status of community contribution after the introduction of Fee Free education policy. So results obtained can help to provide a bigger picture of the problem at hand. This study therefore sought to establish the contribution of community to the development of school projects among Ward Secondary Schools in Magu District.

Research questions

The study was guided by three research questions:

(1) What are the forms of community contributions for the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District?

(2) What are the resource mobilization methods for the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District?

(3) What are the challenges which hinder community contributions to the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District?

Review of related literature

This section presents a range of theoretical and empirical literature on the basis of the research questions.

Theoretical underpinning

This study was guided by Social System theory which was expounded in 1968 by Niklas Luhmannin in which he emphasized about a real system which is open and interacts with its environment. He further emphasized that schools cannot exist in isolation but in cooperation with the community in which it finds itself. This theory was relevant to the study because community members have a responsibility to participate in decision making, serve the needs of the school and work hand in hand with the school management to make sure that the school maintains an open system in order to influence its development (Gerim, 2017). Although there are criticism to

his theory that social systems are not only bonded by communications, rules also bond them. But this theory is still relevant as we study modern social organizations which involve direct or indirect interactions from in and out the organization. This interaction is the means to organizational development.

In this context, the school as a social institution found in a community has to work with the community. Therefore, the school as an academic institution should interact with the community to strengthen the provision of education to its people as an open system. Furthermore, as an organization, schools should have good relationships with the community to allow the community members to own them and feel as if they belong to them (Wolfgang, 2004).

Forms of community contributions

Various studies across the world have pointed out that community participation through various channels is critical to improving the quality of education. Pradhan, *et al*. (2014) conducted a study in Indonesia on improving the quality of education through enhancing community participation in schools and found out that the community plays a key role in the construction of school projects by financing the construction of projects such as, water supply, electricity supply and other physical infrastructures thereby allowing their children to get quality education. Furthermore, studies in Nigeria reveal a mixed trend. For instance, Bakwai *et al*. (2016) examined community participation in financing infrastructural development in North-west Zone basic schools found a high level of community participation in cash donations, labor and material supply. On the contrary, Kanau and Haruna (2013) observed poor community participation in funding the development of school projects in public schools because the community believed that it is the role of the government to fund school development projects.

Furthermore, Sharma (2013) emphasize on the importance of community contributions since he observed that it can lead into identification of learners needs and then address them so as to improve the performance of students. Also Tondeur (2013) conducted a study in Kigali on the responsibilities of school management

teams in which the study pointed out that effective school management enhances interaction with the community allowing them to participate in the construction of projects which in turn helps in fostering quality education.

In contrast to that, In South Africa, a study by Prew (2012) observed that in some rural areas, community participation in the construction of school infrastructure was very little since the community members were busy with their own activities. The issue of construction and repair of school infrastructure were left to the government and donors. Therefore, the development of education sector in South Africa is a result of government investments in education and contributions from various donors.

Methods of resource mobilization in community contribution to the development of school projects

Empirical literature presents various methods of resource mobilization towards school development projects. Nnadi and Ugochukwu (2015) also conducted a study on mobilization strategies for effective development of community projects in Igbo-Etiti local government area of Enugu state, Nigeria and found that the development of any institution depends on the strategies of mobilizing finances. In Nigeria, schools have developed income generating projects rather than depending on the government. The schools use the community as a market for the products from their income generating projects which engages both students and community members as workers in the projects.

A study conducted by Muema (2015) on integrating ICT in schools' financial management in Tanzania found that public schools involve the parents in mobilizing finances during graduations and fundraising sessions. In addition to that, Godda (2018) contends that the government may not be able to meet all the development needs of public schools and recommends the need for community involvement should be emphasized.

A study conducted by Muniu, Gakuu and Rambo (2018) sought to establish the influence of community participation on sustainability of community water projects

in Nyeri, Kenya brought forward a contrast view whereby people mobilize finances for their own projects and it is not easy for parents to participate in schools' economic projects by mobilizing finances. This is because financing of education in Kenya belongs to the government and other donors while parents and the community plays their roles in the academic development of learners.

Moreover, a study conducted by Omari (2013) in Tanzania on the nature and causes of school effectiveness in education under performance revealed that they are suffering because of poor higher learning institutions and that investments in education are not given priorities by involving communities in mobilizing finances to get quality education institutions. This implies that the for school development projects to be effectively undertaken, all stakeholders must be involved in mobilizing resources. Total dependence on the government would lead to failure or delay in implementation of such projects hence hindering the performance of public secondary schools.

Challenges facing community contributions to the development of school projects
Eilam and Trop (2013) also conducted a study on evaluating school-community participation in developing local sustainability agenda in Australia and found that communities face various challenges in participating in the development of education institutions such as the problem of accountability and resistance to change. They suggested that there should be a strong relationship between the community and education institutions. Also, school leaders and teachers should maintain accountability and transparency in the use of resources provided by the community for the development of school projects. In addition, the community should be made aware of the benefits that accrue to their children when they are involved in the development of schools.

Similarly a study by Kumar (2013) in India on community participation in education: a changing pattern of education administration revealed that the process of community participation in education becomes costly as it takes longer to complete the process than the time agreed upon due to lack of awareness and commitment

from other community members. It was also noted that decentralization of education in India promotes participation of the community in contributing to the development of education projects in schools although they faced some challenges in doing so. These challenges include lack of participation by some parents and mismanagement of collected funds.

Furthermore, Godda (2018) conducted a study in Tanzania on free secondary education and the challenges facing the heads of public schools in implementing it. The study found that there were inadequate funds received from the government and the community to run the schools. Most heads of schools reported that the amount of money they received per month for construction and repair of school infrastructure was not enough to finish the school buildings such as laboratories, teachers' houses and hostels. Therefore, a financial constraint is one of the big challenges that face the implementation of school projects.

Leocardia et al. (2017) conducted a study on parental involvement in secondary schools and revealed that there was no clear policy on community participation and contribution in education. Therefore, non-availability of a policy was one of the challenges that faced the implementation of school projects. As a result, they suggested that the government should come up with a policy to guide the community on how it can involve itself in development of community schools. This conflict would minimize conflicts between parents and other stakeholders.

Moreover, a study conducted in Tanzania by Masabo, Muchopa and Kuoth (2017) on parental involvement in school activities in Kibondo District, Tanzania found that problems facing parents in getting involved in school activities among Ward secondary schools was as result of poor relationship between the schools and the community. Therefore, poor relationship among school stakeholders is one of the key challenges that faced the implementation of school projects. Furthermore, the study of Mnaranara (2010) in Tanzania found that challenges encountered during the construction of primary schools included, misuse of government funds, inadequate funds to undertake all planned activities, lower level of community

participation in contributing materials, fluctuation of prices of building materials, existence of multiple projects, HIV/AIDS, and differences in political ideologies.

Despite the available literature on the theme of community contributions to the school development projects, few have covered existing forms of community contribution and methods used for resource mobilization in Ward Secondary schools especially in Magu District. Thus, this study sought to answer three research questions: (1) what are the forms of community contributions to the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District? (2) What are the resource mobilization methods for the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District? (3) What are the challenges which face community contributions to the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District?

Methods and Materials

The following section describes methodology that was used to carry out the study.

Research design

The study adopted a convergent parallel research design and a mixed research approach. Mixed research design. This design allowed large amounts of data in terms of quality and quantity to be collected over a short period of time, so as to answer research questions under study. The study used questionnaires and interview guides as tools for data collection.

Population and sampling

The target population of the study was 1061 subjects from 20 Ward Secondary Schools. These he included 1000 community members, one District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO), 20 Ward Education Officers (WEO), 20 ward Executive Officers and 20 heads of schools. Purposive sampling was used to select 1 District Education Officer(DEO), 4 Ward Education Officers(WEOs), 4 Ward Executive Officers and 5 Heads of Schools while simple random sampling was used to select 276 community members totaling to a sample of 290 participants in the study. The

respondents included in the study were selected due to their direct involvement in school development affairs, they are stakeholders in education.

Treatment of data

The mixed methods approach was used in data analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed statistically with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences by using frequency, percentages and presented in form of tables while Narrative Analysis was used to analyze qualitative data.

Ethical considerations

In carrying out the study, ethical standards were adhered to by seeking authorization from relevant authorities such the Vice Chancellor of Saint Augustine University of Tanzania, Mwanza Regional Administrative Secretary and Magu District Administrative Secretary. Participants were informed about the purpose and the importance of the study and were given freedom to choose whether to participate or not. Anonymity and confidentiality were observed in that the respondents did not disclose their identities. This was done in order to ensure credibility to data collection exercise and guard against any form of suspicion.

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of the community to the development of school projects in ward Secondary Schools in Magu district, Tanzania. The study was guided by three research questions.

Forms of community contribution to the development of school projects

The first specific objective of this study aimed at finding out the forms of contribution of the community in the development of school projects in ward secondary schools in Magu district. Data were obtained through questionnaires administered to parents and interviews held with the school heads of the sampled community secondary schools.

The results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Forms of Community Contributions

Form of contribution	Frequency	Percent
Man Power	83	**30.1**
Finance	142	**51.8**
Materials	51	**18.1**
Total	**276**	100.0

The results in table 1 indicate that community contributions were in the form of manpower, finance and materials. From the results majority, 51 percent rate finance as one of the form of community contributions. This means that the main form of community contribution in Ward Secondary schools is Finance. While man power is rated 30.1 percent and 18.1 percent through materials. Thus, findings reveal that majority of the community members contributed in school development projects through finance while minority contributed in the form of materials and man power.

Methods of school resources mobilization

The second specific objective of this study aimed at identifying the methods of mobilizing resources by the community in the development of projects in ward secondary schools in Magu district. The data were obtained through questionnaires administered to parents and interviews held with the school heads of the sampled ward secondary schools. Therefore, the researcher aimed to answer this question; what are the methods used to mobilize required for the development of school projects in ward secondary schools in Magu District? With regard to this question, the results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Methods of School Resources Mobilization

Method of Resource Mobilization	Frequency	Percent
Contribution from parents	115	**41.7**
Fundraising	89	**32.2**
Income generating projects	72	**26.1**
Total	**276**	**100.0**

The results presented in table 2, indicate that majority (41.7 percent) of the community members reported that schools mobilize resources through contributions from parents. This gives the impression that individual contributions from parents are a growing source for resource mobilization in secondary schools in Magu district. It means parents continue to partner with other stakeholders in funding the school projects. Results from interviews also implied that financial contribution from parents was the easiest way of mobilizing resources for school development activities. This finding correlates with Muniu, Gakuu and Rambo (2018) who observed that community members participated much on the school projects through contributions which had brought direct impact in school development. The same result was obtained through interview. One of the interviewees said,

> The simplest way for a community to mobilize school finances is through contributions although their contributions are not enough to implement all school needs. We need to initiate more school projects that will generate more income in our schools through community participation in the projects and products of those projects.   Without the community, school income generating projects cannot work [Interviewee 1, 12thMay 2019].

On the other hand results from table 2 show that 32.2 percent of the respondents indicated that schools mobilized for development of school projects through fundraising. This finding implies that the schools conducted fundraising during major events in schools such as graduation ceremonies. These findings are similar to those of Muema (2015) who observed that secondary schools in Mlali and Mzumbe wards in Morogoro, Tanzania involved community members in the mobilization of finances during graduations and this include fundraising during graduation.

Finally, results in table 2 showed that only 26.1 percent of the community members indicated that methods of school resources mobilization included income generating projects. This implies that many schools do not undertake income generating projects in their schools; it can be due to lack of funds.

Challenges that hinder community contributions to school development projects

Research Question 3 sought information about challenges which hinder the community from mobilization of resources required in development of school projects in ward secondary schools in Magu District? With regard to this question, the results are shown in table 3.

Table 3: **Challenges that hinder community contributions to school development projects**

Challenge	Disagree		Agree			Total
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
Misuse of school fund	75	27.7	201	72.3	276	100
Delay of community contribution	65	23.6	211	76.4	276	100
Lack of transparency and accountability of the heads of the schools	30	10.9	246	89.1	276	100
Low awareness of community on contribution in the ongoing construction infrastructures	45	16.3	231	83.7	276	100
Misinterpretation of free secondary education policy	67	24.3	209	75.7	276	100

NB: **F**-Frequency; %- Percentage

Results in table 3, indicate that most of the respondents (72.3) percent of the respondents agreed that misuse of funds is one of the challenges which hinder community contribution in the development of school projects in Ward Secondary Schools in Magu District. However, 27.7 percent of the respondents disagreed that misuse of funds was a challenge. A majority of the respondents were very concerned with the misuse of funds that hinder the community's contribution in the

development of school projects in ward Secondary Schools in Magu District. These contrast with the least number of parents who noted that the misuse of funds limited the community's contributions in the development of school projects. Similarly, 76.4 percent of the respondents agreed that delay in community contribution affected the development of secondary school projects while 23.6 percent disagreed with this position. In addition, 89.1 percent agreed that lack of transparency and accountability from some heads of schools affected the development of school projects while 10.9 percent of the respondents disagreed. Moreover, 83.7 percent agreed that low awareness of community on contribution in the ongoing construction infrastructures was responsible for community's poor participation in school development projects while 16.3 percent disagreed. In the same vein, 75.7 percent of the participants agreed that misinterpretation of free secondary education policy was a reason for low levels of community participation in school development projects while 24.3 percent disagreed.

These findings agree with the observation of Mnaranara (2010) who showed that challenges encountered during the implementation of projects such as construction of primary schools classes include the misuse of government funds released for undertaking the same. Interviews with heads of schools noted that the amount of money they received from the community in the development and repair of school projects was not enough or timely released. This is supported by Godda (2018) who found that heads of schools were ready to take on new responsibilities but there were inadequate funds received from the government and the community to run the schools.

Conclusions of the study are guided by the 3 research questions which are: (1) what are the forms of community contributions for the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District? (2) What are the resource mobilization methods for the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District? (3) What are the challenges which hinder community

contributions to the development of school projects among ward secondary schools in Magu District?

The study concludes that despite of the introduction of Fee Free education policy the communities still contribute to school development projects, and major forms of community contributions existing for the school development projects are financial resources followed by material and manpower. With regard to research question number two resource mobilization methods for the development of school projects among Ward Secondary schools in Magu District were contribution from parents, fundraising and income generating projects. And with regard to research question number 3, the study concludes that there are challenges which hinder community contributions for development of school projects including lack of community awareness on the importance of their contributions to school development projects and misuse of funds.

Based on the conclusions of this study, it is recommended that Ministry of Education should sensitize the community on various forms through which they can contribute to school development projects such as through finances, material contribution and providing manpower. Also school management should invest these forms so as to collect community contributions for the development of various school projects which yield for achievement of educational goals.

Again the researcher recommends that in additional to contributions from parents/guardians, Ward secondary schools management should initiate various income generating projects and conduct various fundraising activities to raise school additional income instead of only depending on the government source.

Finally, the school management should exercise good use of public funds and make sure that there is transparency in all processes such as procurement so as to gain trust from the community and to ensure sustainable use of mobilized resources; and to educate the community through seminars about the importance of community contributions to the realization of goals of education in Tanzania.

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