



Community Participation and School Governance in Gambia: An Ethnographic Study

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Abstract

Community participation in school governance is a critical aspect of educational management in many countries, including Gambia. This study aims to explore how community involvement affects decision-making and resource allocation within schools. This study employs an ethnographic approach, utilising participant observation, interviews, and document analysis to gather data from various stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, and school administrators in Gambia. The research was conducted over a period of six months across multiple schools in different regions of the country. Community participation significantly influenced decision-making processes by providing diverse perspectives on educational needs and priorities. For instance, community input led to an increase in funding for infrastructure projects from 30% to 50%, improving school facilities and student learning environments. This study underscores the importance of fostering collaborative relationships between communities and schools to enhance educational outcomes and resource management efficiency. Schools should establish clear channels for community engagement, ensuring that input is systematically considered in decision-making processes. Governments and educational authorities must also support these efforts by providing resources and training for effective community-school partnerships.

Keywords: *Africanization, Community-Based Education, Ethnography, Participatory Development, Rural Education, Social Capital, Youth Empowerment*

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