

Motivational Strategies For Promoting Effective Community Involvement In Implementing The Curriculum In Public Schools. A Case Of Ward-Based Secondary Schools In Wanging'ombe District, Njombe, Tanzania.

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Abstract: This research explored motivational strategies for encouraging effective community involvement in curriculum implementation in public schools, with a particular focus on ward-based secondary schools in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, Tanzania. The study emerged as a responsive intervention to address the persistent poor performance of students in final examinations in many ward-based secondary schools. However, a review of existing literature indicates that most previous studies have largely focused on community participation in school infrastructure development, planning, and management, while paying limited attention to effective community involvement in curriculum implementation, the core function of schooling. The study was underpinned by pragmatic philosophy and Putnam's Social Capital Theory, which emphasise the importance of fostering constructive relationships between schools and the surrounding community. The research recognises the local community as a valuable educational resource endowed with diverse skills, knowledge, and experiences that can be utilised to address challenges related to curriculum implementation in schools. Methodologically, the study adopted a qualitative research approach within an interpretive case study design, enabling an in-depth exploration of participants' views, perceptions, and lived experiences regarding their involvement in curriculum implementation within their natural settings. Data were collected from twenty-one (21) participants—including education officers, heads of schools, teachers, community members, and students—using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation, and documentary review. The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis procedures. The findings revealed that community involvement in curriculum implementation serves as a strategic response to challenges such as shortages of teaching and learning resources and teachers, the integration of indigenous knowledge and skills, the strengthening of teacher–community collaboration, and the enhancement of traditional school–community sports and games. Furthermore, the study identified key motivational strategies for improving community involvement, including recognition, appreciation, rewards, awareness creation, provision of transport allowances, and the simplification of legal and bureaucratic procedures. The study concludes by recommending that heads of schools and local government authorities implement appropriate motivational strategies to raise community awareness and enhance community participation in curriculum implementation in secondary schools, particularly in ward-based secondary schools.

Keywords: community, curriculum implementation, ward-based secondary schools

1. Introduction of the study

Community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation has increasingly attracted global attention and has emerged as a major focus of contemporary educational research. This growing interest reflects a paradigm shift in education from the conventional top-down, teacher-centred model of curriculum implementation to a more collaborative and participatory approach (Heng & Song, 2020). Diverse forms of community involvement in curriculum implementation are widely recognised for fostering relevant, inclusive, and context-responsive educational practices that address learners' real-life needs (Benson & Dresdow, 2014).

During the second half of the twentieth century, this paradigm shift gained prominence through the work of John Dewey in the United States, particularly following the launch of the Progressive Education Movement. From the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century, Dewey promoted student-centred and experiential learning as essential components of meaningful education (Hines & Fallace, 2023). The effectiveness of this approach became increasingly evident in the last quarter of the twentieth century, when the involvement of diverse educational stakeholders in curriculum implementation was recognised as vital (Kahn, 2020). During the 1960s and 1970s, educational theorists and societal demands for relevance and inclusivity further reinforced this emphasis. Consequently, concepts such as community-based education, culturally responsive pedagogy, and the recognition of students as active participants in their own learning gained prominence (Dawson, 2023).

The importance of strengthening partnerships between schools and communities in the provision of education was further emphasised with the adoption of Article Seven of the World Declaration on Education for All (WDEFA) in 1990. The WDEFA sought to align formal education with local community values, cultures, and challenges, thereby making learning more meaningful, relevant, and connected to students' lived experiences (Hollins, 2015).

Globally, many countries have adopted collaborative teaching and learning practices. Finland, for example, is widely recognised for its innovative education system, which prioritises teamwork among teachers, students, and community members to promote holistic teaching and learning (Opertti et al., 2018). Similarly, in Canada, teachers, community members, and students employ cooperative teaching and learning strategies to foster teamwork and shared experiences (Daniel et al., 2003). In Australia, collaborative curriculum implementation involves teachers working closely with community members to design engaging and comprehensive learning resources. Likewise, Japan's education system emphasises collaboration with local community members through classroom-based problem-solving activities that promote peer interaction and collective learning (Häkkinen et al., 2017).

In developing countries, particularly in Africa, collaborative approaches involving community members in curriculum implementation have also gained momentum in recent years. Countries such as Namibia, Rwanda, and Niger have demonstrated a strong commitment to collaborative teaching practices by encouraging teamwork between teachers and community members to enhance teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Rubagiza et al., 2016). Similarly, Gambia, South Africa, Ghana, and Senegal emphasise cooperative teaching and learning practices, advocating for the sharing of both indigenous and formal knowledge among teachers, community members, and students (Lin et al., 2021). Comparable initiatives that promote peer interaction and knowledge exchange have been observed in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Niger (Aiyebilehin, 2016).

Likewise, Tanzania has underscored the importance of strengthening community involvement in curriculum implementation, in line with global educational trends. The establishment of school committees and parent-teacher associations reflects national efforts to promote collaboration between schools and local communities, not only in administrative matters but also in teaching and learning processes. This perspective is consistent with successive versions of the Education and Training Policy (URT, 1995; URT, 2014; URT, 2023), which emphasise the active participation of local authorities and communities in school construction and the provision of education. These policies advocate decentralisation by devolution, empowering regions, districts, communities, and educational institutions to manage education delivery effectively. Furthermore, this commitment is reinforced in the National Five-Year Development Plan (2021/22–2025/26), which prioritises strong partnerships with the private sector, faith-based organisations (FBOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and the wider community to enhance effective teaching and learning environments (URT, 2021).

In response to government initiatives, many local communities in Tanzania, including those in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, have embraced the establishment of Ward-Based Secondary Schools (WBSS) in each ward (Lucumay & Matete, 2024). While the government plays a significant role in supporting these schools through the provision of capitation and development grants, teacher recruitment, employment of non-teaching staff, and improvement of infrastructure—such as classrooms, toilets, administrative offices, and school fences—many WBSS continue to face acute shortages of teachers, support staff, classrooms, furniture, and laboratory equipment. These challenges contribute to substandard education provision in WBSS (Lucumay & Matete, 2024), resulting in persistent mass failure in national final examinations. Consequently, many secondary school leavers face uncertain futures and limited life opportunities (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). This context highlights the need to involve surrounding communities as an alternative and immediate support mechanism, drawing on unemployed graduates, retired teachers, and professionals from diverse fields to assist in teaching and learning activities aimed at improving students' academic performance.

However, several studies (Alexander, 2019; Bas & Sentuki, 2019; Nnko, 2017; Fritz et al., 2015; Bhusal, 2015; Kihumbe, 2015) reveal that, in Tanzania, community participation in education is largely confined to manual and supportive activities such as school infrastructure construction (classrooms, offices, toilets, school fences, and halls), food provision, and school resource management through governing boards. Notably, Alexander (2019) reports that community members rarely participate in the core process of curriculum implementation, largely because it is perceived as the exclusive responsibility of teachers. Against this backdrop, the present study sought to explore motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools, with specific reference to Ward-Based Secondary Schools in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, Tanzania.

The rationale for this study is grounded in the growing global emphasis on collaborative curriculum implementation and the recognition of community involvement as a critical factor in promoting educational inclusivity and relevance. The findings of this study are expected to provide policymakers with actionable recommendations for transforming the prevailing teacher-centred curriculum model into a collaborative, inclusive, and culturally responsive framework in Tanzania. Accordingly, the study highlights the potential of shared responsibility, ownership, and partnership in enhancing teaching and learning processes within educational institutions.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to:

Explore stakeholders' perceptions of the importance of community involvement in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools, with particular reference to WBSS in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, Tanzania.

Examine motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools, focusing on WBSS in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, Tanzania.

1.2 The Theory Underpinning the Study

This study was grounded in Putnam's (2000) Social Capital Theory, which conceptualises social capital as the collective value of social networks through which individuals cooperate, support one another, and pursue shared goals. The theory identifies key dimensions of social capital, including shared norms and values, trust, and social interconnectedness within a community. In the context of this study, Social Capital Theory provides a framework for understanding the relationship between schools and surrounding communities, viewing the community as a valuable resource endowed with diverse skills, knowledge, and experiences essential for addressing challenges in curriculum implementation.

Promoting community involvement strengthens social cohesion and trust between teachers and community members, thereby fostering sustainable partnerships that support effective curriculum implementation. Litz and Hourani (2016) further argue that Social Capital Theory cultivates a culture of trust, tolerance, and cooperation, which contributes to a supportive and collaborative teaching and learning environment. Such an environment enhances classroom productivity, facilitates conflict resolution, and promotes compliance with shared educational goals.

2.0 Materials and methods

2.1 Research design

This study adopts an interpretive research design to conduct an in-depth exploration of community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation within its authentic, real-world context. The interpretive design provides a flexible framework that supports the use of triangulated data collection methods. Consequently, it enables a comprehensive examination of participants' experiences and perspectives regarding their involvement in curriculum implementation, while also generating rich insights into the significance and value of their contributions (Hamidu, 2021).

2.2 Study participants and sampling techniques

This study employed both purposive and simple random sampling techniques to select participants. Purposive sampling was used to deliberately select one (1) District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO), four (4) Ward Education Officers (WEOs), and four (4) Heads of Schools (HoSs), who served as key education administrators at the district, ward, and school levels. These participants were selected based on their roles and experiences relevant to curriculum implementation. Therefore, a simple random sampling technique was applied to select five (5) teachers, five (5) community members (CMs), and five (5) students. Overall, the study involved a total of twenty-four (24) participants whose experiences were closely aligned with the objectives of the study. The use of simple random sampling ensured that each member of the target population had an equal probability of being selected for participation (Horton, 2023). The combination of purposive and random sampling techniques enhanced methodological rigor by reducing potential selection bias and ensuring fair and balanced representation of the study population (Hadi, 2016; Horton, 2023).

2.3 Data collection methods/instruments

The study employed triangulation of data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions, and documentary review, to gather data on community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation. This approach facilitated an in-depth examination of social dynamics, perceptions, opinions, and lived experiences related to CI in curriculum implementation, thereby enhancing the richness and credibility of the findings (Lietz, 2010). Data collection continued until no new information emerged and responses became repetitive, a point referred to as data saturation (Mason, 2010).

2.4 Data collection procedure

The study utilised multiple data sources to systematically collect data, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the research findings (Horton, 2023; Hadi, 2016). Research questions were carefully formulated and administered using clearly defined terms, concepts, and terminology to ensure that the data collected accurately reflected the study objectives and research questions.

2.5 Data Analysis

This study employed a thematic analysis approach to analyse the collected data, as it provides a flexible and systematic framework for identifying patterns and meanings (Spencer et al., 2014). The researcher engaged in repeated reviews of data from multiple sources, immersing fully in the collected information to gain a detailed understanding. Initial codes were then assigned to segments of the data to identify key themes that emerged from the participants' ideas and experiences. A careful analysis of the established themes was conducted to ensure their accuracy and alignment with the research questions, facilitating appropriate interpretation. This approach enabled the researcher to describe and interpret complex social contexts including participants' experiences, perspectives, knowledge, and skills making the findings accessible and comprehensible to the reader (Spencer et al., 2014).

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher maintained a strong focus on research ethics throughout the study by obtaining a research permit and ethical approval from relevant institutions, thereby safeguarding the well-being, rights, and dignity of all participants (Brittain et al., 2020). Participants were provided with detailed explanations of the study's objectives and procedures, and informed consent was obtained to ensure voluntary participation, including the right to withdraw at any point according to their own preferences, interests, and values (Gupta & Mishra, 2024). The researcher ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of all data from collection through

reporting, reinforcing participants' autonomy and comfort in participating. This ethical approach fostered trust and encouraged full and honest engagement, resulting in accurate and reliable data that enhanced the integrity of the research findings (Henthorn et al., 2024).

Recurring patterns in the data were organised into multiple themes, providing a structured framework for interpreting the findings. These themes reflect the diverse perspectives, opinions, and experiences of stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation. Table 1 presents the themes derived from the participants' varied experiences, knowledge, and insights regarding community involvement in curriculum implementation in secondary schools.

Table 3.1 Key Themes Conforming to Research Questions Two (2) And Three (3)

Research question	Themes emerged
What is the perceived understanding of the importance of community involvement in implementing the curriculum in public secondary schools, a case of WBSS in Wanging'ombe district, Njombe, Tanzania?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of indigenous education • Collaborative students' discipline • Temporary situational remedy for teacher shortage • Traditional sports and games promotion • Enhanced cooperation between teachers, the community members and students
What are the motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in implementing the curriculum in public secondary schools, a case of WBSS in Wanging'ombe district, Njombe, Tanzania?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly legal bureaucracies • Provision of transport allowances • Recognition and appreciation of community support in curriculum implementation • Awareness facilitation

3.4 Findings and Discussion

3.4.1 Introduction

This study explored participants' perceptions of the importance of, and motivational strategies for, promoting effective community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools, focusing on Ward-Based Secondary Schools (WBSS) in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe, Tanzania. Data were collected from twenty-four (24) participants, including purposively selected District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO), Ward Education Officers (WEOs), and Heads of Schools (HoSs), as well as randomly selected teachers, community members (CMs), and students. Participants were selected based on their informed consent to participate, with some serving as school overseers and others as key stakeholders within their respective jurisdictions. This section presents the themes that emerged from the participants' experiences, perspectives, and discussions regarding the perceived importance of, and motivational strategies for, promoting effective community involvement in curriculum implementation in public secondary schools.

3.4.2 The perceived understanding of the importance of community involvement (CI) in implementing the curriculum in public secondary schools (a case of WBSS)

When the research participants were asked about the importance of involving community members in implementing the curriculum, most responses revolved around: *Promotion of indigenous education, Collaborative students' discipline control,*

Temporary situational remedy for teacher shortage, Traditional sports and games promotion, and Enhanced cooperation between teachers, the community members and students as discussed in the following sub-sections;

- **Promotion of indigenous education**

Undoubtedly, community members (CMs) possess indigenous knowledge and skills, which serve as valuable learning resources for students. This underscores the point highlighted by Malambugh et al. (2025), in agreement with Hamidu (2021), that the most effective way to enhance indigenous knowledge and skills within formal education is through the active involvement of community members in curriculum implementation. Such engagement fosters a more culturally relevant and comprehensive curriculum, aligned with the rich indigenous traditions and heritage of the region (Hamidu, 2021; Porter, 2017).

Findings from this study reveal that indigenous education encompasses teaching traditional norms, customs, values, creativity, and the application of indigenous technologies in various economic activities that promote productivity, arts and crafts, dance, and initiation ceremonies within regular classrooms. Most participants noted that these components of indigenous education promote discipline among learners and contribute to shaping them into responsible citizens with strong moral values. One community member, for instance, elucidates:

"It remains necessary to acquaint our students with our indigenous skills, knowledge and experience in the classroom as we prepare youths to become good ethical and patriotic adult citizens of our land. Since the curriculum includes civics topics covering ethics, traditional norms, customs, values, creativity, applied indigenous technologies in various economic activities that enhance increased productivity, arts and crafts, dances and initiation ceremonies, the school must involve us to uncover these in practice to our students and teachers" (A participant in FGD 4)

However, the majority of research participants argued that students' adoption of foreign cultural practices stems from the limited involvement of community members in integrating indigenous knowledge, skills, and cultural experiences into the curriculum. One participant explained, "Our children often consider it ferocious and obdurate" (FGD 1), while another added:

"Honestly, we altogether need to add more effort on sharing indigenous knowledge, skills and experience to the students in schools due to the increasing youths' moral decay as they largely embrace foreign cultures rather than ours. We must teach them proper behaviour, wearing style, indigenous technology, dignity and our language to promote good morals and values for their future nation" (A participant in FGD 3)

Similarly, teachers emphasised the importance of involving community members, particularly elders, as guest speakers in classroom sessions, as well as taking students on practical excursions to observe various community cultural practices firsthand. Such engagement enables students to learn practically, promotes good morals and values, and fosters respect for their indigenous heritage. For instance, one teacher stated:

"Sometimes, our students appreciate openly when we invite community elders, retired teachers, chiefs, and religious leaders as guest speakers in the class sessions on issues of ethics, good morals and values and actually they finally perform well in the related subjects" (HoS 2).

The quotes above highlight that community members (CMs), teachers, and students all emphasise that collaborative integration of indigenous knowledge, skills, and experiences into the curriculum discourages youths from rapidly adopting foreign cultural practices, thereby preserving their cultural dignity. This finding aligns with Malambugh et al. (2025) and Lee (2024), who assert that incorporating these elements not only enhances cultural relevance but also fosters discipline and moral values among students. Similarly, Wygal (2015) notes that this practice broadens students' learning scope, positioning schools to better integrate indigenous wisdom, practices, and values into their educational programs (Palmer, 2022; Ronoh, 2018). Consequently, this approach strengthens the curriculum's cultural relevance and inclusivity, providing a platform for CMs to impart traditional wisdom, norms, values, ethics, knowledge, and skills while remaining vigilant against irrelevant or inappropriate customs. One research participant in the FGDs emphasised:

“However, we must be careful in selecting what kind of indigenous knowledge our learners are learning” (A participant in FGD 1)

In addition to the previous quote, despite the recognised importance of involving community members to promote indigenous knowledge, skills, and experiences in curriculum implementation, the majority of participants in this study expressed concern about certain harmful customs and traditions that undermine students’ dignity. Such practices include gender-based misconceptions, female genital mutilation (FGM), and traditional dances performed naked in public, among others. As noted by Even-Addae et al. (2024), these practices degrade both human dignity and cultural integrity.

- **Collaborative control of students’ discipline**

Students’ discipline and academic performance are closely interconnected, as disciplined students are more likely to concentrate on learning tasks and achieve better academic outcomes (Hamidu, 2021). Discipline is therefore a critical foundation for academic success, yet it is shaped not only within the school environment but also at home and in the wider community. As Malambugh et al. (2025) argue, students’ behavior across these multiple social contexts makes discipline a shared responsibility among schools, parents, and community members. Findings from this study support this view by revealing active collaboration between community members, parents, and schools in managing students’ discipline both in and outside the school setting. School meeting records further indicate that community members and parents are regularly involved in addressing discipline cases through School Governing Board and school parent meetings, reflecting a collective approach to promoting positive behavior and, ultimately, improving students’ academic performance:

“Whenever the students misbehave, we often invite their parents to discuss their children's misconducts” (A participant in FGD 2)

Findings from FGDs indicate that the presence of parents or guardians in classrooms, either as guest speakers or counsellors, significantly discourages student misbehavior and truancy. Students reported that when parents or relatives are involved in classroom activities, they are less likely to escape from lessons or engage in misconduct due to the expectation of discipline both at school and at home. As one student from FGD 3 noted, *“If my parent or relative is in our classroom, I can’t misbehave or dare to dodge from school because the parent or relative will punish me at home.”* This perception is echoed by the majority of community members, who view their involvement as an effective means of reinforcing discipline through shared authority between school and family. While this approach strengthens accountability and promotes order, it also suggests that discipline is largely driven by external control, highlighting the need to balance parental presence with guidance strategies that encourage students’ self-discipline and moral responsibility:

“...Actually, we are responsible for controlling our children’s discipline at home, on their way to and from school, to lessen the burden on teachers’ roles. When parents and the community at large fail to manage our children's discipline, it will be worse for teachers...” (A participant in FGD 4)

“When community members as a whole, alongside the parents, work hand in hand with teachers, no student will get a chance to misbehave anyhow. Hence, each student will concentrate on their studies” (A community member in FGD 3)

Nonetheless, the majority of participants, particularly community members (CMs), argued that since schools often invite them to collaborate with teachers in instructional activities, they can also contribute to managing students’ discipline across different settings, thereby enabling teachers to focus more on teaching. However, a few CMs expressed differing views, largely influenced by their economic status and educational backgrounds, which limited their perceived capacity to participate in discipline management:

“I expected the way the schools often invite us as guest speakers, collaborating with employed staff in teaching, the school administration could do the same, inviting us to work in a team in managing students’ discipline. But I am afraid they hesitate to involve us as community members to join them, student discipline may be because they

think we may have no time for that role, as we are busy in upgrading our low household economic status," stated (A participant in FGD 1)

A few community members (CMs) further argued that the low educational status of some community members should not be considered a barrier to their full involvement in managing students' discipline, as such participation would enable students to focus more effectively on their studies. They emphasized that discipline is grounded more in moral authority, social norms, and shared responsibility than in formal education. One participant articulated this view explicitly by stating:

" I wish teachers could involve us fully to join them in controlling students' discipline because a collaborative control of students' discipline has nothing to do with our education status, and remember they are our own children " (A participant in FGD 2)

The findings discussed above are consistent with Hamidu (2021) and Kamkwis and Zumo (2019), who report that collaboration among parents, community members, and teachers contributes to improved student discipline and academic performance. Although community involvement has been limited, invited community members have recorded positive outcomes in addressing issues such as attendance, truancy, substance abuse, and other disciplinary challenges through school governing boards and school–parent meetings. Students and teachers acknowledged that parental and community presence serves as a preventive measure against delinquent behavior, a view supported by Ocan (2017), who emphasizes that unified collaboration enhances discipline and academic achievement. Consequently, this study recommends strengthening inclusive and coordinated collaboration between school administrations and community members, regardless of socio-economic or geographical differences, to effectively manage students' discipline and support learning outcomes.

- **Temporary situational remedy for teacher shortage**

Most research participants indicated that effective community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation can temporarily alleviate teacher shortages. This finding aligns with Hamidu (2021), who notes that in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in science subjects, inviting local community members to support teaching helps reduce the impact of staffing gaps. The study revealed that selected schools have engaged community graduates who voluntarily teach while awaiting government employment, demonstrating that, even on a temporary basis, CI can significantly mitigate teacher shortages. Interview extracts from some Heads of Schools (HoSs) further illustrate this practice and its contribution to sustaining teaching and learning, particularly in science subjects:

"We have struggled to find enough qualified teachers in science subjects, mainly in Physics, Mathematics, Agriculture science, Chemistry and Biology, but often fail to get them easily. Fortunately, the invited community members remain our school's academic lifesaver as we are getting volunteer teachers of all subjects in crisis" (HoS 3)

"We have the invited graduate volunteers from the community teaching physics, basic mathematics, IT, and chemistry in our school, and in doing this, they have significantly abridged the pressure of the teacher shortage on our staffing, mostly in science subjects" (HoS 1)

"Honestly, our only two science teachers (one for basic mathematics and the other for physics were seriously overloaded with too many students' classrooms for them to manage. However, it is our luck that three graduates and five retired teachers from the community living near this school have been volunteering in teaching the subjects, hence offering pressure release on our existing two teachers and allowing us to maintain improved students' academic performance in such subjects" (WEO 4)

" We are very proud of the retired teachers, university graduates who are waiting for employment, and some tend to join us when they are on their long holidays, volunteering in teaching mainly science subjects, which at times, we don't have employed teachers to permanently teach our students. Thus, we have been managing at least to fill the gaps in our teaching staff" (WEO 1).

The quotes above suggest that, despite the heterogeneous nature of community members, the majority converge and collaborate on common interests, such as constructing and managing public ward-based schools and participating in curriculum implementation alongside teachers (Malambugh et al., 2025), driven by a shared sense of public responsibility. Similarly, most participants in the focus group discussions (FGDs) expressed that their involvement in teaching not only helps address teacher shortages but also enhances the overall functioning of the schools, as they explicitly noted:

" We are not only filling the gaps of teacher shortage, involving us in this role guarantees that our teamwork spirit improves our students' academic performance in all subject areas, discipline and patriotic nurturing" (A participant in FGD 3)

"It has been a while now, we continue volunteering to support our schools in teaching the subjects that have no teachers or very few teachers to effectively implement the curriculum fully for our children to achieve the quality education they deserve" (A participant in FGD 4)

"Honestly, since that school serves our own children, some among us have been helping Teachers who remain overloaded with too many class sessions. Hence, at least our children are not missing their daily lessons, but also, we help teachers to control students' discipline and their daily classroom attendance" (A participant in FGD 1).

Although the quotes above highlight the value of community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation, some community members (CMs) expressed differing views, considering teaching to be a professional responsibility that requires formal qualifications. They argued, in line with Fu and Zhang (2024), that the government should employ a sufficient number of qualified teachers rather than relying on a contingent approach that depends on community graduates volunteering their services. In this context, the participants further explained:

".... I cannot devalue volunteers from the local community in teaching our children, as they are doing a great patriotic job. However, I advise the government must bring many qualified professional teachers to take this role rather than schools relying on the unguaranteed volunteers for our children to receive quality education" (A participant in FGD 2).

" Although I appreciate all retired teachers and graduates from the community who volunteer to teach our children, honestly, I recommend the government to prioritise employing many qualified teachers in permanent terms to sustain set educational standards," (A participant in FGD 4)

Similarly, the district education overseers recognize that involving community members in teaching roles has significantly contributed to improving students' academic performance in many ward-based secondary schools (WBSS) (Hamidu, 2021) that face teacher shortages. For example, one overseer noted:

".... My colleagues and I, as education overseers, are applauding Community involvement in teaching as our saviour wherever our schools face a shortage of teachers. As of now, in this district, we have more than 143 volunteer teachers teaching science subjects in various ward-based secondary schools in our district" (DSEO).

The research findings, aligned with the quote above and the education policy (URT, 2023), underscore the importance of community involvement (CI) in addressing temporary teacher shortages, particularly in science subjects. These findings correspond with Weddle (2024), who notes that CI in teaching helps manage immediate staffing gaps while fostering shared responsibility in education. This collaborative approach engages teachers and local stakeholders in overcoming systemic barriers to learning (Malambugh et al., 2025; Jones, 2020). However, not all community members share the same view, as some emphasize that teaching is a professional role that should be preserved for qualified personnel. Most participants' perspectives align with Mfenachayia (2015), indicating that schools often invite retired professional teachers or unemployed graduates to volunteer, while Heads of Schools (HoS), Ward Education Officers (WEO), and District Secondary Education Officers (DSEO) maintain supervisory authority and uphold the professional standards of teaching. Overall, the findings suggest a balanced approach that

combines community involvement with the employment of qualified, permanent teachers (Assefa & Mohammed, 2022), while recognizing the historical, political, and cultural contexts that shape students' learning experiences.

- **Traditional sports and games promotion**

Since curriculum implementation involves both classroom instruction and extracurricular activities, including traditional sports and games, the participation of community members (CMs) enhances these activities at school playgrounds (Hamidu, 2021). Involving CMs in such events fosters a shared appreciation of cultural heritage between students and the community (Karlson & Pašāne, 2021). Observations from this study reveal that community teams—such as football, netball, and traditional dance groups—regularly use school playgrounds alongside student teams, promoting collaboration, cultural continuity, and active participation. Some interview extracts explicitly illustrate these experiences:

"Sometimes, the school use football, netball and volleyball matches. In some cases, we initiate traditional dancing competition with CMs living in the vicinity of our school to make our bond vigorous while learning from each other's skills" (HoS 4)

"Joining community teams allows us to experience our cultural heritage firsthand while having fun and staying active. It is an important part of our school experience" (Student as a participant in FGD 3)

"We appreciate having traditional sports and tournaments with community members at our school setting, as it inculcates our cultural traditions and builds in us cooperation and a spirit outside of the classroom. It remains a very ethical, enriching experience that we learn a lot" (Student as a participant in FGD 4).

The selected CMs who participated in FGDs, on the other hand, expressed similar experiences as students in the quotes above, as they emphasise;

"We are very happy to actively share traditional sports, darts, solo-njonga, football, and students as it nurtures a sense of unity, dignity and cultural pride in our generations, and they learn many supplementary sports and games activities from us at a school ground" (A participant in FGD 2)

"Our traditional sports and games remain one of the learning resources for the students. Thus, involving community members in implementing extracurricular activities as well reinforces our bond with the younger generation and preserves our cultural heritage" (A participant in FGD 3)

"Through playing traditional sports and games together, students gain a deeper appreciation for our cultural traditions, fostering mutual respect and understanding between generations" (A participant in FGD 4)

Since community involvement in implementing the curriculum promotes mutual respect and empathy across generations, teachers maintain that they unite schools and the community around the school. In this viewpoint, teachers who participated in FGDs explicate:

"We are happy to witness the invited CMs playing with our students' traditional sports and games alongside community teams because they promote exchange of traditional sports and games that build vigorous cooperation among students and community members" (Teacher as a participant in FGD 4)

"In fact, involving traditional sports and games improves their physical fitness and strengthens a win-win situation for everyone involved between the school and local community" (Teacher as a participant in FGD 2)

The quotes above clearly indicate that most research participants emphasized that collaborative engagement between community members (CMs) and teachers in curriculum implementation fosters physical fitness, unity, fraternity, and cultural pride, all of which contribute meaningfully to holistic curriculum delivery. This finding aligns with Malambugh et al. (2025) and Saura and Zimmermann (2021), who argue that involving community members in school academic activities creates valuable opportunities for preserving traditional sports, dances, crafts, arts, and games. Moreover, the shared use of school grounds by CMs and students for traditional social activities promotes intergenerational learning, as community members transmit indigenous knowledge, skills,

and lived experiences to younger generations (Nelischer & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2023). Such interactions enrich students' educational experiences by making learning more inclusive, culturally grounded, and socially relevant.

Consequently, this study reveals that collaboration between schools and communities serves as a vital learning resource that nurtures collective wisdom, preserves cultural heritage, and develops well-rounded learners prepared for responsible citizenship. In this regard, the findings underscore the need for education policymakers and stakeholders to strengthen and institutionalize effective community involvement (CI) in curriculum implementation in order to ensure that educational initiatives remain inclusive, culturally responsive, and aligned with the needs of diverse societies. However, despite the demonstrated benefits, the study also reveals that CI in curriculum implementation remains limited in practice within ward-based secondary schools (WBSS). This gap highlights the relevance of the study's second objective, which explores motivational strategies for enhancing effective CI in public schools, with specific reference to WBSS in Wanging'ombe District, Njombe Region, as elaborated in Section 3.4.3.

- **Enhanced cooperation between teachers, community members and students**

Cooperation among individuals aimed at achieving institutional objectives is essential for producing quality outcomes (Kamkwis & Zumo, 2019). This principle is particularly relevant in secondary school settings, where strong teamwork among teachers, invited community members, and students in curriculum implementation—both within and beyond the classroom—enhances students' academic performance (Hamidu, 2021; Malambugh et al., 2025). However, findings from this study indicate that while some level of cooperation exists among these stakeholders in various school activities, the majority of participants reported that such collaboration remains sporadic rather than systematic. One interview extract illustrates this situation clearly:

"We involve community members in many school matters, but my concern rests on their low attendance at the school academic and discipline meetings, very low contribution of all what we agree in the meetings such as, meals, books and furniture, increased students' indiscipline cases and the current increased teen-students' pregnancies in front of their eyes' witness" (WEO 4)

"Of course, they join us in solving some school issues, though their very low turn up discourages us in some points, such as their incomplete contribution of agreed funds, ream papers, furniture, cereal crops and books, deters our teamwork and effort to provide all required teaching and learning resources for our students" (HoS 3)

We highly need a stronger cooperation between schools and communities, despite the fact that currently there is very low communication and feedback between us, I mean families, community members and the schools. I am sure this contributes to increased issues like teen students' pregnancies and students' truancy" (A participant in FGD 2)

"In my 10 years' experience of working here as a teacher and the Head of school, I have witnessed very erratic cooperation between this school and community members, albeit we seriously need cooperation with CMs to achieve school plans and secure our students' improved academic performance through our cooperation" (HoS 1)

Nevertheless, most research participants in the FGDs expressed their readiness to cooperate with teachers, students, and school administrations, noting that they had previously contributed to the construction of the schools using their own efforts and resources. Consequently, they indicated that, when invited, they are willing to work alongside teachers in teaching activities, as illustrated by the following quotations:

"Of no doubt, we used our resources to establish these schools. Thus, nothing can impede us from joining teachers in teaching the students on whatever they want us to do under their guidance" (A participant in FGD1)

"The majority of community members are willing to contribute and support teachers' initiatives. The problem teachers often invite more parents who have children at the school, and not involve the community as a whole" (A participant in FGD4).

"They have expert people to support teachers if the school involve them in implementing the curriculum, I mean teaching the students. But the school administration should bless them to enhance our confidence in this role" (A participant in FGD 2)

"We consider that teamwork often matters most between teachers, community members and students, as nothing the team can fail, we are ready to join them, although the school administration does not consider us a learning resource to our learners" (A participant in FGD 3)

Similarly, one student participant in the FGD explained that when teachers invite community members—particularly parents—they usually attend school meetings. However, when the school administration does not clearly emphasize or extend invitations to the wider community, many community members perceive the matters as beyond their responsibility. One participant illustrated this situation as follows:

"I normally see the school invites students' parents, not us all. Therefore, why should I bother to attend where I am not invited, but I am ready to attend when the school invites us all" (A community member in FGD2)

This study highlights that strong cooperation among teachers, community members, and students is essential for effective curriculum implementation and the attainment of quality education in ward-based secondary schools (WBSS). Consistent with Hamidu (2021) and Mosoge and Ngcobo (2012), the findings affirm that teaching should be a shared responsibility among all relevant stakeholders, including those traditionally excluded from classroom practices. However, some community members expressed concern about their limited involvement despite their contributions to school development and management. This aligns with Banaag et al. (2024) and Gyang and Gusen (2021), who emphasise the need for increased openness and collaboration to overcome curriculum implementation challenges and foster an enabling environment for achieving expected school outcomes.

3.4.3 Motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in implementing the curriculum in WBSS in their ward localities

When asked about motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in curriculum implementation, most participants highlighted friendly legal and bureaucratic frameworks, provision of transport allowances, and recognition and appreciation of community contributions, as discussed in the following sub-sections.

- ***Friendly legal bureaucracies***

Friendly institutional bureaucracy that promotes collaboration with parents and community members while upholding by-laws and equity fosters effective community involvement (Arugay & Baquisal, 2024). However, consistent with Seyoum (2024), this study finds that complex rules and regulations in public institutions, including schools, often hinder meaningful community participation in curriculum implementation, as reflected by most participants.

"The problem the school is too bureaucratic to an extent; it's not easy to get permission for schools to involve community members in implementing curriculum" (A participant in FGD 4)

"I wish all public schools could have friendly laws, rules, regulations, order and guidelines that pave a way for us all to share what we have for students to learn in implementing curriculum" (A participant in FGD 1)

In addition to the quotes above, school heads echo community members' concerns that unfriendly national education and training policies, by-laws, regulations, and guidelines hinder effective community involvement in curriculum implementation. Consequently, most participants recommend that the government review and simplify these frameworks to promote meaningful community participation, as reflected in the interview extracts.

"As I have realised that our institutional policy, by-laws and regulations are too complicated to ease this role, I suggest that the macro and micro authorities review them all" (HoS 3)

" We, the school leaders, have been advising and we still advise the responsible authorities to review the existing bureaucratic rules and procedures and make them pave the way for promoting community involvement in implementing curriculum, as the school will harness the community expertise and resources for students' benefit" (HoS 1).

Likewise, the DSEO affirms that reviewing existing rules, regulations, and orders would further motivate community members to volunteer in teaching both within and outside schools while upholding acceptable ethics, customs, and traditions.

"What I know is that having reviewed bureaucratic rules and procedures will promote the valuable contributions of community members that safeguard the quality and integrity of what we need them to teach the students" (DSEO)

In this context, the findings reveal that complex institutional by-laws, rules, and guidelines for authorising community involvement significantly hinder effective participation in curriculum implementation. Research participants, mainly school leaders, emphasise that reviewing and developing more collaborative procedures would enhance community involvement (Roberts, 2015). Nonetheless, the DSEO stresses, in line with Ojo (2014), that such reforms must align with local cultural norms while safeguarding educational integrity. Overall, the findings underscore the need for administrative reforms that simplify bureaucratic frameworks to promote effective community involvement, as supported by Maulana et al. (2022).

- **Transport allowances**

Providing sustainable transport to invited community members (CMs) not only facilitates their daily commute to schools to support teachers in curriculum implementation but also boosts their morale in this role (Malambugh et al., 2025). Given that CMs often reside in different areas, each requires appropriate transport to arrive on time (Campillo, 2021; Mtumbi, 2015), ideally within a structured transport and involvement framework (Campillo, 2021). In this context, a retired teacher participating in the FGDs explained:

"I think, when the school heads provide us at least a bus fare or give us any transport alternative that enables me to travel to and from the school. I am a retired mathematics teacher, and I am still energetic enough to teach, so, facilitated transport could encourage me to volunteer much to join the teachers in helping the students in their classrooms every day, as I see them struggle with teacher shortage" (A participant in FGD 4)

Nevertheless, most Heads of Schools (HoSs) stated that government budgets allocate funds for specific purposes, excluding volunteering teachers, and therefore they have no authority to reallocate funds, even partially, to provide transport allowances for community members in teaching roles. In this context, a few HoSs suggested:

"As we have no authority to reallocate the funds from the government, which are often allocated for specific purposes in schools, in our School governing board, I have been suggesting the need for fundraising initiatives to fill the gap, indeed, just to facilitate the volunteers at least transport and a little token of thanks to them" (HoS 3)

"We are looking for alternative funds as the school governing board has already passed the decision to get funds for settling the transport facility, and just a token of thanks for their help" (HoS 1)

In line with the quotes above, these findings align with Campillo (2021) and Mtumbi (2015), who emphasise the importance of finding alternative ways to support volunteers' transport and provide tokens of appreciation for their contributions to school success. Participants also highlighted the need for broader forms of motivation beyond transport support (Jones, 2019). Given the persistent shortage of teachers, particularly in science subjects, facilitating transportation, recognition, and certification for volunteering community members is critical to mitigating this challenge. This view corresponds with Chan et al. (2017), who stress the importance of alternative strategies to enhance effective community involvement in curriculum implementation as a valuable student learning resource. Moreover, Tanzania's education and training policy (URT, 2023) provides devolved authority for school administrations, teachers, and ward education officers (WEOs) to collaborate with local community leaders in designing initiatives that motivate and reward volunteers teaching in and outside schools.

- **Recognition and appreciation of community support in curriculum implementation**

Acknowledgment itself serves as a reward, but combining it with tangible incentives fosters a stronger and more sustained motivation to undertake a role (Nuvayouma, 2023). This aligns with the findings of this study, which show that some schools routinely recognize community members' contributions to curriculum implementation through certificates and various prizes. Acknowledgment can take verbal, tangible, monetary, promotional, social, or developmental forms (Jones, 2019). However, most participants noted that incentives are often limited or entirely absent, despite their significant volunteer contributions. Nonetheless, participants emphasized that even acknowledgment alone remains a key motivating factor that encourages continued involvement in teaching, as illustrated in the following interview extracts:

"We devote a significant amount of time to volunteering in teaching, yet we often feel unappreciated due to the lack of recognition or Having no any incentives or acknowledgement provided to us, we feel the school does not appreciate us despite we volunteer much as we can in teaching students any time when teachers invite us as guest speaker in the classroom" (A participant in FGD 4)

"To be honest, we do not need much from the school than just a small token or a word...thank you...as it shows appreciation matters a lot to us" (A participant in FGD 2)

"Sometimes we feel more delighted when the school, I mean, teachers acknowledge our volunteering efforts in front of political leaders or during community gatherings, simply encourages us to continue tirelessly" (A participant in FGD 1)

"It's not necessary for teachers to give us money as a sign of appreciation. Even giving us certificates promotes our morale and courage to continue volunteering to work together with teachers when invited to implement the curriculum" (A participant in FGD 3)

In this study, school heads explained that they do not provide monetary rewards to invited community members (CMs) for their contributions to teaching due to limited school budgets from the central government. However, findings reveal that some HoSs occasionally recognize volunteers through verbal appreciation or certificates during school meetings or local community gatherings, as illustrated by the following quotes:

"Normally, we thank them by awarding them certificates only because we have a financial crisis that daunts our ability to provide them with some money as incentives for their attendance in teaching our students" (HoS 4)

"The problem is that the central government has already allocated capitation and development funds for specific budgeted school activities. We only tell them thanks, as we cannot redirect such funds to appreciating community involvement in teaching students unless we are looking for other alternatives" (HoS 1)

"During the school-parents' meetings and community meetings, we often tell them, thank you...together with giving them certificates as our appreciation to their dedicated efforts in supporting curriculum implementation" (HoS 2)

Similarly, Ward Education Officers (WEOs) acknowledge the efforts of community members involved in curriculum implementation during public community meetings, often in the presence of local political leaders. One WEO explained:

"We normally give them a word of thanks to all our community members in the eye-witness of political leaders in public meetings, although we are looking for alternative forms of acknowledging them further to express our gratitude for their invaluable contributions in implementing the curriculum" (WEO 4)

The findings of this study reveal that community members (CMs), who devote substantial time and effort to volunteering, deserve tangible recognition or incentives despite schools' financial constraints. Most participants reported that schools acknowledge CMs verbally or in writing during school–parents' meetings and community gatherings, which Nuvayouma (2023) classifies as a form of extrinsic motivation. However, school heads and Ward Education Officers (WEOs) emphasized the need for a systematic, all-inclusive approach to record and recognize community involvement. This aligns with Malambugh et al. (2025) and Johnson and Smith (2019), who argue that formally acknowledging CMs fosters their continued willingness to volunteer, thereby supporting successful curriculum implementation.

- **Awareness facilitation**

Awareness of a role significantly influences the effectiveness of one's involvement. Most research participants indicated that being informed of their eligibility to participate in curriculum implementation in WBSS motivates community members (CMs) and increases their willingness to engage. This aligns with Adams et al. (2022), who note that when CMs are unaware of this role, they often assume teaching is solely the responsibility of professional teachers. Consequently, participants emphasized the need to be well-informed and actively considered for teaching students both inside and outside the classroom, as reflected in the following interview extracts:

"When we are aware of a given opportunity to join teachers in teaching students, surely from us our children will learn the local topics that they have been missing for a long time, mainly traditional dances, rituals, good morals, discipline, ethics, politics, sports and games" (A participant in FGD 3)

"When the school administration offers us proper teaching guidance in teaching more than academic subjects, we can be confident enough in how to contribute our valuable insights and experience to the students" (A participant in FGD 1)

"What I know, CMs have a lot to teach the students, such as good morals, discipline, and politics. The school administration should communicate to us proper methods of implementing the curriculum" (A participant in FGD 2)

Nevertheless, Heads of Schools (HoSs) expressed concern over low community member (CM) attendance at school–parents' meetings, noting that limited HoS participation in local community meetings may contribute to CMs' lack of awareness of their roles in curriculum implementation. Most HoSs, however, emphasized the need to actively promote community awareness of this role:

"The problem very few often attend our parents' school meeting, and we are not regularly invited to their local community meetings, hence the majority are not aware of what and how to implement this task. My colleagues and I are looking for the best way to make them fully aware" (HoS 3)

This study reveals that the effectiveness of community members' (CMs') involvement in curriculum implementation depends largely on how well they are made aware of their roles and guided by school administrations. Consistent with Spyropoulou and Koutroukis (2021), lack of clarity from school authorities often leaves CMs uncertain about how to support teachers effectively. While low awareness remains a key constraint, participants highlighted CMs' strong desire to contribute knowledge on traditional values, ethics, crafts, discipline, and local governance, yet many feel sidelined. These findings underscore the need for targeted awareness strategies and community outreach initiatives to foster sustainable and meaningful community involvement in curriculum implementation (Alfrey & O'Connor, 2024).

3.5. Conclusion

This study explored motivational strategies for promoting effective community involvement in curriculum implementation in public schools, focusing on Ward-based Secondary Schools in Wanging'ombe District, Tanzania. Findings reveal that such involvement strengthens school–community teamwork, helps maintain students' discipline, mitigates temporary teacher shortages, and facilitates the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills. These results align with Malambugh et al. (2025) and Hill et al. (2018), who also highlight its role in promoting traditional sports and games and improving academic performance. Nevertheless, the study shows

that despite its importance, community involvement remains limited. Consistent with Hamidu (2021), barriers include reliance on English as the medium of instruction, political interference, CMs perceiving teaching as “none of their business,” and time constraints. Based on these findings, the study recommends the following motivational strategies to enhance effective community involvement in curriculum implementation:

1. Use any possible dominant alternatives to acknowledge and appreciate local community contributions in implementing curriculum, nurturing morale, and providing maintenance support to ease the implementation.
2. Augment effective communication gateways between school administration, teachers and CMs that enable the community to access opportunities and guidelines for addressing various topics subject to them.
3. Review and simplify the existing bureaucratic rules, by-laws and processes to enable the invited CMs to get easier access and promote effective involvement of CMs in implementing curriculum while upholding cultural alignment and school academic integrity.
4. The government should review the education budget to include extra funds for facilitating CMs’ transport support in this role. Also, local community authorities, in collaboration with the schools, must develop effective public fundraising initiatives that will enable the availability of transport allowances for the CMs to easily travel to and from the schools.

3.5. Recommendations for further research

The findings presented in this research pave the way for the following further research opportunities/areas:

1. Effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives to empower community involvement in implementing curriculum. This study will provide detailed insights into the impact of training programs, workshops, and other related capacity-building interventions for achieving informed strategies to fortify community involvement efforts.
2. The influence of digital platforms and communication tools in facilitating community involvement in implementing curriculum. This study will reveal a detailed understanding of how technology can augment community involvement, collaboration and inform the development of digital literacy initiatives, besides the online support networks.
3. The influence of cultural, social and institutional factors in facilitating effective community involvement in implementing curriculum. A comparative study on the best practices and lessons learned in various regions.

When researchers address the recommended research areas, they will add more knowledge to our understanding of community involvement not only in implementing curriculum but also in developing more inclusive, equitable, and effective education integrity.

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