

MOBILIZING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Often governments tap in on social capital to supplement their development efforts. By participating communities in development, the load is shared. The study examined how communities participate in school construction projects in primary schools in Somaliland and how community participation in school construction projects influences the performance of those projects. The study used a correlational design and was undertaken as a cross-sectional survey. The target population was 920 primary school headteachers in all the 13 regions of Somaliland and 82 District Education Officers. A sample of 257 headteachers was drawn using multistage sampling where purposive sampling and stratified random sampling with replacement were used to sample headteachers while 22 DEOs were sampled using simple random sampling. Data was collected from headteachers using questionnaires and from DEOs using semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was pilot tested on 28 headteachers. The response was received from 247 headteachers and 20 DEOs. Variables relationships were analyzed using path analysis and tested using t-tests at $\alpha = 5\%$. The main methods used to involve the community in primary schools' construction projects were: involving them in decision-making processes, volunteering labour and fundraising. An insignificant negative correlation between community participation and performance of construction projects ($r = -0.105$, $p = 0.1$, $\alpha = 0.01$) indicated that community participation was not an important predictor of performance of construction projects. A negative and insignificant total effect of community participation on performance of construction projects [$b = -0.187$, $t = -1.651$, $p = 0.100$, $R^2 = 0.011$, $\alpha = 0.05$] indicated a weak inverse relationship. The study found that community participation had no significant influence on the performance of construction projects. Community participation in public primary schools in post-war Somaliland is a policy-driven initiative and a fill-gap measure of deficiencies left by the government's low and inadequate capitation to schools. Low social capital in the communities participated in projects coupled with the costs and the downsides of the community participation process can result in a negative impact on the performance of those projects. Urban schools tend to benefit more from community participation than rural schools due to higher social capital stocks in urban communities as compared to rural communities.

Keywords: Community Participation, Performance, Construction Projects, Social Capital, School Development, School Projects.