

## ASSESSING THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ON PERCEIVED SCHOOL QUALITY VIA A MIXED-METHODS APPROACH

Kifayat Ullah Khan<sup>1</sup>, Jehanzeb Ali<sup>2</sup>, Farhan Ali<sup>3</sup>, Mushtaq Ahmad<sup>\*4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of International Business, College of Economics and management science, Nanjing agricultural university, Nanjing 210095, Jiangsu, China.

<sup>2,3,\*4</sup>Department of Education, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, Abasyn University, Peshawar Campus, Ring Road (Charsada Link), Peshawar 25000, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

<sup>1</sup>kifayat@stu.njau.edu.cn; <sup>2</sup>Jehanzebmoh@gmail.com; <sup>3</sup>far7083@gmail.com; <sup>\*4</sup>mushtaq.ahmad@abasyn.edu.pk

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Corresponding Author: \*

Mushtaq Ahmad

### Abstract

This study aimed to assess the influence of community participation on perceived school quality through a mixed-methods approach. The research examined the role of parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members in supporting educational development and improving school effectiveness. A mixed-methods research design was employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative phase involved a structured Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 250 respondents, including teachers, parents, school administrators, and community members. The qualitative phase included open-ended responses to gain deeper insights into stakeholder perceptions regarding school-community collaboration. The quantitative findings revealed that respondents generally agreed that community participation positively contributes to school quality. The results indicated favorable perceptions regarding parental involvement, community support for school activities, effective communication between schools and communities, and collaborative decision-making processes. Respondents also perceived that active community participation enhances student academic performance, improves school discipline, strengthens school management, and promotes supportive learning environments. Qualitative findings further supported these results by emphasizing the importance of cooperation, trust, and shared responsibility in achieving educational improvement. However, some barriers to effective participation, including limited awareness and communication challenges, were also identified. The study concludes that community participation plays a significant role in enhancing perceived school quality and fostering positive educational outcomes. The findings suggest that stronger school-community partnerships can contribute to improved institutional effectiveness, student development, and public trust in educational systems. Therefore, educational policymakers and school administrators are encouraged to promote inclusive participation and collaborative engagement strategies to support sustainable school improvement.

## Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental instrument for social, economic, and national development (Tabassum et al. 2026). The quality of education provided by schools plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic achievement, social behavior, and future opportunities. In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the role of community participation in improving educational systems and enhancing school effectiveness. Educational institutions are no longer viewed as isolated organizations; rather, they are considered social institutions that function more effectively when supported by active collaboration among parents, teachers, administrators, and community members (Arum 2000; Maier et al. 2017). Community participation in education refers to the involvement of stakeholders such as parents, local leaders, organizations, and community members in school-related activities, decision-making processes, and educational development initiatives (Gamede and Uleanya 2021). Such participation may include attending school meetings, supporting academic programs, contributing resources, volunteering in school activities, and collaborating with school management to address educational challenges. Effective school-community relationships can foster mutual trust, accountability, and shared responsibility for educational success (Shatkin and Gershberg 2007).

The concept of school quality is multidimensional and includes various factors such as effective teaching, qualified teachers, supportive learning environments, adequate infrastructure, strong leadership, student achievement, and positive school culture (Chapman and Adams 2002). Schools perceived as high quality are often characterized by strong communication systems, efficient administration, and active stakeholder engagement. Community involvement has increasingly been recognized as an important factor contributing to these characteristics because it provides schools with both social and material support that may enhance educational outcomes (Bedoui and Adouane 2024; Chapman and Adams 2002; Rodriguez et al. 2022). Previous

studies have suggested that parental involvement and community engagement positively influence students' academic performance, school discipline, attendance, and motivation (Rudo and Dimock 2017). Schools that maintain strong partnerships with communities often demonstrate improved educational effectiveness and greater public trust. Community participation may also strengthen decision-making processes by ensuring that educational policies and practices reflect local needs and expectations. Furthermore, collaborative relationships between schools and communities can help address challenges related to limited resources, student behavior, and institutional accountability (Bedoui and Adouane 2024; Belete 2024; Kirby and DiPaola 2011; Rudo and Dimock 2017).

Despite the recognized importance of community participation, many schools continue to face challenges in developing effective partnerships with stakeholders. Factors such as limited communication, lack of awareness, socioeconomic barriers, and insufficient opportunities for involvement may reduce community engagement in educational activities (Mittal and Bansal 2024; Scull and Cuthill 2010). In some contexts, schools operate with minimal parental or community participation, which may negatively affect educational quality and institutional development. Therefore, understanding how community participation influences perceptions of school quality remains an important area of educational research.

## Research Questions

- What is the level and nature of community participation in schools, and what roles do parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members play in school development?
- How do stakeholders perceive the quality of schools, and what influence does community participation have on these perceptions of school quality?
- What challenges hinder effective community participation in schools, and what strategies can be adopted to

strengthen school–community collaboration and enhance school quality?

#### Study Objectives

- To examine the level and nature of community participation in schools, including the roles of parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members in supporting school development.
- To investigate stakeholders' perceptions of school quality and determine the influence of community participation on perceived school quality.
- To explore the challenges affecting effective community participation in schools and propose strategies for strengthening school–community collaboration to enhance educational quality.

#### Literature Review

##### Community Participation in Education

Community participation has become an important concept in educational development and school improvement (Prew 2009). Educational researchers and policymakers have increasingly emphasized that schools achieve better outcomes when communities actively participate in educational processes. Community participation refers to the involvement of parents, local leaders, organizations, and community members in school activities, decision-making processes, and educational support initiatives. Such participation may include attending school meetings, supporting educational programs, volunteering in school activities, and contributing resources for school development (Kendall, Kaunda, and Friedson-Rideneur 2015; Maier et al. 2017). Researchers have argued that schools operating with strong community support often demonstrate improved accountability, stronger communication systems, and better student outcomes. Community involvement creates collaborative relationships between schools and stakeholders, thereby enhancing trust and mutual responsibility for educational success (Prew 2009). Several studies have also highlighted that parental

participation is one of the most significant forms of community involvement in education. Parents who maintain communication with teachers and participate in school activities contribute positively to students' academic achievement, discipline, and motivation. Schools that encourage community engagement tend to foster inclusive educational environments where stakeholders feel responsible for supporting institutional goals and student development (Leal Filho et al. 2025; Spencer 2023; Cabrillos 2024; Schaffner and Buswell 2004).

##### Impact of Community Participation on School Quality

School quality is a multidimensional concept that encompasses educational effectiveness, teacher competence, school leadership, learning environments, student achievement, and institutional management (Bedoui and Adouane 2024). Researchers have emphasized that high-quality schools are characterized by supportive learning environments, effective instructional practices, strong leadership, and positive relationships with stakeholders. Previous literature indicates that perceptions of school quality are influenced by both academic and social factors. Parents, teachers, and community members often evaluate school quality based on students' academic performance, teacher professionalism, school discipline, infrastructure, and administrative efficiency. Schools with strong communication systems and active stakeholder involvement are generally perceived more positively by communities (Tabassum et al. 2026; Tabassum 2018; Tabassum, Ahmad, and Salim 2026). Studies have also shown that teacher competence and school leadership significantly contribute to perceived educational quality. Effective teachers create engaging learning environments and provide academic support that enhances student achievement. Similarly, school administrators who promote transparency, accountability, and collaborative decision-making strengthen institutional effectiveness and public trust in schools (Tabassum, Ahmad, and Salim 2025; Chapman and Adams 2002; Kirby and DiPaola 2011). Community perceptions regarding

school quality may therefore depend on the extent to which schools fulfill academic, social, and developmental expectations (Maier et al. 2017; Kusumaningrum et al. 2017).

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to assess the influence of community participation on perceived school quality. The mixed-methods approach was selected to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

**Population and sample of the Study**

The population of the study consisted of stakeholders associated with schools, including teachers, parents, school administrators, and community members. These groups were selected because they play important roles in school functioning, educational development, and community participation. A total sample of 250

respondents participated in the quantitative phase of the study. A stratified random sampling for the quantitative phase to ensure representation from all stakeholder groups. Purposive sampling was used for the qualitative phase to select participants with relevant experience and involvement in school-community activities.

**Research Instrument and Data Collection**

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted a section of demographic information of the respondents and Likert-scale items (Table 1), divided into three dimensions (Table 2). The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale i.e. “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, “Neutral”, “Agree”, “Strongly Agree”. Moreover, the qualitative section included open-ended questions to obtain detailed participant opinions regarding the influence of community participation on school quality and the challenges affecting school-community collaboration (Table 3).

**Table 1. Items pertaining to variables in quantitative part of the questionnaire in this study.**

Variables	Code	Items
Community Participation	Q1	Community members regularly participate in school activities.
	Q2	Parents actively support school programs and events.
	Q3	The school encourages community involvement in decision-making.
	Q4	Local organizations contribute to school development initiatives.
	Q5	Community meetings related to school improvement are conducted frequently.
	Q6	Volunteers from the community assist in educational activities.
	Q7	Communication between the school and community is effective.
	Q8	Community members feel responsible for supporting the school.
Perceived School Quality	Q9	The school provides a high standard of education.
	Q10	Teachers in the school are professionally competent.
	Q11	Students receive adequate academic support from the school.
	Q12	The school environment is safe and supportive.
	Q13	School facilities meet students’ educational needs.
	Q14	The school effectively promotes student learning outcomes.
	Q15	The administration manages the school efficiently.
	Q16	The school maintains positive relationships with the community.
	Q17	Community participation improves the overall quality of education.

<b>Impact of Community Participation on School Quality</b>	Q18	Increased parental involvement positively affects student performance.
	Q19	Community support contributes to better school management.
	Q20	Schools with active community participation perform better academically.
	Q21	Community engagement helps improve school discipline.
	Q22	School-community collaboration enhances students' social development.
	Q23	Financial and moral support from the community improves school resources.
	Q24	Community participation strengthens trust in the school system.

Table 2. Item distribution in quantitative part of the questionnaire in this study.

Dimension	Number of Items
Community Participation	8
Perceived School Quality	8
Impact of Community Participation on School Quality	8
Total Items	24

Table 3. Items in qualitative part of the questionnaire in this study.

S. No.	Open Ended Questions
Q1	In your opinion, how does community participation influence school quality?
Q2	What are the major barriers preventing effective community participation in schools?
Q3	What strategies can schools adopt to improve collaboration with the community?
Q4	Please share any experiences or examples of successful community involvement in schools.

**Pilot Study and Reliability Analysis**

A pilot study was conducted with 20 participants to evaluate the reliability and clarity of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The pilot study produced a Cronbach's alpha value indicating the reliability level of the questionnaire before full-scale administration.

**Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation. The findings were presented in tables for interpretation and discussion. Qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions were analyzed thematically by identifying recurring themes and patterns related to community

participation and school quality. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the objectives of the research, and informed consent was obtained before data collection. Respondents were assured that their responses would remain confidential and would only be used for academic purposes. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents had the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process.

**Results and Findings**

**Demographic Information of Respondents**

The demographic analysis revealed that the study included a total of 250 respondents from different stakeholder groups associated with schools and community participation (Table 4). Among the participants, parents constituted the largest group with 100 respondents (40%), followed by teachers with 80 respondents (32%). Community members accounted for 50 respondents (20%), while school administrators represented the smallest group with 20 respondents (8%). This distribution indicates that the study incorporated diverse perspectives from major educational stakeholders, thereby increasing the comprehensiveness and representativeness of the findings. Regarding gender distribution, male respondents formed the majority with 145 participants (58%), whereas female respondents accounted for 105 participants (42%). This demonstrates a relatively balanced participation of both genders in the study. The age distribution showed that the majority of respondents belonged to the 26-35 years age group with 95 participants (38%), followed by respondents aged 36-45 years with 75 participants (30%). Participants aged 18-25 years and those above 46 years each represented 16% of

the sample. These findings indicate that most respondents were mature individuals with substantial experience and involvement in school and community activities. In terms of educational qualification, most respondents possessed a Bachelor's degree (44%), followed by Master's degree holders (34%). Respondents with secondary education represented 14%, while those holding PhD or other advanced qualifications constituted 8% of the sample. This suggests that the majority of participants were adequately educated and capable of providing informed responses regarding school quality and community participation. Concerning school affiliation, 160 respondents (64%) were associated with public schools, while 90 respondents (36%) belonged to private schools. This indicates greater representation from the public education sector. The findings further revealed that most respondents had maintained an association with schools for 4 to 6 years (38%), followed by 1 to 3 years (28%) and more than 6 years (26%). Only 8% had less than one year of association. This reflects that the majority of respondents possessed sufficient exposure and experience related to school-community interactions.

**Table 4. Demographic Information of Respondents (N = 250).**

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Respondent Category	Teachers	80	32
	Parents	100	40
	School Administrators	20	8
	Community Members	50	20
Gender Distribution of Respondents	Male	145	58
	Female	105	42
Age Distribution Group of Respondents	18-25 Years	40	16
	26-35 Years	95	38
	36-45 Years	75	30
	46 Years and Above	40	16
Educational Qualification of Respondents	Secondary Education	35	14
	Bachelor's Degree	110	44
	Master's Degree	85	34
	PhD/Other	20	8
Type of School	Public Schools	160	64

	Private Schools	90	36
Years of Association with Schools	Less than 1 Year	20	8
	1-3 Years	70	28
	4-6 Years	95	38
	More than 6 Years	65	26

**Reliability Analysis**

The reliability analysis of the questionnaire was conducted using Cronbach’s alpha to determine the internal consistency of the research instrument. The questionnaire consisted of 24 Likert-scale items administered to 250 respondents. The analysis produced a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.70 which is generally considered

acceptable (Table 5). The questionnaire remains useful for demonstrating statistical procedures and data analysis in academic research contexts. Future studies may improve reliability by refining questionnaire items, increasing item clarity, and conducting further pilot testing before large-scale administration.

**Table 5. Reliability analysis of the quantitative part of the questionnaire (N = 250).**

Statistic	Value
Total Respondents	250
Total Items	24
Cronbach's Alpha	0.70

**Community Participation**

The findings regarding community participation demonstrated an overall mean score of 3.99, which falls within the “Agree” category. This indicates that respondents generally perceived community participation in schools positively. The standard deviation values ranged from 0.65 to 0.76, reflecting consistency in respondents’ opinions. The analysis revealed that respondents agreed that community members regularly participate in school activities, parents actively support educational programs, and schools

encourage community involvement in decision-making processes. Participants also acknowledged that local organizations contribute to school development initiatives and that communication between schools and communities is generally effective. Furthermore, respondents agreed that community members feel responsible for supporting schools and that volunteers frequently assist in educational activities (Table 6). These findings suggest that community participation plays an active and supportive role in school operations and educational development.

**Table 6. Interpretation of results regarding the community participation in School (N = 250).**

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Q1	3.99	0.65	Agree
Q2	4.01	0.71	Agree
Q3	3.91	0.73	Agree
Q4	4.04	0.76	Agree
Q5	4.02	0.73	Agree
Q6	4.00	0.70	Agree
Q7	3.99	0.74	Agree
Q8	3.94	0.73	Agree

**Perceived School Quality**

The results concerning perceived school quality showed an overall mean score of 3.99, indicating that respondents generally agreed that the selected schools maintain satisfactory educational quality. The standard deviation values ranged from 0.68 to 0.77, demonstrating relatively stable responses among participants. The respondents agreed that schools provide high standards of education and employ professionally competent teachers. They also perceived that students receive adequate

academic support and that school environments are safe and supportive for learning. Moreover, respondents acknowledged that school facilities adequately meet students’ educational needs and that school administrations manage institutions efficiently. Positive school-community relationships were also recognized by the participants (Table 7). These findings collectively suggest that respondents held favorable perceptions regarding the quality and effectiveness of schools.

**Table 7. Interpretation of results regarding the perceived school quality (N = 250).**

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Q9	4.02	0.77	Agree
Q10	4.07	0.68	Agree
Q11	4.00	0.75	Agree
Q12	4.04	0.73	Agree
Q13	3.96	0.72	Agree
Q14	4.00	0.74	Agree
Q15	3.94	0.75	Agree
Q16	3.91	0.71	Agree

**Impact of Community Participation on School Quality**

The findings related to the impact of community participation on school quality revealed an overall mean score of 4.00, indicating general agreement among respondents regarding the positive influence of community involvement on educational quality. Standard deviation values ranged between 0.66 and 0.79, showing consistency in participant responses. The respondents agreed that community participation contributes significantly to improving educational quality and positively affects student academic performance. They also believed that community

support assists in enhancing school management and improving school discipline. Additionally, participants acknowledged that collaboration between schools and communities supports students’ social development and improves school resources through financial and moral assistance. Respondents further agreed that active community participation strengthens trust in the school system (Table 8). These findings demonstrate that community engagement is perceived as an important factor contributing to overall school effectiveness and quality enhancement.

**Table 8. Interpretation of results regarding the impact of community participation on school quality (N = 250).**

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Q17	3.99	0.69	Agree
Q18	4	0.7	Agree
Q19	4.06	0.66	Agree
Q20	3.99	0.69	Agree
Q21	3.94	0.69	Agree
Q22	4.03	0.72	Agree

Q23	4.01	0.79	Agree
Q24	3.99	0.7	Agree

**Qualitative Results**

**Theme 1: Positive Influence of Community Participation on School Development**

Most participants emphasized that community participation plays a significant role in improving school development and educational quality. Respondents reported that active involvement of parents and community members contributes to better school functioning, improved discipline, and enhanced academic performance among students.

Participants stated that when communities support schools through participation in meetings, educational activities, and development initiatives, schools become more responsive to students’ needs. Respondents also indicated that collaborative relationships strengthen trust between schools and stakeholders.

**Representative Responses**

*“When parents and community members participate in school activities, students become more motivated and disciplined.”*

*“Community support helps schools improve facilities and educational programs.”*

*“Schools perform better when the community works together with teachers and administrators.”*

**Theme 2: Importance of Parental Involvement**

Another major theme that emerged from the findings was the importance of parental involvement in children’s education. Many respondents believed that parents play a central role in supporting academic achievement and monitoring student behavior.

Participants explained that regular communication between parents and teachers helps identify students’ academic weaknesses and encourages timely support. Respondents further indicated that students perform better when parents actively participate in school-related matters.

**Representative Responses**

*“Students show better academic performance when parents regularly communicate with teachers.”*

*“Parental involvement creates a strong educational environment for children.”*

*“Parents should participate in school meetings and support learning activities at home.”*

**Theme 3: Improved Communication and Collaboration**

Respondents frequently highlighted communication and collaboration as important factors influencing school quality. Participants noted that effective communication between schools and communities enhances transparency, trust, and cooperation.

Many respondents stated that schools should maintain regular interaction with parents and community members through meetings, awareness programs, and collaborative decision-making processes.

**Representative Responses**

*“Strong communication between schools and communities improves understanding and cooperation.”*

*“Schools should involve community members in important decisions related to education.”*

*“Regular meetings help strengthen school-community relationships.”*

**Theme 4: Challenges Affecting Community Participation**

Despite recognizing the benefits of community involvement, respondents also identified several barriers limiting effective participation. Common challenges included lack of awareness, limited time, financial difficulties, and weak communication systems.

Some participants explained that many parents are unable to attend school activities because of work responsibilities, while others lack awareness regarding the importance of their involvement in educational development.

**Representative Responses**

“Many parents are busy with work and cannot participate regularly in school activities.”  
 “Some community members do not understand the importance of supporting schools.”  
 “Limited communication between schools and parents reduces participation.”

**Representative Responses**

“Schools should organize community programs to encourage participation.”  
 “Community partnerships can improve school resources and learning opportunities.”  
 “Educational quality improves when schools and communities work together.”

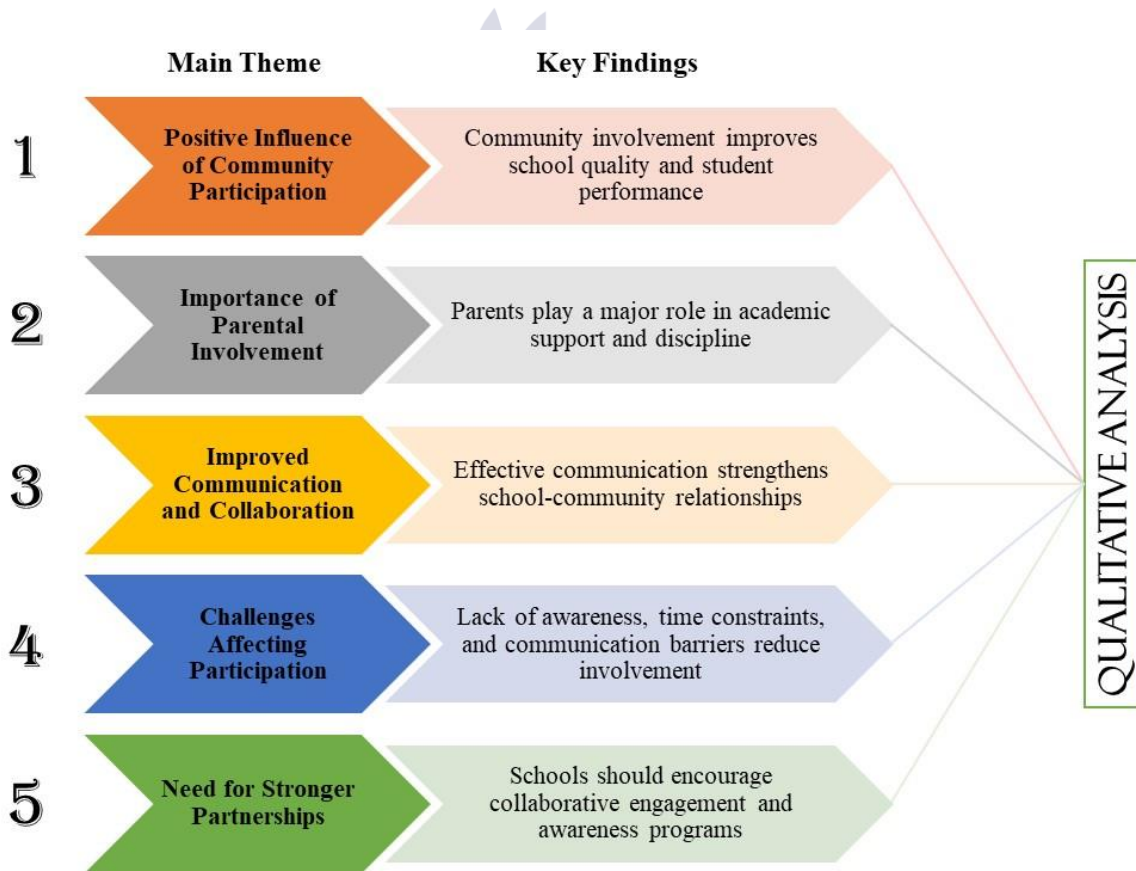
**Theme 5: Need for Stronger School-Community Partnerships**

Participants emphasized the need for schools to develop stronger partnerships with communities to improve educational quality. Respondents suggested that schools should organize awareness programs, encourage volunteer activities, and create opportunities for collaborative participation.

Many participants believed that stronger school-community relationships would contribute to better educational outcomes, improved school resources, and greater student support.

**Summary of Qualitative Themes**

The qualitative findings supported the quantitative results by demonstrating that respondents generally viewed community participation as an important contributor to school quality and educational improvement. Participants emphasized that collaboration, communication, and shared responsibility among stakeholders positively influence school effectiveness. However, the findings also revealed the need to address barriers limiting community engagement in order to establish stronger and more sustainable school-community partnerships.



### Discussion

The present study aimed to assess the influence of community participation on perceived school quality through a mixed-methods approach. The findings of the study revealed that respondents generally held positive perceptions regarding community involvement and its contribution to school quality. The overall mean scores for community participation, perceived school quality, and the impact of community participation on school quality all fell within the "Agree" category, indicating favorable attitudes toward collaborative relationships between schools and communities.

The demographic findings (Table 4) demonstrated that the study incorporated responses from multiple stakeholder groups, including teachers, parents, school administrators, and community members. The inclusion of these groups strengthened the comprehensiveness of the study because school quality and community participation are multidimensional concepts that require perspectives from different educational actors (Anderson, Graham, and Thomas 2019; Rodríguez et al. 2022; Kim 2019; Kusumaningrum et al. 2017). The results regarding community participation (Table 6) suggest that respondents perceived schools as institutions that encourage stakeholder involvement in educational activities and decision-making processes. These findings support the idea that strong school-community partnerships create supportive educational environments that benefit students academically and socially (Afrianti, Viona, and Efriyadi 2024; DePetris and Eames 2017; Daniel 2017). The findings related to perceived school quality (Table 7) also indicated positive respondent perceptions regarding educational standards, teacher competence, school management, and learning environments. These results imply that schools with active stakeholder engagement are often viewed more favorably by the community (Gordon and Louis 2009; Cabrillos 2024). The study further revealed that respondents strongly believed community participation positively influences school quality (Table 8). These findings align with the broader educational perspective that schools function

more effectively when communities actively participate in educational planning, monitoring, and support activities. Community involvement may provide both moral and material support that assists schools in achieving educational goals more efficiently (Selman 2004; Afrianti, Viona, and Efriyadi 2024; Arum 2000; Belete 2024; DePetris and Eames 2017; Shatkin and Gershberg 2007).

The qualitative responses also reinforced the quantitative findings by emphasizing that collaboration between schools and communities promotes mutual understanding, accountability, and educational progress. Respondents highlighted that active communication and shared decision-making foster stronger relationships between stakeholders and contribute to improved learning environments. However, some participants also identified barriers such as limited parental awareness, lack of time, and insufficient communication channels between schools and communities. These challenges suggest that schools may need to adopt more inclusive and accessible strategies to encourage stakeholder engagement (Onyinye and Ukou 2025; Spencer 2023).

### Conclusion

The present study examined the influence of community participation on perceived school quality through a mixed-methods approach involving teachers, parents, school administrators, and community members. The findings demonstrated that respondents generally held positive perceptions regarding community involvement in educational activities and its contribution to improving school quality. The quantitative results revealed overall agreement among participants concerning the effectiveness of community participation, the quality of schools, and the positive impact of stakeholder collaboration on educational outcomes. The study found that active community participation enhances communication between schools and stakeholders, supports school development initiatives, improves student performance, and strengthens school management practices. Respondents also perceived that schools with greater parental and community involvement tend

to provide more supportive and effective learning environments. These findings highlight the importance of collaborative relationships between schools and communities in achieving educational improvement and institutional effectiveness. The qualitative findings further supported the quantitative results by emphasizing that cooperation, shared responsibility, and stakeholder engagement contribute positively to school development. However, certain barriers such as limited awareness, communication gaps, and insufficient opportunities for participation were also identified as challenges affecting effective community involvement. Overall, the study concludes that community participation is a significant factor influencing perceived school quality. Schools that actively engage parents, community members, and local stakeholders are more likely to foster trust, accountability, and educational success. Therefore, educational institutions and policymakers should encourage stronger school-community partnerships by promoting inclusive participation, effective communication, and collaborative decision-making processes. Such initiatives may contribute to sustainable improvements in educational quality and student development.

#### Author's contributions

All authors contributed equally in the development of this paper.

#### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declared that they have no competing interest.

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