



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SAGBAMA, BAYELSA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the level of community participation in school governance in public secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria, with particular focus on school discipline, provision of instructional resources, and school safety. The study was guided by three research questions and three corresponding hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of principals and teachers drawn from 15 public secondary schools within the study area. From this population, a sample of 128 respondents, comprising 15 principals and 113 teachers, was selected. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Community Participation and School Governance Questionnaire (CPSGQ). The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.73, indicating that the instrument was sufficiently reliable for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the independent sample t-test was employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that the level of community participation in promoting school discipline, supporting the provision of instructional resources, and ensuring school safety was generally low. The results further showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean responses of principals and teachers on all the variables examined. Based on these findings, the study concluded that inadequate community involvement constitutes a major constraint to effective school governance and the attainment of quality educational outcomes. In view of this, the study recommended, among others, that there should be the establishment and strengthening of structured stakeholder engagement frameworks, increased sensitization and awareness programmes, as well as the promotion of collaborative safety initiatives aimed at improving community participation in school governance.

Keywords: Community Participation, School Governance, School Discipline, Instructional Resources, School Safety

Introduction

Globally, education governance increasingly emphasizes participatory approaches as a key strategy for achieving inclusive, equitable, and quality education. The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) under the Education 2030 Agenda underscores the importance of engaging multiple stakeholders, particularly communities, in improving school outcomes, promoting effective teaching, and ensuring safe learning environments (UNESCO, 2015). Collaborative governance systems, which involve parents, civil society organizations, and local actors in decision-making, are considered essential for accountability, responsiveness, and overall school effectiveness. In Sub-Saharan Africa, community participation in education has been promoted as part of reforms aimed at decentralizing school management and strengthening accountability. Platforms such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) have been shown to enhance local supervision,



mobilize resources, and encourage stakeholder involvement in school activities, particularly in contexts where formal education systems face limitations in funding and capacity (Umar & Kwashabawa, 2025). However, structural challenges such as insufficient funding, limited stakeholder capacity, and socio-economic inequalities continue to constrain the depth and sustainability of community engagement.

In Bayelsa State, the state's riverine geography, poor infrastructure, and poorly resourced rural schools further complicate community participation. In Sagbama Local Government Area, public secondary schools face systemic challenges such as teacher shortages, limited instructional materials, and inadequate safety measures, which affect both governance and student outcomes (Adejare, 2024). Given these conditions, understanding the community's role in enhancing school discipline, providing instructional resources, and ensuring school safety is crucial for improving educational quality in the area. Conceptually, this study is anchored on the view that community participation is central to strengthening school environments, enhancing accountability, and supporting effective educational outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Effective public secondary school performance depends not only on the efforts of school administrators and teachers but also on active community engagement. Research and policy highlight the importance of stakeholders such as parents, local leaders, civil society organizations, and NGOs in improving school outcomes through participation in key areas like discipline, resource provision, and safety (UNESCO, 2015). Ideally, communities contribute meaningfully to ensuring well-disciplined students, adequately resourced classrooms, and safe school environments, creating conditions that support learning and overall school effectiveness. In Sagbama, Bayelsa State, however, these contributions remain inconsistent and limited. Evidence suggests that community involvement in promoting student discipline is weak, provision of instructional resources is minimal, and safety measures often rely solely on the school administration (Bayelsa State Ministry of Education, 2022). These shortcomings are compounded by inadequate infrastructure, insufficient learning materials, and gaps in supervision, leaving schools unable to fully realize the potential benefits of stakeholder engagement. The consequences of these gaps are significant. Poor discipline among students affects academic performance and school culture, limited instructional resources reduce teaching effectiveness, and unsafe learning environments threaten student welfare and community confidence. Collectively, these factors undermine educational quality and school development in public secondary schools in Sagbama. Despite these challenges, there is limited empirical research examining how communities actively contribute to discipline, instructional resources, and school safety in Sagbama. Most studies focus on broader governance issues at national or urban levels, leaving riverine communities underrepresented in the literature.

Therefore, this study is necessary for examining the role of the community in improving school discipline, providing instructional resources, and enhancing safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama. Findings from this research can inform local policy, guide school management practices, and offer practical strategies to strengthen community engagement and improve educational outcomes in similar rural settings across Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine community participation in school governance in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study intends to achieve the following objectives:

1. To investigate the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.
2. To find out the extent the community provides instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.
3. To evaluate the contribution of the community in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.



Research Questions

The following research questions were proposed for the study:

1. To what extent does the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent does the community provide instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?
3. To what extent does the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant level:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community provides instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.

Review of Related Literature

Community Participation

Community participation is broadly defined as the active engagement of individuals, groups, and institutions in decision-making, planning, and activities that affect their shared interests within a local context (Chambers, 1997, as cited in Dantata, 2025). In education, community participation refers to how various stakeholders contribute to school processes, policies, and resource management with the aim of improving educational outcomes. This involvement goes beyond mere attendance at school meetings and encompasses meaningful engagement in governance, planning, and oversight to ensure that schools respond effectively to the needs of their learners (Dantata, 2025). Narrowing to the school context, the term “community” in public secondary schools includes a diverse set of actors. Key stakeholders consist of parents and caregivers, local leaders, traditional rulers, alumni associations, religious bodies, civil society organizations, and NGOs that support school objectives (Uche, 2024). Each group brings unique resources, perspectives, and cultural knowledge that complement formal school structures, enhancing governance, accountability, and the overall quality of education. By recognizing these multiple actors as part of the school community, participation can be designed to be inclusive, culturally sensitive, and responsive to local needs.

In the Nigerian education policy context, community participation is formally recognized as a mechanism for enhancing school governance and accountability. Policies such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme, alongside the establishment of PTAs, school boards, and SBMCs, mandate structured involvement of communities in school planning, supervision, and resource mobilization (Ezenwaji et al., 2019). These frameworks aim to harness local knowledge, mobilize additional resources, and ensure that schools operate in a manner consistent with both national standards and local expectations. Effective participation, therefore, integrates both statutory provisions and voluntary engagement, creating a system where communities play a central role in improving school effectiveness and educational quality.

School Governance

School governance refers to the formal and informal structures, policies, and processes that guide how schools are directed, controlled, and held accountable in achieving their educational objectives. Scholars often distinguish governance from school management or administration. While governance focuses on strategic decision-making, policy formulation, and accountability mechanisms, management deals with the day-to-day running of the school, including curriculum delivery, staff supervision, and routine logistical activities (Mifsud & Wilkins, 2025). This distinction is critical: governance provides the



vision, rules, and oversight that frame how a school should operate, whereas management is responsible for implementing those policies within the school environment.

Governance takes on added significance due to wider accountability requirements, diverse stakeholder expectations, and the stewardship of public resources. It involves setting priorities that align with national education policies while balancing local needs, ensuring that strategic decisions benefit learners equitably, and that school boards and leaders remain responsive to community concerns (Mifsud & Wilkins, 2025). Stronger stakeholder trust, more cooperative decision-making, and strong performance monitoring and resource use transparency mechanisms are all associated with effective governance in this setting and are crucial for raising the standard of instruction in public secondary schools (Uche, 2024).

Beyond infrastructure and training, NGOs also engage in advocacy and community mobilization aimed at promoting inclusive, equitable, and quality education. Through advocacy, NGOs collaborate with governments, communities, and civil society to influence education policy, raise public awareness about education rights, and encourage broader societal support for schools (Bello, 2025; Wagener & Eich, 2025).

School Discipline

School discipline in secondary schools refers to the set of rules, policies, and practices that guide student behaviour, promote a safe and orderly learning environment, and encourage students to meet expected standards of conduct. It includes both the behavioural norms established by the school and the strategies used to enforce them, ensuring that learning proceeds without unnecessary disruption (Iniobong, 2025). Effective discipline goes beyond merely controlling misbehaviour; it also aims to teach students self-regulation, respect for others, and personal responsibility, creating conditions that support academic engagement and social development (Eze, 2024).

Key aspects of school discipline include behavioural standards, enforcement of rules, student conduct, and the nature of staff-student relationships. Behavioural standards define expectations for punctuality, respect for authority, adherence to school rules, and appropriate interactions among peers (Nwogu et al., 2025). Rule enforcement refers to the consistency and fairness with which these standards are applied. Studies suggest that positive, non-punitive approaches to discipline are more effective in promoting good behaviour and a constructive school climate than punitive measures alone (Eze, 2024). Student conduct reflects the extent to which learners internalize and act according to these behavioural expectations, while strong staff-student relationships, built on mutual respect and supportive engagement are critical for reducing disciplinary issues and maintaining a positive school environment (Nwogu et al., 2025).

School discipline is increasingly recognized as not only an internal administrative matter but also a governance and community concern. This is because discipline directly impacts student safety, the overall school climate, and educational equity, all of which extend beyond the classroom. Poor discipline can lead to exclusionary measures, such as suspensions, which research links to negative outcomes including school disengagement and increased risk of antisocial behaviour outside school (Nwogu et al., 2025). Evidence from sub-Saharan contexts further shows that parental and community involvement in reinforcing behavioural expectations positively influences student conduct, highlighting that effective discipline is shaped by both school practices and wider social environments (Njugia et al., 2024). Therefore, addressing discipline in schools requires coordinated efforts among educators, parents, and community stakeholders to establish consistent expectations, promote positive behaviour, and ensure a safe and conducive learning environment.

Instructional Resources

Instructional resources refer to the range of materials, tools, and facilities that support teaching and learning in schools. They include textbooks, laboratory equipment, information and communication technology (ICT) tools, libraries, and teaching aids such as charts, models, and multimedia devices that help bridge the gap between theory and practice in instruction (Ibe-Moses et al., 2024). Textbooks provide essential content aligned with curriculum standards, while laboratories and ICT tools, such as computers and projectors, facilitate experiential and interactive learning. Libraries offer access to



broader information sources that enhance research skills and independent study. Collectively, these resources influence instructional quality, student engagement, and overall academic outcomes.

In many Nigerian public secondary schools, persistent gaps in instructional resources undermine the quality of teaching and learning. Research across several regions indicates that essential materials such as textbooks, laboratory equipment, libraries, and ICT facilities are often inadequate or entirely absent, particularly in rural or underfunded schools, which limits effective curriculum delivery (Ibe-Moses et al., 2024). For example, studies on social studies instruction in Edo State found that teachers had to rely primarily on basic materials such as textbooks and charts, as more advanced resources like computers and multimedia tools were largely unavailable (Okobia, 2011). Similarly, research in Ogun State public secondary schools revealed shortages of laboratories, libraries, and ICT facilities, which negatively affected teaching effectiveness and student motivation (Onikoyi et al., 2024). These constraints have been linked to weaker academic performance and reduced use of varied pedagogical strategies that enrich learning experiences.

In light of these challenges, community provision of instructional resources emerges as an important strategy within participatory governance. Evidence from Nigerian schools shows that when local stakeholders including parents, alumni, NGOs, and community groups, actively contribute resources or support facilities, the availability and use of instructional materials improves, enhancing teaching effectiveness and student outcomes (Dape, 2025). Community participation can take many forms, such as donations of books and teaching aids or the establishment and maintenance of libraries, laboratories, and ICT centres. Such involvement not only supplements government provision but also fosters accountability, shared ownership, and sustainability of school learning environments. Integrating community support into instructional resourcing therefore aligns with the broader goals of participatory governance in education, ensuring that schools are better equipped to meet instructional needs and deliver quality learning outcomes.

School Safety

School safety refers to the condition in which schools are free from threats, hazards, and risks that could negatively affect the physical and psychosocial well-being of students, teachers, staff, and other members of the school community. In educational research, safety is broadly understood to include physical safety (protection from violence, accidents, or environmental hazards), psychosocial safety (freedom from bullying, intimidation, or emotional trauma), and environmental safety (infrastructure and surroundings that are free from health risks) (Adebayo & Ileuma, 2023). A safe school environment allows learners and educators to participate in teaching and learning without fear or distraction, fostering conditions that support both academic achievement and social development (Odeyemi & Afonja, 2026). School safety is increasingly recognized as a matter of governance and community concern, rather than solely an internal administrative issue. Evidence shows that creating safe learning environments requires coordinated efforts among school leaders, education authorities, parents, local communities, and security agencies, particularly in contexts where schools face risks such as violence, absenteeism, and infrastructural hazards (Osegue et al., 2025). In Nigeria, rising insecurity, attacks on schools, and vulnerability to violence have highlighted the importance of community vigilance and stakeholder engagement. Communities play key roles in reporting risks, supporting safety measures, and reinforcing protective norms (Aderinto et al., 2025). Effective safety governance therefore relies on shared responsibility, with active community participation strengthening planning, accountability, and responsiveness to hazards affecting school life.

Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory, most prominently developed by Bourdieu (1986) and later expanded by Putnam (2000), proposes that social networks, shared norms, and trust within communities generate resources that enable cooperation and collective action. In essence, communities with strong social capital where members trust one another, communicate effectively, and observe norms of reciprocity, are better positioned to achieve positive collective outcomes, including improvements in public services and community development. In the educational context, social capital is evident in the relationships among parents, teachers, community leaders, and local organizations that support school operations, uphold rules, and contribute resources for learning.



This theory is particularly relevant for understanding why community participation in schools may succeed or fail depending on local dynamics. In settings like Sagbama, Bayelsa State, the success of initiatives aimed at improving student discipline, providing instructional resources, and ensuring school safety largely depends on the strength of networks and the level of trust between schools and their communities. Where social capital is strong, community members are more likely to collaborate, monitor school activities, and actively support both formal and informal governance structures. Conversely, weak or fragmented social networks can hinder participation, resulting in gaps in discipline enforcement, resource provision, and safety measures.

For the present study, Social Capital Theory offers a conceptual lens to examine how the quality of community-school relationships influences key outcomes such as school discipline, instructional resources, and school safety. By analyzing the networks, trust, and norms within Sagbama's communities, the study identifies how social capital facilitates or limits effective community participation in school governance, providing actionable insights for strengthening local engagement and enhancing educational outcomes.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the extent of community participation in enhancing school discipline, provision of instructional resources, and school safety in public senior secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Area (LGA) of Bayelsa State. The population for the study consisted of all principals and teachers from 15 public secondary schools within Sagbama LGA. From this population, a sample of 128 respondents was selected, comprising 15 principals and 113 teachers. Data were collected using a self-developed instrument titled Community Participation and School Governance in Public Secondary School Questionnaire (CPSGQ). The questionnaire was designed to measure the three dimensions of community participation school discipline, instructional resources, and school safety using items rated on a Likert scale of VHE, HE, LE and VLE. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.73, indicating acceptable internal consistency. To maximize response rate and clarify any ambiguities, the questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher. For data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used to address the research questions, providing a descriptive summary of respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding community participation in school governance. Additionally, an independent t-test was employed to test the formulated hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance, allowing the researcher to determine whether observed differences were statistically significant. This methodological approach provided both descriptive and inferential insights necessary to understand the role of community participation in strengthening governance in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA.

Result

Research Question One: To what extent does the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Summary of descriptive (Mean & SD) on the extent the Community contribute in enhancing School Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

S/N	Community contribution to School Discipline	Principals (N=15)		Teachers (N=113)		Mean Set (N=128)	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Community members collaborate with school management to enforce rules and regulations in public secondary schools	2.30	0.85	2.40	0.98	2.39	Low Extent
2	Parents and community leaders participate in setting behavioural standards for students in public secondary schools	2.20	0.88	2.35	0.80	2.33	Low Extent



3	The community reports cases of student misconduct to school authorities in public secondary schools	2.10	0.98	2.30	0.96	2.28	Low Extent
4	Community involvement has helped reduce truancy and absenteeism among students in public secondary schools	2.25	0.91	2.40	1.00	2.38	Low Extent
5	Community elders and traditional leaders are engaged in resolving disciplinary issues in public secondary schools	2.35	0.70	2.45	0.98	2.44	Low Extent
Grand Total		2.28	0.86	2.32	0.94	2.31	Low Extent

The data in table 1 shows that the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA, Bayelsa State is low (Mean=2.31). The table further reveals that the respondents disagreed that community members collaborate with school management to enforce rules and regulations in public secondary schools (Mean=2.39), parents and community leaders participate in setting behavioural standards for students in public secondary schools (Mean=2.33), the community reports cases of student misconduct to school authorities in public secondary schools (Mean=2.28), community involvement has helped reduce truancy and absenteeism among students in public secondary schools (Mean=2.38) and community elders and traditional leaders are engaged in resolving disciplinary issues in public secondary schools (Mean=2.44).

Research Question Two: To what extent does the community provide instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Summary of descriptive (Mean & SD) on the extent the community provide Instructional Resources in enhancing School Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

S/N	Community provision of Instructional Resources	Principals (N=15)		Teachers (N=113)		Mean Set (N=128)	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	The community donates textbooks and learning materials to public secondary schools	2.30	0.85	2.40	0.98	2.39	Low Extent
2	Community organizations fund the provision of laboratory equipment and science materials in public secondary schools	2.35	0.88	2.40	0.80	2.39	Low Extent
3	Community members contribute financially to the procurement of instructional resources for public secondary schools	2.25	0.98	2.35	0.96	2.34	Low Extent
4	The community supports schools with ICT tools and digital learning resources in public secondary schools	2.28	0.91	2.42	1.00	2.40	Low Extent
5	Alumni and community groups establish libraries or reading centres to support teaching and learning in public secondary schools	2.20	0.87	2.30	0.83	2.29	Low Extent
Grand Total		2.32	0.90	2.45	0.91	2.43	Low Extent

Table 2 above shows that the extent the community provide instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State is low (Mean=2.43). The table also shows that respondents disagreed that the community donates textbooks and learning materials to public secondary schools (Mean=2.39), community organizations fund the provision of laboratory equipment and science materials in public secondary schools (Mean=2.39), community members contribute financially to the procurement of



instructional resources for public secondary schools (Mean=2.34), the community supports schools with ICT tools and digital learning resources in public secondary schools (Mean=2.40) and that alumni and community groups establish libraries or reading centres to support teaching and learning in public secondary schools (Mean=2.29).

Research Question Three: To what extent does the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State?

Table 3: Summary of descriptive (Mean & SD) on the extent the community contribute in enhancing School Safety in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

S/N	Community provision of Instructional Resources	Principals (N=15)		Teachers (N=113)		Mean Set (N=128)	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Community members assist in providing security surveillance around public secondary schools	2.18	1.16	2.36	1.18	2.34	Low Extent
2	The community funds the construction or repair of fences and physical safety structures in public secondary schools	2.22	0.95	2.31	1.14	2.30	Low Extent
3	Community leaders intervene to prevent external threats such as cultism and violence from affecting public secondary schools	2.05	1.06	2.40	0.80	2.36	Low Extent
4	The community organizes safety awareness programmes for students in public secondary schools	2.15	0.77	2.33	0.84	2.31	Low Extent
5	Community involvement has contributed to reducing incidents of theft, vandalism, and other safety threats in public secondary schools	2.12	1.02	2.28	1.19	2.27	Low Extent
Grand Total		2.20	0.99	2.38	1.03	2.35	Low Extent

Table 3 above shows that the extent the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State is low (Mean=2.35). The table further reveals that respondents disagreed that community members assist in providing security surveillance around public secondary schools (Mean=2.34), the community funds the construction or repair of fences and physical safety structures in public secondary schools (Mean=2.30), community leaders intervene to prevent external threats such as cultism and violence from affecting public secondary schools (Mean=2.36), the community organizes safety awareness programmes for students in public secondary schools (Mean=2.31) and community involvement has contributed to reducing incidents of theft, vandalism, and other safety threats in public secondary schools (Mean=2.27).

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test on the difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing School Discipline in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-test	Sig.	Remark
Principals	15	2.28	0.86	126	-0.156	0.876	NS
Teachers	113	2.32	0.94				

NS= Not Significant



The table above showed the difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. The mean opinion of the principals is 2.28 and the standard deviation is 0.86, while the mean response of the teachers is 2.32 and the standard deviation is 0.94. The t-test calculated value is -0.156, the corresponded significance value is 0.876 showing > 0.05 at 126 degrees of freedom. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. Hence, the null hypothesis one is retained at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community provides instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.

Table 5: Summary of t-test on the difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community provides Instructional Resources in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-test	Sig.	Remark
Principals	15	2.32	0.90	126	-0.520	0.604	NS
Teachers	113	2.45	0.91				

NS= Not Significant

The table above showed the difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community provides instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. The mean opinion of the principals is 2.32 and the standard deviation is 0.90, while the mean response of the teachers is 2.45 and the standard deviation is 0.91. The t-test calculated value is -0.520, the corresponded significance value is 0.604 showing > 0.05 at 126 degrees of freedom. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community provides instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. Hence, the null hypothesis two is retained at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State.

Table 6: Summary of t-test on the difference in the mean opinions of Principals and Teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing School Safety in Public Secondary Schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-test	Sig.	Remark
Principals	15	2.20	0.99	126	-0.639	0.524	NS
Teachers	113	2.38	1.03				

NS= Not Significant

The table above showed the difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. The mean opinion of the principals is 2.20 and the standard deviation is 0.99, while the mean response of the teachers is 2.38 and the standard deviation is 1.03. The t-test calculated value is -0.639, the corresponded significance value is 0.524 showing > 0.05 at 126 degrees of freedom. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean opinions of principals and teachers on the extent the community contribute in enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama, Bayelsa State. Hence, the null hypothesis three is retained at 0.05 level of significance.



Discussion of Findings

The result presented in table 1 and 4 revealed that the level of community contribution to enhancing school discipline in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA is low. This indicates that community participation in disciplinary processes within the study area is limited and not yielding the expected impact. This finding is consistent with earlier studies which observed that community involvement in school-related activities in many parts of Nigeria remains weak due to poor engagement structures and limited awareness of stakeholder roles (Ezenwaji et al., 2019). In addition, the study found no significant difference between the opinions of principals and teachers regarding the extent of community involvement in school discipline. The implication is that both school administrators and classroom teachers are experiencing similar challenges arising from low community engagement, which may undermine efforts to maintain discipline and promote positive student behaviour. This finding supports the position of Njugia et al. (2024) that effective school discipline extends beyond internal school control and requires active collaboration between schools and their host communities. Overall, the low level of community involvement in school discipline may contribute to persistent behavioural problems such as truancy, absenteeism, and student misconduct, thereby negatively affecting the school climate. There is therefore a clear need to strengthen partnerships between schools and community stakeholders in order to improve disciplinary practices and create a more conducive environment for teaching and learning.

The results presented in table 2 and 5 indicate that the level of community contribution to providing instructional resources in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA, Bayelsa State, is low. This finding suggests that schools rely heavily on government provision for teaching and learning materials, with local stakeholder contributions being limited. Such low participation aligns with earlier studies highlighting persistent resource gaps in Nigerian public schools and the difficulties of mobilising community support, particularly in rural and riverine areas (Okobia, 2023). The study also revealed no significant difference between the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding community provision of instructional resources. The finding reinforces the idea that effective school governance requires not only strong internal management but also active engagement from community stakeholders to mobilize additional instructional resources and enhance teaching and learning (Dape, 2025). Altogether, the low level of community support for instructional resources highlights a critical gap in participatory governance. Without active involvement from parents, alumni, local leaders, and community organisations, schools continue to experience shortages of essential materials, which can adversely affect teaching quality and students' academic performance. Consequently, there is a need for strategies that strengthen community contributions and partnerships to improve resource availability and support better educational outcomes in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA.

The result presented in table 3 and 6 indicate that the extent of community contribution to enhancing school safety in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA, Bayelsa State, is low. This suggests that parents, local leaders, and other community stakeholders play minimal roles in safeguarding schools, leaving schools to manage security largely on their own. This finding aligns with prior research by Adebayo and Ileuma (2023) which highlights that effective school safety requires active community engagement alongside internal school measures, especially in rural and under-resourced contexts where schools face both infrastructural and security challenges (Aderinto et al., 2025). The result also revealed no significant difference between the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding the level of community contribution to school safety. Such consensus underscores the need for coordinated efforts between school staff and community stakeholders to strengthen protective measures and foster a secure learning environment. In all, the low level of community engagement in school safety reflects a critical governance gap. Without proactive involvement from parents, traditional and religious leaders, and civil society organisations, schools remain exposed to internal and external threats. Enhancing community collaboration in school safety initiatives is therefore essential for creating a safe, secure, and conducive environment for teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Sagbama LGA.

Conclusion

This study examined the extent of community participation in school governance in public secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, with particular focus on school



discipline, provision of instructional resources, and school safety. The findings revealed that community involvement across all three dimensions is consistently low, indicating a significant gap between policy expectations and actual practice. Specifically, communities were found to contribute minimally to maintaining student discipline, supporting the provision of instructional materials, and enhancing school safety measures. Furthermore, the absence of significant differences in the perceptions of principals and teachers suggests a shared consensus regarding the inadequate level of community engagement. This weak participation undermines the effectiveness of participatory governance frameworks and limits the potential benefits of collaborative efforts in improving educational outcomes. Consequently, strengthening community-school partnerships remains imperative for fostering accountability, improving resource availability, enhancing discipline, and ensuring safe learning environments in public secondary schools within the study area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends the following:

1. School administrators and education authorities should establish structured and sustained engagement platforms, such as functional Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), to actively involve community stakeholders in decision-making and disciplinary processes.
2. Government and school leadership should implement targeted awareness and sensitization programmes to educate community members on their roles and responsibilities in supporting instructional resource provision and overall school development.
3. Collaborative security frameworks should be developed between schools, community leaders, and local security agencies to enhance surveillance, infrastructure protection, and safety awareness initiatives within and around school environments.

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