

Extent of Community Participation in the Conservation of Secondary School Farm Resources in Plateau State

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Abstract: *The study sought to ascertain the extent of community participation in the conservation of school farm resources in secondary schools in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study had four specific objectives, four research questions were answered and four hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is 49,494 comprising 49200 students offering agriculture in 153 schools and 294 Agricultural science teachers in the schools. The total sample size for the study is 397, drafted using Taro Yameni formula for estimating sample size. Further, simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 students while 97 teachers were sampled. The data for the study was collected through a self-structured questionnaire titled 'Extent of Community Participation in the Conservation of School Farm Resources Questionnaire (ECPCSFQR)' It contained two sections, A and B. Section A focused on the respondent's relevant bio data while section B focused on the research questions, it contained 4 clusters with a total of 32 items. The questionnaire was structured in a four point scale of Very high extent VHE, High extent, HE, low extent LE and very low extent VLE for cluster 1 and 2. While cluster 2 and 3 was structured with; strongly agree S.A, agree A, disagree D and strongly disagree SD, all with a corresponding value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three validates who are experts in Agricultural Education in the Department of Vocational Agriculture and Technology Education, JOSTUM. Reliability of .77 was obtained using Cronbach alpha method. The instrument was administered by the researcher and three research assistants. Out of the 397 copies distributed, 328 copies representing 82% of the questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions. For research question 1 and 2, real limit of numbers was used for interpretation. For research question 3 and 4, the interpretation was based on the cut-off point of 2.50 while t-test was used to test of the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. It was found from the study that the school community makes their materials available for conservation of school farm resources at a low extent, members of the school community makes themselves available for participation in the conservation of school farm resources at a low extent, there are 9 challenges facing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources and there are 7 solutions to these challenges in Plateau State. Among the recommendation made were that; the school community leaders should develop more interest in participating in securing the school farm resources by lending their facilities to schools when needed so their children will utilize the farm to acquire skills in school and that agricultural experts in the community should endeavour to make themselves available as resource persons in the school farm when their services are needed.*

Keywords: *Community participation, conservation, school farm, resources and secondary schools*

Introduction

Among the objectives of secondary school education is to impact entry level vocational skill to students for self-reliant and to prepare them for higher degree acquisition. In order to achieve this in secondary school, there is need for sufficient practical demonstration of those things the students are expected to face after graduation. This is in line with a theory of vocational education which states that vocational education will be effective in proportion if the place, facilities and methods used in teaching the students is same as those they would use in their future place of work. In keeping with this theory, every school has a school farm marked for practical skills acquisition

The school farm is the practical field meant for imparting agricultural knowledge and technical skills to students in the program through repeated practice (Akolo, 2015). Osinem (2004) noted that school farm is a miniature pilot farm where scientific findings and innovations can be tried thoroughly and relevant adjustments made before feedback is sent to researchers for improvement if need be. In keeping with above, School farms are also recognized as a laboratory for teaching agricultural practical lessons. School farm in the context of this study is an area designated by the school management for the transfer of classroom information into practicable forms and as a store of valuable resources for the school. There are many things that make up a school farm. These components are regarded as the school farm resources. Uko, (2010) opined that in order to run a school farm generally, a number of inputs have to be put together and these inputs are called production factors or farm resources.

Resources are materials which are consumed or get transformed into products or leads to the transformation of other inputs into products in the production process. FAO (2013) saw farm resources as land and on farm buildings, equipment's, manure handling facilities and others which contributes to the completion of crops , livestock and livestock products as commercial enterprise such a timber operation, compost, mulch, or other biomass crops and commercial equine operation. School farm resources are all the materials utilized in the running of the school farm for instructing the students on practical agricultural production. This ranges from material resources such as soil, planting materials to human resources such as labour. FAO (2013) classified farm resources into human and material resources. The material resources were defined to include all non-human resources utilized in the farm while the human resources are all human labour utilized in organizing the material resources for the achievement of farming objectives. For the school farm to continually achieve the purpose of impacting practical skills to the students, there is need for them to be adequately and properly handled by all stake holders in secondary education including the school community through conservation.

Conservation of farm resources is a farming system that promotes maintenance of a permanent soil cover, minimum soil disturbance, and diversification of plant species. Conservation of school farm resources involves the judicious utilization of farm resources such as landed resources, labour resources, capital resources and the products resulting from the combination of these factors of production (Uko, 2010). In the opinion of Akolo (2015), farm resources conservation is a skillful treatment towards crop and livestock production and also the art of controlling the resources for producing more crops and animals. Farm resources conservation practices all over the world are changing from the traditional management approach with emphasis on managing natural resources in a way that ensures greater flow to all stakeholders especially local community members (Onsomu & Mujidi, 2017). The shift in emphasis is informed by the fact that the local communities are inextricably tied to their cultural resources whether used as a source of food, medicine, fuel or for maintaining ecological balance (Beamlaki, 2012). The sustainable management of farm resources requires a more comprehensive approach which includes strengthening the organization

and technical capabilities of rural communities, as well as engendering support for sustainable resources use from larger community group (Food and Agricultural Organization, FAO, 2005). This implies that for conservation of farm resources at all levels to be effective, there must be need for participation of the surrounding community.

A community is a group of people living together and sharing common culture, goal and orientation. Community as described by Oghuvbu and Okoro (2007) are people obliged to one another not because of place of birth, race, sex, religion but people bound to one another and governed by shared taste, value, specific norms for common interest. Ngoka (2013) and Modebelu (2014) observed that a community is a body of people living in the same locality and having a common cultural and historical heritage and the willingness to work together.

In the context of this study, a community is seen as a group of people residing within the school environment or location who could participate in the conservation of resources in the school farms around them. Community participation is therefore the active involvement or concern or interest of the community members to participate in the judicious utilization and management of the school farm resources. Community participation in the conservation of school farm resources is an important discussion among scholars searching for better approaches to enhance the sustainable utilization of the school farm for instructional purposes.

The extent of community participation in the conservation of farm resources would to a large extent depend on the prevalent school-community relationship (Martin, 2017). Community participation in the conservation of school resources could be likened to a symbiotic relationship. In this scenario, the community members who also have their children in the school will benefit from which ever effort they put in while the school management enjoy a safe and increased source of resources to be used in the farm. In the context of this study, community participation in the conservation of school farm resources would be determined by the extent at which the community make their materials available for use in school farm and the extent at which members of the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources.

Community material resources is the totality of all resources owned by the school internal and external community. The term 'community material resources' covers a wide range of things that's potentially helping the community. This could be anything as long as it provides assistance or a service to the members of the local area. Tyokyaa (2014) noted that they are resources owned by the community that can be improvised for instructional purposes in agriculture. The author noted that there seem to be low utilization of community resources in the conservation of school farm. Nassaira (2016) found that secondary school access to school community materials is still minimal. Most of the instructional facilities needed for instructing the students in the school farm could be found within the community. The community therefore need to participate in the conservation and management of the farm by lending these materials to the school. Local cooperation, participation and management are crucial to achieving both short term development result and long term sustainability of the school farm. Supporting this, Bamberger (2016) noted that the conservation of school farm resources is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the school system. This include the teachers, farm instructors, students, school management and the school community. The author maintained that members of the community play key roles in securing the school farm from external attacks. According to Nation, Bess, Voight, Perkins, and Juarez (2018) the community can lend their facilities or material resources to assist in the farm by donating their farm implements for use in the school farm, lending their farm tools for use in the school farm, allowing the school use their basic resources such as pipe born water, electricity for operations in the school farm and others.

Community participation in the conservation of school farm resources could also be in the form of community members lending their services to solve problems in the school farm. Oppenheim (2018) opined that community can lend their members to assist in securing the school farm, farm equipment operators from the community assist in operating the school farm machines and veterinary doctors from the community participate in caring for the school farm animals. More so, Muthoni, (2015) noted that expert plant breeders in the community can join in crop breeding in the farm, scientist within the community can assist in providing information on indigenous soil conservation practices that could be adopted in the school farm. However, Onsomu and Mujidi (2017) observed that the level at which the experts in agriculture within school community lend hands in school farming is still very low due to poor school-community linkage. Efforts towards community support in school farm management has been very low in the Nigeria context, instead, records of battle between schools and host community over land and other resources ownership is prevalent Onmhengbe (2016).

Many factors challenges the community from participating in the conservation of the school farm. These may range from the attitude of members of the community, teachers, the government and even the school management. These challenges may also be extended to ignorance, poor school leadership, poverty, political interference, poor beliefs and customs and lack of communication between the school and the community (Donoghue, 2014). Unwillingness of the school to accommodate community participation is also an issue (Onsomu & Mujidi, 2011).

For school administration and teachers to understand the school-community partnership, they are to address the nature of the relationship that exists. In line with this understanding, Modebelu (2014) opined that fewer instructions for communities become a challenge to accommodate and attract community to get more involved in school activities. The most disheartening issues includes; inadequate meeting times for communities, less effective communication mechanisms and none home visits by teachers and school leaders. More importantly, Muthoni (2015) asserted that in most cases schools leaders or administrators did not attempt to establish a partnership with the community in the surroundings believing that community members are irrelevant to the schooling process. On the same note, school leaders or administrators believed that most of community members are illiterate or had low educational background at that time anything to do with school was intimidating to them (Onsomu & Mujidi 2017). Additionally, Oppenheim (2018) argued that community, especially those that are in the working-class are not always an educational resource, and they are reluctant in performing school activities such as manual work and intellectual work. This situation reduces the participation of the community in school activities, create constraints in the school- community relationship. Ibrahim (2018) in his study found that communities were even disappointed since the school staff did not let them know about several resources managed in the school far which involved their children.

A lot of measures have been adopted in enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources. In the context of school farm conservation, there are many approaches that could be adopted to promote community participation. These task involves the teacher, the school management, the students and the community leaders and individual members (Nation et al, 2018). Brown-Luthango (2013) noted that it is essential to promote a school environment where community members feel welcomed, respected, trusted, heard, and needed. According to Catherine (2022) some measures to enhance community participation include involving both formal and informal community groups, creating opportunities to contribute to strategic alignment, building

community awareness campaigns and others. In the opinion of Biogunleye (2019), using the school as a community hub and engaging the school community are some approaches to adopt to enhance community participation in the conservation of school farm.

Statement of the problem

Community participation in the conservation of school farm resources is a key to ensuring the purposes of establishing the school farm is achieved. This is because high level of community participation would ensure all the resources are put together and used rightly for the benefit of the students. When the community is well involved in taking care of school facilities in the farm, security would be guaranteed and the partnership would result to steady availability and utilization of the resources by the students for their practical activities.

However, in many schools there is severe lack of farm resources in the school, the few that exists are not being properly utilized. Meanwhile the community member have collective resources ranging from human to materials which would have been utilized if there was a good relationship between the school and the community members.

This implies that there is need to ascertain the level at which the community participate in the conservation of school farm resources and there is lack of literature to this regard in the study area. This creates a research gap which this present study tends to fill.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to ascertain the extent at which community participate in the conservation of school farm resources in plateau State. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the extent at which community make their materials available for conservation of school farm resources
2. the extent at which members of the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources
3. the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources
4. the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources.

Research questions

The following research questions were asked and answered for the study.

1. What is the extent at which the community make their materials available for conservation of school farm resources?
2. What is the extent at which members of the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources?
3. What are the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources?
4. What are the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources?

Hypotheses statement

The following null hypotheses were tested for the study at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the extent at which the community make their material resources available for conservation of school farm resources
2. There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the extent at which members of the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources

3. There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources
4. There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The design was chosen because it deals with the use of questionnaire to collect data from a representative sample which will be generalized upon the entire population. The area of the study is plateau state located in North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The state was created in 2nd February 1976, it is bounded by the states of Kaduna and Bauchi on the North, Taraba on the East, and Nassarawa on the South and West. Plateau has area of 11,936 square miles (30,913 square km) and a Population of 3,178,712 as at 2006 census. The population of the study is 49,494 comprising 49200 students offering agriculture in 153 schools and 294 agricultural science teachers in the schools (Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, Plateau state Ministry of Education, 2023). The total sample size for the study is 397, drafted using Taro Yameni formula for estimating sample size. Further, simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 students while 97 teachers were sampled. The data for the study was collected through a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled Extent of Community Participation in the Conservation of School Farm Resources Questionnaire (ECPCSFRQ) and contained two sections, A and B. Section A focused on the respondent’s relevant bio data while section B focused on the purpose of this study and research questions, it contained 4 clusters with a total of 32 items. The questionnaire was structured in a four point scale of Very high extent VHE, High extent, HE, low extent LE and very low extent VLE for cluster 1 and 2. While cluster 2 and 3 was structured with; strongly agree S.A, agree A, disagree D and strongly disagree S D. All with a corresponding value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three validates who are experts in Agricultural Education in the Department of Vocational Agriculture and Technology Education, JOSTUM. Reliability of instrument was tested using 30 respondents (15 teachers and 15 students) in Nasarawa State and data realized were subjected to Cronbach alpha method and a reliability index of .77 was obtained, proving that the instrument was reliable for the study. The instrument was administered by the researcher and three research assistants who were briefed by the researcher on the objectives of the study and options provided for the respondents. Out of the 397 copies distributed, 328 copies representing 82% of the questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions. For research question 1 and 2, real limit of numbers as shown below was used for interpretation. For research question 3 and 4, the interpretation was based on the cut- off point of 2.50. This means that any item that has mean of 2.50 and above was regarded as agree and any item below was taken otherwise.

Scale	Scale point	Lower limit	Upper limit
Very high level / VHL	4	3.50	4
High level /HL	3	2.50	3.49
Low level /LL	2	1.50	2.49
Very low level/VLL	1	1.00	1.49

t-Test was used to test of the hypotheses. This measures the differences between two groups of mean. The Ho was rejected if the calculated value is greater than the critical value of 1.96 and accepted if otherwise, at 326 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant.

Results/Findings

Research question 1: What is the extent at which the community make their materials available for conservation of school farm resources?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the extent at which the community make their materials available for conservation of school farm resources

Table 1: Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-Test result of the Respondents on the Extent at which the Community make their Materials Available for Conservation of School Farm Resource

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}_1	S_1	\bar{X}_2	S_2	\bar{X}_g	S_g	t-cal	Rmk
1	Community donates their farm implements for use in the school farm	2.43	.71	2.40	.70	2.41	.71	.38	L,NS
2	The community allows the school use their machines such as bulldozers, tractors and others in the school farm	2.05	.75	2.00	.73	2.03	.74	.60	L,NS
3	Community lends their farm tools for use in the school farm	2.17	.78	2.15	.77	2.16	.78	.23	L,NS
4	The community usually assist in sourcing farm inputs for the school farm	2.49	.78	2.48	.69	2.49	.74	.39	L,NS
5	The community allows the school use their natural resources such as lakes, natural vegetation's, forests to augment the school farm	2.33	.73	2.46	.73	2.39	.73	.12	L,NS
6	The community allows the school use their basic resources such as pipe born water, electricity for operations in the school farm	2.09	.76	2.07	.75	2.08	.76	.24	L,NS
7	The community allows the school use their facilities such as feed mills, rice mills, storage structures, processing plants for preserving or processing school farm products	2.49	.87	2.47	.86	2.48	.87	.21	L,NS
8	Allows the school access organic manures from the community for conserving the school farm soil fertility	2.51	.87	2.63	.87	2.57	.87	.21	H,NS
	Pooled					2.33	.77		L

Key: \bar{X}_1 -mean of students, \bar{X}_2 - mean of teachers, S_1 -standard deviation of students, S_2 -standard deviation of teachers, L-low, NS- not significant. N-328, d.f -326, level of significance- .05, t-tab-1.96

Source: Field survey 2024

Data presented in Table 1 above shows that items 1 to 7 had their mean scores ranging from 2.03 to 2.49 which are within low level in the real limits of numbers. However, item 8 had a mean of 2.57 which is within high level in the real limit of numbers. A pooled mean of 2.33 implies that in all, there is low level at which the community make their materials available for conservation of school farm resources. Also the data shows that all the items had calculated value less than the Table value of 1.96 thus accepting the null hypothesis stated. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the level at which the community make their material resources available for conservation of school farm resources

Research question 2: What is the level at which the community make themselves available for conservation of school farm resources?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the extent at which the community make themselves available for conservation of school farm resources

Table 2: Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-Test Result of the Respondents on the Extent at which the Community Members make themselves Available for Conservation of School Farm Resources

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}_1	S_1	\bar{X}_2	S_2	\bar{X}_g	S_g	t-cal	Rmk
1	The community lends their members to assists in securing the school farm	2.16	.75	2.18	.74	2.17	.75	.24	L,NS
2	Expert plant breeders in the community join in crop breeding in the farm	2.09	.45	2.08	.44	2.09	.45	.08	L,NS
3	Experts in soil science from the community joins in conserving the school farm soil fertility	2.42	.88	2.40	.87	2.41	.88	.21	L,NS
4	Competent animal breeders from the community participate in managing the school farm livestock	2.41	.85	2.39	.84	2.40	.85	.21	L,NS
5	Farm equipment operators from the community assists in operating the school farm machines	2.28	.81	2.26	.81	2.27	.81	.22	L,NS
6	Veterinary doctors from the community participate in caring the for the school farm animals	2.48	.73	2.45	.72	2.47	.73	.37	L,NS
7	Agricultural engineers from the community makes themselves available in the school farm when their services are needed	2.43	.88	2.40	.87	2.42	.88	.36	L,NS
8	Members of the community officially participate during agricultural shows or field days	2.19	.79	2.15	.77	2.17	.78	.46	L,NS
Pooled						2.43	.76		L

Key: \bar{X}_1 -mean of students, \bar{X}_2 - mean of teachers, S_1 -standard deviation of students, S_2 -standard deviation of teachers, L-low, NS- not significant. N-328, d.f -326, level of significance- .05, t-tab-1.96

Source: Field survey 2024

Data presented in Table 2 above shows that all the items had their mean scores ranging from 2.09 to 2.47 which are within low level in the real limits of numbers. A pooled mean of 2.43 implies that there is low level at which the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources. The result of the data also shows that all the items had their calculated value less than the Table value of 1.96 thus accepting the null hypothesis stated. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the level at which the members of the community make themselves available for participation in conserving the school farm resources.

Research question 3: What is are the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources

Table 3: Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-Test Result of the Respondents on the Factors Affecting Community Participation in the Conservation of School Farm Resources

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}_1	S_1	\bar{X}_2	S_2	\bar{X}_g	S_g	t-cal	Rmk
1	Poor school –community relationship	3.43	.85	3.40	.84	3.42	.85	.32	A,NS
2	Bad attitude of some school teachers	3.39	.84	3.35	.83	3.37	.84	.43	A,NS
3	Poor regard of the community members by the school management	3.21	.79	3.20	.79	3.20	.79	.11	A,NS
4	Lack of resources that could be of help to school farm in the community	3.57	.89	3.54	.88	3.56	.89	.28	A,NS
5	Poor education level of some community members	3.43	.85	3.39	.84	3.42	.85	.42	A,NS
6	Unwillingness of some community leaders to support the school activities	3.28	.81	3.25	.80	3.27	.81	.31	A,NS
7	Bad political leadership of a community	3.17	.78	3.14	.77	3.16	.78	.30	A,NS
8	Poor communication or orientation of the community members on the need to support the school farm	3.27	.81	3.23	.79	3.25	.80	.37	A,NS
9	Most community members send their children to schools outside the community	3.31	.82	3.28	.81	3.30	.82	.33	A,NS

Key: \bar{X}_1 -mean of students, \bar{X}_2 - mean of teachers, S_2 -standard deviation of students, S_2 -standard deviation of teachers, A-Agree, NS- not significant. N-328, d.f -326, level of significance- .05, t-tab-1.96

Source: Field survey 2024

The result of the data presented in Table 3 shows that all the items had their mean scores ranging from 3.16 to 3.56 which is above the cut off mean of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that all the items are the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources in Plateau State. Further, the result shows that all the items had their calculated value less than the Table value of 1.96 thus accepting the null hypothesis stated. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the factors affecting community participation in the conservation of school farm resources.

Research question 4: What are the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources?

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources.

Table 4: Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-Test Result of the Respondents on the Measures for Enhancing Community Participation in the Conservation of School Farm Resources

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}_1	S_1	\bar{X}_2	S_2	\bar{X}_g	S_g	t-cal	Rmk
1	Maintain cordial relationship with the community leaders	3.31	.82	3.28	.81	3.30	.82	.33	A, NS
2	Involve both formal and informal community groups	3.43	.85	3.40	.84	3.42	.85	.32	A, NS
3	Create opportunities to contribute to strategic alignment	3.26	.81	3.22	.79	3.24	.80	.45	A, NS
4	Build community awareness campaigns	3.29	.81	3.26	.81	3.28	.81	.33	A, NS
5	Use the school as a community hub	3.52	.88	3.49	.87	3.51	.88	.31	A, NS
6	Engage the school community in the areas they can benefit from the school farm	3.44	.85	3.40	.84	3.42	.85	.42	A, NS
7	Provide sufficient support during community events	3.32	.82	3.30	.82	3.31	.82	.22	A, NS

Key: \bar{X}_1 -mean of students, \bar{X}_2 - mean of teachers, S_2 -standard deviation of students, S_2 -standard deviation of teachers, A-Agree, NS- not significant. N-328, d.f -326, level of significance- .05, t-tab-1.96

Source: Field survey 2024

The result of the data presented in Table 4 shows that all the items had their mean scores ranging from 3.24 to 3.51 which is above the cut off mean of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that all the items are the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources. The result also shows that all the items had their calculated value less than the Table value of 1.96 thus accepting the null hypothesis stated. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean response of students and agricultural science teachers on the measures for enhancing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study in research question 1 revealed that there is low extent at which the community makes their material available for the conservation of school farm resources. This finding is in line with Nassaira (2016) who found that access to these materials from the local community by the school is still at minimum. In line with the study also, Tyokyaa (2014) noted that there seem to be low utilization of community resources in the conservation of school farm.

The findings of the study in research question 2 revealed that there is low level at which the community makes themselves available for participation in the conservation of schools farm resources. The finding is in line with Oppenheim (2018) who noted that community members, especially those in the working-class and lower-class are not always an interested in performing activities that would lead to securing the school farm resources. Further in line with the findings, Muthoni, (2015) noted that expert plant breeders in the community can join in crop breeding in the farm, scientist within the community can assist in providing information indigenous soil conservation practices that could be adopted in the school farm. Onsomu and Mujidi (2017) observed in line with the findings of the study that the level at which the experts in agriculture within school community lend hands in schools farming is still very low

The findings of the study in research question 3 revealed that there are 9 challenges to community participation in the conservation of school farm resources. The finding agrees with Donoghue (2014) who found that, ignorance, poor school leadership, poverty, political interference, poor

beliefs and customs and lack of communication between the school and the community are key factors limiting community participation in school farm. More so, Onsomu and Mujidi (2011) found that unwillingness of the school to accommodate community participation is also an issue limiting community participation in school farm resources conservation.

The findings of the study in research question 4 revealed that there are 7 measures to enhance community participation in the conservation of school farm resources. This finding is in keeping with Catherine (2022) who noted that the various ways to enhance community participation in the conservation of school farm resources include involving both formal and informal community groups, building community awareness campaigns. Nation et al (2018) found in line with study that the measures to enhance community participation involves the teacher, the school management, the students and the community leaders. More so, Biogunleye (2019) pointed that the use the school as a community hub and engaging the school community are reliable measures

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there the school community makes their materials available for conservation of school farm resources at a low extent, members of the school community makes themselves available for participation in the conservation of school farm resources at a low extent, there are 9 challenges facing community participation in the conservation of school farm resources and there are 7 solutions to these challenges in Plateau State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made

1. The school community leaders should develop more interest in participating in securing the school farm resources by lending their facilities to schools when needed so their children will utilize the farm to acquire skills in school
2. Agricultural experts in the community should endeavour to make themselves available as resources persons in the school farm when their services are needed
3. The school management should maintain more healthy relationship with the school community so the challenges militating against community participation in the school farm resources conservation can be understood and solved
4. The school management, teachers and community leaders should adopt the measures identified in this study to enhance community participation in the conservation of school farm.

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