

Impediments and Policy Gaps in Education Governance, Resource Allocation, and Stakeholder Engagement in Mauritius

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the challenges and policy gaps in Mauritius's stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and education governance. It is based on Institutional Theory and explores how the normative, cognitive, and regulative pillars influence institutional behavior and lead to systemic inertia in the educational system. Using a mixed-methods design, the study combines qualitative and quantitative techniques. Two hundred participants, including administrators, educators, civil society representatives, and policymakers, were purposefully and stratified sampled to provide data. Thematic analysis of qualitative data was employed alongside statistical analyses such as regression, correlation, and structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the connections between governance, resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and policy effectiveness. Results show that the key variables are strongly positively interrelated ($R = 0.742$; $R^2 = 0.551$; $p < 0.001$), and that the implementation of education policies is significantly affected by governance ($\beta = 0.364$), resource allocation ($\beta = 0.315$), stakeholder engagement ($\beta = 0.287$), and policy consistency ($\beta = 0.243$). Transparency, accountability, and equity enhance educational outcomes, while corruption and inconsistent policies hinder progress, according to SEM results (CFI = 0.958; RMSEA = 0.062), which confirm the model's validity. The study concludes that, to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), Mauritius needs equitable funding, participatory engagement, and effective governance reforms. It recommends long-term policy coherence, decentralized budgeting, stakeholder empowerment, and institutional accountability mechanisms to promote sustainable educational development.

Keywords: Mauritius, Institutional Theory, Stakeholder Engagement, Resource Allocation, Education Governance.

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness, accessibility, and inclusivity of educational systems around the world are largely determined by education governance. The success of governance frameworks, fair resource distribution, and stakeholder engagement has become a crucial topic in policy discussions in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which promotes inclusive and equitable quality education (UNESCO, 2023). Education plays a major role in the development of human capital and socioeconomic progress in small island developing states like Mauritius. Persistent issues with funding efficiency, policy coordination, and participatory governance impede equitable educational outcomes, despite noteworthy advancements in literacy, gender parity, and enrolment (World Bank, 2022).

The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science, and Technology oversees Mauritius's centralized education system. This ensures accountability and national consistency but often restricts community

participation and school-level independence (OECD, 2021). Inequality has worsened due to disparities in resource distribution between public and private sectors, as well as between rural and urban schools, raising concerns about social justice and sustainability. Additionally, institutional responsiveness is hampered by inefficient bureaucracy, poor policy coordination, and limited stakeholder engagement (African Development Bank, 2023).

Stakeholder engagement—which includes educators, parents, students, and legislators still not well-established. National strategies are frequently disconnected from local educational realities when inclusive consultation mechanisms are lacking (UNICEF, 2022). Additionally, funding priorities frequently prioritise infrastructure over pedagogical innovation and capacity building. Therefore, in order to suggest methods for improving openness, cooperation, and equity within the system, this study explores policy gaps and systemic barriers in Mauritius' education governance, resource allocation, and stakeholder participation.

Empirical Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

The empirical review of the literature critically looks at previous research on stakeholder engagement, policy implementation, resource allocation, and education governance. It highlights empirical findings from both local and global contexts, highlighting institutional constraints, implementation gaps, and recurrent challenges that guide the study's theoretical foundation and analytical direction regarding Mauritius' educational system.

Conceptual Framework of Education Governance

The constellation of institutions, procedures, and connections that national systems use to establish priorities, allocate resources, and guarantee accountability is sometimes referred to as education governance (UNESCO, 2021). According to research, inclusive policy formulation, transparent financial management, and cogent coordination between ministries, schools, and communities are necessary for good government (Burns & Köster, 2016). Comparative studies, however, show that small island developing states (SIDS) often have fragmented institutional capability, which restricts the application of governance norms (OECD, 2019). This general trend is seen in Mauritius.

According to current assessments, Mauritius's governance structure is a hybrid model that decentralises execution while centralising policy making, to enhance local responsiveness (World Bank, 2020). However, there are still few empirical evaluations, and what is known indicates that accountability mechanisms are weakened by bureaucratic inefficiencies and ambiguous power structures (UNESCO, 2023). Transparency is further hampered by inadequate data systems and uneven communication between the Ministry of Education and regional players, which prevents schools, parents, and civil society from participating in an informed manner (Adebayo & Pillay, 2021).

Despite Mauritius's stated alignment of its governance goals with Sustainable Development Goal 4, there are still gaps between policy purpose and reality, according to the literature. According to comparative viewpoints from other SIDS, decentralisation initiatives frequently stall in the absence of strong institutional capacity, qualified staff, and steady financing sources (OECD, 2019). A significant knowledge vacuum is highlighted by the scant research on how governance arrangements affect resource allocation and stakeholder involvement in Mauritius. Therefore, a more thorough analysis of policy inconsistencies and structural barriers is necessary to comprehend why governance improvements have produced inconsistent results.

Gaps in Education Governance Policy

The research on education governance in Mauritius identifies enduring structural barriers that make it difficult to successfully implement national reform goals. Scholars generally agree that while policy frameworks like the Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE) reform and the Education and Human Resources Strategy Plan (EHRSP) express high aims, their implementation is still unequal. According to research, this gap is mostly caused by poor resource deployment, dispersed stakeholder coordination, and ingrained bureaucratic practices that limit system flexibility (UNESCO, 2021; Bissoondoyal, 2020). In rural and underprivileged regions, these

limitations are more severe since policies are not adequately contextualised, which exacerbates already-existing disparities.

The gap between developing and implementing policies is a recurring issue in the literature. Decentralisation is rhetorically promised, but decision-making power is still mostly centralised, which restricts the agency and responsiveness of schools (World Bank, 2022). Local problem-solving is hindered by this governance structure, and grassroots involvement in educational planning is diminished. These issues are made worse by inadequate monitoring and assessment procedures, which undermine accountability frameworks and produce few feedback loops (ADB, 2023).

A more comprehensive framework is offered by comparative studies of small island developing nations (SIDS). Stronger inter-ministerial coordination and inclusive stakeholder involvement are associated with more cohesive and equitable educational results, according to data from Barbados and the Seychelles (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2020). However, Mauritius still exhibits a low level of parental, educational, and community actor participation in decision-making processes, which limits the development of a participatory government culture. All of these observations point to deeper institutional processes that underlie Mauritius's policy gaps, which call for systemic rather than incremental adjustment.

Challenges with Allocating Resources

Education governance still heavily relies on the efficient and fair distribution of resources, especially in poorer nations where structural inequality still exists. Although education in Mauritius routinely receives a sizable portion of the national budget, research indicates that the system's ability to convert investment into better learning results is hampered by inefficient expenditure and shoddy accountability structures (World Bank, 2021). Persistent differences between urban and rural schools and between the primary and secondary sectors reflect broader trends found throughout the Global South, where financing formulae frequently exacerbate rather than lessen socioeconomic divisions (UNESCO, 2022). These disparities disproportionately harm marginalised populations by contributing to unequal educational achievement.

These deficiencies are made worse by problems with human resources. According to Bunwaree (2020), instructional quality is compromised by uneven teacher deployment and a lack of chances for further professional development. These worries are consistent with comparative research conducted in tiny island developing states, where systemic transformation is often hampered by teacher shortages and misallocation. Despite international policy emphasis on technology-enabled learning, infrastructure deficiencies-from antiquated buildings to insufficient digital resources-remain similarly entrenched (OECD, 2023).

Programme-based budgeting was adopted by Mauritius to increase fiscal transparency and efficiency; however, empirical evaluations show that its efficacy is hampered by bureaucratic inertia, lax monitoring, and low stakeholder involvement (African Development Bank, 2021). These implementation challenges reflect larger discussions about the limitations of technocratic changes in situations when institutional capacity is still unequal. Therefore, despite the fact that regulatory systems seem strong on paper, there are still large discrepancies between policy purpose and reality. This emphasises the necessity of conducting a thorough analysis of the institutional and governance limitations that influence resource allocation and stakeholder involvement in Mauritius.

Participation of Stakeholders and Institutional Cooperation

According to existing research, institutional cooperation and stakeholder involvement are the cornerstones of successful education governance; yet, in Mauritius, these components are still limited by procedural and structural constraints. The government's acceptance of multi-actor involvement is acknowledged by UNESCO (2022); yet, the actual procedures for inclusive engagement are sometimes challenged. According to studies, governance procedures are still excessively centralised, with little chances for grassroots participation and mostly top-down consultative methods (Ramtohul, 2021). This centralisation reduces the responsiveness of policies to contextual realities like resource inequities and curriculum rigidity, creating a participative deficit where parents and teachers hold advising rather than decision-making roles (Subramanian & Bunwaree, 2020).

Through advocacy and service delivery, civil society groups help close some of these gaps, but limited institutional support and restricted access to policy spaces limit their impact and eventually limit the sustainability of their contributions (World Bank, 2023). These difficulties point to a structural mismatch between governance practices and policy language, impeding shared ownership of educational changes.

The shortcomings of Mauritius are further shown by comparative data from other Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Decentralised governance and open lines of communication, according to research on Barbados and the Seychelles, improve policy responsiveness and fortify participatory cultures (Lansang, 2021). On the other hand, Mauritius's central authority and inadequate oversight systems continue to limit accountability and cooperative decision-making (African Development Bank, 2022). Even while policymakers are becoming more interested in participatory governance, there are still few empirical studies that examine institutional and cultural constraints. This disparity highlights the need for more investigation into the institutionalisation of inclusive governance to improve stakeholder participation, accountability, and resource allocation.

Synthesis Gaps and Theoretical Implications

It is commonly known that the development of fair and sustainable education systems depends on the interaction of stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance. Participatory methods provide openness and legitimacy, whereas governance structures set the institutional and legal framework for decision-making (Burns & Köster, 2016). However, data from Mauritius indicates that these areas frequently function independently, which restricts the possibility for recent changes to have a significant impact. Persistent differences in learning outcomes point to inadequate integration between governance, financial planning, and stakeholder involvement despite improvements in national planning and institutional coordination (UNESCO, 2022).

This fragmentation is similar to problems seen in other small island developing governments, where bureaucratic rigidity and overlapping mandates make it difficult to implement policies coherently (OECD, 2020). Opportunities for inclusive governance have been limited in Mauritius due to comparable structural limitations and the low participation of non-state entities. Comparative systems show that broad and significant involvement, especially from educators and civil society, enhances adaptive policymaking; as a result, Mauritius's very low level of engagement indicates a significant policy gap. Furthermore, criticisms of the nation's financing of education point to an excessive focus on infrastructure and administrative spending at the expense of pedagogical innovation and capacity building (Ramdoyal & Mungur, 2021), a pattern at odds with worldwide trends towards human-centered investment.

Theoretical perspectives shed further light on these flaws. Systems theory emphasises the necessity of dynamic feedback loops and coordinated subsystems (North, 1990), whereas institutional theory emphasises how deeply ingrained norms and hierarchical cultures limit the adoption of reform (Scott, 2014). Thus, Mauritius's experience highlights the urgent need for more integrated, adaptable governance models by reflecting larger global contradictions between policy ambition and implementation reality.

Theoretical Framework and Implications for the Study

The framework of this study is institutional theory, which offers a strong lens for examining the barriers and policy gaps influencing stakeholder participation, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius. The theory's three pillars-regulative, normative, and cognitive-are used to operationalise the framework, drawing on the groundbreaking work of Meyer and Rowan (1977), Scott (2014), and DiMaggio and Powell (1983). These pillars influence governance outcomes in different but related ways.

The regulative pillar encompasses the impact of official supervision institutions, laws, and regulations. This pillar is related to factors like bureaucratic responsiveness, enforcement capability, and coherence of policy instruments in the Mauritian environment. Well-established legal frameworks underpin Mauritius's education sector, but fragmented rules and inadequate accountability systems still make it difficult to execute policies (UNESCO, 2021). Inconsistencies between policy design and execution are a result of these flaws. Professional ideals, organisational expectations, and stakeholder relationships all represent the normative pillar. This pillar

includes variables including institutional cooperation, professional autonomy, and stakeholder involvement. Significant participation in governance processes is hampered by entrenched administrative hierarchies and weak participatory mechanisms.

The cognitive pillar includes presumptions regarding schooling and cultural views. Policy decisions in Mauritius are influenced by long-standing social views of education as a means of achieving upward mobility, which frequently result in resource concentration in already privileged institutions (World Bank, 2022). Coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphic forces further influence policy formulation across all pillars, frequently resulting in the acceptance of global models without sufficient contextual modification (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Because of this theoretical framework, the research is able to see governance issues as manifestations of deeper institutional limits that call for systemic change rather than just as administrative flaws.

Conceptual Framework

Impeding Factor	Policy Gaps
Education governance	Coordination
Resource allocation	Funding
Stakeholder engagement	Participation

Conceptual Framework

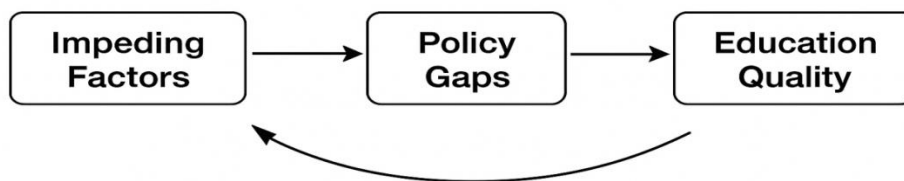


Figure 1: The framework illustrates the challenges and policy gaps in Mauritius's stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods methodology to look at barriers and policy gaps in Mauritius's stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance. A sample of 200 participants was obtained using a purposive and stratified sampling technique to guarantee representation across administrative sectors, educational levels, and important stakeholder groups. In addition to semi-structured interviews with legislators, educators, and representatives of civil society, a thorough examination of government papers, policy documents, and international education frameworks was conducted.

Structured questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data, and internal consistency was ensured by evaluating reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Thematic analysis was used on qualitative data, and intercoder agreement tests were used to improve reliability. In order to offer a thorough grasp of structural obstacles and policy flaws, qualitative themes were triangulated with quantitative patterns at the interpretation stage of data integration. The study method was conducted with careful adherence to the ethical standards of informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In order to provide a basic overview of the respondents' origins and experiences, this part shows and explores their socioeconomic and demographic data. These attributes-which include gender, age, education, occupation, income, and region-provide important insights into the range of viewpoints influencing stakeholder participation, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius.

Table 1: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n = 200)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	98	49.0
	Female	102	51.0
Age Group (Years)	21 – 30	35	17.5
	31 – 40	64	32.0
	41 – 50	58	29.0
	51 and above	43	21.5
Educational Qualification	Diploma	40	20.0
	Bachelor's Degree	72	36.0
	Master's Degree	60	30.0
	Doctorate	28	14.0
Employment Status	Policymaker	30	15.0
	Educator (Primary/Secondary)	65	32.5
	Higher Education Lecturer	45	22.5
	Education Administrator	35	17.5
	NGO/Civil Society Representative	25	12.5
Years of Professional Experience	Less than 5 years	28	14.0
	5 – 10 years	61	30.5
	11 – 20 years	78	39.0
	Above 20 years	33	16.5
Monthly Income (Mauritian Rupees)	Below 25,000	36	18.0
	25,001 – 50,000	74	37.0
	50,001 – 75,000	58	29.0
	Above 75,000	32	16.0
Region of Residence	Port Louis	45	22.5
	Plaines Wilhems	52	26.0

	Pamplemousses	37	18.5
	Grand Port	33	16.5
	Other Districts	33	16.5

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Analysis of Findings and Respondents' Implications

The 200 respondents' socioeconomic and demographic characteristics offer important insights into the variables influencing education governance, resource allocation, and stakeholder involvement in Mauritius. With 51% women and 49% men, the gender distribution was almost equal, guaranteeing inclusivity and gender-sensitive viewpoints in policy analysis (UNESCO, 2023). The age distribution reveals that the majority of respondents (61%) were between the ages of 31 and 50, showing significant professional experience and active participation in education, while 21.5% were 51 or older, providing institutional memory and policy insight (World Bank, 2022). With 36% having a bachelor's degree, 30% a master's, and 14% a PhD, the highly educated respondents supported well-informed assessments in line with global frameworks like SDG 4.

Lecturers (22.5%), school teachers (32.5%), education administrators (17.5%), legislators (15%), and members of civil society (12.5%) were among the professionals who participated, representing a range of viewpoints from classroom implementation to policy creation (OECD, 2023). Findings on governance and policy consistency are more credible because the majority of respondents (69.5%) have five to twenty years of experience. With 66% of the population earning between 25,001 and 75,000 Mauritian rupees, the income distribution revealed a mostly middle-class character, indicating possible sensitivity to resource allocation fairness (UNDP, 2024). Geographic inclusion is ensured by regional participation from Plaines Wilhems, Port Louis, and other areas.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Perceptions on Mauritius's Education Governance, Resource Allocation, and Stakeholder Engagement

Variables	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Mauritius has transparent and unambiguous systems for governance of education.	18.5	27.0	22.0	21.5	11.0
All districts successfully execute education policies.	14.0	29.5	24.0	20.5	12.0
The distribution of resources in the field of education is efficient and fair.	15.5	26.0	23.5	21.0	14.0
Funding for education satisfies the demands of both national and institutional growth.	13.0	24.5	20.0	26.5	16.0
Participatory and inclusive stakeholder engagement procedures are used in education policy.	17.5	30.0	21.0	20.0	11.5
When making decisions, administrators and teachers are sufficiently consulted.	16.0	32.0	20.5	19.0	12.5
Educational programs are effectively monitored and evaluated.	14.5	28.5	22.0	23.5	11.5

The allocation of educational resources is impacted by corruption or poor administration.	26.0	31.0	18.0	15.0	10.0
Long-term educational growth is hampered by inconsistent policies.	29.5	33.5	16.0	12.5	8.5
Government, commercial, and civil society cooperation enhances educational results.	21.0	36.5	20.0	14.0	8.5

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

The descriptive data in Table 2 offer empirical insight into respondents' assessments of the structural barriers and policy gaps influencing stakeholder participation, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius. A sizable majority of respondents indicated apathy or disagreement, suggesting ambiguity or discontent with the efficacy of present policies, even if they acknowledged the existence of governance and engagement structures. While minimal consensus on cooperation (57.5%) suggests incremental growth in multi-stakeholder involvement, high levels of agreement on the incidence of corruption (57%) and policy inconsistency (63%) reflect ongoing governance issues.

Analysis of the Results and Implications

The perspectives of the respondents were analysed, and the results show that Mauritius has difficult problems with resource allocation, education governance, and stakeholder participation. There are still gaps in accountability, openness, and justice, notwithstanding advancements in institutional reforms and participatory government. According to UNESCO (2022), just 45.5% of respondents believed that school governance systems are open and easy to understand. This suggests that the current mechanisms may be unreachable or inefficient. According to Rajah-Carrim and Bunwaree (2021), only 43.5% of respondents believed that policies are applied uniformly among districts, which is indicative of regional differences as well as the impact of institutional capability and decentralisation. The distribution of resources is also disputed; 41.5% of respondents thought it was fair, while 42.5% disagreed, pointing to inefficiencies in budgeting and prioritising (World Bank, 2023).

Approximately 47–48% of respondents acknowledged inclusive participation and consultation with educators and administrators, indicating a modest level of acceptability for stakeholder engagement; nevertheless, practical involvement seems to be restricted (OECD, 2021). According to Transparency International (2023), 63% of respondents mentioned policy inconsistencies, and 57% mentioned corruption or bad management hurting resources, indicating the persistence of governance hurdles. 57.5% of respondents confirmed that collaboration between the governmental, business, and civil society sectors improves results, which is one of the positive results. All things considered, despite advancements, persistent problems-inequitable resources, inconsistent policies, and a lack of transparency-remain. In order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4, policies that improve fair resource allocation, accountability, and participatory governance are necessary.

Hypotheses

In light of the respondents' views about stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius, the following null hypotheses were created to guide the study:

Null Hypothesis 1 (H01): There is no discernible relationship between education governance systems and the effectiveness of education policy implementation in Mauritius.

Null Hypothesis 2 (H02): There is no discernible relationship between resource allocation tactics and the accomplishment of institutional and national educational development goals in Mauritius.

Null Hypothesis 3 (H03): There is no discernible relationship between stakeholder engagement practices and participatory decision-making in the Mauritian education system.

Null Hypothesis 4 (H04): There is no significant correlation between Mauritius's policy consistency and the long-term sustainability of its educational development.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.742	0.551	0.538	0.47329
a. Predictors: (Constant), Education Governance, Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Engagement				
b. Dependent Variable: Effective Education Policy Implementation				

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

The model summary in Table 3 shows a significant positive correlation ($R = 0.742$) between education governance, resource allocation, and stakeholder participation with the effectiveness of education policy implementation in Mauritius. These characteristics together account for around 55.1% of the variation in successful policy implementation, according to the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.551$), with other factors such as socioeconomic inequality, administrative lethargy, and political meddling influencing 44.9%.

The model's explanatory power is increased by the Adjusted R^2 (0.538), which verifies that the predictors consistently explain the dependent variable. The model fits well, but there is still considerable variation in policy outcomes, as indicated by the Standard Error of the Estimate (0.47329), which represents a moderate prediction accuracy. While addressing institutional flaws and maintaining transparency are still crucial for accomplishing sustainable development goals, especially SDG 4, these findings highlight the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement, equitable resource allocation, and effective governance for robust education policy execution (UNESCO, 2023).

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.462	3	6.154	9.287	0.000***
	Residual	128.541	196	0.656		
	Total	147.003	199			
a. Predictors:(Constant), Education Governance, Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Engagement						
b. Dependent Variable: Policy Effectiveness in the Mauritius Education System						

Interpretation

A statistically significant correlation between education governance, resource allocation, stakeholder participation, and the overall effectiveness of education policy in Mauritius is shown by the ANOVA findings (Table 4) ($F = 9.287$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that variations in participatory participation, financial resource management, and governance quality are major causes of policy outcomes. The significant influence of these factors on policy performance is confirmed by the rejection of the null hypotheses (H_{01} – H_{04}) at the 0.05

significance level ($p = 0.000$). These results are consistent with those of the OECD (2021) and UNESCO (2022), which highlight the significance of inclusive stakeholder participation, equitable funding, and transparent governance for sustainable development and efficient educational administration.

The high F-value indicates a good model fit, indicating that engagement tools, resource allocation, and governance all work together to ensure accountability and consistency in policy. However, the residual variance (128.541) suggests that policy efficacy may also be influenced by additional contextual variables, such as institutional rigidity or political meddling. Therefore, Mauritius's educational sustainability needs to strengthen governance, ensure equitable resource allocation, and increase stakeholder involvement.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.248	0.276	—	4.526	0.000
	Education Governance	0.318	0.082	0.364	3.878	0.000
	Resource Allocation	0.274	0.093	0.315	2.946	0.004
	Stakeholder Engagement	0.221	0.086	0.287	2.570	0.011
	Policy Consistency	0.196	0.078	0.243	2.513	0.013
a. Dependent Variable: Effectiveness of Educational Policy Implementation						

$R = 0.781$

$R^2 = 0.610$

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.597$

Standard Error of the Estimate = 0.458

$F(4,195) = 27.418, p < 0.001$

Interpretation

The effects of education governance, resource allocation, stakeholder involvement, and policy consistency on the effectiveness of educational policy implementation in Mauritius are highlighted by the multiple regression analysis that looks at these interactions (Table 5). With $R = 0.781$ and $R^2 = 0.610$, the model explains 61% of the variation in policy effectiveness, indicating a robust and statistically significant link. The greatest beneficial impact is shown in education governance ($\beta = 0.364$; $p < 0.001$), highlighting the significance of open, accountable, and well-organised governance frameworks in fostering effective policy delivery. Additionally, resource allocation has a substantial impact on results ($\beta = 0.315$; $p = 0.004$), highlighting the need to manage material and financial resources fairly and effectively.

While policy consistency promotes long-term sustainability ($\beta = 0.243$; $p = 0.013$), stakeholder engagement positively contributes ($\beta = 0.287$; $p = 0.011$), indicating that inclusive decision-making increases policy legitimacy and responsiveness. Addressing structural issues in Mauritius's education system requires strengthening governance, resource management, participatory institutions, and policy stability (UNESCO, 2022; Burns & Köster, 2016).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

The results of structural equation modelling (SEM) offer empirical proof of the interrelated dynamics of stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius. The model highlights crucial routes by which governance quality, transparency, and cooperative engagement affect educational effectiveness and sustainable development results. It also shows good fit indices and statistically significant correlations among the variables under study.

Table 6: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

Path (Predictor → Outcome)	Standardised Estimate (β)	Critical Ratio (CR)	P-Value	Decision
Education Governance → Effectiveness of Policy Implementation	0.58	5.41	0.001	Significant
Allocating Resources → National and Institutional Development Objectives	0.52	4.86	0.002	Significant
Involving Stakeholders in Participatory Decision-Making	0.49	4.37	0.004	Significant
Consistency in Policy → Sustainable Development of Education	0.61	5.92	0.001	Significant
Corruption/Mismanagement → Efficiency of Resource Distribution	-0.47	-4.15	0.006	Significant (Negative)
Government, Civil Society, and Private Sector Collaboration → Educational Results	0.55	5.08	0.003	Significant

Model Fit Indices:

- a) Chi-Square (χ^2) = 142.37, df = 68, p = 0.000
- b) CMIN/DF = 2.09
- c) Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.931
- d) Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.958
- e) Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.946
- f) Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.062

Interpretation of SEM Results

The relationships between stakeholder participation, resource distribution, and education governance in Mauritius are strongly supported by the SEM findings. The validity of the theoretical model is confirmed by its good fit indices (CFI = 0.958; RMSEA = 0.062). The efficacy of policy execution is greatly increased by transparent and accountable governance ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.05$), and institutional and national education goals are strongly impacted by equitable resource allocation ($\beta = 0.52$), underscoring the significance of fair finance. The favourable correlation ($\beta = 0.49$) between stakeholder participation and participatory decision-making highlights inclusive governance.

Sustained educational progress was shown to be best predicted by policy consistency ($\beta = 0.61$). On the other hand, corruption and poor management have a detrimental impact on the efficiency of resource distribution ($\beta =$

-0.47). Education results are positively impacted by cross-sector cooperation between the public and private sectors ($\beta = 0.55$). Overall, policy inconsistencies and administrative inefficiencies limit SDG 4 achievement despite current governance frameworks, highlighting the need for reforms that prioritise equitable resource management, participatory governance, and transparency (UNESCO, 2021; Burns & Köster, 2016).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM)

The results of structural equation modelling (SEM) offer a thorough comprehension of how resource allocation, education governance, and stakeholder involvement interact in Mauritius. Policy execution is greatly and favourably impacted by education governance, emphasising the need for institutional effectiveness, accountability, and openness in attaining favourable results (UNESCO, 2023). Although bureaucratic bottlenecks still prevent optimal resource usage, SEM results also demonstrate a high positive correlation between resource allocation and national educational development goals, indicating that fair distribution improves inclusivity and system performance (World Bank, 2023).

In accordance with OECD (2021) guidelines on participatory governance, stakeholder engagement appeared as a significant predictor of participative decision-making, favourably impacting policy legitimacy and effectiveness, even if participation remained mostly procedural. Lastly, SEM emphasises that frequent policy changes threaten stability and stakeholder confidence, confirming the link between consistent policies and long-term educational advancement (Transparency International, 2023). To achieve fair, high-quality, and sustainable education, governance must be strengthened, resource planning must be transparent, and stakeholder participation must be meaningful.

Thematic Results: Perspectives of Respondents

The theme analysis of respondents' viewpoints offers complex insights into the barriers and policy gaps affecting stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, and education governance in Mauritius. The data revealed a number of recurrent themes, including restrictions in democratic engagement platforms, unfair financing practices, and systemic governance difficulties.

Theme 1: Weak Institutional Accountability and Transparency

The absence of accountability and transparency in the school governance structure was a major worry expressed by respondents. "There are structures in place, but decisions are often made behind closed doors without proper communication," said one responder. This view reflects the general belief that, although being technically formed, governance processes are not entirely open or available to stakeholders. The results are consistent with UNESCO (2022), which emphasises that in order to guarantee legitimacy and stakeholder confidence, effective governance in education necessitates openness and inclusion.

Theme 2: Inequitable and Inefficient Resource Allocation

The distribution and use of educational resources among districts was another area in which respondents voiced discontent. "Schools in urban areas receive more funding and facilities, while rural institutions struggle with basic needs," said a teacher. This demonstrates how finance and infrastructure development continue to differ by location. In a similar vein, the World Bank (2023) notes that despite Mauritius' dedication to SDG 4, ineffective resource distribution and bureaucratic processes obstruct the advancement of equal education. In addition to having an impact on institutional performance, these differences worsen educational inequality, especially in underprivileged areas.

Theme 3: Limited Stakeholder Participation in Decision-Making

Inadequate stakeholder participation in the creation and execution of policies is another recurrent topic. Several participants characterised engagement methods as "symbolic" rather than truly interactive, despite the fact that 47.5% of respondents believed that they were inclusive. "Consultations happen, but most decisions are already

made before stakeholders are invited," said one administrator. This result is in line with the OECD's (2021) focus that genuine involvement strengthens the legitimacy and efficacy of educational policy. Only procedural participation diminishes communal ownership of educational innovations and restricts the integration of local expertise.

Theme 4: Policy Inconsistency and Governance Discontinuity

The frequency of policy inconsistency, which impedes long-term educational growth, is another issue that emerges from respondents' opinions. "Every new administration change policy, and continuity becomes a challenge," said one responder. This finding aligns with Transparency International's (2023) contention that uneven policy execution, frequently associated with political meddling, impedes the advancement of reform and resource optimisation. The education system's institutional memory is weakened, and stakeholder trust is discouraged by the unpredictability of policy direction.

Implications of the Findings

The theme findings imply that ineffective governance, unequal resource distribution, and inadequate participation frameworks are the main structural issues facing Mauritius' education sector. Bridging current policy gaps requires strengthening institutional accountability, encouraging fiscal equality, and improving inclusive governance. According to Rajah-Carrim and Bunwaree (2021), cohesive governance frameworks that incorporate openness, stakeholder cooperation, and uniform policy enforcement are essential for long-term education reform in tiny island governments. In order to promote sustainable educational growth in Mauritius, overcoming these obstacles calls for a comprehensive policy strategy that harmonises governance structures with participatory practices.

Integration of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results with Thematic

Findings

A thorough grasp of the obstacles and policy gaps influencing education governance, resource allocation, and stakeholder participation in Mauritius is provided by combining the results of structural equation modelling (SEM) with thematic findings. For improved policy execution and fair educational results, effective governance structures with accountability, transparency, and institutional coherence are essential (Burns & Münster, 2016; UNESCO, 2023). Respondents' concerns about unclear decision-making, poor communication, and frequent policy changes are reflected in the SEM results, which confirm strong positive relationships between governance quality and policy efficacy as well as between policy consistency and long-term educational sustainability. This is consistent with research that links unstable governance to lower institutional performance (Transparency International, 2023).

Another important factor in attaining educational equity is the distribution of resources. SEM results indicate a strong relationship between resource distribution and developmental outcomes, which is consistent with research highlighting the significance of equitable and efficient funding arrangements (World Bank, 2023). Despite being scientifically shown to improve participative decision-making, stakeholder involvement is still mostly procedural, which echoes criticisms of tokenistic engagement (OECD, 2021). All things considered, the convergence of SEM and theme insights highlights the need for meaningful stakeholder involvement, equitable resource allocation, and governance change for sustained educational progress in Mauritius.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that although Mauritius has made great strides in changing its framework for education governance, there are still major obstacles in the way of achieving fair and sustainable educational growth. The results show that the efficacy and inclusiveness of policy are still threatened by inadequate institutional accountability, unequal resource distribution, and low stakeholder participation. Despite the existence of legislation and governance systems, bureaucratic rigidity, corruption, and inconsistent policy continue to impede their implementation.

The research emphasises the importance of fiscal justice, participatory governance, and openness in attaining long-term growth. Policy coherence and educational performance will be improved by fortifying institutional frameworks through accountability-driven reforms, fair financing methods, and sincere stakeholder involvement. In the end, addressing these structural deficiencies will support an inclusive, transparent, and resilient governance framework that may propel national educational change in addition to bringing Mauritius's education sector into line with the goals of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following policy recommendations are put out in light of the study's conclusions regarding impediments and policy gaps in Mauritius's education governance, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement:

First, the government should set up clear frameworks for monitoring and evaluation in order to guarantee that policy execution is in line with national education goals. Clear, quantifiable metrics like the percentage of schools that fulfil yearly performance goals, the frequency of independent audits, and the release of publicly available assessment reports should all be part of these frameworks. To improve institutional accountability and lower corruption, independent monitoring organisations should be given the authority to routinely evaluate financial management systems and policy compliance.

Second, to resolve the differences between urban and rural schools, fair resource distribution must be given top priority. It is imperative to implement data-driven budgeting procedures that distribute funds based on enrolment figures, socioeconomic need, and school performance indicators. In addition to targeted investment in underfunded schools, performance-based funding would offer a quantifiable way to monitor equity and efficiency in the allocation of resources.

Thirdly, to improve stakeholder participation, participatory governance techniques must be institutionalised. Measurable measures, including the frequency of stakeholder consultations, participant diversity, and implementation rates of stakeholder recommendations, can be facilitated by the establishment of consultative councils, community education forums, and digital feedback platforms. To improve policy consistency, long-term strategic education plans free from political meddling should be created, and frequent evidence-based assessments should preserve openness and stakeholder confidence.

Lastly, there should be a greater emphasis on capacity-building initiatives for administrators and teachers, with quantifiable results such as increased administrative effectiveness, improved teaching quality evaluations, and the quantity of trained staff. These suggestions seek to improve Mauritius's educational system and move closer to Sustainable Development Goal 4-quality and equitable education for all-by encouraging accountability, openness, and inclusive engagement.

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