



THE NATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Reviewing the Quality of Basic Education in the MOMASE Region of PNG: East Sepik & Morobe

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Name of presenter

OVERVIEW

- Introduction and Background
- Aims, and Focus, Location, Current Education System
- Methodology
- Data Collection & Management
- Literature Review
- Findings and Discussion
- Conclusion

Aim of the study

- ❑ This study aimed to do an investigation into the quality of universal basic education.
- ❑ The study intended to identify the problems in detail in order to obtain clearer understanding of the underlying issues and find ways forward for policy makers and the government of Papua New Guinea to embark on.
- ❑ The study monitored closely the universal basic education and quality issues in selected PNG schools; hence, it had a prime focus of unearthing data which hopes to shed light on appropriate directions to curtail quality problems in schools and the next series of studies on problems of universal basic education.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the main factors that affect basic education in East Sepik and Morobe provinces
- To identify the challenges the Momase schools are facing and suggest interventions on how to resolve the issues.

Introduction & Background (1)

- Since independence Papua New Guinea has made enormous progress in achieving universal basic education for her children.
- Much has also been achieved as a result of the National Education Plans 1995-2004 and 2005-2014, and 2015 - 2019.
- However, a lot still remains to be done in order for Papua New Guinea to realise its international commitments, especially towards the Convention of the Rights of the Child which recognises that education is a right that belongs to all children without any form of discrimination, (the Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), (UBE Plan 2015-2019).
- While access and retention are measured through enrolment and output at grade eight after nine years of basic education, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest the achievement of quality, although, grade eight results can be used as a measure of quality for schools.

Introduction & Background (2)

- Quality is one aspect that cannot be measured from the results of grade eight examinations alone.
- Although quality is referred to as “achievement of required standard of literacy and numeracy of children after nine years of basic education”, there is more than just reaching a standard level of literacy and numeracy.
- Quality can be measured from the access all through to retention including other factors in the process of basic education such as societal influence, schools’ facilities and equipment, parental support, peer influences, teachers’ factors and importantly government policies.
- It is therefore timely that a review into quality of universal basic education is carried out to determine factors affecting it. To a certain extent, one could assert that government policy such as TFF is another factor affecting quality universal basic education.

Introduction & Background (3)

- ❖ The UBE/ER Research team has been involved in analyzing, compiling and the writing of Provincial and District Profiles - Biannual
- ❖ From 2018 - 2020 we managed to complete the 2009 provincial and district education profiles (20 provinces) were published in December 2020. Due to directives from our Management, we fast forwarded our work to 2015 and 2019 education profiles but called them Key Education Development Indicators which were released and published last year 2021 (housed in the Development Indicators program)
- ❖ All publications can be accessed from the NRI Website. Publications of our UBE Profiles education key development indicators come under “Other Publication” **WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS?**

Introduction & Background (4)

UBERP carried out a nation-wide survey on “Reviewing the Quality of Universal Basic Education in Papua New Guinea after seeing the downward falling trend of education quality in schools nationwide evidenced in the analyses and findings of the education profiles and key education development indicators for all provinces and districts.

Data collection was done in the four regions of the country from June 2018 – December 2018.

- Ø1. Highlands Region: (Eastern Highlands & Enga)
- Ø2. New Guinea Island: (East New Britain and AROB)
- Ø3. Momase: (East Sepik and Morobe)
- Ø4. Southern Region: (Central and Milne Bay)

Overall, data was collected from the following:

- ❖ 8 Provinces
- ❖ 16 Districts
- ❖ 140 schools visited
- ❖ interviewing 8000 students
- ❖ 1600 teachers and
- ❖ 140 Head Teachers.

All four Regional Reports were anticipated to have been completed by end of 2020, however, due to unexpected challenges, the reports have only been completed last year.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – MOTHER TONGUE EDUCATION
TOK PISIN OR VERNACULAR
Prep1-2 (aged 6-8 years)

LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL
Grades 3-5
TOK PISIN & ENGLISH



BILINGUAL EDUCATION
(aged 9-11 years)
VERNACULAR & ENGLISH

UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH – ONLY EDUCATION
Grades 6-8 (aged 12-14 years)

Methodology

- The methodological approach for this study was a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods utilizing school survey questionnaires and interviews with the aim to triangulate both data.
- Participants' interviews were conducted where members of different subjects could not read and respond to the questionnaires and this group of subjects were the students. A one-on-one participants' interview was preferred over the other interview types because of the researchers' intention to generate a rich understanding of the subjects' experiences and beliefs in relation to the quality of education they were experiencing.

Participants & Sampling Procedures

- ❑ This study used systematic and stratified sampling procedures to help gain data from different strata of the school population and authorities in East Sepik and Morobe provinces respectively.
- ❑ The participants of this study comprised of 25 head teachers, 310 teachers and 2,256 students thus a total of 2,591 participants took part in the survey.

Data collection & Analysis Procedures

- ❑ The questionnaire was given to all teachers and head teachers of the study by the researchers on the day of the interview.
- ❑ The researchers then met with the selected students from the respective schools to conduct face-to-face interview in order to complete the questionnaires.
- ❑ The interview was completed in one hour with the return rate of nearly 100% of the selected interviewees.
- ❑ After the interview with students, the researchers retrieved the questionnaires from the teachers and head teachers before they departed each school.
- ❑ The responses to the questionnaires were analysed using excel spreadsheet and SPSS for discussions. The tools for analysis were usage of tables, graphs and pie charts to compare the responses of the different cohorts.

Ethics Approval

- ❖ The proposal together with the refined questions and letter of transmittal were sent to the National Department of Education (Research and Evaluation Unit) for Ethics Approval.
- ❖ After the approval was granted, the informant consent letters together with the Ethics Approval letter was sent to the respective provincial education advisor (PEA) for approval.
- ❖ After the provincial approval, two teams of researchers were sent to carry out the survey. One team to East Sepik and another team to Morobe.
- ❖ The team identified field assistants on the ground to assist in data collection.

Literature Review: East Sepik Province

- ❖ There are many journeys to experience in this Province that take you through incredible rivers and coastal plains meeting extraordinary people and their culture.
- ❖ East Sepik is the second largest province in PNG. Its capital is Wewak. It has a land area of 43,426 square kilometers is divided into six districts; Ambunit-Dreikikir, Angoram, Maprik, Wewak, Wosera-Gawi, and Yangoru-Saussia district. It has a population of over 433,000 people and one of the most visited of all PNG's province. To date 60 percent of all visitors to PNG go to East Sepik.
- ❖ East Sepik Province has been and is harmonious with the five National Goals and Directive Principles achieved through education system that promotes moral and ethical values, and that equips individuals to be literate, skilled and healthy citizens, so that they can contribute to the peace and prosperity of the province.

Con't East Sepik

- ❖ In particular, the 2009 report quantified that East Sepik had 262 primary and community schools (51%) and 257 elementary schools (49%).
- ❖ The GER was 87.4%, NER was 53.2%, NAR was 13.6% and the Quality (sum of mean score) of UBE was 53.4.
- ❖ In 2016 the province had 274 primary schools from which 98 were government agency schools and 176 were run by Church and others governing bodies.
- ❖ There were 420 elementary schools from which 128 were government agency schools and 238 were run by Church and other governing bodies. Primary school's GER and NER was 93.5% and 45.8%, and elementary school's GER and NER were 139.0% and 47.1% respectively.
- ❖ This study chose 13 schools in both Wewak and Angoram district of East Sepik Province as sample areas for the study.

Con't East Sepik

- ❖ The East Sepik Provincial Government with the support from the UN and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's funding, submitted the Ten-Year Provincial Education Plan to the National Department of Education (NDoE) to be incorporated into the 2010-2019 National Education Plan.
- ❖ The NDoE used the provincial plan as the guide and implement the national priorities at the subnational level.
- ❖ The planning exercises conducted under the leadership of the NDoE and the Provincial Government have significantly enhanced the capacity of the East Sepik education authority, which in turn supports the school boards in implementing their inclusive School Learning Improvement Plan.
- ❖ Apparently, East Sepik has made a significant progress in the UBE over the last decade from 2009 to 2019.

Literature Review: Morobe Province

- ❖ Morobe Province is located at the beginning of the Highlands Highway, the main transport corridor to the coast.
- ❖ The Province stretches from the Sarawaget Range in the north along the Huon Peninsula to the east and through the Markham Valley in the center of the province.
- ❖ The Bulolo and Watut Valleys run north-south with the Ekuti and Owen Stanley Ranges in the south.
- ❖ This province takes in the second largest city of the nation, Lae, which is the capital of the Province.
- ❖ It accommodates population of approximately 5000,000 is divided into nine districts; Bulolo, Finschhafen, Huon, Kabwum, Lae, Markham, Menyamya, Nawae, and Tawae-Siassi district.
- ❖ To get the snapshot of the quality of UBE in the Morobe Province, the sampling area were Markham and Lae district.

Con't Morobe Province

- ❖ In consistent to its Provincial vision and the National directive principles the Provincial Government reinforced the 10 years (2007–2017) Provincial Education Plan (PEP) to drive the growth of the education system.
- ❖ Thus, the education system has been drastically improving, expanding and increasing in basic education and also secondary and vocational education.
- ❖ In 2016 Morobe Province had 357 actively run primary schools and 817 elementary schools.
- ❖ The primary school's GER and NER were 98.7% and 59.0%.
- ❖ The elementary school's GER and NER were 163.5% and 68.6% respectively.
- ❖ This study was carried out in twelve (12) schools in both Markham and Lae district of Morobe Province to identify the factors that impeded the quality of UBE in the province.

Con't Morobe Province

- ❖ The Morobe Provincial Governments, both former and current, considered education as a vital tool for human capital development and invest vastly in the education system, while ensuring this prepares healthy, literate and skilled individuals who then contribute to the peace and prosperity of the province.
- ❖ The province has made a very significant progress on education over the last two decades (1996-2016).
- ❖ In the first 11 years (1996-2007) the province established 301 primary and community schools and 541 elementary schools.
- ❖ The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) was 67.96%, Net Enrolment Rate (NER) was 50.04% and Net Admission Rate was 9.20%.

Results & Key Findings – Participating Schools

Schools in East Sepik Province	Schools in Morobe Province
1. Angoram Primary	1. Amba Demonstration Primary School
2. Banak Elementary School	2. Arifiran Primary School
3. Banak Primary School	3. Markham Road Primary School
4. Dagua Elementary School	4. Milfordhaven Primary School
5. Dagua Primary School	5. Mutzing Primary School
6. Gavien Primary School	6. St Mary's Catholic Primary School
7. Hawain Primary School	7. St Martin's Elementary School
8. Kasmin Primary School	8. St Martin's Primary School
9. Kreer Heights Primary	9. St Paul's Elementary School
10. Moim Primary School	10. St Paul's Primary School
11. Passam Primary School	11. Zumara Primary School
12. Tumurau Primary School	12. Zumim Primary School
13. Yawasoro Primary School	

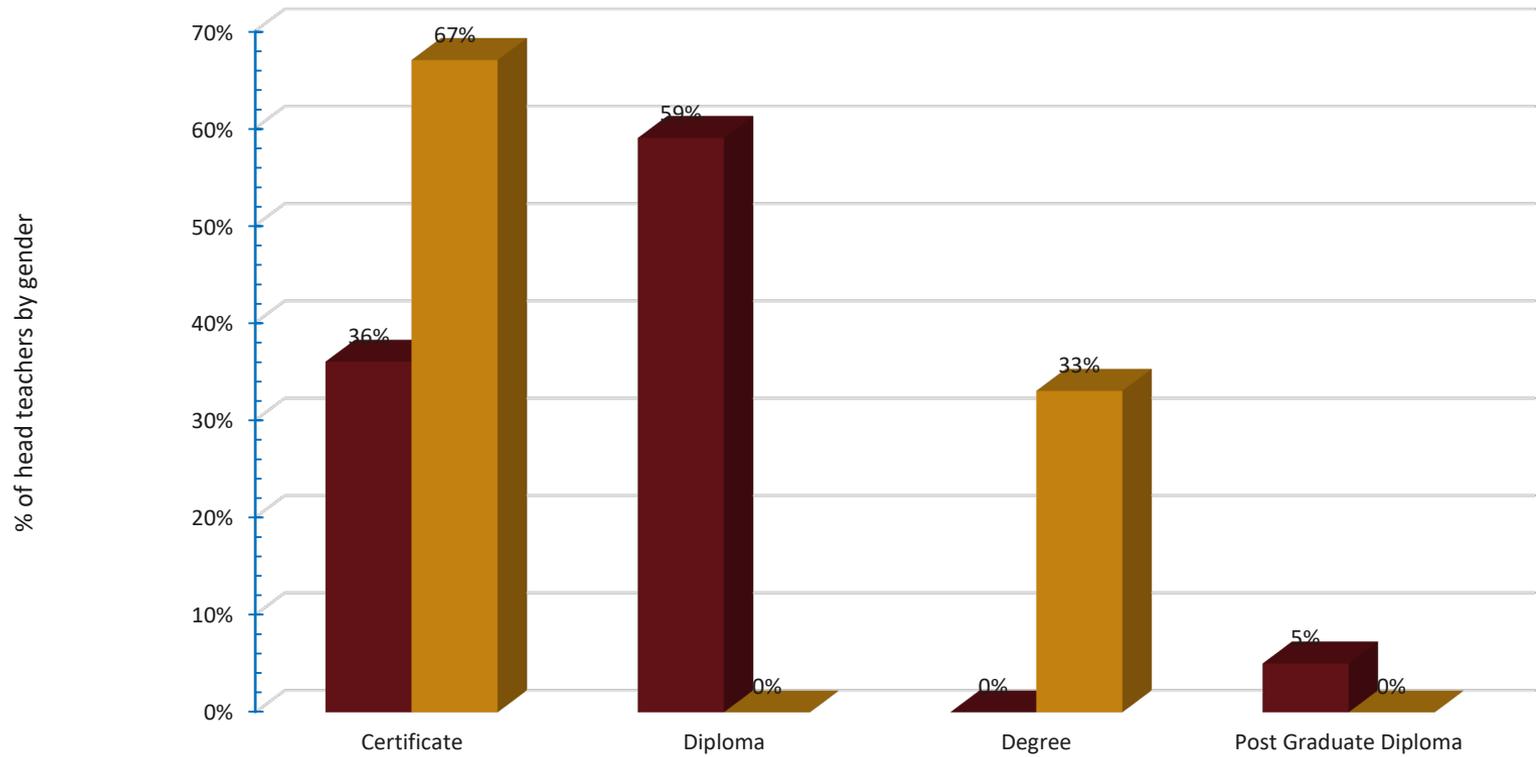
Participants of the study

Participants	East Sepik Province		Morobe Province		TOTALS	
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Head teachers -25	12	1	10	2		25
Teachers -310	43	84	40	143		310
Primary Teachers	38	68	39	137	282	
Elementary Teachers	5	16	1	6	28	
Students	484	414	627	651		2176
Students Primary	464	389	615	634	2,102	
Students Elementary	20	25	12	17	74	
TOTALS	539	499	677	796		2511

RESULTS: Head Teachers

	East Sepik Province	Morobe Province
Male	12	10
Female	1	2
Total No. of Schools	13	12

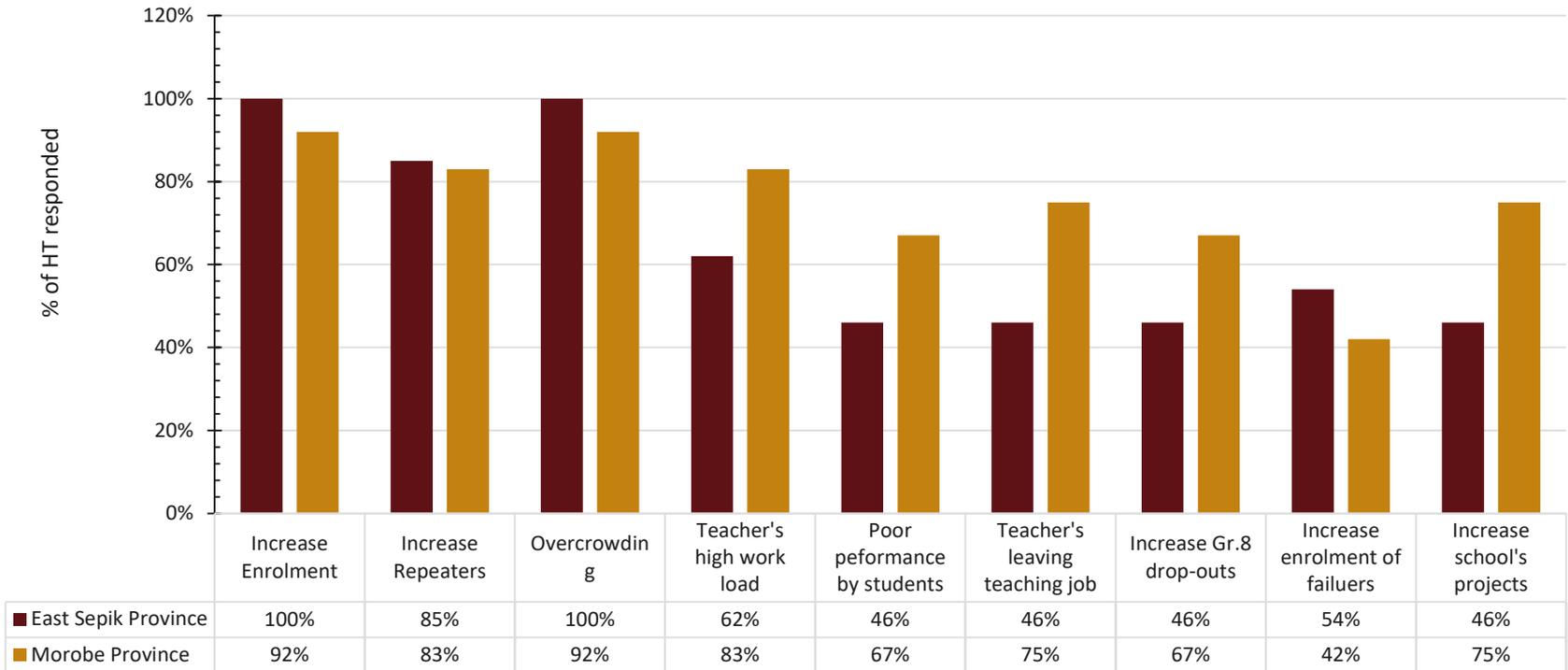
Head Teachers Education level by Gender



Challenges HeadTeachers face

Challenges	Province Name			
	East Sepik Province		Morobe Province	
	HT who agreed	HT who disagreed	HT who agreed	HT who disagreed
Funding Issue	11	2	11	1
Inadequate school equipment & infrastructure	12	1	11	1
Student & Teacher's Discipline issue	6	7	4	8
Lack of learning facilities & resources	6	7	10	2
Lack of parents & community's support	12	1	10	2

% of Head teachers' comments on negative effects of TFF policy on quality education



RESULTS - TEACHERS

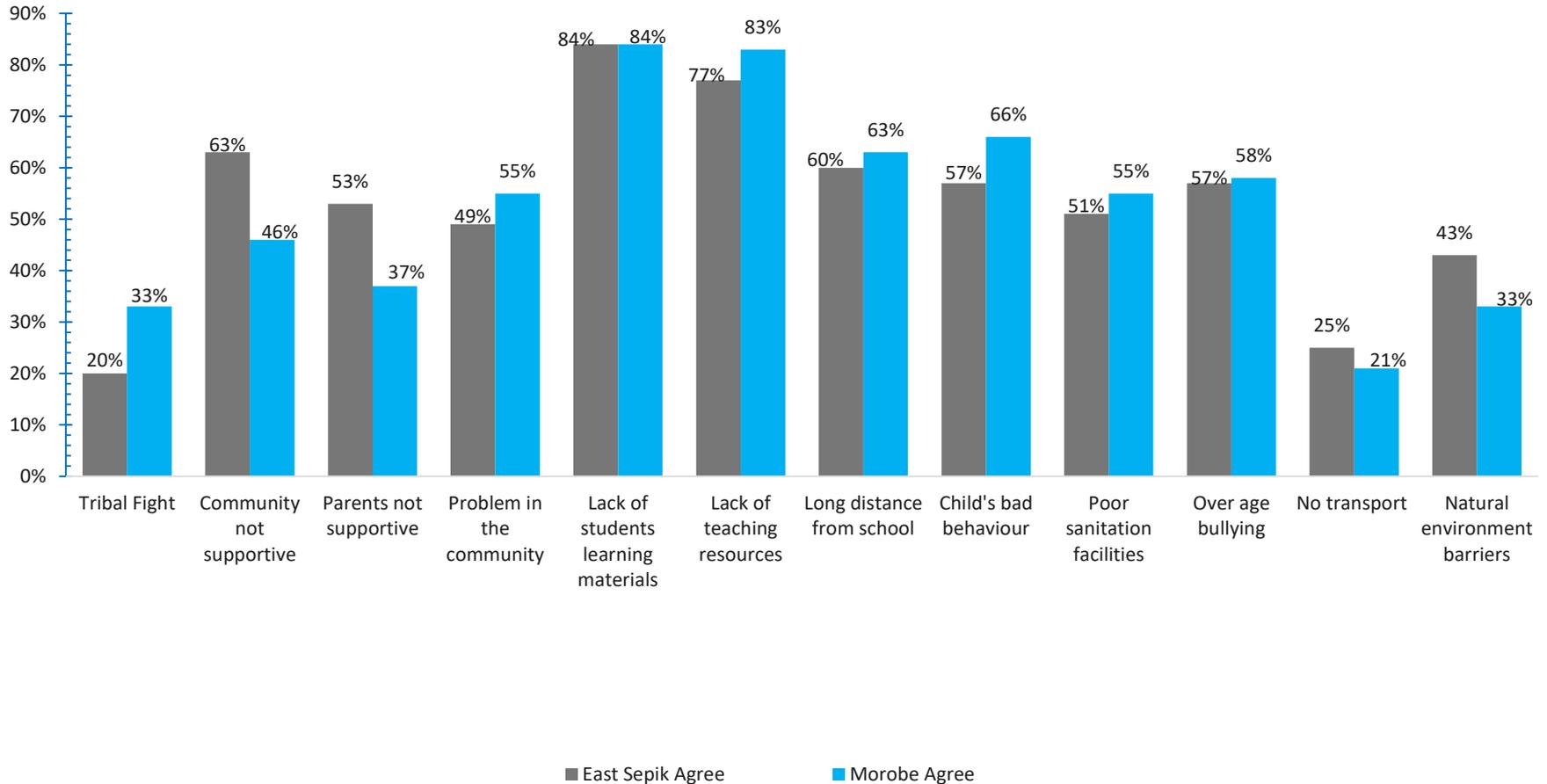
Total number of teachers and schools by province

	Province Name		
Gender	East Sepik	Morobe	Total Teachers Region
Male	43 Primary=38 Elementary=5	40 Primary=39 Elementary=1	83
Female	84 Primary=68 Elementary=16	143 Primary=137 Elementary=6	227

Teachers' Level of Education by Gender

	Gender	
Education Level	Male	Female
Certificate	9	32
Diploma	63	177
Degree	6	13
Post Graduate Diploma	3	1

Teachers' responses on the challenges faced in school



Teachers' comment on the negative effect of TFF Policy on education

	East Sepik	Morobe
Effects	Teachers Agreed [Total Teachers = 127]	Teachers Agreed [Total Teachers = 183]
Increase Enrolment	113	171
Increase Repeaters	114	159
Overcrowding	114	172
Teacher's workload	94	164
Poor performance	73	143
Teachers leave for other job	48	88
Increase Gr.8 dropouts	72	124
Increase enrolment of failures	85	130
Increase school project	82	107

STUDENTS

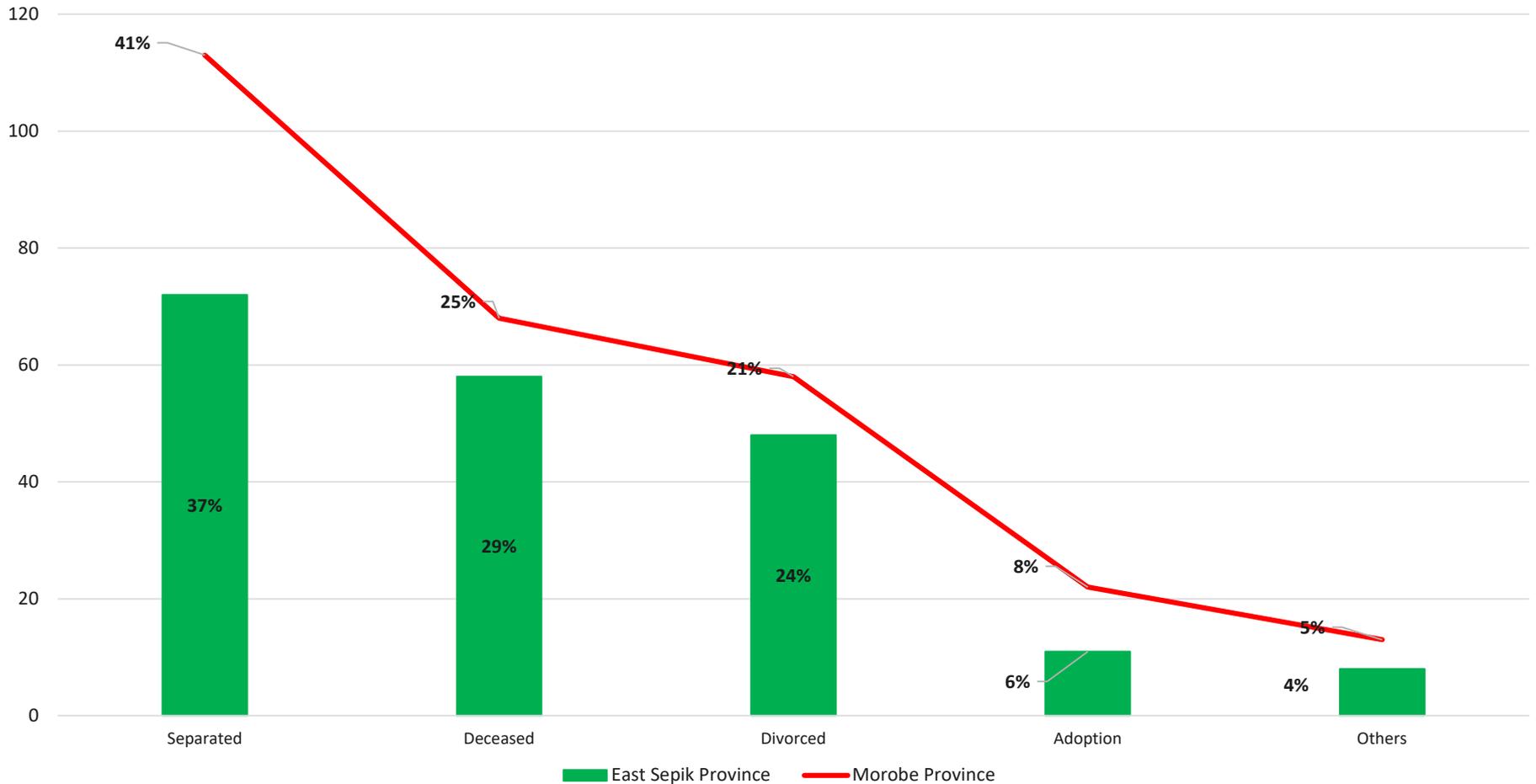
Number of Students by Gender

		Province		
Educational Stage	Gender	East Sepik Province	Morobe Province	
Primary School	Male	464	615	
	Female	389	634	
Elementary School	Male	20	12	
	Female	25	17	
Total		898	1278	

Parents' of students' Marital Status by Province

	Student's response per province		
Parent's Marital Status	East Sepik Province	Morobe Province	Total
Living Together	669	978	1647
Not Living Together	209	274	483

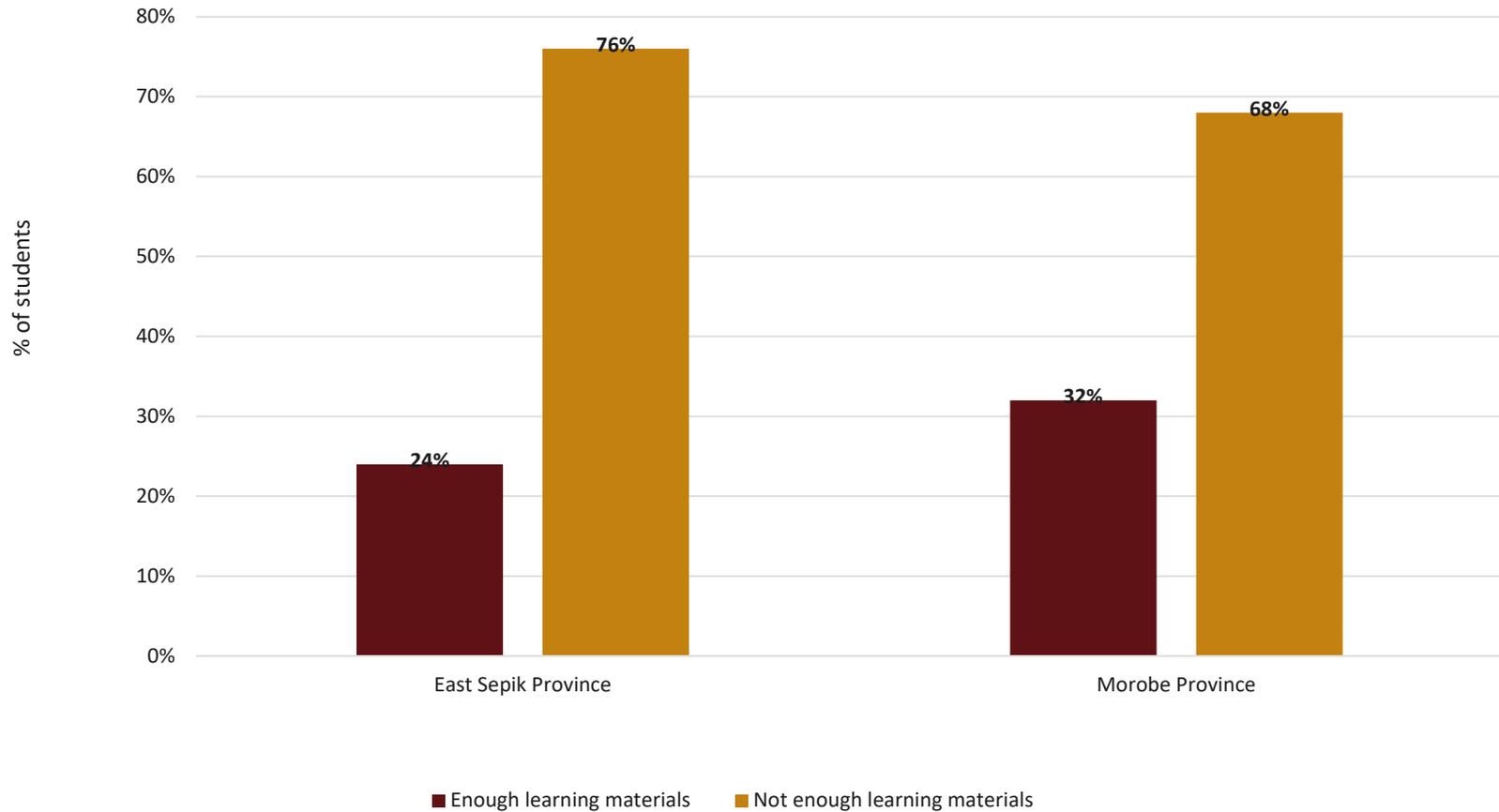
Reasons why parents are not living together



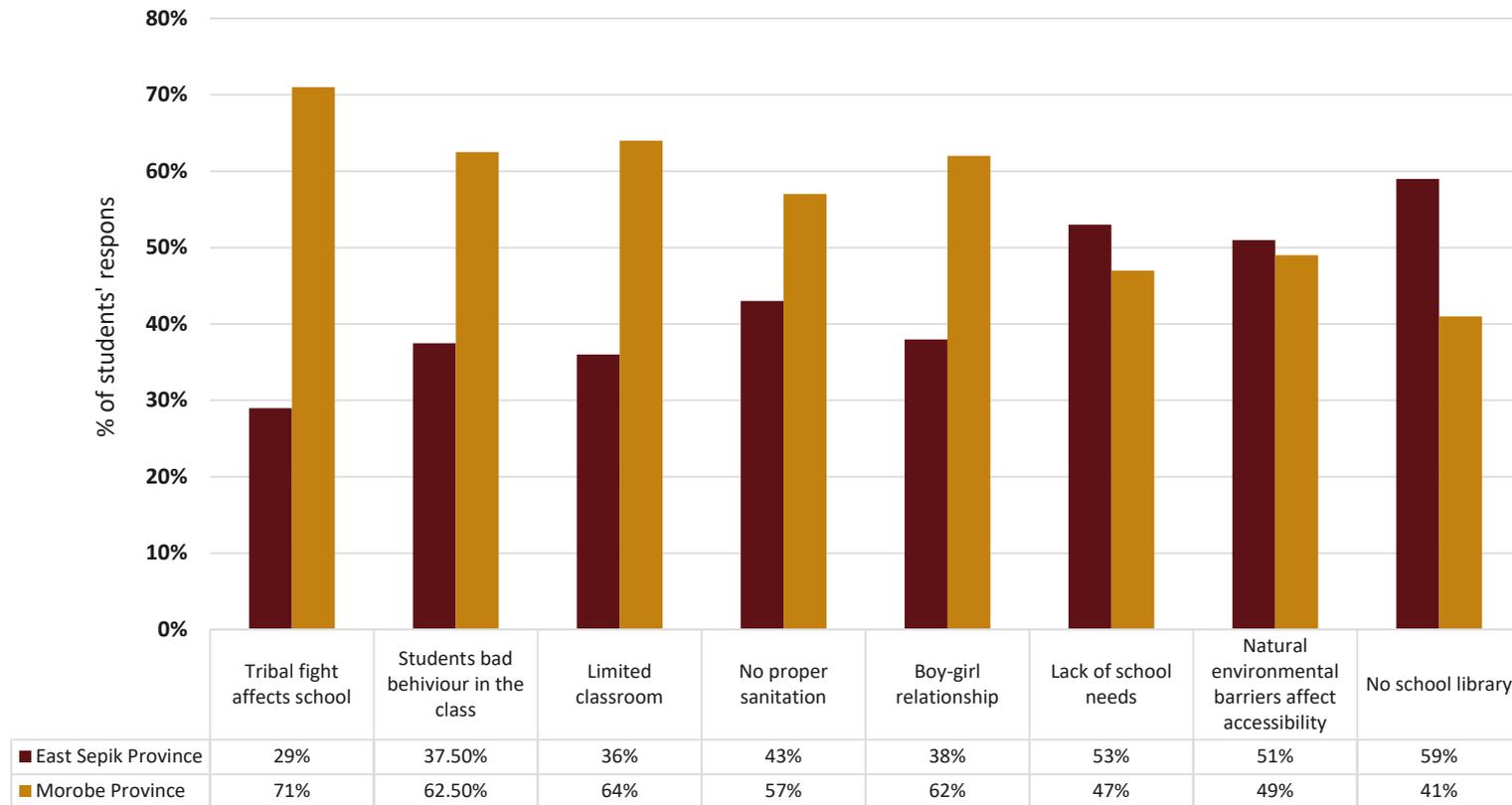
Students' parents employment status

	Student's response per province	
Parent's Employment Status	East Sepik Province	Morobe Province
Both or one Working	399	886
Both Unemployed	398	379

Students' views on Learning materials



Percentage of students responding to factors affecting quality of education

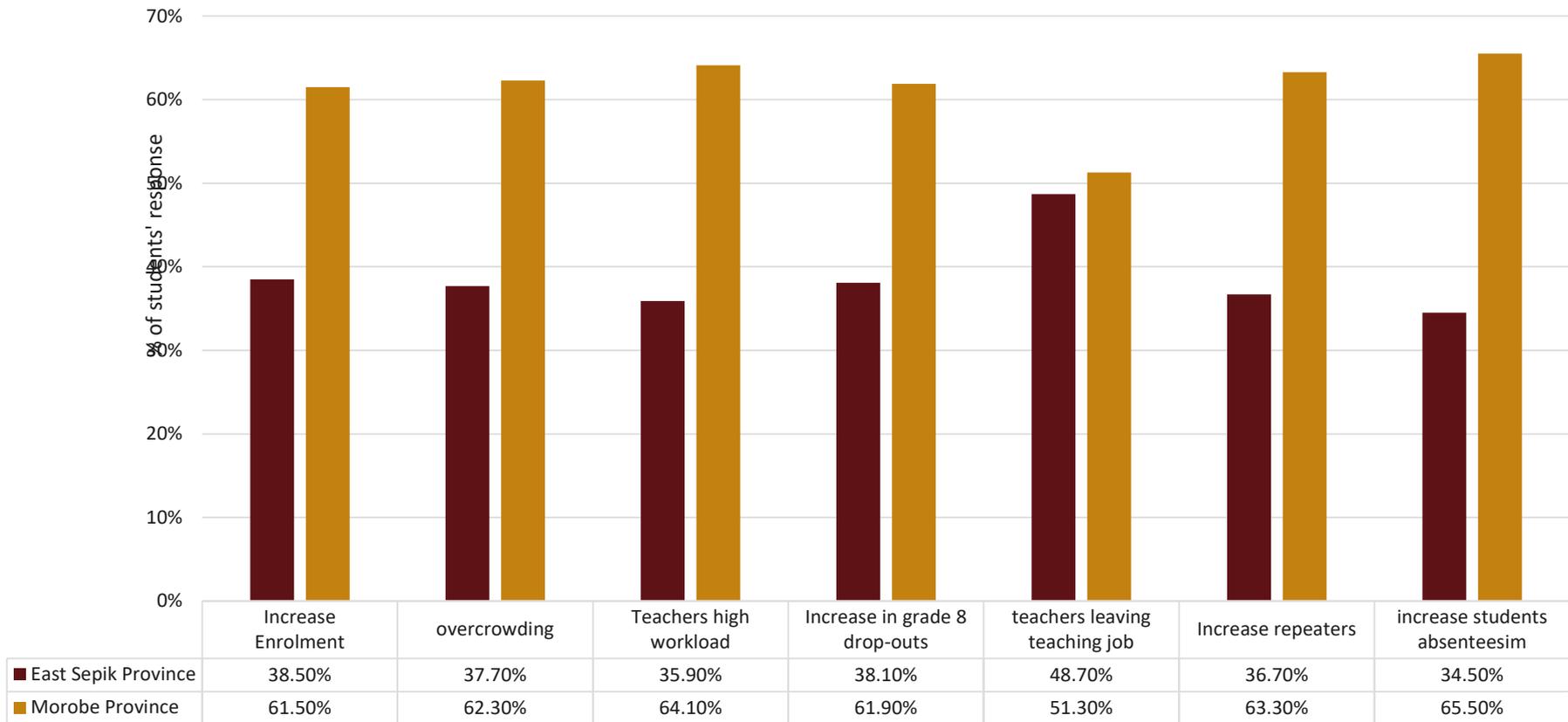


Students responses on the negative effects of TFF policy on quality education

	Province		
	East Sepik Students respond YES	Morobe Students respond YES	
Negative Effects of TFF Policy			Total Number of Students per province - East Sepik = 916 - Morobe = 1340
Increase Enrolment overcrowding	626	1002	
Teachers high workload	496	819	
Increase in grade 8 dropouts	525	939	
teachers leaving teaching job	375	609	
Increase repeaters	308	324	
increase student's absenteeism	541	933	
	348	661	



Percentage of students' opinion on negative effects of TFF policy on quality education



KEY FINDINGS

- The purpose of the study was to investigate the underlying issues that hindered the progress of quality basic education in schools in East Sepik and Morobe provinces. In particular to examine the views of head teachers, teachers and students on the recurring issues that have continued to contribute to the deteriorating standards of quality education in the Momase region.

Findings revealed similarities among the three cohorts (head teachers, teachers, students) who took part in the study. It found that the challenges currently faced by schools in East Sepik and Morobe are no different to recent studies by Walton et al (2022), Goro and Norea (2020), and Nun and Nelson (2019) with regards to the challenges faced during the tuition fee free era. These main findings are as follows:

These main findings are as follows (1):

1. Funding issue

All head teachers (except one from Morobe) in this study reported that they continue to face funding issues every year as the TFF funds are often disbursed to schools by the National Government very late. In order to minimize this issue and to get the school running at the start of each school year, head teachers collect project fees from parents to kick start the academic year.

2. Inadequate resources for teaching learning

The supply and re-supply of textbooks and teaching resource materials to primary schools has long been a major constraint to providing quality education. In most cases the pupil-textbook ratio has been too high to ensure sufficient textbook access for each pupil to master the subject matter as per the curriculum. Teachers in Momase reported disappointing and acute shortages of teaching resources and inadequate school equipment and infrastructure in their schools. Majority of teachers, head teachers and students in both East Sepik and Morobe showed concerns about the inadequate school equipment and infrastructure schools had. It was far worse in rural schools where textbooks are either outdated or not received on time and teachers had to create their own teaching and learning resources from their own pockets. Some teachers reported they travelled to neighbouring schools that had photocopying machines to make copies of assignments and exercises for their students.

Main Findings (2)

3. Overcrowding in the classroom

Participants in the Momase study raised concerns about overcrowding. Results revealed that 100 percent of head teachers from East Sepik and 92 percent from Morobe reported varying problems that they encountered which impacted negatively on their performance, thus, resulting in the drop of quality learning. Similarly, majority of teachers and student participants reported the same sentiments of the dire need to build more classrooms.

4. Lack of parental and community support

Quality learning is reinforced when there is partnership between the school and the home learning environment. Parents must ensure that their children are healthy, well fed and encouraged to attend school regularly. The quality of children's lives before the commencement of formal schooling and during formal schooling greatly influences the kind of learners they can become. Quality learners are produced when children are kept healthy through nutritious diets and medical support, positive early childhood experiences, and sound home support for their learning. The study found that majority of head teachers from both East Sepik and Morobe reported the lack of parental support as well as community support in their schools which is a worrying concern.

Main Findings (3)

5. Poor sanitation facilities

Poor water and sanitation facilities have been identified as being a major reason for children, particularly girls, dropping out of school. There is a desperate need for all schools to be able to provide both an adequate supply of safe drinking water as well as sufficient toilet facilities. It is imperative that schools must purchase water tanks and/or water systems to provide all-year-round access to clean water as children cannot be expected to study to the best of their ability if they do not have access to clean water. The study revealed that more than 50 percent of teachers in East Sepik as well as majority of head teachers and students reported that there are poor sanitation facilities in their schools and called for extra funding from the government to build new toilets to replace the ones that are now in a dilapidated state.

6. Lack of parental and community support

Quality learning is reinforced when there is partnership between the school and the home learning environment. Parents must ensure that their children are healthy, well fed and encouraged to attend school regularly. The quality of children's lives before the commencement of formal schooling and during formal schooling greatly influences the kind of learners they can become. Quality learners are produced when children are kept healthy through nutritious diets and medical support, positive early childhood experiences, and sound home support for their learning. The study found that an overwhelming number of head teachers from East Sepik and Morobe as well as teachers reported the lack of parental support as well as community support in their schools which is a worrying concern.

Main Findings (4)

7. Teachers' Training and Qualifications

Results revealed that there were more female teachers than males that participated in this study however there was only one female head teacher in East Sepik and two female head teachers in Morobe. With regards to head teachers' qualifications, there was only one post-graduate diploma holder, one degree holder, thirteen diploma holders and ten certificate holders. This finding suggests that there is a need for teachers to upskill or upgrade their teaching qualifications to a Bachelors of Degree level as a way to improve quality leaning in the classroom.

8. Education Officers/Inspectors visitations to schools

This study found that education officers including school inspectors had difficulties visiting schools as a result of lack of funding for travelling. Two inspectors reported that although the Department of Education purchased boats for them for school visits along the river and to the islands, they did not have funds to pay for fuel-zoom and therefore cancelled their school visits.

Main Findings (5)

9. Students' living status with parents in the home

An important finding which was a sensitive one was the discovery of who the students were living with at home. Results revealed that 61 percent of students in East Sepik and 62 percent in Morobe were living with only one parent as the other parent was either separated or divorced.

10. Students' parents' employment status

The study found that parents' employment status has an influence either positively or negatively on a child's learning ability. Out of the total number of students, 398 in East Sepik and 379 in Morobe reported that their parents were not employed in formal employment which thus contributed to issues they faced attending school.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- ❑ The findings of this study have revealed many similarities to studies undertaken by Walton et al (2022), Abady (2015) and Goro and Norea (2020).. Multitudes of parents are thankful that their perennial financial burdens are greatly eased.
- ❑ However, parents and other stakeholders are silent on the ‘quality of teaching and learning or quality of education’ issues as this falls outside of their realm.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What is needed and calls for immediate attention from the Government and provincial governments of East Sepik and Morobe are:

1. To ensure that TFF funds are committed towards supporting quality education improvement programs in their provinces.
2. Make teaching and learning atmosphere in the classrooms attractive to retain school-age children in school for the full cycle from Elementary to Grade 12 thus increased funding to schools is paramount.
3. Committed effort must be taken by headteachers to report to standard officers the demarcation of funds for educational infrastructure as well and how much for 'quality education improvement programs.

To ensure that TFF funds are disbursed on a timely basis to schools.

Recommendations cont'

4. The provincial governments of East Sepik and Morobe must device a better strategy on the dispatchment of teaching and learning resources to schools.
5. Train and employ more qualified teachers to minimise the issue of high teacher-pupil ratio athe the same time Improve quality of teachers (selection of trainees at Grade 12 only with GPA of 2.0 or more)
6. Build more classrooms to cater for the increasing number of students annually.

Recommendations cont'

Quality can be improved and enhanced further through;

- More time spent in learning activities
- Positive learning environment both in and out of school
- Improving Quality of teachers (selection of trainees at Grade 12 only with GPA of 2.0 or more)
- Good School management (Governance)
- Foster good relationships between school and communities
- The roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders like churches and politicians should be clearly described and communicated to all.

Thank you

I now welcome Questions and Comments

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