

YEAR 9 CONSULTATION REPORT 2019



**Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Tuvalu Education Department**

This Report was prepared by

Team Leader - *Ale Kuea Ioane*

Assistant Consultants – *Christopher Fanoanoaga,*

Tehoa Telulu, Vaelei Pouniu, Elisaia Teafiula





Table of Content

1. Introduction	3
1.1. The Need for a Year 9 Consultation	3
1.2. Significance of the Consultation	3
1.3. Scope of the Consultation	3
2. Methodology.....	4
3. Discussion and Findings.....	4
3.1. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the advantages and disadvantages of having Year 9 in primary schools and the advantages and disadvantages if Year 9 is returned to MSS.....	5
3.1.1. Advantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools	5
3.1.2. Disadvantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools.....	6
3.1.3. Advantages of having Year 9 at Motufoua Secondary School	7
3.1.4. Disadvantages of having Year 9 at MSS	8
3.2. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the notion that, should the Year 9 return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools?	9
3.3. The perspectives of primary and secondary school teachers on the notion of whether Year 9 should return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools.	10
Conclusion	10
Appendix 1.....	12

1. Introduction

In October of the current year, 2019, the newly established government formally tasked the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, under the leadership of the Minister of Education, with orchestrating a comprehensive engagement involving key stakeholders within the education sector. This specific consultation aimed to solicit insights from various parties, including parents, family members, guardians of current and prospective students at Motufoua Secondary School (MSS), and teachers across primary educational institutions and MSS. The central focus was to deliberate on whether Year 9 should transition from its placement within the primary education framework to being situated at MSS.

This report corroborates that a significant majority of participants across diverse communities in Funafuti and the outer islands, while opting for anonymity, expressed a preference for relocating Year 9 to MSS.

1.1. The Need for a Year 9 Consultation

From a statistical standpoint, subsequent to the reassignment of Year 9 from Motufoua Secondary School (MSS) to Primary Schools in 2016, the overall success rate for Year 9 students notably declined, persistently remaining below a 50% pass rate over the course of the last three years (2016-2018). This decline primarily stemmed from the absence of adequately qualified educators specializing in subjects like Commercial Studies, Agriculture Science, Basic Technology, and Home Economics. Additionally, there was an insufficiency in the availability of educational resources, as well as limited learning spaces and infrastructure conducive to facilitating high-quality instruction across all subjects incorporated in the Year 9 curriculum during this period.

1.2. Significance of the Consultation

The pivotal rationale behind conducting this consultation lies in enabling the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, facilitated by the Education Department, to engage comprehensively with all pivotal stakeholders involved in the Year 9 educational program. This strategic endeavor aims to garner diverse viewpoints and perspectives regarding the existing placement of Year 9 within primary schools. Specifically, the objective is to furnish the Ministry with a broad spectrum of insights, ensuring the formulation of a judicious decision that authentically reflects and aligns with the perspectives and requisites voiced by parents, guardians, relatives, and educators. Ultimately, this process aims to serve the best interests of Tuvalu's future generations.

1.3. Scope of the Consultation

The consultation specifically focused on engaging two discernible cohorts: firstly, parents, family members, and guardians of present and prospective Motufoua Secondary School (MSS)

students, and secondly, educators within all government-operated primary and secondary schools, excepting Lotoalofa Primary School. Furthermore, the consultation commenced in Funafuti, encompassing the island's various communities, and extended its reach to include communities across all outer islands, with the exception of Niulakita.

2. Methodology

Mixed methods research was used as the research methodology along with the interpretivist and constructivist paradigms to guide the consultation process. The consultation employed both questionnaires and participatory workshops (talanoa/sautalaga) as primary methods for data collection. Two distinct sets of questionnaires were created—one targeting parents, guardians, relatives, and community leaders, while the other was intended for teachers. The participatory workshop was convened with these key stakeholders to supplement the insights garnered from the questionnaires by obtaining additional perspectives not captured therein. Specifically, structured akin to talanoa/sautalaga discussions, the workshop involved a diverse mix of participants, including parents, guardians, elders, and teachers.

The amassed data from both the questionnaires and participatory workshops underwent analysis through a thematic analysis and quantitative analysis framework. This process involved categorizing all gathered ideas and perspectives into predetermined themes corresponding to the open and closed-ended questions present in the questionnaires and participatory workshops.

3. Discussion and Findings

The discussion and presentation of findings from the consultation below is organized according to the following three key areas;

- i. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the advantages and disadvantages of having Year 9 in primary schools and the advantages and disadvantages if Year 9 is returned to MSS.
- ii. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the notion that, should the Year 9 return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools?
- iii. and the perspectives of primary and secondary school teachers on the notion that, should the Year 9 return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools?

The target groups of this consultations were allowed to explore and share their ideas and perceptions on the advantages and disadvantages of the two alternatives which are, i) continue having Year 9 in primary schools and ii) return it to MSS. The underpinning idea of this approach is to allow them to have a rich understanding of those advantages and disadvantages before deciding regarding the return of Year 9 to MSS or retaining it in primary schools.

3.1. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the advantages and disadvantages of having Year 9 in primary schools and the advantages and disadvantages if Year 9 is returned to MSS.

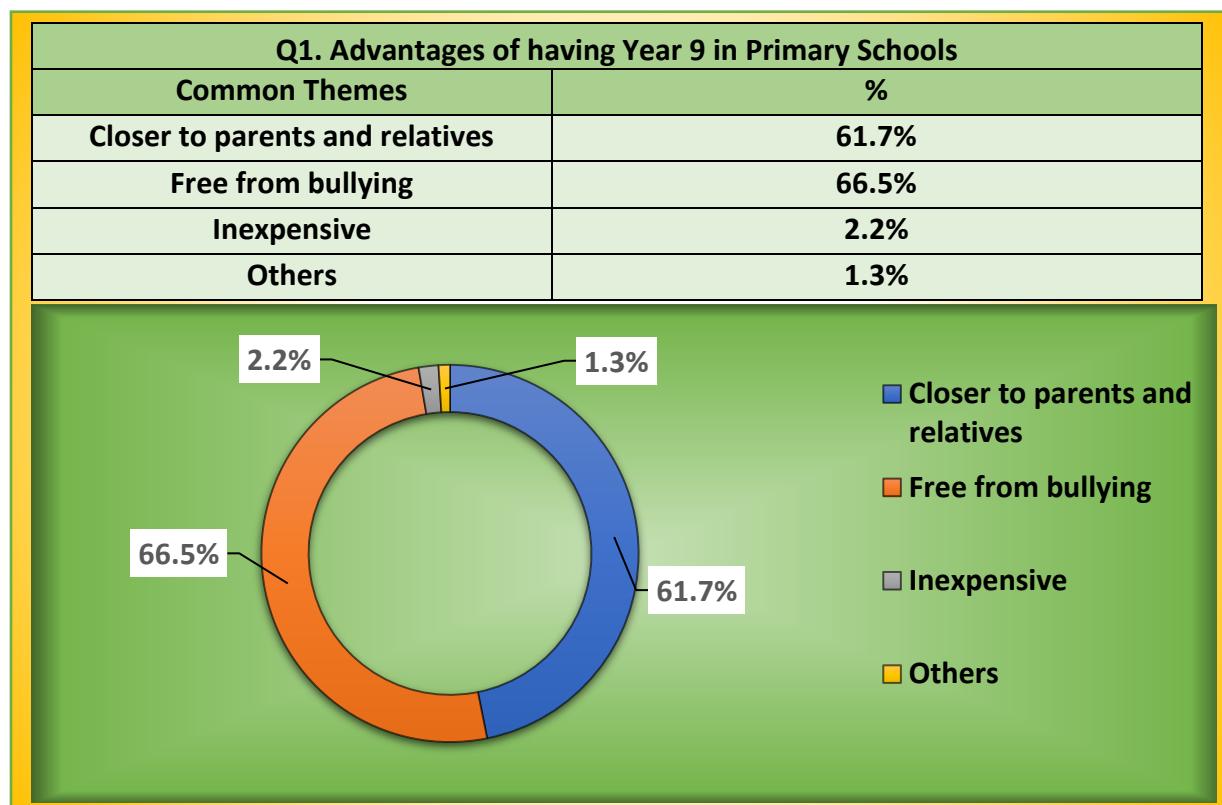
3.1.1. Advantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools

Presenting in Figure 1 below, free from bullying and closer to parents are the most common advantages with the highest percentages of 66.5 and 61.7 respectively. This is according to the perceptions of parents, guardians, and relatives collected during the consultations on Funafuti and outer islands with the exclusion of Niulakita. Closer to parents as one of the pre-identified themes was developed from the sub-themes such as students’ belongings being well looked after and students’ attendance to school being well monitored and controlled by their parents.

A 2.2 percent of parents, guardians, and relatives of students enrolling in the Year 9 program in primary schools and those at Motufoua agreed with the idea that having Year 9 in primary schools is cheaper than having it at Motufoua. This is in terms of their spending on their child(ren) clothes, pocket money, and others.

The 1.3 percent represented other advantages such as learning Tuvalu traditions and culture and students’ accessibility to the internet to assist them in their school work.

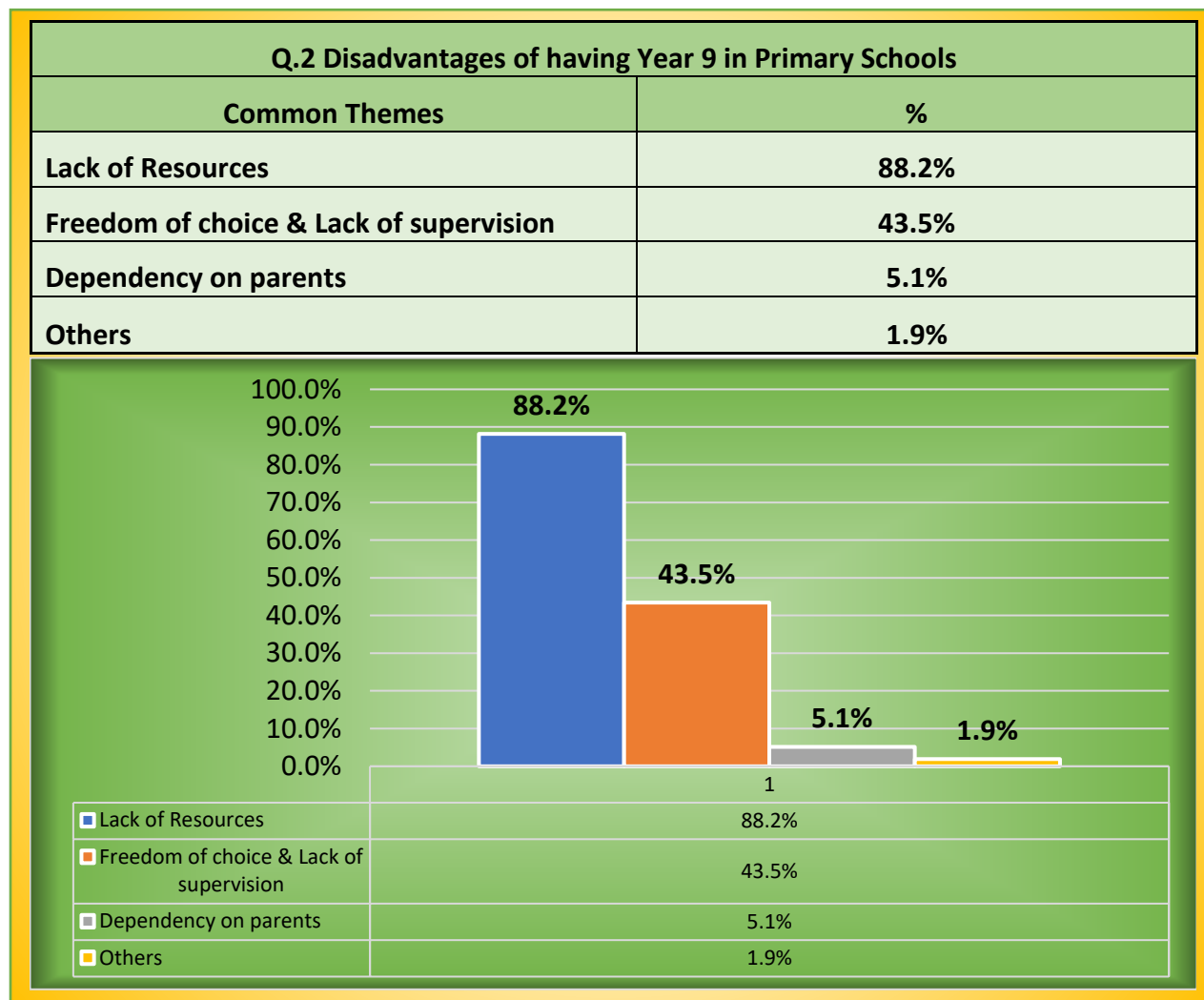
Figure 1: Advantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools



3.1.2. Disadvantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools

Figure 2 presents that 88.2 percent of parents, guardians, and relatives perceive that lack of resources is the major disadvantage of having Year 9 in primary schools. Lack of resources generally refers to specialized subject teachers, teaching and learning materials, normal classrooms, special classrooms, libraries, workshops, and other resources that are lacking in primary schools and are essential to the successful delivery of the Year 9 program.

Figure 2: Disadvantages of having Year 9 in Primary Schools



Freedom of choice and lack of supervision means that Year 9 students in primary schools are not well-controlled and supervised by their parents which allows them to do other things such as engaging in youth and island communities’ gatherings and social activities which further hinder their concentration on their school work. This disadvantage accounts for 47.3 percent of parents, guardians, and relatives’ perceptions as in Figure 2 above.

The idea that having Year 9 students in primary schools will increase their dependency on their parents and discourage them from being independent as another disadvantage has a percentage of 4.9. Other disadvantages such as Year 9 students becoming bullies and bad social behavioral influencers to young pupils in primary schools are accounted at 4.2 percent.

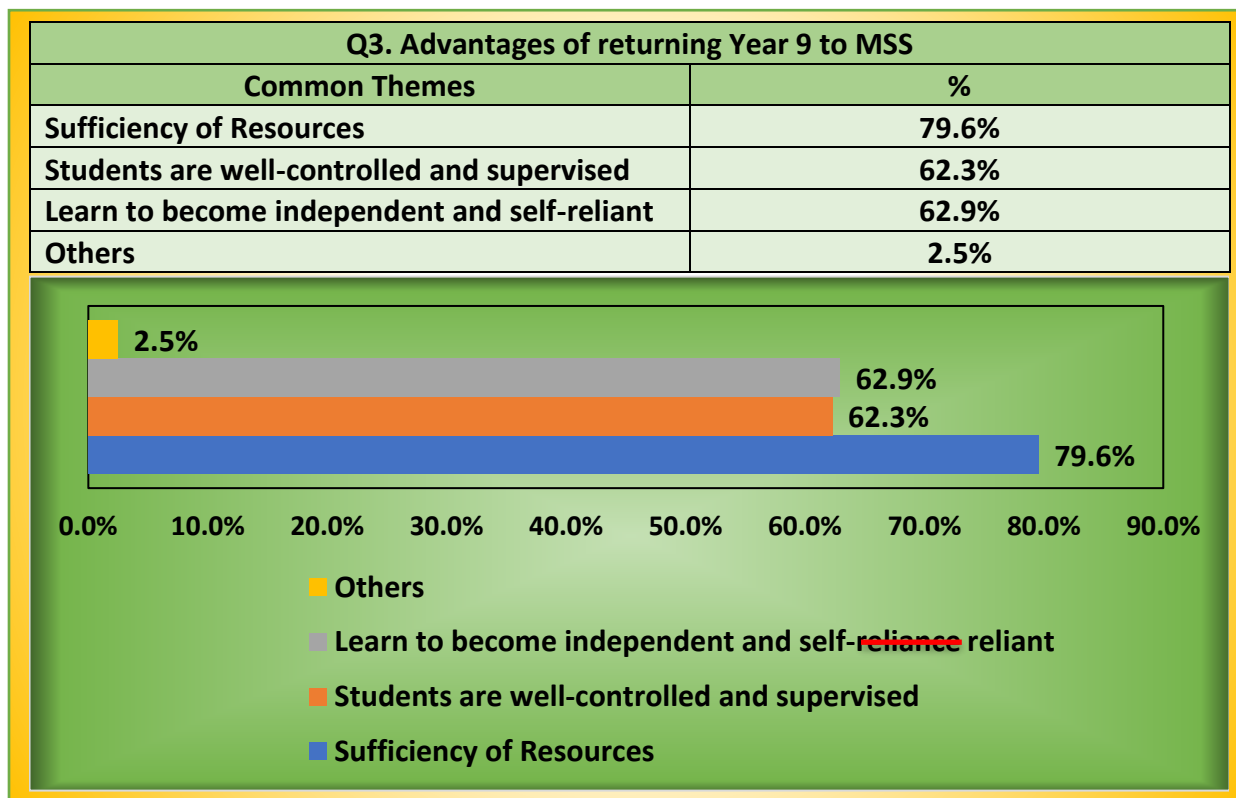
3.1.3. Advantages of having Year 9 at Motufoua Secondary School

Figure 3 presents that the sufficiency of resources is perceived by parents, guardians, and relatives as the most common advantage of having Year 9 at MSS with a percentage of 79.6. Resources here are generally referred to by specialized teachers as human resources, classrooms, textbooks, special classrooms such as science and computer laboratories, and workshops as capital resources.

Students who are well-controlled and supervised are perceived equally to be independent or self-reliant by parents, guardians, and relatives in all communities as the second most common advantage of having Year 9 at MSS.

Other advantages of having Year 9 at MSS include peer learning, where Year 9 students will have the opportunity to learn and receive support from other students from other islands in terms of their school work and different cultures and traditions of different islands, become competitive in and outside of the classroom, and others.

Figure 3: Advantages of having Year 9 at MSS



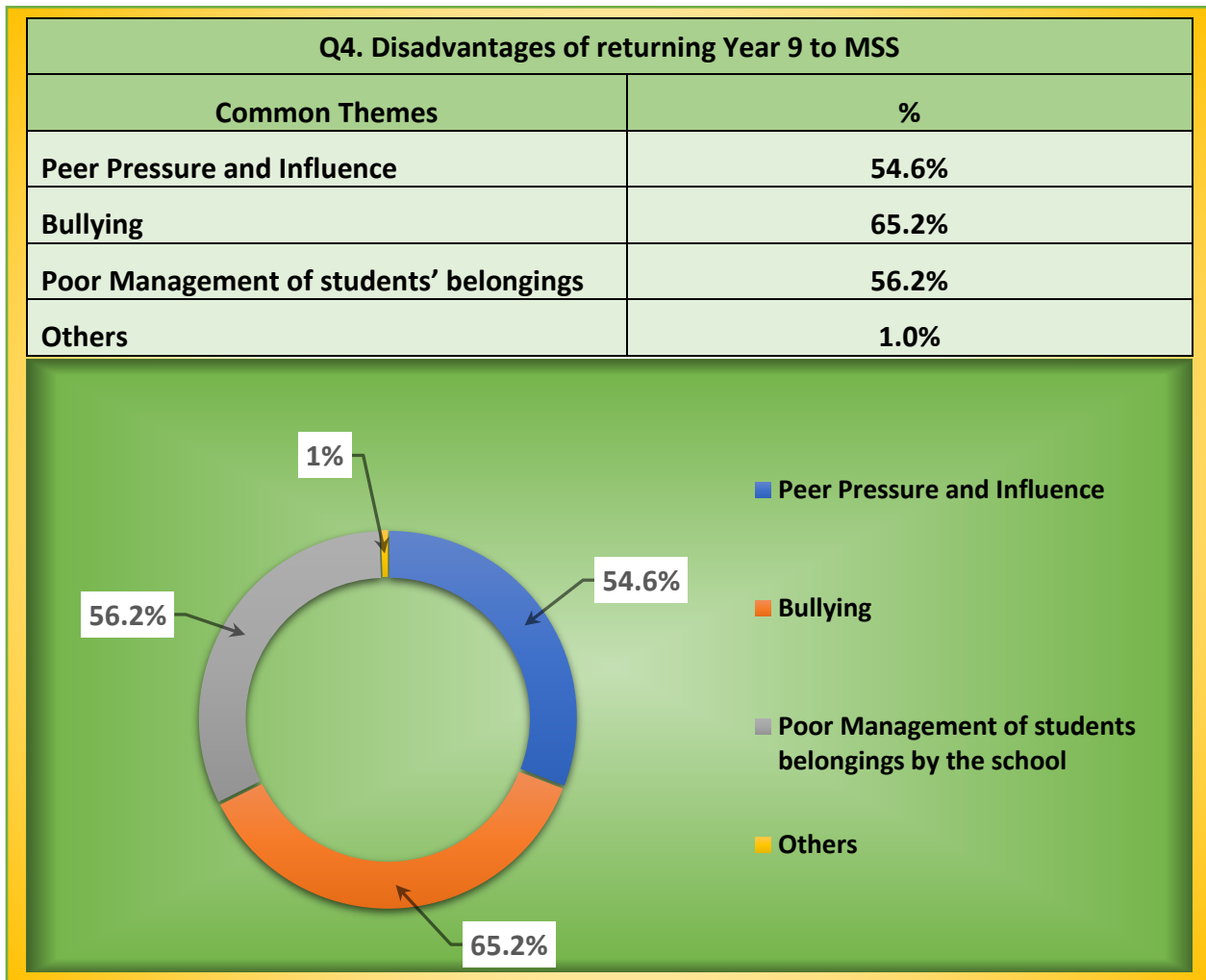
3.1.4. Disadvantages of having Year 9 at MSS

Bullying is regarded as the most common disadvantage of having Year 9 at MSS according to the perception from parents, guardians, and relatives in all the communities according to the responses collected during the consultations in all communities, with a percentage of 65.

Poor managerial mechanisms on students’ belongings by MSS was regarded as the second common disadvantage with a percentage of 56.2. Peer pressure and Influence with a percentage of 54.6 is the third most common advantage which generally refers to the bad behaviors and attitudes that are modelled by senior students and can be copied by Year 9 students.

Other disadvantages of having Year 9 at MSS include, both Year 9 girls and boys being too young to be placed at MSS as a co-educational boarding school, they can daunt their classes due to unreliable and constant supervision by teachers and support staff of MSS, and others.

Figure 4: Disadvantages of having Year 9 at MSS

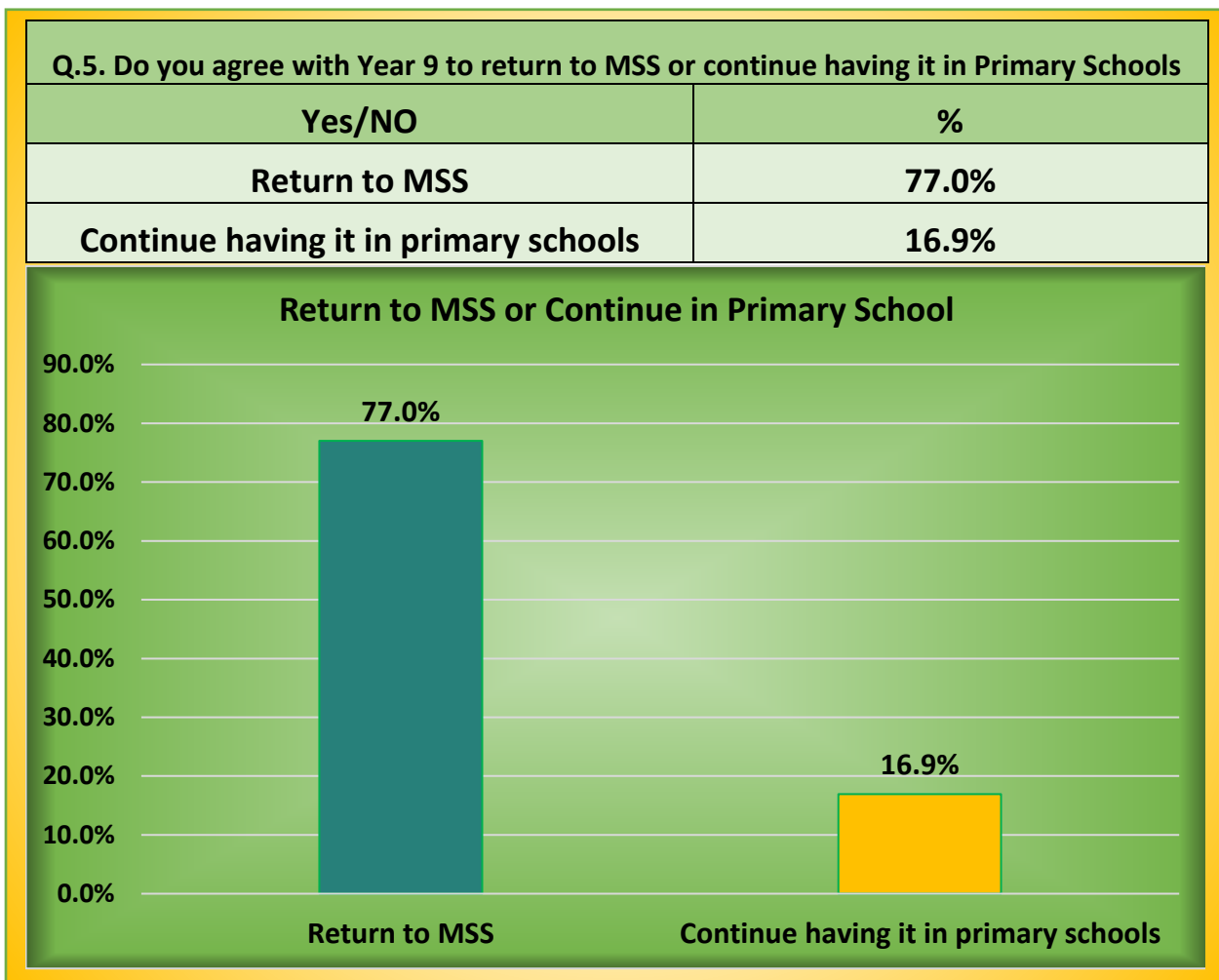


3.2. Perspectives of parents, guardians, and relatives on the notion that, should the Year 9 return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools?

This section of the discussion specifically focuses on the presentation of the perceptions of parents, guardians, and relatives of students enrolling in the Year 9 program and at MSS on the notion of, should Year 9 return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools.

77 percent of parents, guardians, and relatives in all the communities consulted agreed and argued that Year 9 should return to MSS while 16.9 percent of the same targeted population argued that Year 9 should be remained in primary schools.

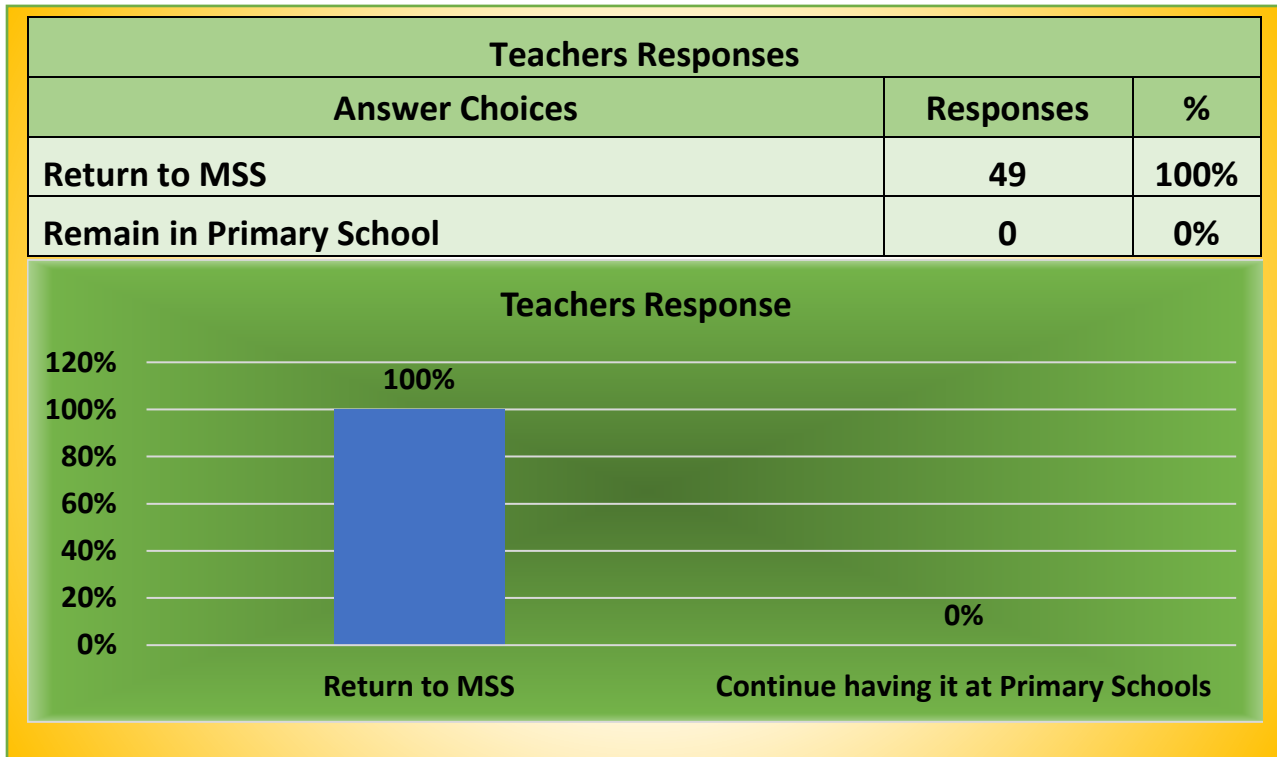
Figure 5: Return Year 9 to MSS or Continue having it in Primary Schools



3.3. The perspectives of primary and secondary school teachers on the notion of whether Year 9 should return to MSS or remain in primary schools.

Teachers in most primary schools and MSS have a different perspective compared to parents, guardians, and relatives on the nation of whether Year 9 should return to MSS or continue having it in primary schools. According to the responses collected from the teachers, they all agreed and argued that Year 9 should be returned to MSS as shown in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Return Year 9 to MSS or Remain in Primary School



Conclusion

After the consultation with every island community on Funafuti as well as the outer islands, a majority of 66.5% of the target population prefer the idea of children free from bullying as a strong advantage of having Year 9 in Primary Schools. They also perceive the lack of resources in all Primary Schools as a major disadvantage of having Year 9 in Primary School level which has the largest percentage of 88.2%.

However, the sufficiency of resources at MSS caught the attention of 79.6% of the target consulted groups to choose Year 9 to be at Motufoua Secondary School. For most of the target population 65.2% identified bullying as a threat and the most common disadvantage of having Year 9

at MSS. Despite all that, a total of 77.0% of Parents have the favor of returning to Year 9 to MSS at Vaitupu.

Appendix 1

Recommendations from all the consulted communities

1. Security
 - Provide wardens to each dormitory
 - A policeman to work at the school
 - Place security cameras where possible
2. Responsibility
 - Remind teachers and staff on their responsibilities
 - Enforce school rules
 - School staff to work collaboratively
 - Parents to be responsible to their children at home
 - Conduct teachers and staff induction
3. New resources
 - Establish a Junior Secondary School
 - Get enough teachers for Year 9 students
 - Construct enough classrooms and school facilities
4. Government and Education Department Responsibilities
 - Monitor staff performance
 - Make sure teachers are enough for the students
 - Establish a committee to deal with school matters such as behavioral issues etc.
5. Separation
 - Let Junior students and Senior students stay separately
 - Stay according to their levels or ages
 - Isolate Year 9 from Year 1 to Year 8 in Primary School level
6. Discipline
 - Encourage the concept of living together and living with one another
 - Parents and grandparents to discipline their children at home
 - Discipline the teachers
7. School Rules
 - Enforce school rules
 - Control the use of new technology such as mobile phones, tablets, and laptops
 - Conduct a regular check on students' items such as plates, spoons, clothes, etc.
8. Punishment
 - Re-introduce corporal punishments and spiritual empowerment
 - Misbehave students to feed the whole school
 - Expose photographs of bullied students with their parents
9. Community Involvement

- Conduct staff and guardians' meetings
- Teachers and parents to work closely
- Consult with the community about difficult issues in the school

10. Culture and Religious Studies

- Build up students' spiritual life

11. Entrance Exams

- Continue National exams such as National Year Eight Exam (NYEE)
- Increase pass mark above 50%

12. Others

- Let Year 9 at the Primary School level if the government can supply everything that is required for Year 9
- For this time let Year 9 placed at Motufoua Secondary School otherwise it is a waste of time of educating students from Year 1 to Year 8 because Year 9 is not well equipped with resources and teachers which affect a lot in their performance.
- Give an opportunity within the year for the parents to visit the school to lodge their complains about their children.