



Expected Roles and Functions of the School Management Committee: An Investigation for Effective Functioning

Meena Sehrawat¹ & M. M. Roy²

^{1,2}District Institute of Education and Training, Ghumenhera (SCERT, Delhi)

Corresponding Author: M. M. Roy, **E-Mail:** madanmohanroy24@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Community has always been essential in giving significant education to children and members of a community have taken the liability of educating their children. Attempts have been made to improve participation of the community in schools by creating committees like Village Education Committees and School Management Committees. But questions always remain, how far are the communities practically engaged with schools? Significant provisions concerning constitution and functions of SMCs are given in sections of the RTE Act, 2009. With the above in background the present study was taken up with two broad objectives: first, to study the expected roles and functions of the school management committee; and, second to find out and suggest measures for smooth functioning of school management committee. A descriptive survey method was used to collect the data from 390 school management committee members using Questionnaire. The data were quantitatively analyzed using percentage. Responses obtained through questionnaire were converted in to frequencies followed by their conversion in to percentage. Findings revealed that members involved themselves in the monitoring of the admission, attendance and participation of child but didn't ensure some of the key expected roles and functions and in order to function smoothly, SMCs should be elected through proper election process as per RTE act and SMC members should be oriented by the principals and other authorities. This study can be useful for all the stakeholders involved at the planning, implementing and evaluating the functioning of the School management Committee or community participation in schools. This study focusses on expected roles and functions of school management committee as per the RTE Act and finds new that if members do not function as per the RTE Act, municipal school which is the miniature of the society is going to suffer in providing the quality education as well as implementation of true decentralization.

KEYWORDS

Community Participation, Mid- day Meal, Right to Education Act, Roles and Functions, School Based Management, School Development Plan, School Management Committee.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a basic human right and a basis for the realization of all other rights which have been considered by policy makers of India through 86th constitutional amendments and RTE Act 2009 (reference?). In India millions of children need elementary education and the same through the RTE Act 2009 have been mandated as a fundamental right to all children between 6 and 14 years of age (MHRD, GOI). Community–school relationship has been found as one of the serious factors to ensure enrolment of out-of-school children, especially girls, and to prevent children from leaving school before completing the elementary education (Adangabe, 2020). Strong and sustained community participation in the management of schools can not only enhance transparency and accountability in the education system but also promote a sense of ownership, agency and responsibility for positive change. Active involvement of communities have improved school functioning significantly. Ramachandran (2001), Govinda and Diwan (2003) mentioned that School-Based Management should be supported for more efficient management and quality improvement in education (Anton 2005). Issues of educational exclusion is closely associated with an increase in awareness among local governing agencies about local educational problems and their effective participation in the day-to-day functioning of schools as well as the decision making processes (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay 2010).

However, MHRD report on SSA Framework for Implementation pointed out that community participation would be a central and main factor in planning, implementation and monitoring interventions for universal elementary education. The report also stresses the role of people and especially the community as fundamental to the success of these initiatives and School Management committee was considered an important area in this regard (MHRD, 2011). School is a part of the society, parent and other stakeholders play very important role in school functioning. Collaboration with parents and other key local stakeholders, teachers are now actively involved in the governance of schools or school complexes, by being included as members of School Management Committees or School Complex Management Committee (Dnyandeo & Bawane, 2020).

In Nepal, schools failed to provide quality education, the community managed schools was one of the best option. More than 8000 schools were handed over to the community and results achieved were more than anticipated. The active participation and support from stakeholders (i.e. parents, community and even teachers) was an indicator of success of the program (Dhungel, Shreeram,

Lamichane & Pokharel, 2013). Significant provisions concerning constitution and functions of SMCs are given in sections of the RTE Act, 2009. These points have been elaborated in the Model Rules prepared for consideration and adoption by the state or the union territory (UT) administration. However, the rules clearly recognized the community as a primary stakeholder in the overall process of achieving the objectives of the RTE Act, 2009. Right to free and compulsory Education to Children Act 2009 empowered communities to perform a significant role in decision making process in schools and they were given a key role in functioning of schools under the Act (Srivastava, 2017).

The School Management Committees have been given the authority to observe the working of schools and utilization of their grants. For School Management Committees to be an active institution to regulate and manage a village school, they must have understanding of its importance, know their responsibilities and must perform efficiently (Dwivedi & Naithani, 2015; Sele, 2020) Studies conducted on the functionality and role of school management committees found that in all elementary schools School Management Committees were constituted and they were functioning properly covering their aspects (Meher & Patel, 2018). According to Ed. CIL (2002), Okendu (2012), and Rout (2014), the School Management Committees help in improving retention and achievement level of all children, in effective management of schools, to achieve universal enrolment and enhancement of the standard of secondary level and lot of responsibilities was put on the communities in the name of participation but not much was done in terms of their capacity building (Rao 2009). However, Thapa, S, (2012) showed that SMCs were not functional in schools and rather they were doing more of a formality than practicality further Priyadarshinee and Gowramma (2018) revealed that most of the members of SMDC were not aware about their role for the development of secondary education as prescribed by Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). Some members were also not aware about their meetings and most members were not oriented about their roles and responsibilities. Research also revealed that the awareness level of chairpersons of SMDCs was more than that of the other members. Orientation and capacity building programmes of all the members of SMDC by the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) authority, was seen as an essential requirement in addition to prescribing a minimum educational standard for the members. Nyandro, Mapfamo and Makoni (2013) observed that due to lack of management course and orientation among the SMDC members about their roles and responsibilities, they were not aware about the management of funds, budget preparation, making decisions and raising funds. Rastogi (2020) showed that the role of SMC as a community

representative needs to be explored rather than a power-centric committee. With interventions and working with SMCs, communication and awareness need to develop among villagers. Communication and awareness are both the process and product of engagement.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

International institutions like the World Bank and UNICEF emphasized the significance of community participation in schools, and hence it turned to be an integral factor to Samagra Shiksha, formerly known as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan. It has been a constant attempt to improve participation of the community in schools by building committees like Village Education Committees and School Management Committees. But how far are the communities practically engaged with schools. In this context, there is a critical need to investigate the role and functions of SMC. Although its major roles or functions are to support the quality of teaching, proper development and utilization of funds that are provided by the government, implementation of different schemes devised by the state as well as the central government, to create awareness regarding health among the children, to provide sanitation facilities, to develop school infrastructure and so on. The SMCs have been given a range of 'powers' by the RTE rule. These powers are related to the academic activities such as monitoring classroom practices, completion of course work and nonacademic activities like maintaining financial records, developing SDP, monitoring mid-day meals, community awareness in terms of the provisions of the RTE act, ensure enrolment and continued attendance of children; etc. So, in the light of above following objectives were framed.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the expected roles and functions actually performed by the School Management Committee (SMC).
2. To suggest measures for effective functioning of School Management Committee.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey method was used to study the problem. There were 131 primary schools in South Delhi Municipal Corporation of Delhi, from this population only 50% of schools were randomly selected further from these selected schools, six school management committee members were randomly selected. $131 \text{ SMC} \times 50\% = 65 \text{ SMC} \times 6 = 390$ school management committee members. Questionnaire for SMC members was developed to get the response

regarding the roles and functions actually performed by the SMC members. The tool consisted of 24 items on various functions expected to be performed as per RTE Act. The tool was validated by the experts to check its content validity. Before the administration of questionnaire all selected SMC members were told about the objective and usefulness of the study. The data were quantitatively analyzed using percentage. Responses obtained through questionnaire were converted in to frequencies followed by their conversion in to percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

TABLE 1

Profile SMC members

Sr. No	Profile		N=390	%
1.	Tenure as SMC member	1 year and less than 1 year	290	74.46
		More than 1 year	100	25.53
2.	Gender	Male	135	34.56
		Female	255	65.44
3.	Educational Qualification	Below 10 th class	250	64.06
		10 th class	39	9.93
		12 th class	27	6.88
		Graduate	34	8.71
		Post Graduate & above	40	10.39
4.	Age	25-40 year	251	64.37
		41-60 year	114	29.35
		61 & above	25	6.26

The profile of SMC members in relation to tenure as SMC member, gender, educational qualification and age have been presented in the table1. As per RTE act SMCs were to be reconstituted every two years it means that members should have at least tenure of two years but data from the table 1 reveal that majority of SMC members (74.46 percent) were having tenure equal to one year or less than it while 25.53 percent were having tenure more than one year. Data

further shows that female members were in good majority (65.44 percent) as compared to male members (34.56 percent) showing that they were given due place in the committee. The data on educational qualification of SMC members reveal that majority of the members (64.06 percent) were having educational qualification below 10th class. While 10th, 12th, graduate and post graduate SMC members were very few i.e. (9.93 percent), (6.88 percent), (8.71 percent) and (10.39 percent) respectively. The percentage distribution of SMC members by age group suggests that majority of members (64.37 percent) were between the age group of 25-40 years. While few members (29.35 percent) were between the age group of 41-60 years and very few (6.26 percent) were in the age group of 60 years and above.

TABLE 2**Expected Functions Actually Performed by SMC Members**

S.No.	Dimensions N=390	Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Is Pupil Teacher Ratio in your school is as per the RTE norms?	77	19.74	313	80.26
2.	Are the teachers regular and punctual in the school?	284	72.82	106	27.18
3.	Are the teachers able to complete the entire curriculum within the specified time?	306	78.46	84	21.54
4.	Are teachers involved in the non- academic duties other than census, disaster relief, and election duties?	241	61.79	149	38.21
5.	Are you involved in the process of improving the performance level of students?	141	36.15	249	63.85
6.	Do you make efforts to identify the needs of the teachers for their training?	75	19.23	315	80.77

7.	Are you involved in the Monitoring of the following- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission • Attendance • Completion of elementary education by every child? 	205	52.56	185	47.44
8.	Do you ensure the child belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged groups are not discriminated?	57	14.61	333	85.39
9.	Do you ensure the admission of children of migrant families?	69	17.69	321	82.31
10.	Do you ensure the mainstreaming of out of school children?	105	26.92	285	73.08
11.	Do you ensure the monitoring and the smooth functioning of Special Training Center?	94	24.10	296	75.90
12.	Do you regularly monitor the quality of Mid -Day Meal?	118	30.25	272	69.75
13.	Are regular health checkups organized in the schools for students?	128	32.82	262	67.18
14.	Have you participated in the regular health checkups of students?	61	15.64	329	84.36
15.	Are you aware about the various welfare schemes like Chacha Nehru Sehat Yojna, Kishori Yojana etc?	108	27.69	282	72.31
16.	Do you ensure that the necessary facilities are provided to Children With Special Needs?	27	6.92	363	93.18
17.	Are you aware of the RTE norms for the Class rooms required as per the strength of students?	78	20	312	80

18.	Are you aware that the class rooms have proper electrical facilities like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fans • Bulbs/tube light etc. 	284	72.82	106	27.18
19.	Is safe drinking water available in the school?	348	89.23	42	10.77
20.	Are separate toilet blocks available for girls and boys?	354	90.76	36	9.24
21.	Are sufficient fire safety arrangements available in the school?	262	67.17	128	32.83
22.	Are sufficient numbers of desks available as per the strength of the students in the school?	371	95.12	19	4.98
23.	Are the following teaching equipment available in the school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science equipment • Teaching learning material • Games equipment 	311	79.74	79	20.26
24.	Is library properly used by the teachers & Students?	257	65.89	133	34.11

One of the important indicators that influence class room transaction is the pupil teacher ratio. Majority of SMC members (80.26 percent) revealed that their schools were not having PTR as per RTE norms. 72.82 percent of teachers were found to be regular and punctual. Members also found that (78.46) percent teachers were able to complete the entire curriculum in time. Members further found that (61.79) percent teachers were involved in the non- academic duties other than census, disaster relief, and election duties. 63.85 percent of SMC members did-not involve themselves in the process of improving the performance level of students. 80.77 percent members did not identify the needs of the teachers for their training.

It was found that 52.56 percent of members involved themselves in the monitoring of the admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by every child. 85.39 percent of members didn't ensure the discrimination of child belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged groups are not discriminated. Table- 2 further shows that (82.31 percent) members did not ensure the admission of children of migrant families. 73.08 percent members did not ensure the mainstreaming of out school children. It can be seen from the table -2 that (75.90 percent) members did not ensure the monitoring and the smooth functioning of Special Training Center. Majority of members (69.75) percent also did not monitor the quality of Mid- Day Meal. As per the (67.18 percent) members regular health checkups were not organized in the schools as well as they (84.36 percent) did not participate in the regular health checkups of students. 72.31 percent of members were not aware about various welfare schemes like Chacha Nehru Sehat Yojna, Kishori Yojana. 93.18 percent members did not ensure the necessary facilities provided to Children with Special Needs. Majority of members (80.00 percent) were not aware about the RTE norms for the Class rooms required as per the strength of students. 72.82 percent of members were aware about the class rooms and other facilities like electrical Fans, Bulbs/tube light; etc.

Table-2 also highlighted that majority of members 89.23 percent, 90.76 percent, 67.17 percent, 95.12 percent found that safe drinking water, separate toilet blocks for girls and boys, sufficient fire safety arrangements, sufficient number of desks as per the strength of the students were available in the school respectively. 79.74 percent and 65.89 percent members indicated that teaching equipment's like science equipment's, TLM and games were available in the school and library was properly used by the teachers and students respectively.

Involvement of parents in children's education is leads to improved learning outcomes. In the light of this, the RTE Act mandated parental involvement in schools through School-Based Management Committees. Present study confirms the previous findings of the study conducted by the Center for Education, Innovation and Action Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (2019) on SMC in four states of India, found the highest awareness about the roles, responsibilities and functions of SMC amongst the head teachers of most of the schools across the four states, followed by others with parents least aware of the functioning of SMCs. Majorly parents were more concerned about the immediate benefits for their children. Kernel (2012) revealed that SMCs were formed as per the guidelines and they were conducting regular meetings and training to SMC members regarding their roles and functions. The study is in tune with the research studies conducted by (Rout, 2014; Teddy, 2019; Rout and Mishra, 2020) who

revealed the same findings in which SMC's were aware about their roles and responsibilities. However, the findings of the following research studies are different from the present study, Betageri (2003) showed a wide gap between the role performed by the School Betterment Committee (SBC) and Village Education Committee (VEC) members. Roles and functions were not known to all the members. Srivastava (2018) found that School Management Committees face many challenges like lack of clarity on policy guidelines, low community awareness and inadequate capacity building of members. Mamun (2014) found that the SMCs in rural areas were not functioning well. Two thirds of SMC members did not receive their training on roles and responsibilities. Most of the SMC members were not well aware of their roles and responsibilities.

LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to the role and functions of school management committee of schools of South Delhi Municipal Committee involving small sample size, variables of the study, non-standardized questionnaire, and descriptive analysis of the data and wider generalizability of the findings. This study can provide insight for all the stakeholders involved at the planning, implementing and evaluating the functioning of the School management Committee or community participation in schools specially policy makers. This study finds new that if members do not function as per the RTE Act, municipal school which is the miniature of the society is going to suffer in providing the quality education as well as implementation of true decentralization in real sense.

CONCLUSION

The present study focused on the expected roles and functions of the school management committee and suggestions for effective functions. Findings of the study have led us to conclude three major points.

1. The profile of SMC members in relation to tenure as SMC member, gender, educational qualification and age showed that majority of SMC members were having tenure equal to one year or less than one year having more female members than male and most of the members were having educational qualification below 10th class. In relation to the age group, good percentage of members was between the age group of 25-40 years.
2. Through questionnaire, SMC members revealed that their schools were not having PTR as per RTE norms. Teachers were found to be regular and punctual and were able to complete the entire curriculum in time. Members further found that teachers were involved in the non-

academic duties other than census, disaster relief, and election duties further they didn't involve themselves in the process of improving the performance level of students as well as in the identification of the needs of the teachers for their training. Members involved themselves in the monitoring of the admission, attendance and participation of child but didn't ensure some of the key expected roles and functions like, the discrimination of the child belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged groups, the admission of children of migrant families, the mainstreaming of out school children, the monitoring of the Special Training Center and the necessary facilities to Children with Special Needs. They did not, monitor the quality of Mid-Day Meal, and participate in the regular health checkups of students, even aware about various welfare schemes like Chacha Nehru Sehat Yojna, Kishori Yojana. Most of members were also not aware about the RTE norms for the Class rooms required as per the strength of students. Most of the members monitored the availability of infrastructural facilities like safe drinking water, separate toilet blocks for girls and boys, sufficient fire safety arrangements, desks as per the strength of the students, facilities like electrical Fans, Bulbs/tube light and the teaching equipment's like science equipment's, TLM and games.

3. In order to function smoothly, SMCs should be elected through proper election process as per RTE act. SMC members should be oriented by the principals and other authorities and members may be given opportunities by the school authorities to participate in the school functioning in order to have better understanding of gaps in schools as mentioned in the above point. SMCs should be given prior intimation a week ago with agenda for the bimonthly meetings. School should ensure active participation of members through SDP (School Development Plan) along with transparencies in the fund flow mechanism and its utilization. True decentralization can be ensured when SMCs actively participate and monitor the functioning of schools.

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