



ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC) FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN THE CONTEXT OF RTE ACT-2009

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Abstract

School and community are interdependent and interrelated to each other. School is the deliberate product of the community and a good community is also a product of good school. Therefore, all the activities of the school should be by the community, for the community, and of the community. Considering its importance, the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment has given ample power to the community to exercise its power for the development and management of the school. In the words of NCF-2005, 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments and the institutional statutory space they provide for local community to participate in decision making in education for their children, are important developments". Similarly, RTE Act, 2009 has also strongly and located for the participation of the community in the management of the school. On the other hand, SMC is constituted by the members of the community. Thus, the SMC members, being the representative of the community members are getting involved with the management process of the community, there by the relationship between school and community is getting closer.

Introduction

The idea of open Government finds resonance with democracy, of which India is a living example. Being the largest democracy in the world, India has embraced diversity and inclusions cornerstones for creating an equitable society through development. The field of education, a major component of this development effort occupies a place in the '**Concurrent List**' of the constitution of India, and pertains to both central and state government. Policies are formulated both at central level as well as state level, but it is the states that are considered as the primary implements in accordance with their local context.

In India, at present, there are about 1.5 million schools at elementary level (catering the age group 6-14). Added to this, the number of elementary schools in the govt. sector represents about 73% (U-DISE) data of total provision, which implies that a larger proportion of parents send their children to Govt. schools at the elementary stage. To make schools responsive and accountable to both parents and the community, several measures have been taken by the state, making it mandatory for school heads to engage with parents and the community at large. It seeks to assess the **effectiveness of School Management Committee (SMC)** in bringing **transparency** (A part of 5T Initiative) and accountability in to schools. This changes in national level policies on decentralization and the formulation of Right to Education act (RTE) in 2009.

Review Of Related Literature

Sharma et. al. (2016) Committees such as mother groups, PTA & SMC should develop fixed guidelines for operationalizing their unique roles to avoid redundancy, even as they explore areas for mutual community- building and collaboration

Chisamya, (2010) emphasizes that a strong management system of education is pertinent in ensuring efficient and effective accountability at various levels of education.

Antonowicz et al, (2010) observed that financial management training has a positive influence irrespective of the original level of education of the SMC members.

Nayak, P.M (2009) in his book on community participation in the Universalisation of primary education explores the actual and expected roles of the SMC in school governance. The study further underlined that caste, class; gender and political affiliation of members do effect the functioning of the SMC in multiple ways.

Coppola, Luczak & Stephenson; cited in Pailwar & Mahajan, (2005) Community participation is increasingly encouraged in education as a means of achieving accountability and enhancing the quality of education offered in schools. These committees are supposed to encourage communities to participate and “assume ownership” of the education system, which would ostensibly increase accountability. It can take different forms, ranging from parents sending their children to school to active participation in school-related meetings, assisting with school constructions and supporting teachers in achieving positive outcomes. It will strengthen governance, and the resources available for primary education will be better used.

Irvin and Stansbury (2004) believe that citizen participation will produce more public preference in decision making. Improved governance of education has been identified as one way through which level of access, quality and participation in education can be improved

(UNESCO, 2009) and which can reduce various problems related to inequality which accentuates exclusion (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2010).

Wainwright & wehrmeyer (1998), participation by citizens and users present an important concept and strategy for planners, designers, community organizers and government officials.

As, hardly any study is available on role of SMC for effective management of elementary schools in the context of RTE Act 2009, in Ganjam district. So the study was undertaken.

Objective of the study

1. To study the awareness of the SMC members regarding their duties and responsibilities for effective management of the school.
2. To study the mode of participation of the SMC members for effective management of the school.
3. To study the role perception of SMC members for effective management of the school.
4. To evaluate the performance of the SMC members.
5. To suggest some remedial measures to improve the performance of the SMC members for effective management of the school.

Hypothesis of the study: Hypothesis in statement Form

1. The SMC members have adequate awareness about their duties and responsibilities is favourable.
2. The mode of participation of the SMC members for school management is positive.
3. The perception regarding their role in school management is effective.

Delimitations of the Study: The present study is limited to Ganjam District only though it may be applied to all the districts in the state. Further the findings of the study will also be limited to the data collected through the instruments prepared by the investigator.

Research Methodology

Design of the Study: The researcher followed the survey method of research to conduct the study. Ex -post-facto design was also followed as he was studying the existing role of SMC members for the effective management of elementary schools.

Population and Sample of the Study: All the elementary schools of Ganjam District of Odisha and all its SMC members, headmasters and teachers constitute the population of the study.

Sample of the Study: Two of Twenty-two Blocks and 5 schools of each Block were selected randomly in Ganjam District. From each school ten SMC members including male, female and members of the weaker section of the society constitute the sample of study. Further all the Headmasters and two teachers from each school were also be a part of the sample. Thus, the

sample size of the study was 100 SMC members, 10 headmasters and 20 teachers from the selected schools.

Tools and Techniques: The investigator prepared two sets of interview schedules, one for the SMC members and another one for the headmasters and teachers on the basis of the notification on RTE Act, 2009 by Govt. of India and the Guidelines for the composition and functions of SMC by Govt. of Odisha as mentioned earlier. In order to prepare the interview schedules, the investigator collected statements from the said guidelines and RTE Act covering different broad dimensions of the role of SMC members such as academic, non-academic, mode of participation and role perception. Academic dimension includes their role in curricular, co-curricular and evaluation activities of the school, enrolment and retention of the students. Similarly, the non-academic dimension covers their role in beautification of the school campus, infrastructural development, maintenance of the accounts, Mid-Day Meal, protection of rights of the children and visioning with community and other stake holders of the school.

The initial draft schedules were prepared covering the above dimensions and were given to the experts of DPIASE, Konisi, Berhampur Ganjam for its correction and give their opinion on it. On the basis of the expert's opinion necessary correction was made and the final drafts of the schedule was prepared.

The investigator also follows the T-Test & Percentile technique of participatory observation to get direct experience of the role of SMC members in the school management.

Findings of the study

The responses of the SMC members regarding their mode of participation in the SMC meeting, collected by the researcher through the interview schedule have been analyzed in an open discussion.

1. In order to evaluate the performance of the SMC members, Headmasters and Teachers of the concerned school had been interviewed with the help of a questionnaire. They expressed their opinion without any fear and favor on the basis of their long association with School Management Committee. Their opinion has been analyzed in the following manner to find out the extent to which they are contributing their best towards the management of their school.
2. The opinions of the headmasters and teachers on the non-academic performance of the SMC members, collected by the researcher through the interview schedule have been analyzed in an open discussion.

Conclusion

India is considered to be one of the youngest countries in the world. In response various government reports and policies started advocating for and supporting an education system that was more responsive and accountable to the community. These created a context for reforming the education system by empowering the community to locally generate and implement intuitional practices to support the school. Policy documents were explicit about the need to empower communities because they are one of the crucial stakeholders whose interests are to be protected.

This study has focused on exploring the effectiveness of school Management Committees (SMC) in bringing transparency, citizen engagement and accountability to school education as an example in India.

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