



“ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES IN ENHANCING QUALITY IN SCHOOLS - AN EXPLORATORY STUDY”

Mr. Iyer Ganapathi S.¹ and Dr. Sunita Magre²

¹M.Sc. (Ecology and Environment), M.A. (Education), PGDSLM, PET ,
Research Scholar , Department of Education, University of Mumbai.

² Associate Professor and Head , Department of Education,
University of Mumbai.

ABSTRACT

Locating the term quality in educational discourse is now a universal concern today. The belief that quality goes with privilege is clearly irreconcilable with vision of participatory democracy that India upholds and practices in the political sphere. According to the World Bank lack of quality is a major problem in many education systems. The quality of education is poor at all levels in low- and middle-income countries. Students in developing countries have a mean level of achievement below that in industrial countries, and their performance shows a much greater variance around the mean.” Whether this problem has increased or not is difficult to judge, but it is enough to notice that there is a huge need to improve quality in education in many countries. The researcher has tried to find out the gap between the key functions of the School Management Committees that are attributed theoretically to enhance school-quality like Making School Development Plan (SDP) as per the RTE guidelines/norms ; management of school; Supervising and supporting implementation of SDP; Supervision/monitoring of finance, management, academic progress, distribution of entitlements & other functions; Ensuring accountability and transparency in the system through the social audit mechanism; Keeping proper accounts of the fund available and sharing its deployment; Creating and maintaining an educational database; Coordinating with the local authority, generating funds from other sources for development of schools; Monitoring academic progress of the children; and the functioning of school management systems that exist in reality! The study has considered the School Managing Committee members and the teaching staff of schools in urban and rural areas of Greater Mumbai and Thane. The study also considers the types of school boards, gender, teaching experience and educational qualification of the participants in enhancing quality in schools. The researcher has used t-test and ANOVA to test the null hypotheses framed in the study and has found significant differences in the functioning of School Management Committees in the enhancement of quality education on the basis of types of school boards, geographical areas, teaching experience and educational qualifications overall.



KEYWORDS : Quality, School Management Committees (SMCs), Functions of SMCs, Gaps in the functions

INTRODUCTION

In all aspects of the school and its surrounding education community, the rights of the whole child, and all children, to survival, protection, development and participation are at the centre. This means that the focus is on learning which strengthens the capacities of children to act progressively on their own behalf through the acquisition of relevant knowledge, useful skills and appropriate attitudes; and which creates for children, and helps them create for themselves and others, places of safety, security and healthy interaction.

(Bernard, 1999). What does quality mean in the context of education? Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The terms efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993). Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today, however. Quality education includes: Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace; Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

While carrying out research it was necessary to study the earlier work in the field of research done and the method and extent in order to achieve a wholesome research.

Shuchi Grover And Nishu Harpreet Singh Harvard Graduate School of Education (April 2002) conducted the study "The Quality Of Primary Education: A Case Study Of Madurai And Villupuram Districts In Tamil Nadu, India" which was a pilot quality assessment study based upon school observations, interviews and research conducted in two districts of Tamil Nadu, India. The most salient findings were that key structures are in place for imparting quality primary education. However, several weaknesses in the system of educational administration and management currently limit the quality of education provided. A strengthening of crucial elements of the education system is needed in order to achieve the two important goals of building. Strong accountability in the system and evaluating the quality of the system by regular monitoring of student learning, to improve the overall efficiency of the system was necessary.

R. S. Tyagi (2011) conducted the study "Academic Supervision in Secondary Schools: School-Based Approach for Quality Management". The paper argues for effective school-based instructional supervision and support for the professional development of teachers by the heads. It discusses how principals – when supervising instruction – follow reflective practices in different situations. These situations include classroom observation, meetings, conferences, and deliberations with teachers.

Biswal, K. (2011) conducted the study "Secondary Education in India: Development Policies, Programmes and Challenges. Create Pathways to Access". The paper identifies key challenges relating to implementation of major reform programmes including Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA). It concludes that India needs to step up investment in pre-reform activities for creating a sustainable environment for initiating change; improving political will; introducing strategic management models ensuring continuity in change at the school level; and increasing budgetary allocation for making more inclusive quality secondary education a reality.

Dr. N.P.Prabhakar, and Dr.K.V.Rao, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Andhra Pradesh, India (2011) conducted the study "School Based Management: An Analysis of the Planning Framework and Community Participation". A sample of 188 secondary schools – about 34% of the population was selected through stratified sampling technique. The primary data was collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules. Chi-Square Test and simple percentages were used to analyze the data with the help of SPSS-17. The findings reveal that the planning framework is weak in public schools while it is well built in privately-run schools. But, despite the established planning framework in private schools, parents or community are not involved. The parent/community participation is true to the spirit in the small chunk of public schools where the planning framework is ascertained. The study suggests the policy makers to stress on conducive framework for micro planning in public schools and thrust upon parent/community

participation in the private set-up to strengthen the planning activity for achieving efficiency and accountability of the system.

Singh, Abhinav; Purohit, Bharathi(2011) presented the paper, "Leadership For Education In India: The Dean's Role" . Due to privatization of higher education in India, there has been an emergence of sub-standard schools throughout the country. The authors suggest that the dean of a school plays a key role in the learning process, both in academic and extracurricular capacities. It is an obligatory and moral duty of a dean to maintain academic integrity and promote a strategy for strengthening the quality of graduate and postdoctoral education across the schools. The degradation of the position of the dean must be reversed. People in the position must realize their duties towards the students, the nation and the next generation. The authors contend that the dean will have a crucial role to play if higher education in India is to progress and get out of the present mess.

Cheng, Alison Lai Fong; Yau, Hon Keung (2012) conducted the study "Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions of Quality Management in Hong Kong Primary Schools" A quantitative, survey questionnaire was adopted in this study. A total of 322 respondents (83 principals and 239 teachers) out of 83 primary schools responded to the questionnaire. The finding shows that all four features of Quality Management (QM) are perceived as being implemented in Hong Kong primary schools. The findings indicated that there are significant differences between the perceptions of principals and teachers towards "Values and Duties", "Systems and Teams", "Resources and Changes" of QM. However, there is no significant difference between the perceptions of principals and teachers towards "meeting pupil needs and empowering staff" of QM.

Lagrosen, Yvonne; Lagrosen, Stefan (2012), conducted the study "Organisational Learning for School Quality and Health". The study is based on a quantitative survey. Items measuring health status and values of quality management were included in a questionnaire addressed to teachers in a random sample of 20 schools. The items were checked for reliability with Cronbach's alpha tests and the correlation was measured with Pearson's correlation test. In the findings, correlations were found between all the indices of quality management values and the health index. This indicates that the health status of the school employees is related to the level of adoption of the quality management values. A framework depicting the findings from an organisational learning perspective is proposed. The study strengthens the knowledge of the connections between quality management and health.

Olayiwola, Shina (2012), in his paper, "Leadership for Quality and Accountability in Education" reviews a book entitled "Leadership for quality and accountability in education" written by Mark Brundrett and Christopher Rhodes. In the book, Mark Brundrett and Christopher Rhodes explain, "the role of leadership and its direct relationship with quality and accountability in enhancing learning outcomes". The authors consider the process, themes and impact in quality and accountability in education in three parts using mostly research reports. Brundrett and Rhodes note that if school leaders possess the requirements to operate within external quality frameworks, then such possession can lead to significant improvements in learning and teaching processes and outcomes.

Osei-Owusu B, & Sam, F. K. (2012) sought to assess the role of School Management Committees (SMCs) in improving quality teaching and learning in Ashanti Mampong Municipal Township Basic Junior High Schools in Ghana through the views of head teachers, teachers and SMC Members. The design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. A simple random sampling method was used to select a sample size of thirty (30) respondents. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents, validated by the researchers and analysed by the use of descriptive statistics. The findings indicated that SMCs were ineffective in the monitoring and supervision of head teachers', teachers' and pupils' attendance. Even though SMC's were not doing enough to assist teachers to improve teaching and learning, they were seen as very effective in solving school community relations since SMCs are relatively on task on the issue of serving as a vehicle for promoting community participation in the provision of quality education. Finally, it was recommended that much effort is needed to be done by SMCs in the Ashanti Mampong Municipal to raise the standard of basic education.

Adeolu Joshua Ayeni & Williams Olusola Ibukun(2013) conducted the study "A Conceptual Model for School-Based Management Operation and Quality Assurance in Nigerian Secondary Schools". This paper examined the School-Based Management Committee's (SBMC) involvement and effectiveness in school governance, curriculum implementation and students' learning outcomes in Nigerian secondary schools. The findings indicated that the major challenges facing effective operation of SBMCs were identified as low capacity of key members of the SBMCs; poor attendance of members at meetings due to lack of incentives and financial support from the government; lack of cooperation from the schools; and PTA's resistance to the SBMC initiatives; these resulted in ineffective school management and low level of students' academic achievement. It was concluded that a conceptual model of inter-relatedness be adopted to strengthen the operational capacity of SBMCs for efficient service delivery and quality learning outcomes in secondary schools.

Hooge, Edith; Honingh, Marlies(2014) wrote that school boards are expected to monitor and enhance the educational quality of their schools. Taking Dutch school boards in primary education as an exemplary case (N = 332) the researchers developed and tested a path model using structural equation modelling to analyse the extent to which school boards discern educational quality in their schools. The results showed that, in general, school boards in primary education believe that they can contribute to enhancing the quality of school education. If the school board and school(s) management stick to their governing and management roles respectively, this positively affects the extent to which the school board is able to identify educational quality in the schools it governs.

Hosgörür, Vural (2014), conducted the study "School Development Applications in Turkey". This is a qualitative case study on 30 individuals working within 11 primary schools located in the provincial capital of Mugla province. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews, and analysed through content analysis. As a result of the study, briefly, it was found out that the school development management teams established in the schools were not voluntary, but members were assigned to the teams, that the working groups significantly lacked information about the School Development Management Teams (SDMTs) which had a negative impact on the participation and the taking on of responsibilities by the members, that teamwork could not be performed as intended, that meetings were only irregularly held, that team objectives could not be achieved, and that almost all participants emphasised the lack of financial resources as one of the most important problems in achieving the objectives of school development management teams. It was concluded on the basis of these findings that the school development management teams should be reviewed and revised to serve more efficiently.

Mestry, Raj; Bodalina, Kishan(2015) studied "The Perceptions and Experiences of School Management Teams and Teachers of the Management of Physical Resources in Public Schools". A structured questionnaire was administered to investigate the management teams' and teachers' perceptions and experiences of the management of physical resources in schools. Findings revealed that many governing bodies lack the necessary financial skills to develop practical budgets and procure physical resources economically for their schools. The study indicated that they are unable to set-up systematic structures and stringent processes, and this has caused wasteful expenditure for schools, and the failure of teachers to maintain and productively use physical resources. Their function to constantly monitor and evaluate the procurement and maintenance of physical resources is seriously lacking. According to the finding, Governors who are proficient will experience very little difficulty in managing the school's physical resources effectively.

NEED OF THE STUDY

According to the World Bank lack of quality is a major problem in many education systems: "The quality of Education is poor at all levels in low- and middle-income countries. Students in developing countries have a mean level of achievement below that in industrial countries, and their performance shows a much greater variance around the mean." Whether this problem has increased or not is difficult to judge, but it is enough to notice that there is a huge need to improve quality in education in many countries. Poor

quality may not be the only reason for the discussion about quality in education. As mentioned above another reason for this discussion may also be to argue for fundamental changes in the education system. Teachers in most countries would strongly agree that the quality of education has to be improved. The ways to improve the quality is to be found in education reforms, which will allow well educated teachers to improve and develop their work in the classroom.

The researcher has tried to find out the gap between the key functions of the School Management Committees that are attributed theoretically to enhance school-quality like Making School Development Plan (SDP) as per the RTE guidelines/norms; management of school; Supervising and supporting implementation of SDP; Supervision/monitoring of finance, management, academic progress, distribution of entitlements & other functions; Ensuring accountability and transparency in the system through the social audit mechanism; Keeping proper accounts of the fund available and sharing its deployment; Creating and maintaining an educational database; Coordinating with the local authority, generating funds from other sources for development of schools; Monitoring academic progress of the children; and the functioning of school management systems that exist in reality!

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:

"Role of School Management Committees in Enhancing Quality in Schools - An Exploratory Study"

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS:

Quality education includes learners who are ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace, processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities ;outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation of the society and positive participation in society

School Management Committee (SMC) is a governing body that supports both academic and administrative work and ensures continuity and stability in the school’s shared vision and goals in relation to the school children, infrastructure of the school, teacher related aspects, utilisation of grants, resource utilisation, planning and community participation.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS:

School Management Committee’s (SMC) functions are related to the school children, infrastructure of the school, teacher related aspects, utilisation of grants, resource utilisation, and planning and community participation.

AIM OF THE RESEARCH: To study the role of school management committees in enhancing quality in schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH: Two of the eight of the research bjectives were as follows:

1. To study the functioning of School Management Committees in relation to school children on the basis of

1. Types of school boards	2. Gender
3. Geographical areas	4. Teaching experience
5. Educational qualification	
2. To study the functioning of School Management Committees in relation to school infrastructure on the basis of

1. Types of school boards	2. Gender
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- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 3. Geographical areas | 4. Teaching experience |
| 5. Educational qualification | |

NULL HYPOTHESES OF THE RESEARCH

1. There is no significant difference in the functioning of School Management Committees in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school children on the basis of

1. Types of school boards	2. Gender
3. Geographical areas	4. Teaching experience
5. Educational qualification	
2. There is no significant difference in the functioning of School Management Committees in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school infrastructure on the basis of

1. Types of school boards	2. Gender
3. Geographical areas	4. Teaching experience
5. Educational qualification	

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research study takes into account only schools in Greater Mumbai and Thane District Region.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The researcher has used descriptive survey research method for the present study.

SAMPLING

Probability sampling of the simple random type has been used by the researcher and had chosen 400 members of school management committees and teaching staff in all from 15 schools affiliated to ICSE, CBSE and SSC in Greater Mumbai and urban and rural areas of Thane District.

TOOL OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

The researcher had constructed a five point Likert Rating Scale on functions of School Management Committees in enhancing quality in schools consisting of 94 items based on the following seven components

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. School Children | 2. Infrastructure |
| 3. Teacher related aspects | 4. Utilization of Grants |
| 5. Resource Utilization | 6. Planning |
| 7. Community Participation | |

TECHNIQUES OF DATA ANALYSIS

t - test and ANOVA were used for hypotheses testing

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The researcher has presented the major findings and conclusions of two of the 8 null hypotheses framed as follows:

HYPOTHESIS 1

TABLE 1

Difference in the functioning of School Management Committees(SMCs) in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school children on the basis of Types of School Boards- CBSE, ICSE and SSC, Using ANOVA Single Factor:

SUMMARY					
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance	
Column 1 CBSE	130	10447	80.36153846	76.3721527	
Column 2 ICSE	140	11089	79.20714286	66.0790853	
Column 3 SSC	130	5775	44.42307692	273.005665	
ANOVA					
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value
Between Groups	109681.4662	2	54840.73309	401.287971	4.70877E-96(0.00)
Within Groups	54254.73132	397	136.6617917		
Total	163936.1975	399			

TABLE 2

Difference in the functioning of School Management Committees (SMCs) in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school children on the basis of Gender, Geographical areas, Teaching experience and Educational (Professional) qualifications:

Variables	Types	N	Mean	SD	df (N-2)	t-ratio	P value	Level of Significance
Gender	Females	337	33.5	10.4	398	1.78	0.08	Not Significant
	Males	63	64.1	21.9				
Geographic Areas	Rural	112	58.2	22.5	398	6.49	0.00	Significant
	Urban	288	72.2	17.9				
Teaching Experience	Above 10 Years	246	74.9	15.3	398	9.82	0.01	Significant
	Below 10 Years	154	57.8	22.8				
Educational Qualification	Graduate and B.Ed.	360	69.1	15.3	398	2.51	0.01	Significant
	Graduate and D.Ed.	40	60.7	22.8				

HYPOTHESIS 2

TABLE 3

Difference in the functioning of School Management Committees(SMCs) in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school infrastructure on the basis of Types of School Boards- CBSE, ICSE and SSC, Using ANOVA Single Factor:

SUMMARY					
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance	
Column 1 CBSE	130	8703	66.94615385	49.38467501	
Column 2 ICSE	140	9286	66.32857143	50.04953751	
Column 3 SSC	130	4825	37.11538462	152.2423971	

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	76444.7319 8	2	38222.3659 9	460.290031 6	3.8386E-104(0.00)	3.01845199 5
Within Groups	32966.7780 2	397	83.0397431 3			
Total	109411.51	399				

TABLE 4

Difference in the functioning of School Management Committees (SMCs) in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school infrastructure on the basis of Gender, Geographical areas, Teaching experience and Educational (Professional) qualifications:

Variables	Types	N	Mean	SD	df (N-2)	t-ratio	P value	Level of Significance
Gender	Females	337	57.8	16.3	398	0.03	0.5	Not Significant
	Males	63	52.8	17.3				
Geographic Areas	Rural	112	47.4	16.9	398	7.78	0.00	Significant
	Urban	288	60.8	14.8				
Teaching Experience	Above 10 Years	246	62.7	12.6	398	9.55	0.00	Significant
	Below 10 Years	154	48.0	18.1				
Educational Qualification	Graduate and B.Ed.	360	57.8	16.2	398	2.84	0.00	Significant
	Graduate and D.Ed.	40	50.05	18.0				

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Significant difference is found in the functioning of School Management Committees in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school children, school infrastructure.
2. No significant difference is found in the functioning of SMCs in the enhancement of quality education in relation to school children, school infrastructure with respect to gender.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In the light of the tremendous importance now being attached the world over, to improving the quality of schooling, a study of the perspectives on school quality assumes utmost significance, as a clear understanding of the way quality in education has been conceived of globally, could serve as a useful guide for developing plans and policies for improving the quality of schooling in our country. Not too many researchers have been conducted on the enhancement of quality education of schools by School Management Committees. This research has tried to fill the lacunae in this area of research in the Indian context. Through the research the researcher has explored the relation and effectiveness of school management committees and enhancement of quality in schools and suggested suitable recommendations to improve quality education in schools. The ambition of this study is to provide a platform for strategies on improving quality in school education. The result has aimed at offering deep insights working of school management committees and their roles in enhancing school quality. The focus has also been on identifying variations in conceptions about quality and its assurance in school education among School Management Committees (SMCs). Therefore the knowledge generated is also relevant for viewing SMC’s conceptions beyond the selected group of respondents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended by the researcher that if all the aspects considered under study are looked into and tweaked to reach optimum i.e., proper utilization of resources, planning with foresight and 360° view, maximum participation of community in school improvement programmes, proper utilization of budgets and optimum utilization of resources with school children welfare and learning in view, then the role of SMCs will become more effective in enhancing quality in schools.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

- i. A case study on effectiveness of SMC of particular schools in ensuring quality in schools
- ii. A mixed methods study on role of management in ensuring quality in higher education
- iii. A comparative study of managing committees in ensuring quality in schools across the state

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Mr. Iyer Ganapathi S.

**M.Sc. (Ecology and Environment), M.A. (Education), PGDSL, PET ,
Research Scholar , Department of Education, University of Mumbai.**