



A STUDY OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT-AIDED MINORITY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is aimed at studying the community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools. The entire paper is divided into three parts. The first part begins with introduction which deals with the significance of community participation in the overall school improvement, Needs and Importance of the Study and operational definitions of the key terms used in the study. The second part deals with the research questions followed by five objectives which seek to explore how community participation plays a role in the management of Government-Aided Minority Schools. Sampling, analysis and interpretation of data have been also discussed in this part. In the third and last part major findings of the study have been discussed followed by the conclusion and educational implications of the research carried out.

KEY WORD: Community, participation, community participation, Management, Govt-Aided Schools, Minority.

INTRODUCTION

One of the questions pertaining to community participation in the management of Government-Aided Minority Schools is as to whether community's role in these schools is even bigger than the ones which are purely Government funded or the privately managed institutions. The fact is the Government-Aided schools solely rely on the support of the community in most of the school affairs where financial implications are required. Moreover, the muslim community, being marginalised, has to face many challenges in providing financial support to these schools and hence mobilisation of resources always remain an issue. This should further be compared with how other minority communities, which are relatively better off, manage to run the schools.

However, for want of the funds, the schools cannot be left in the lurch. Nonetheless, the children of the community cannot be deprived of the pleasure of learning in the formal system. Significantly, when the community participates in the management of the school, it not only increases ownership but also empowers communities to take important decisions concerning the future of their children. The research studies indicate that when parents get involved in the education of their children, the latter are motivated and they can perform even better. Most of the educational policies place the 'community participation' on the top and consider this as an important tool for improving the functioning of the school. Education of all children should be considered a social responsibility for all members of the community and it is important to make strategy to get stakeholders involved. There is a need to take initiatives to improve infrastructure, educational services and educational quality.



NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

As we know that education takes place not only in schools but also within families, communities and society. But no one can take 100 percent responsibility for educating children. Communities and society must support parents and families in the upbringing, socializing and educating of their children. Schools prepare children for the betterment of society. Each group plays an important role in contributing to children's education. It is important to develop partnerships between schools, parents and communities. Community participation has been highly beneficial to increases in enrolment, for retention and achievement. Kalhotra (2013) studied on the "status of community participation in elementary schools of Jammu" and found that community participation plays an important role in arrangement of infrastructural facilities and organisation of co-curricular activities in elementary schools of Jammu. In one another study Pailwar and Mahajan (2005) discussed on "Janshala in Jharkhand: An experiment with community involvement in education" and said that active involvement of the community has facilitated in identifying community-specific education issues and formulating effective strategies to address those barriers which hamper the process of education by mobilising resourced from within the community. In government-aided schools 95% of the salary of teaching and non-teaching staffs are granted by state government. 5% of the salary managed by schools itself. Beside that maintenance of the building, water bill, electricity bill, telephone bill, internet bill etc. are managed by schools itself. It's a very challenging for the school to collect fund and managing the schools. Therefore it's important to study that the role of community in collecting fund and managing the schools.

If we see globally most of the educationists and researchers all over the world argued that community participation plays very important role in promoting education in terms of quality and quantity. In one of the study, Hamdan (2013) studied on "Effect of Community Participation in Education on Quality of Education" and found that Community participation in education is positively correlated with quality education. In one another study Abrisham (2010) discussed on "Community Participation for Educational Planning and Development" and said that community participation can contribute to educational planning and development through various channels such as - advocating enrolment and education benefits, boosting morale of school teachers, raising money for schools, constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities. Policy makers, educators are recognized community participation as one of the major keys to improving the quality of education. A number of studies have been done on community participation But no study seems to carried out on management of Government-aided minority schools in terms of community participation, owing to this there seems to be a gap in the field of community participation in education because without taking all aspects of education we cannot fulfil this gap. So this study will be an attempt to study the community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A Study of Community Participation in the Management of Government-Aided Minority Schools"

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Community- A community is a social unit of any size that shares common values as social, religious, occupational and geographical characteristics.

Participation- Participation is a process through which all members of a community or organization are involved in and have influence on decisions related to educational activities that will affect them.

Community Participation- Community Participation can be defined as involvement of communities in education through different activities like contribution of money, materials, and labour, research and data collection, dialogue with policy makers, school management, curriculum design, development of learning materials and other school infrastructure.

Management- Management of the school covers admission, management of library, laboratory, building and other physical and material resources, financial resources, examination and promotion, relation with

students, community and other persons and agencies connected with the establishment and functioning of the school.

Government-Aided Schools- Government-aided schools means a privately managed school which is recognised by and is receiving aid from the Government, the rules and regulations followed here are same as that of the government schools. The curriculum, study materials, syllabus, examinations, etc. for each class of education are taken care of according to the government rules.

Minority- The smaller number or part, especially a number or part representing less than half of the whole. In India Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhist and Parsis are considered to be minorities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) How far community participation is helpful in the management of government-aided minority schools?
- 2) What is the role of community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the status of community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools.
- 2) To study as to whether SMCs and Management committees have any coordination in garnering community support in the management of government-aided minority schools.
- 3) To study the perceptions of stakeholders towards the involvement of community in the management of government-aided minority schools.
- 4) To Study the role of Community with reference to generation of financial resources in government-aided minority schools.
- 5) To study the barriers in community participation pertaining to managing of government-aided minority schools.

Delimitations of the Study

Due to constraints of time and limited resources, the present study was confined to Government-Aided minority schools of North Delhi only. The study was delimited to the following aspects:

- a) Only three Government-Aided minority schools of North Delhi were selected for the study.
- b) Only Muslim, Sikh and Christian Government-Aided minority schools have been taken.

Population

Since the study intends to find out the community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools in the district of North Delhi., so the population for the study was all the government-aided minority schools of Delhi.

Sample for the Study

The sample for the present study was taken from 3 Government –aided minority schools (1 Muslim, 1 Christian & 1Sikh) from North district of Delhi. Sampling was done both randomly and purposively.

Since the study was intended to know the community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools. Therefore, 3 Managers, 3 Principals, 18 Teachers, 24 students and 18 Parents who were SMC members were selected from 3 different government-aided minority schools. Selection of schools, Managers and Principals was purposive. Teachers, students and Parents who were SMC members were selected on random basis thus making the total sample size as 66.

Tools for Data Collection

Investigator developed a comprehensive questionnaire for teachers as well as Interview schedules for managers, principals and parents who were SMC members. Focus group discussion was also used for students. In order to attain the objectives of the study, following five tools were used:

1. Questionnaire for Teachers
2. Interview schedule for Manager
3. Interview schedule for Principal
4. Interview schedule for Parents who were SMC members
5. Focus group discussion for Students

Administration of the Tools and Collection of the Data

For collecting the data, the investigator personally visited the schools. After obtaining permission from the Principal of the selected schools, the investigator contacted the respondents and thus administered the tools. Interviews were taken by the investigator personally from the Managers, Principals and Parents who were SMC members of the selected three schools. Parents who were SMC members were not present in the school. However, by virtue of the cooperation extended by the Principals, the concerned parents could be made available in the school same day. The investigator met the teachers of the selected three schools personally and asked them to fill up the Questionnaire after going through the instructions carefully. The same were collected from them after ensuring that each and every item was answered. Focus Group Discussion were organized for a group of students in each of the selected schools. It was, in fact, the most rigorous and time consuming task of the present study.

Statistical Technique Used

As the present study focused upon studying the community participation in the management of Government-aided minority schools, the researcher used the simple Percentage (%) technique to analyse the data.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

The data was analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively as per the objectives.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Followings are the major Findings of the study being carried out in each of the three different Government-aided minority schools i.e. (Muslim, Sikh and Christian):

- ❖ By comparing all the three different minority schools, it was found that there was significant involvement of the community in all the government-aided school in the form of ensuring attendance of the students, regularizing and monitoring both bullying and truancy in the school, reducing the number of dropouts in the school, ensuring more enrolment in the school, maintaining retention of the students in the school. But the extension of participation differs in all the three government-aided schools of three different minority community. The fact is the status of community participation was better in Christian school followed by Muslim and Sikh communities.
- ❖ After analyzing all the three different minority schools, it was noted that there was no coordination between Management committees and SMCs in all the three different minority schools be it was Muslim, Sikh or Christian. There was no collaborative meeting between Management committees and SMCs in all the three different government-aided schools. But all the committees were working well on their own separately.
- ❖ It was observed that the management of neither of the sampled schools was in favour of SMCs. All of them were of the view that SMCs would act as a parallel management body to already existing management committees of the school. Hence, there may be certain decisions which may not have agreement between themselves and can lead to hampering of a number of managerial functioning's of the school. But as per the rules of Directorate of Education, it was mandatory for all the school as to whether it was government or government-aided to constitute SMC to make it functional. This way SMC came into existence in all the schools, But by coming up of SMC in all the schools belonging to the minority communities, it played a supportive role in the management of the schools.

- ❖ By taking views of all the stakeholders, it was found that all have positive response regarding management of the government-aided schools. Because without support of the community, it was not possible to maintain the infrastructure of the school and generation of funds required for giving 5% salaries to the teaching and non-teaching staffs.
- ❖ If a comparison is drawn between these sampled schools, it may be inferred that Sikh and Muslim managed schools needed more community support in comparison to the Christian managed schools. This being so because Christian community is more aware about the importance of education and they generously contribute to the trust which ultimately provides financial support to the school. Moreover, their infrastructure facilities are far better than other minority managed schools.
- ❖ All the stakeholders suggested that there needed to be the involvement of the community in the management of the government-aided school but their extension should be in a limited manner as per the requirement of the school because they argue that too much involvement of the community in the management of the schools disturb the functioning of the school.
- ❖ Different communities have different means for generating finance according to their need and available resources. Communities played an important role in the generation of finance in all the schools. If we compare all the three different minority communities i.e. (Muslim, Sikh, Christian) on the basis of analysis of present data, it was found that in Muslim and Sikh schools there was more financial crisis as compare to Christian school because Christian school had a strong management and their infrastructure had already been developed. But in Muslim school, infrastructure was in a developing stage and in Sikh school it was observed that they had lack of infrastructure.
- ❖ If we see the different means of the generation of finances, in Muslim school they were giving their school ground on rent for solemnizing marriages for the local community. Besides, they also take contribution from parents. While in Sikh school, which was managed by their own management and trust connected to Gurudwara samiti, the expenditure is met through the donations. They never charge any type of fees from the students whether it was admission fees or monthly fees. However, in the situation when there is a paucity of funds, sometimes some teachers also donate their 1% salary. In the Christian school they take 5000 as caution money from the students and they returned the money whenever the children leave the school. The huge refundable caution money from parents, the interest of which is always capitalized by them to meet all the expenditure.
- ❖ There are many hurdles that hamper the very process of running the Government-aided schools. Fiancé was the one of the important barriers in the management of the schools which was facing almost all the government-aided minority schools.
- ❖ After comparing all the three schools managed by different minority communities, it was found there were so many barriers which hamper the very process of running schools but the nature of problem was different. One of the hurdles that schools were facing was same in all the school and that was related to finance. Muslim school was facing infrastructure as well as lack of community awareness which affected quality education and teaching learning process. There was shortage of staffs also.
- ❖ Sikh school was facing infrastructure problem even they had no playground and there was also lack of community awareness and shortage of staffs. Significantly each of the sampled schools adopt different measures to overcome the financial crisis. Whereas Muslim managed schools would bank on the contributions from parents, the donation provided by Gurudwara samities and the trusts would help run Sikh schools. The Christian managed schools charge the huge refundable caution money from parents, the interest of which is always capitalized by them to meet all the expenses.

CONCLUSION

Investigator conducted a study on the community participation in the management of government-aided minority schools. The study revealed that community participation play an exemplar role in ensuring attendance of the students, regularizing and monitoring both bullying and truancy in the school, reducing the number of dropouts, ensuring more enrolment, maintaining retention of the students, helping in the

proper functioning of the school, helping in the generation of financial resources in almost all the three different minority schools i.e. (Muslim, Sikh and Christian). Comparison had been drawn to ascertain the extent of community participation in the management of these three different minority schools. By comparing all the three different minority schools it was found that there is involvement of the community in all the three different minority school. But the extension of participation differs in all these schools. The status of community participation is better in Christian school followed by Muslim and Sikh communities.

After analysing all the three different minority schools, it was noted that there is no coordination between Management committees and SMCs among all the three different minority schools whether it was Muslim, Sikh or Christian. There is no collaborative meeting between Management committees and SMCs in all the three different government-aided schools. But all the committees are working well on their own separately. It was observed that the management of neither of the sampled schools is in favour of SMCs. All of them are of the view that SMCs would act as the parallel management body to already existing management committees of the school, hence there may be certain decisions which may not have agreement between themselves and can lead to hampering of a number of managerial functioning of the school. But as per the rules of Directorate of Education it was mandatory for all the school as to whether it is government or government-aided to constitute SMC to make it functional. This way SMC came into existence in all the schools, But by coming up of SMC in all the schools of different communities, there is benefit and support for the management of the schools.

All the stakeholders namely Managers, Principals, Parents who were SMCs members and students of the schools were taken as sample from all the three different community for knowing perception of them towards involvement of community in the management of the government-aided schools. By taking views of all the stakeholders, it was found that all have positive response regarding management of the government-aided schools. Because without support of the community, it is not possible to maintain the infrastructure of the school and generation of funds required for giving 5% salaries to the teaching and non-teaching staffs. If a comparison is drawn between these sampled schools, it may be inferred that Sikh and Muslim managed schools needed more community support in comparison to the Christian managed schools. This being so because Christian community is more aware about the importance of education and they generously contribute to the trust which ultimately provides financial support to the school. Moreover, the infrastructure facilities is far better than other minority managed schools. All the stakeholders suggested that there needed to be the involvement of the community in the management of the government-aided school but their extension should be in a limited manner as per the requirement of the school because they argue that too much involvement of the community in the management of the schools disturb the functioning of the school.

Finance is the key for the management of the government-aided schools because only 95% of the salaries of the teaching and non-teaching staffs are funded by the government but rest 5% of the salaries of the teaching and non-teaching staffs have to manage by schools itself. Besides the salaries of the staffs there are so many other expenses for managing the school i.e., maintenance of the building, maintenance of the furniture, maintenance of the different labs like science labs, computer labs etc., water bill, electricity bill, internet bill, Xerox bill etc. . It is a very difficult task because taking all the things collectively the amount became very hefty and it is not an easy task to generate the fund by them.

Apart from above, there are many other hurdles that hamper the very process of running the Government-aided schools Such as, lack of infrastructure, financial crisis, dropouts of the students, and unawareness among community regarding importance of education. These all barriers can be overcome by the involvement of the community. There is a need to understand the nature of the community and need to assess capabilities of communities and responsible agencies, and provide them assistance and need to conduct continuous assessment.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings of the study, it can be inferred that community participation in the schools, has greater educational implications. This, not only reduces the gap between the textual knowledge and the indigenous knowledge which students acquire in the community but it also helps the schools become a learning ecosystem where schools and communities interact continuously for the betterment of the school. In addition to this, following may be the educational implications:

- ❖ This study would help in understanding the concept of community, community participation and community participation in education.
- ❖ This study would help in understanding the educational inequality among three different minority communities i.e. (Muslim, Sikh and Christian)
- ❖ This study would provide a base and literature for the further studies related to community participation in education.
- ❖ This study would help in understanding the management of government-aided minority schools.
- ❖ This study would help in understanding the financial management and barriers pertaining to the management of the government-aided minority schools.
- ❖ This study would help in understanding different management committees of government-aided schools, such as Management Committees and School Management Committees for the proper functioning and development of the school.

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