# Effectiveness of School Management Committees in the Academic and Physical Improvement of Public Sector Educational Institutions under Islamabad Capital Territory

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**Abstract**

Involvement by school management committees is an important phenomenon in the academic and physical development of educational institutions. Governments and educational authorities promote their constructive participation and involvement in education in order to strengthen the worldwide educational process. The Pakistani government, both in the provinces and in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), has launched projects to involve the population in education with the same goal. Participatory school management committee bodies, such as School Management Committees (SMCs), have been established in all public schools in Pakistan at the behest of the government. To this aim, rules and regulations governing the functioning of such school management committees will be developed, and the School will receive a financial contribution each year to be used for consultation and support. This study intends to i) determine the extent to which SMCs are useful in improving academic and physical conditions in educational institutions. Data were gathered from 900 respondents, including Area Education Officers, Principals, and Teachers from six sectors of the Islamabad Capital Territory. The respondents' data was collected using three questionnaires. The research is quantitative in character. The sample approach used was convenience sampling, which refers to include a population based on its accessibility and availability to the researcher. Using the Chi-square test, it was observed that school management committees' instructional engagement in ICT was successful in most areas but ineffective in others. It is suggested that (i) effective planning is required to propagate the notion of school

management committee engagement; (ii) awareness campaigns be intensified; and (iii) SMC participatory bodies meet with FDE personnel to address concerns at educational institutions.
**Keywords:** School Management Committees (SMC), Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), academic and physical uplift, awareness campaign

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Education is a socializing process. As a result, Article 25A of Pakistan's constitution establishes the state's responsibility for education. Furthermore, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution delegated responsibility for education to provinces, which implies that provinces in Pakistan now have their own budgets and may govern educational processes without relying on the federation.

The goal of any government, and hence every educational institution, is to provide high-quality education. The government, educational institutions, parents, and community must all work together to attain this aim. Only their united efforts will be able to do this. Historically, communities and some governments believed that educational institutions and their professors were solely responsible for providing education. Parents assumed that enrolling their children in school was adequate activity on their part. They thought that schools and instructors were solely responsible for their students' intellectual and moral growth. As parents and the community were not paying close attention to intellectual and character development, which was critical, the scope and quality of education suffered. It also hampered pupils' moral and character development. With time, it became clear that education, like any other activity, required a variety of inputs to flourish as students gained confidence and an openness to learning. (Noguera et al., 2017).

To ensure the success of the educational process, all of the aforementioned parties must actively engage. Parents may help their children do their assignments. The community might keep in touch with the school about maintenance and development plans, as well as check educational institutions' efficacy. If there is a teacher shortage, community workers may take up teaching duties. Other members of the community should educate parents and children on the indisputable value of education, provide free tutoring centers, and engage with educators and department of education officials. This strategy is intended to educate the community's children in a friendly environment. This can lead to growth and an increase in scholarly activities. (Fiore. 2016). Many countries' educational institutions encourage appropriate levels of community participation, which is why they are superior in terms of both quality and quantity.

Recognizing the importance of public involvement in education, the Government of Pakistan directed all government schools across the country to establish dynamic public participating societies such as Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs), Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs), and Schools Management Committees (SMCs) to provide moral and financial support to the schools. The provincial department of education attempted to encourage parents to engage in educational institutions. The provincial finance agency directed the distribution of funding for classroom consumables and minor repairs to all public elementary and secondary schools annually. These elected community participatory organizations could only use these funds after discussing with the principal or headmaster of the relevant school.

In February 2022, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training in Islamabad

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announced the School and College Management Committee (SMC) Bylaws, which had been approved by the federal cabinet. SMC refers to a committee constituted by the directorate for each institution to handle school/college matters, bridging the gap between the institution and the community in order to enhance educational institutions generally. These Bylaws clearly define the functions and roles of all stakeholders in educational institutions, ranging from participating in the process of upgrading the institution's infrastructure by mobilizing physical and financial resources for the betterment of institutions to taking effective steps to improve academic performance of all students.

The SMC consists of eight members: the Chairperson (School Head), the President (from parents), the General Secretary (teacher), the Finance Secretary (from parents), and four teachers. In addition to the obligatory community engagement in education, Pakistan has a long tradition of voluntary community involvement through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and humanitarian groups.

According to the rules, community participatory councils such as PTCs, PTAs, SMCs, and others were responsible for specific tasks such as monitoring student absenteeism, lowering dropout rates, increasing enrollment rates, halting outside interruption in schools, hiring temporary teachers from the students' fund, using rented buildings in the absence of public sector buildings, raising donations to schools and students, and providing financial assistance to deserving students.

The purpose of this research was to determine how a School Management Committee could effectively contribute to the qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of education through effective community participation in funding generation, managing educational institution development, and planning various events to raise community awareness of education. Because any system may require some change, stakeholders were asked to submit recommendations to increase community engagement and establish successful two-way connections in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

**Statement of the Problem**
The goal of the research was to determine how effectively the SMC might help to the academic and physical growth of educational institutions in the Islamabad Capital Territory. This problem statement seeks to explore and address concerns such as SMC's lack of understanding of their position and active engagement, limited effect on decision-making, inadequate representation, insufficient resources, and communication and coordination gaps.

**Research Objectives**
The study's aim was as follows:
i.      To measure the extent SMCs are effective in the academic and physical improvement of educational institutions.

**Research Questions**
i.      What is the extent of effectiveness of SMCs in the academic and physical improvement of educational institutions

**Significance of the Study**

The research on the efficiency of School Management Committees (SMCs) in the public sector educational system is relevant for various reasons:

Improved governance: The study's evaluation of SMC effectiveness can give insight on how well SMCs carry out their tasks, such as regulating school operations, guaranteeing accountability, and increasing stakeholder involvement. This information may be used to make more informed decisions and improve school management and governance.

Quality of Education: SMCs have a direct influence on the quality of education in public schools. Understanding SMCs' efficacy can assist identify their strengths and limitations in terms of driving educational quality. It can also give insights into the variables that impede or assist efficient committee functioning, resulting in meaningful suggestions for change.

Stakeholder Participation: The research can evaluate the amount of stakeholder involvement and participation in SMCs, examining whether varied viewpoints are appropriately represented and taken into consideration. It can discover solutions to boost stakeholder participation, resulting in more collaboration and shared accountability for educational results.

Accountability and Transparency: By assessing the efficacy of SMCs, the research can determine how well these committees carry out their tasks in terms of financial management, resource distribution, and school performance monitoring. It can detect shortcomings in accountability procedures and make recommendations to improve openness and efficiency.

Policy Formulation: The study's findings can help shape policy and reform initiatives in school management and governance. Governments and education authorities might use the study's findings to update current rules, provide recommendations for successful SMC operation, or implement new initiatives to improve the overall effectiveness of public sector educational institutions.

Knowledge Generation: Research on the efficacy of SMCs contributes to the corpus of knowledge on educational management and governance. This knowledge can inform future research projects, capacity-building initiatives, and professional development programs for school administrators and committee members.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

School Management Committees are encouraged to involve all stakeholders in the schools to ensure effective implementation of responsive programs, projects and activities. It is also stated that every elementary and secondary schools shall organize Parent-Teacher Associations for providing a forum for the discussion of issues and their solutions related to the total school programs and to ensure the full cooperation of parents in efficient implementation of such programs. With this, the PTA must provide mechanisms to ensure proper coordination with the members of the community to provide an avenue for discussing relevant concerns, aid, and support to the school for the promotion of common interest (Gazmen, 2016). She also mentioned that the existence of PTA has proven to be potential instrument in the solution of many problems.

In Timagos' (2017) study entitled "Parental Involvement its Relation to the 7 Developmental Domains of the Kindergarten Pupils", revealed that there is a significant difference between the level of parental involvement of parents and guardians along school communication and school participation

Gazmen (2016) in her study, "Parent-Teacher Association of Baggao East District and Its Contribution to School Development", found out that harmonious and good relationship between the home and the school is the primary goal to implement programs and projects. That there is a need to build a strong PTA for productive citizens from the school population. She also found out in the assessment on the extent of Involvement of PTA on the Programs and Projects of the school, that PTA officers are "sometimes" involved only on pupil development and school-community relations, and "often" involved in the fiscal development and physical facilities development.

According to Ibezimako (2017), the association is built on structures, both human and material. It comprises an executive committee called a School Committee. In most cases, it is made up of twelve members, of whom four are selected from among the school staff, including the head of the school known as the headmaster/headmistress, the principal, a teaching staff and a counsellor of the school.

From one perspective, SMCs are dream hoarders, institutions that help facilitate the unequal distribution of educational opportunities both within and across schools (Reeves 2017). SMCs are increasingly effective fundraisers, and many SMCs in affluent communities raise hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (Brown, Sargrad, and Benner 2017).

Modest in terms of organizational structure and human resources, SMCs recruit members from across the school. Nonetheless, our field research indicates that a relatively small group of parents typically play a disproportionately large role in PTA operations. Much SMC labor occurs outside of open school-wide meetings: on email chains and social media, in closed meetings of elected PTA board members, or in smaller committees on which parents volunteer to organize around particular tasks or interests, such as school grounds and facilities, fundraising, or newsletter production. Fundraising is also a central activity for many SMCs. These organizations collect membership dues and parent and community donations and run bake sales, raffles, and school festivals (Murray et al. 2018).

SMCs may create socioeconomically exclusive social networks through which advantaged parents share information about, and advocate for, enhanced educational opportunities for

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their children, a process described as "negotiated advantage" (Lareauand Calarco 2012; Calarco 2018). In either case, based on the social reproduction perspective, we hypothesize that the benefits associated with SMCs accrue to the relatively advantaged children with close network ties to the PTA and its leaders, at the expense of students in other social networks. According to Currid (2017), A community in general is a non-formal and effective educational body. It can serve a variety of purposes in advancing education. These responsibilities could include boosting student attendance, funding education, preserving a positive school climate, catering to physical resources, and providing media for easy learning.

The Pakistani government started encouraging community engagement in education from the beginning when it came to education institutions. The significance of community involvement was underlined in the text of Educational Policies in Pakistan. Two recent education policies were cited here: Schools Management Committees (SMCs) were given consideration in the National Education Policy 1998–2010, which also said that the elected chairman of the village's school management committee was required to continuously assess the state of education in his prerogative to make sure the application of vital rule protections. Additionally, chairman shall frequently engage with regional educational authorities and serve as the primary information source for the supervisor and education officer (Government of Pakistan,1998).

The FDE in Islamabad recognized importance of alert and dynamic SMCs working in each federally administered school while keeping in mind the safety of pupils, parents and teaching faculty. In this regard, the Multi-Donor Support Unit (MSU) introduced a novel PTA concept. This idea states that in order to enhance the quality and accessibility of education in a community, these organizations must operate on a non-profit basis. Locals should be allowed to speak on behalf of their communities in a non-political venue. The bodies' goals and objectives should be: to work for each student's wellbeing, to raise parents' awareness of their role in providing quality education, to encourage parents' positive involvement and motivation, to make the best use of the facilities offered in schools, to reduce student dropout rates, to reduce teacher and student absenteeism, to foster positive relationships between parents and schools, and to improve parental involvement. One-day workshops were held to launch the PTAs under this program, which was then followed by elections in all 396 institutions and the creation of a unit inside the Federal Directorate to oversee and assess its operations. The publication also examined the state of PTAs in provinces with seventeen thousand in KPK. One hundred and nineteen thousand people made up the province's entire membership. PTAs were established in the province of Sind in 1994. A total of 27000 PTAs were created, and 22% of the bodies received instruction from them. In the province of Sind, a PTA had eleven members. Six additional members were parents and other community members, including the head of the school, who also served as co-chairman. Three members were teachers. PTAs were established in the Balochistan province in 1995. More than 66 million rupees were allotted by the government for community mobilization. So far, 10,000 corpses have been produced. Only five people made up the PTA in this province: the head teacher, three parents, and a representative from the education department. Due to the scheme's hasty start, Balochistan's work speed was initially unsatisfactory, but the appointment of a department of education official later on showed that things had improved in the schools (Government of Pakistan, 2003).

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**METHOD AND PROCEDURE**

The population of the study are: All 06 sectors of ICT**.** All 06 Area Educational Officers. All 394 Principals (Male & Female) and 5000 teachers of the aforementioned educational institutions**.** The sampling technique employed was convenience sampling as it refers to inclusion of the population based on their accessibility and availability to the researcher. The respondents were given questionnaires to complete based on their level of agreement on a three-point Likert scale, representing "mostly", "rarely" and "not at all". The main tool utilized to gather data from all respondents was a questionnaire. The reliability of Questionnaire for AEOs is found to be 0.85 whereas Questionnaire for the Principals is found reliable 0.91. The reliability of Questionnaire for Teachers is 0.88. Using the chi-square technique, the tool's data was collated, evaluated, and analyzed. Chapter 4 of the study employed the chi-square analysis method (Garrett, 2000, p. 253).

**COLLECTION OF DATA**

**Summary of data collection**

| Category | Type of tool | No; of participants | Returned/Received | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area Education Officers | Questionnaire | 06 | 06 | 100 |
| Principals | Questionnaire | 394 | 294 | 75 |
| Teachers | Questionnaire | 500 | 375 | 75 |

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Using the chi-square technique, the tool's data was collated, evaluated, and analyzed. Chapter 4 of the study employed the chi-square analysis method (Garrett, 2000, p. 253).

Ho: SMC's involvement in educational institutions was ineffectual.

H1: SMC involvement in educational institutions was effectual.

Table 1: Analysis of periodic checking of the funds generated by SMC, expenditures / utilization of collected fund.

| | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ | $\alpha = 0.05$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 1 | 4 | 1 | | |
| $f_e$ | 2 | 2 | 2 | | |
| Residual | -1 | 2 | -1 | | |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3.0 | |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 / f_e$ | 0.5 | 2 | 0.5 | | |

It was revealed through Table No. 1 that these departmental officers did not periodically examine the use of funds in their respective sectors. Therefore, null hypothesis was failed to be rejected and alternative hypothesis was failed to be accepted.

Table 2: Analysis of assurance that the amounts are utilized judiciously and as per government policy and instructions.

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|  | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ ☐ = 0.05 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 6 | 0 | 0 | |
| $f_e$ | - | - | - | |
| Residual | - | - | - | ----- |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | - | - | - | |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 /$ $f_e$- | - | - | |

Since all respondents confirmed that SMC money was used in educational institutions in accordance with the guidelines, Table No. 2 showed that no Chi-square test was required in this instance and that Area Education Officers adhered to the SMC involvement rules.

Table 3: Analysis of cognizance of SMC regarding the significance of their contribution in academic and institution's physical uplift.

|  | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ ☐ = 0.05 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 10 | 55 | 10 | |
| $f_e$ | 25 | 25 | 25 | |
| Residual | -15 | 30 | -15 | 54 |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | 225 | 900 | 225 | |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 /$ $f_e$ | 9 | 36 | 9 | |

Table No. 3 showed that due to higher value of Chi square value, Null hypothesis was failed to be rejected and Alternative hypothesis i.e. SMC is cognizant regarding the significance of their contribution in academic and physical uplift of the institution was failed to be accepted.

Table 4:      Analysis of involvement of SMC for the institution's academic improvement.

|  | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ ☐ = 0.05 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 50 | 20 | 5 | |
| $f_e$ | 25 | 25 | 25 | |
| Residual | 25 | -5 | -20 | 42 |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | 625 | 25 | 400 | |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 /$ $f_e$ | 25 | 1 | 16 | |

Table No. 4 revealed that due to higher value of Chi square value in comparison to table value, therefore, Null hypothesis was failed to be accepted. and Alternative hypothesis was failed to be rejected.

Table 5: Analysis of display of practical interest of SMC in developmental works of the institution.

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|  | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ | $\square = 0.05$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 11 | 40 | 24 |  |  |
| $f_e$ | 25 | 25 | 25 |  |  |
| Residual | -14 | 15 | -1 | 17.04 |  |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | 196 | 225 | 1 |  |  |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 / \quad f_e$ | 8 | 9 | 0.04 |  |  |

Table No.5 showed that due to higher value of Chi square value in comparison to table value, therefore, Null hypothesis was failed to be accepted and Alternative hypothesis i.e. SMC showed interest in developmental works of educational institutions was failed to be rejected.
Table 6: Analysis of support and encouragement by FDE regarding positive involvement of SMC in school.

|  | Mostly | Rarely | Not at all | $\chi^2$ | $\square = 0.05$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $f_o$ | 35 | 34 | 6 |  |  |
| $f_e$ | 25 | 25 | 25 |  |  |
| Residual | 10 | 9 | -19 | 21.2 |  |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2$ | 100 | 81 | 361 |  |  |
| $(f_o - f_e)^2 / \quad f_e$ | 4 | 3.2 | 14 |  |  |

Table No. 6 showed that due to higher value of Chi square in comparison to table value, therefore, Null hypothesis was failed to be accepted and Alternative hypothesis i.e. FDE encouraged the efforts of involving SMC in educational institutions was failed to be rejected.

**FINDINGS**
1. The research findings indicate that SMCs actively participated in the resource allocation process by preparing and submitting lists of items required by the educational institutions. This involvement demonstrates a commitment to addressing the needs of the institutions and ensuring that they receive the necessary resources.
2. The absence of regular audit conducted by departmental officers to assess the utilization of funds in their respective sectors. This suggests a gap in monitoring and oversight practices related to fund management.
3. SMCs successfully disbursed funds in accordance with the requirements set forth by the finance division. This adherence demonstrates a commitment to financial accountability and compliance.
4. AEOs successfully adhered to the guidelines and rules related to the utilization of SMC funds in educational institutions. This adherence demonstrates a commitment to following established protocols and ensuring transparency in financial management.
5. Examination results were discussed with the SMC members. This showed that there was a level of engagement and involvement of the SMC in reviewing and analyzing examination outcomes.
6. Lack of assistance from the SMC in arranging co-curricular activities in the educational institution was found.
7. Lack of active involvement of the SMC in initiatives aimed at increasing student strength and reducing absence in educational institutions was also found.

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8.      The data analysis declared a lack of active interest from the SMC in participating and contributing to the developmental works of educational institutions.

9.      Active engagement from the SMC in the procurement process for essential raw materials was not seen. This displayed that the SMC might not have been actively involved in identifying the required materials, sourcing suppliers, negotiating prices, and ensuring the timely procurement of necessary supplies.

10.      One of the primary challenges encountered by the school management was the insufficient allocation of funds by SMC to hire temporary teachers.

11.      There was absence of involvement of resource persons from the SMC in sensitizing learners on career planning in educational institutions. There was lack of utilizing the expertise and guidance of these individuals in providing career-related support to students.

12.      Minimum number of meetings or discussions between the SMC president and teachers regarding the academic environment of the educational institutions were found.

13.      A lack of active participation by the SMC in addressing the problems faced by educational institutions was observed. This indicated fissure in the SMC's role as a problem-solving entity and a missed opportunity to contribute to the overall improvement of the institutions.

14.      Educational institutions did not actively involve skilled and reputable parents as resource persons for orientation on significant topics. This showed a missed opportunity to leverage the expertise and experiences of parents in enhancing the educational environment and knowledge-sharing within the institutions.

15.      The involvement of the School Management Committee (SMC) has a positive effect in curbing the rate of absence in educational institutions.

16.      The involvement of the School Management Committee (SMC) can play a significant role in fostering a friendly environment in educational institutions. When the SMC actively engages and promotes a positive atmosphere, it can contribute to a welcoming and supportive school environment for students, teachers, and staff.

## CONCLUSIONS

There were no endeavors from Area Education Officers for developing links with SMC seniors, and sporadically monitoring fund use in order to achieve student learning goals. At the sector level, very little effort was made to learn about the establishment and operation of SMC in schools. Principals seldom shared the results with parents. Skilled parents and professionals were not introduced to schools as resources to help pupils plan their careers. SMC did not observe or discuss the school's teaching and learning practices. SMC did not address the country's current concerns at educational institutions. SMC did not generally bring school-related issues to the attention of FDE officials. SMC engagement helped to reduce absences and increase student strength. Students in need received uniforms, school bags, and financial assistance as a result of SMC engagement. SMC's cooperation helped to prevent unwanted outside interference in educational institutions. SMC engagement successfully motivated educational institution administration. The establishment of SMC between schools and communities resulted in a cordial connection. SMC assisted schools in obtaining raw materials at a lesser cost from the local community for school repairs and upkeep. Under advantageous conditions, SMC supplied water and electricity to educational

establishments. SMC and educational institutions collaborated to foster a cooperative atmosphere. SMC helped schools organize extracurricular activities. Walks and social activities were organized with the SMC's aid. SMC members helped educational institutions become pleasant and peaceful environments for students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

For further improvement of SMC participation in schools; following recommendations are made:

1.      In order to improve academic conditions, principals and parents may meet twice a year with SMC to discuss exam results.

2.      SMC members may arrange for resource individuals like doctors, engineers, professors, and lawyers to speak about career planning. At their general body meetings in April and February, SMC may discuss the school's teaching-learning situation. With the assistance of a class- and subject-specific strategy, it might be doable. This strategy will revolutionize school academics if implemented.

3.       SMC may inform staff and students about social issues like mobile phone misuse and pollution. With the assistance of SMC social workers, this is achievable. SMC may speak on subjects concerning country's current affairs by summoning former government employees, educationists, and legal experts at the morning assembly.

4.      Other non-governmental and social organizations ought to get remunerated for their hard work in aiding needy students. The communities that collaborated with schools to organize co-curricular activities ought to be recognized with shields and additional SMC budgets.

5.      SMC may be given more repair and construction authority for smooth conduction of professional assignments at a lower cost. The involvement of SMC in contribution of water and power to the educational institutions by their own means ought to be acknowledged. These SMC participatory bodies may receive special funding from governments because they helped schools and communities work together.

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