Effectiveness of School Management Committees in Public Sector Educational Institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory

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Abstract

Participation by school management committees is a significant phenomenon in the academic and physical uplift of educational institutions. Their positive engagement and involvement in education is encouraged by governments and educational authorities to help improve educational process on global level. The Government of Pakistan in the provinces and at Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) has taken initiatives to engage the community in education with the same objective. Participatory school management committee bodies such as the School Management Committees (SMC) have been constituted in all public schools under the direction of government across Pakistan. To this end, rules and regulations governing the operation of such school management committees shall be drawn up and each year some financial contribution shall be made to the School to be spent in consultation and assistance of the same. This study aims i) to investigate the level of awareness of role of School Management Committee in educational institutions. Data were collected from 900 respondents, including Area Education Officers, Principals and Teachers from six sectors of Islamabad Capital Territory. Data from the respondents was gathered using three questionnaires. The research is quantitative in nature. The sampling technique employed was convenience sampling as it refers to inclusion of the population based on their accessibility and availability to the researcher. Using the Chi-square test, it was discovered that the educational participation of school management committees in ICT was effective in most aspects, but ineffective in some cases. It is recommended that (i) proper planning may be needed to disseminate the concept of school management committee involvement; (ii) awareness campaigns may be accelerated; (iii) SMC participatory bodies may meet with FDE officers to discuss issues at educational institutions.

Keywords: School Management Committees (SMC), Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), academic and physical uplift, awareness campaigns.

Introduction

A society has a responsibility to select the best educational system in order to advance and succeed. Education is a socialization process. This is why, the state is responsible for providing education in Pakistan according to Article 25A of constitution of Pakistan's Right

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to education. Moreover, 18th Amendment in the constitution conferred the responsibility of education to provinces which means that provinces in Pakistan now have budget and regulate educative process on provincial level without requiring support from the federation.

The focus of every government, and consequently of every educational institution, is to deliver high-quality education. Government, educational institutions, parents, and the community must work together for the achievement of this goal. Only their combined efforts will be able to do this. Communities and some governments, however, had the misunderstanding that it was the only job of educational institutions and their faculty to provide education in previous decades. Parents believed that enrolling their kids in school was sufficient action on their part. They believed that schools and teachers had sole responsibility for their children's intellectual and moral development. Since parents and the community were not paying close attention to academic and character development, which was vital, it had a negative impact on the expansion of education's scope and quality. The development of students' moral foundations and character was also impeded by it. With time, it became more apparent that education, like every other activity, required several types of inputs in order to succeed as they become more confident and open to learn. (Noguera, et al., 2017).

Therefore, all of the aforementioned parties had to actively participate in the educational process for it to be successful. Parents can assist their children in completing their schoolwork. The neighborhood could stay in touch with the school regarding maintenance and development plans and similarly monitor the effectiveness of educational institutions. Community workers may teach as teachers if there was a teacher shortage. Other members of the community should sensitize parents and children about the undeniable significance of education, set up free tutoring facilities, meet with educators and representatives of the department of education. By employing this approach, it is hoped that community's youngsters might be educated in a supportive setting. This can result in growth and an increase in scholastic actions. (Fiore, 2016). Many nations' educational institutions allow suitable amount of communal involvement, which is why they are better in terms of both quality and quantity.

As a result of realizing the value of public involvement in schooling, the Government of Pakistan directed all government schools across nation to establish dynamic public participating societies such as Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs), Parents Teachers Councils (PTCs), and Schools Management Committees (SMCs) in order for these organizations to provide moral and financial support to the schools. The provincial department of education made an effort to urge parents to participate in educational institutions. Every year, all public elementary and secondary schools were given funds for classroom consumables and minor repairs at the direction of the provincial finance department. These elected community participatory organizations could only use these budgets after consulting with the principal or headmaster of the relevant school. In June 2007, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Elementary and Schools Education departments (E& SE) released a manual with this goal in mind. The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Islamabad issued Bylaws of the School and College Management Committee (SMC) after approval from the Federal Cabinet in February 2022. SMC refers to committee formed by directorate for each institution to manage school/college affairs bridging the gap between

institution and community for overall improvement of educational institutions. These Bylaws clearly define the functions and role of all stakeholders in the educational institutions ranging from participating in process of uplift of institution's infrastructure by mobilizing physical and financial resources for betterment of institutions to taking effective steps in academic improvement of all students. The composition of SMC comprises of 08 members i.e. Chairperson (School Head), President (from parents), General Secretary (teacher), Finance Secretary (from parents) and 04 members (teachers). Along with this required community involvement in education, Pakistan already has a long history of voluntary community involvement in the form of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and welfare organizations.

By rule, community participatory councils like PTCs, PTAs, SMCs, and others had the duty to carry out specific tasks like monitoring student absenteeism, lowering dropout rates, enhancing enrolment rate, halting outside interruption in schools, hiring temporary teachers from the students' fund, utilizing rented buildings in the absence of public sector buildings, raising donations to schools and students, and offering financial assistance to deserving students.

The goal of this study was to determine how a School Management Committee could effectively contribute to the qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of education as a result of effective community participation in funding generation, managing the development of educational institutions, and planning various events to raise community awareness of education. Since every system might need some modification, proposals from the stakeholders were requested to boost community involvement and promote effective two-way relationships in Islamabad Capital Territory.

Statement of the Problem
Goal of the research aspired determination of how well the SMC could contribute to the academic and physical developmental advancement of educational institutions in the Islamabad Capital Territory. This problem statement aims to investigate and address the issues of lack of awareness of SMC about their role and active participation, limited impact on decision-making, inadequate representation, insufficient resources and communication and coordination gaps.

Research Objectives
The study's aim was as follows:
i)To investigate the level of awareness of role of School Management Committee in educational institutions

Research Questions
   i)   What is the level of awareness of role of School Management   Committee in educational institutions.

Review of Related Literature
Heine (2008) asserts that the term "community" has two definitions that are literal: (i) a number of person who live in the similar region and are governed by the same system; and

(ii) a cluster of individuals who share similar interests. He claims that a community is a developing group of people who share similar views, but that "location" is the one element that never changes. By Community we mean that, a group of individuals sharing equal laws, advantages, values, living in a similar residence and adhering to the same laws and rules. (Accurate & Reliable Dictionary, 2012). Community involvement in education is the term used to describe participation of public assisting positively in the entire educational processes, including the growth of their infrastructure, maintenance of their facilities, and the improvement of education's quality and quantity.

A manual titled "Facilitator's Guide" was issued by an educational institution. It sought to make quality education more accessible to all community members and school stakeholders. It was asserted that community engagement in education (CIE) required attending educational institutions by SMC, overseeing the pedagogical progression, thus, aiding the institutional faculty and administration in order to nurture a responsible student. The CIE's goals include to improve student attendance rates, keep more girls in school, watch teachers teach, increase the amount of parent visits to monitor students' progress, and teach pupils moral principles. It identified a number of essential steps for fostering positive school and community interactions. Regular parent-school communication, positive cooperation with SMCs, greeting parents warmly, handling them with respect, encouraging kids to establish strong study habits, enhancing family atmospheres, and inspiring parents in knowledge sharing with educational institutions were some of these actions. The manual advocated setting the date, location, time, and goals of any community meetings with schools. It is important to notify parents, local authorities, and educational supervisors well in advance of meetings. In addition to it, a chairman and secretary shouldn't rule meetings. (UPHOLD's Integrated Education Strategy, USA, 2010). A council secretary should value participation and contributions, express appreciation to parents, express opinions, and summarize the final conclusions of the plan of action.

The school management committees are supposed to provide an authority to education officers and teachers so that they can utilize all the resources in maximum level for the betterment and development of education system. A teacher is always interested to take along the parents and other stakeholders to their school and at workplace (classroom) to discuss and coordinate the issues related to teaching/learning process so that the relationship of these two vital groups make the education system more effective and efficient. Teacher as a motivational and social leader has an important place in the society, because this is the teacher who has role of spine and backbone of the society and therefore the whole education system relies upon him. Research Studies in this field of education discovered that the relationship among teacher, students and community have great impact on students' behavioral development, academic results and outcomes of the education system. In this way when students experience a positive relationship among different segment of society, community and their teachers they become more confident and open to learn. (Noguera, et al., 2017). Student as a child starts learning in a multifaceted system of education, in which he comes across with parents, family, peers, school and class fellows, teachers and other people in the school and community. This is therefore many researchers and social scientists of the field of education as Bronfenbrenner, 1994 and Epstein 2011 agreed and supported

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that when there is a chance of overlapping of spheres of inspiration, encouragement and caring from and of the family, school and community; students' learning chances are brighter than before. This and other theories of the same phenomena have been reinforced from the last two decades of research (Galindo & Sheldon, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009) that both qualitative and quantitative effect the students learning through the influence of family, teachers and community relationships.

The belief system of students brings them at higher levels of risk for weak results with poor upshots children from deprived families, humble background and all with learning difficulties were more harmed by negative teacher parents' relationship and much more benefited if these relationships are positive. (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011).

According to a doctoral study by Ajmal (2006), meaningful connection between schools and the community is a key component of Pakistan's educational reforms. Without community participation, education is a one-way, constrained process. He claimed that the Educational Sector Reforms 2001–2005 offered the District administration more freedom to involve the people. In a survey of the literature, he listed eleven community participation models, two of which—the Javaid, A. Model and the Zaidi, S. Model—had already been created in Pakistan by the respective scholars. According to him, his goal was to evaluate the current state of community engagement in Pakistan and to suggest a local model in this regard. His study's goals were to assessing current community involvement practises, learning about stakeholder awareness and reactions, observing associations and correlations between respondents' perspectives and suggesting a more effective model for community participation. His study, for which he employed the Lickert scale opinionnaire, was restricted to 125 schools in the District of Attock. His study came to the conclusions with the majority of respondents believed that community involvement was helpful in managing public sector schools, there was a positive correlation between respondents' opinions, political involvement, poor communication, and a lack of resources were the main obstacles to community participation and there was no one model of participation that all stakeholders should adhere to. The Chi-square method was employed by the researcher to examine his or her hypotheses. He summarized the study by stating that parents, who are the primary participants, being ignorant of their significance and due to less societal participation in educational institutions, was a major contributing factor to their failure to produce academic achievements. He asserted that the growth of community involvement in the nation was dependent on the education of the community, efficient communication, the provision of incentives to the community, and the moderation of political action.

Method and Procedure
The description of the study's methods and techniques took up the majority of this chapter. 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

Analysis of Data
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).
The distribution of the questionnaires included questionnaires for Area Education Officers, Principals of educational institutions of ICT and questionnaires for teachers of educational institutions of ICT.
H_o: SMC involvement in educational institutions is ineffectual.
Table 1:   Analysis of planning and carrying out SMC awareness campaigns in the respective sector.

	Mostly	Rarely	Not at all	c^2	$\emptyset = 0.05$
f_o	0	3	3		
f_e	2	2	2		
Residual	-2	1	1	3	
$(f_o - f_e)^2$	4	1	1		
$(f_o - f_e)^2 /$ f_e	2	0.5	0.5		

$c^2 = 3$ $\emptyset = 0.05$ df = 2   Table value = 5.991

The null hypothesis, according to which no preparation or action plan was seen regarding campaign for SMC awareness was neither planned nor carried out in sectors by Area Education Officers of the Federal Directorate of Education, Islamabad, was failed to be rejected based on Table 4's finding that the table value (5.991) was more than Chi square value (3).
H_o: SMC involvement in educational institutions is ineffectual.
Table 2:   Analysis of arrangement of meetings with the seniors of the SMC to discuss the importance of their involvement in institution's matters.

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		Mostly	Rarely	Not at all	c^2 Ø = 0.05
f_o		0	4	2	
f_e		2	2	2	
Residual		-2	2	0	4
$(f_o - f_e)^2$		4	4	0	
$(f_o - f_e)^2 /$	f_e	2	2	0	

Here the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected and alternative hypothesis was failed to be accepted on account of evidence that meetings were not organized regarding the significance of SMC involvement with the seniors of the SMC by Area Education Officers in six different sectors of ICT as according to Table 5, it was clear that the table value was higher than Chi square value.

H_o: SMC involvement in educational institutions is ineffectual.

Table 3: Analysis of assurance that SMC is formed in all educational institutions of ICT and are functional as per SMC bylaws.

		Mostly	Rarely	Not at all	c^2 Ø = 0.05
f_o		1	2	3	
f_e		2	2	2	
Residual		-1	0	1	
$(f_o - f_e)^2$		1	0	1	1
$(f_o - f_e)^2 /$	f_e	0.5	0	0.5	

It was revealed through the aforementioned Table that the Chi square value was less than the table value, so the null hypothesis, which states that area education officers in the sectors' educational institutions did not ensure SMC development and operation, was failed to be rejected.

H_o: SMC involvement in educational institutions is ineffectual.

Table 4: Analysis of SMC's motivation for fund raising for the repair and maintenance of the educational institutions.

		Mostly	Rarely	Not at all	c^2 Ø = 0.05
f_o		6	0	0	
f_e		-	-	-	
Residual		-	-	-	-----
$(f_o - f_e)^2$		-	-	-	
$(f_o - f_e)^2 / f_e$		-	-	-	

The null hypothesis is failed to be accepted here, therefore, success of SMC involvement is acknowledged because data in Table No. 7 indicated that all respondents prepared the lists of items required by the educational institutions and submitted them for allocation of SMC

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funding. As a result, data in this case does not require a Chi-square test.

FINDINGS
AEOs in the sectors' educational institutions did not adequately prioritize and promote the development of SMCs. There was a lack of initiatives or programs to establish and strengthen SMCs in the educational institutions.
The analysis highlighted the absence of widespread campaigns initiated by AEOs to raise awareness about the need to enhance educational quality. There were no systematic efforts to engage stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community members, in understanding and improving educational outcomes.
School Principals reported the dedication of SMCs towards the betterment of educational institutions. This suggests that SMCs are perceived to play a positive role in improving educational outcomes and overall institutional development.
The results depicted the absence of quarterly SMC gatherings called at regular intervals by Principals.
The absence of regular attendance by the president and members of SMCs at meetings held at educational institutions was highlighted from results. There was a gap in the active participation and engagement of SMC members in decision-making processes
There was lack of awareness and understanding among SMC members regarding the significance of their contribution in the academic and physical uplift of the institution which indicate a potential gap in knowledge and engagement
SMC members did not maintain regular contact with educational institutions. This indicated a potential gap in communication and collaboration between SMC members and the institutions they were responsible for overseeing.
 A lack of cooperation by the SMC in addressing and solving the problems faced by educational institutions was found.
Analysis of the data revealed a lack of contact and involvement of the SMC in fundraising activities for educational institutions.
SMCs did not demonstrate a positive response in various matters related to educational institutions. This indicated a potential gap in their engagement and proactive involvement in addressing and resolving issues.
SMC was found least interested in addressing problems or conflicts brought to their attention by the school administration.

Conclusions
There were no determinations from Area Education Officers for initiation of SMC awareness drives, strengthening ties with the seniors of SMC, monitoring utilization of funds intermittently resultantly striving towards achieving student learning outcomes. At sector level, negligible effort was made to learn about the formation and functioning of SMC in schools. Results mostly were not shared with parents by the Principals. Skilled parents and professionals were not invited to schools as a resource person to guide on career planning of students. SMC did not observe and discuss teaching-learning procedures of school. SMC did not discuss country's prevailing issues at educational institutions. SMC did not normally bring into the notice of FDE directors the school matters. SMC participation proved helpful in

reducing absence and increasing student strength. Needy students were able to get uniforms, school bags and pecuniary help through SMC involvement. Undesired outside meddling in educational institutions was curbed through involvement of SMC. SMC involvement was successful in motivating administration of educational institutions.

Recommendations

1.   As it was discovered that no efforts were made at the sector level to meet with community elders about their involvement in education and to develop a plan for SMC participation. In a similar vein, there were no public awareness campaigns. As a result, it is suggested that appropriate sector-level meetings may be scheduled for it in adequate space so that area education officers, SMC members, and head teachers from all schools can discuss SMC goals. The presence of FDE officers and press representatives at the event shall be preferable.

2.   All schools may be advised to keep inventory of presence of parents and members duly signed by them during the stage of elections because there were no efforts made at the sector level to learn about the establishment and operation of the SMC in educational institutions. Inspections by a monitoring team shall also be appropriate at SMC elections.

3.   These SMC members may visit FDE directors to discuss issues at schools. If these visits are scheduled during summer or winter vacation, it will be simple. Typically, schools are closed on these days, leaving enough time to complete a task. The FDE ought to express gratitude to the communities through print media for their successful efforts in reducing absenteeism and increasing enrollment. Through electronic media, the government ought to encourage communities for their efforts to provide deserving students with school uniforms, school bags, and financial aid. The FDE ought to reward SMC for successfully reducing unnecessary school interference. The most effective SMC in terms of cooperation with the concerned educational institution's administrations may be highlighted in the media. Both parties may work harder to improve friendly relationships between schools and communities

4.   In the future, FDE may design a training module for SMC members and Principals in order to optimize the engagement and bear the fruit of effectiveness that can result due to this positive collaboration. Those communities ought to keep the peaceful and pleasant atmosphere of the school for longer periods of time.

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