

Problems and challenges faced by School Management Committee members in Bagra Circle, West Siang District , Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract: *The School Management Committee is a statutory body established under Right to Education Act 2009, to ensure community participation in the management aided schools. In India, the formation of School Management Committees was mandated under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Act, 2009. This Act aims to provide free and compulsory elementary education to all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years. As per the provisions of the Act, every government and government- aided elementary school must constitute and School Management Committee to involve parents and the local community in school administration.*

Keywords: *School Management Committee, Community Participation, Role of School Management Committee, community participation, Elementary Education, Educational Governance, RTE Act 2009.*

INTRODUCTION

The School Management Committee (SMC) is a statutory body established under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009) to ensure community participation in the management of government and government-aided schools in India. This Act aims to provide free and compulsory elementary education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. As per its provisions, every government and government-aided elementary school must constitute a School Management Committee to involve parents and the local community in school administration. According to the Act, at least 75% of the School Management Committee members must be parents or guardians of children studying in the school, ensuring strong parental participation in school management.

In Arunachal Pradesh, School Management Committees are established in government primary and upper primary schools to promote community participation in educational development. These committees are generally constituted within six months of the establishment of a school and are reconstituted every two years. The committee acts as a bridge between the school, parents, and the community to improve the quality of education and ensure that the provisions of the RTE Act are properly implemented.

A School Management Committee is mainly composed of parents or guardians, along with teachers, the head teacher, and representatives from the local authority or village community. This structure ensures a balance between school authorities and the community, promoting better coordination and decision-making. The School Management Committee plays a vital role in the overall development of the school. One of its key responsibilities is to prepare and implement the School Development Plan (SDP), which includes planning for infrastructure improvement, teaching-learning resources, and other essential facilities. It also monitors the proper use of school funds to ensure transparency and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the School Management Committee monitors student enrollment, attendance, and dropout rates, ensuring that every child has access to education and continues schooling without interruption. It supports teachers in maintaining discipline and improving the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, the committee encourages parents to actively participate in school activities, creates awareness about the importance of education, and helps in maintaining school facilities such as classrooms, drinking water, toilets, and playgrounds.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Several studies have examined the functioning, roles, and challenges of School Management Committees (SMCs) in school development.

Thapa (2012) found significant gaps in awareness and participation among SMC members, noting that many were unaware of their roles and responsibilities. Issues such as irregular meetings, manipulation of records, and limited participation of women, especially in rural areas, were also identified, which negatively affected school development. In contrast, Njeri (2013), in a study conducted in Kenya, highlighted the positive role of SMCs in inclusive education, showing that they contribute to improving infrastructure, providing teaching-learning materials, mobilizing community support, and strengthening communication among stakeholders. The study also emphasized the importance of training SMC members for better performance.

Mohalik (2015) identified several challenges faced by SMC members in West Bengal, including lack of parental interest, low community participation, poor teaching quality, limited awareness about School Development Plans (SDP), and insufficient financial resources, all of which hinder effective school functioning. Similarly, Sunil Kumar (2016) observed that although SMCs are formed according to RTE norms and include representatives from parents, teachers, and the community, their effectiveness largely depends on awareness and active participation. The study also highlighted key responsibilities of SMCs such as ensuring enrolment, monitoring school activities, and preparing development plans.

Furthermore, Johnson and Brown (2019) found that inadequate training, limited resources, and weak community involvement restrict the effectiveness of SMCs in rural schools, emphasizing the need for collaboration and capacity building. Likewise, Ali (2021) reported that SMC members were not effectively performing their roles in academic and financial areas due to lack of awareness and participation, highlighting the need for proper training and support.

Overall, these studies indicate that while SMCs have strong potential to contribute to school development, their effectiveness is influenced by factors such as awareness, participation, training, and resource availability. Common challenges like low community involvement, irregular meetings, and insufficient training continue to limit their functioning, making it essential to strengthen SMCs for improving school development outcomes.

NEED OF THE STUDY

The School Management Committee (SMC) is one of the most important components of school governance under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in India. It was introduced to ensure community participation and effective management of schools, and since then School Management Committees have been established in government schools across the country. In Arunachal Pradesh, School Management Committees are functioning in various districts to support school development and improve the quality of education. Bagra Circle, located in West Siang district, consists of several villages where government primary schools are functioning with the support of School Management Committees.

The School Management Committees in Bagra Circle are formed as per the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009, and include representatives such as parents, teachers, and local community members. These committees play an important role in the overall development of schools by participating in the preparation of School Development Plans, monitoring school activities, ensuring proper utilization of funds, and promoting community involvement in education. They also help in maintaining transparency and accountability in school functioning. However, despite their importance, School Management Committees in Bagra Circle face several challenges in their functioning. Problems such as lack of awareness of roles and responsibilities, insufficient training, irregular meetings, limited participation of parents and community members, and lack of coordination among members affect their effectiveness. In addition, some members face difficulties in understanding financial matters and monitoring academic activities effectively. In this context, the present study is significant as it helps to understand the actual functioning and effectiveness of School Management Committees in the Bagra Circle, where limited research has been conducted earlier. The study examines the composition and functioning of School Management Committees, the level of participation of members, their role in school development, and the challenges they face in performing their duties. It also evaluates how effectively the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009 are being implemented at the grassroots level.

The findings of the study will be useful in suggesting practical measures for improvement and in strengthening the effective functioning of School Management Committees. Overall, the study contributes to improving school management, enhancing the quality of education, and increasing community participation in the development of schools in the Bagra Circle.

Objective 3: To identify problem and challenges faced by School Management Committee members

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the systematic procedures and technical framework employed to investigate the functioning of School Management Committees (SMC) in Bagra Circle. It details the research design, the geographical setting, the population and sampling techniques, the development and validation of the research instrument, and the statistical methods used for data analysis.

Population and Sampling Technique

The study utilized the **Total Enumeration (Census) Method**. Given the manageable number of educational institutions within the administrative boundary of Bagra Circle, the entire population of schools and their respective SMC stakeholders was included to ensure a comprehensive data set and eliminate sampling error.

Respondents: The primary respondents were categorized to align with the specific objectives of the study:

- **Headmasters (5):** To provide data on the structure and official composition of the committees.
- **SMC Chairpersons (5):** To evaluate the leadership role and contribution to school development.
- **SMC Members (Parents & Teachers):** To identify the grassroots level problems and challenges faced in school development.

Data and Sources of Data

After the data collection phase, the researcher verified all the completed questionnaires collected from the Headmasters, School Management Committee Chairpersons, and School Management Committee Members of the five selected schools in Bagra Circle. The analysis of the data in the present study was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods:

- **Quantitative Analysis:** The data collected from the structured closed-ended questions were coded and tabulated. Percentage analysis was the primary statistical technique used to interpret the composition of the committees and the degree of involvement in school activities.
- **Qualitative Analysis:** Responses from the open-ended questions, particularly regarding the specific challenges and suggestions for improvement, were analyzed qualitatively. The data were arranged according to specific criteria, and the major themes were identified and interpreted accordingly.

The detailed analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the collected data are provided in **Chapter IV**.

Results and Interpretation of Data

SL no		Response		
1	Do SMC members face difficulties in performing their duties?	Yes	No	
		11	20	
		35.4%	64.5%	
2	Level of difficulty experienced by SMC members:	High	moderate	Low
		7	9	15
		22.5%	29.03%	48.3%
3	What are the major problems faced by SMC members?			
	1.Lack of awareness of roles and responsibilities	5	16.1%	
	2. Lack of formal training or orientation	8	25.8%	
	3. Irregular or infrequent meetings	4	12.9%	
	4. Lack of cooperation among SMC members	4	12.9%	
	5. Low participation of parents/community	10	32.2%	
4	Does lack of training or orientation affect the performance of SMC members?	Yes	No	
		16	15	
		51.6%	48.3%	
5	Do members face time constraints due to other responsibilities	Yes	No	

		12	19	
		38.7%	61.2%	
6	Does lack of coordination among members affect the effectiveness of SMC?	Yes	No	
		12	19	
		38.7%	61.2%	
7	Are SMC members motivated and supported by the school authorities?	Fully supported	Partially supported	Not supported
		31		
		100%		
8	Do SMC members face difficulties in monitoring financial and academic activities?	Yes	No	
		18	13	
		58.06%	41.9%	
9	Do the challenges faced by SMC members reduce the effectiveness of school development initiatives?	Yes	No	
		13	18	
		41.9%	58.06%	

Interpretation

This data shows the responses of School Management Committee (SMC) members from Government Primary Schools of Bagra Circle. The data was collected from a total of 31 respondents. Out of these, 20 members (64%) reported that they do not face any difficulties in properly performing their duties, whereas 11 members (35%) reported that they face difficulties in performing their duties. It means that most members are able to perform their duties properly and effectively, but some members still face difficulties. When asked about the level of difficulty experienced, 7 parent (22%), reported that they face a low level of difficulty, whereas 15 School Management Committee (48%) indicated a moderate level of difficulty, and teacher 9 (29%) reported experiencing a high level of difficulties. Additionally, 5 School Management Committee respondents (16%) reported that there is a lack of awareness of roles and responsibilities, whereas 10 respondents (32%) reported that there is low participation of parents and the community. Additionally, 8 School Management Committee respondents (25%), reported a lack of formal training or orientation. Further 4 School Management Committee members respondents, (12%), reported that meetings were irregular or infrequent, whereas 4 respondents, (12%), reported that there is a lack of cooperation among the School Management Committee members. Further, 16 respondents (51%) agreed that lack of training or orientation affects their performance, while 15 School Management Committee respondents (48%) disagreed. 12 School Management Committee members (38%) stated that they experience time constraints, whereas 19 teacher respondents (61%) reported no such issue. Most people are able to manage their responsibilities, but some people find it difficult to make time. Additionally, 20 respondents (80%) believed that lack of coordination among members affects the effectiveness of the School Management Committee, while 6 respondents (19%) did not perceive it as a major problem. Further 18 respondents (58%) stated that the difficulties in monitoring financial and academic matters, while 13 respondents (41%) reported no such difficulty. Additionally, 13 respondents (41%), stated that the challenges faced by School Management Committee members reduce the effectiveness of school development initiatives, while 18 respondents (58%) believed that the overall effectiveness is not significantly reduced.

SUGGESTION BY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. This study is confined to the School Management Committee (SMC) members of West Siang District (Arunachal Pradesh) only. It can be extended to other districts of Arunachal Pradesh for conducting a comparative study.

2. Future research can be carried out to determine whether the perception and functioning of SMC members remain the same in various geographic regions of the state as well as in other states. Data collection can be done with a larger and more diversified sample, which can make the results more reliable.
3. Similar studies can also be conducted to compare the roles and effectiveness of SMC members on the basis of factors such as socioeconomic status, type of school (Private/Government), and location (rural/urban).
4. Moreover, in this study, the quantitative method has been used to find out the results; therefore, it is recommended to use both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection in future studies. The use of qualitative methods can help in understanding the actual experiences and opinions of School Management Committee members, leading to in-depth investigation.
5. There is limited empirical evidence to establish the relationship between the functioning of School Management Committees and school development. Further studies can explore different dimensions of School Management Committee functioning and their impact on school improvement.
6. Studies can be conducted on the role of teachers and parental involvement in supporting the functioning of School Management Committees for better school development.
7. Similar studies can be conducted to examine the relationship between School Management Committee members, awareness, participation, and effective school management.
8. Studies can also be conducted on the challenges faced by SMC members and their impact on school development.
9. Further research can explore the impact of School Management Committee functioning on the academic performance and overall development of students.
10. Studies can also be conducted on the role of School Management Committees in strengthening community participation and improving the overall school system.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study emphasizes the significant role of School Management Committees (SMCs) as a key component of school governance under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. SMCs were established to ensure active participation of parents, teachers, and the local community in the management and development of government schools. In Arunachal Pradesh, particularly in Bagra Circle of West Siang District, SMCs function as an important link between the school and the community, contributing to the overall improvement of educational quality.

The findings of the study reveal that SMCs are constituted as per the provisions of the RTE Act and are actively involved in various school development activities. These include preparation and implementation of the School Development Plan (SDP), monitoring of school activities, ensuring proper utilization of funds, and promoting student enrolment, attendance, and retention. Their role in encouraging community participation and maintaining transparency and accountability has a positive impact on school functioning. However, the study also identifies several challenges that affect the effective functioning of SMCs. These include lack of awareness about roles and responsibilities, insufficient training, irregular meetings, limited participation of members, and lack of coordination. In addition, some members face difficulties in handling financial matters and monitoring academic activities, which reduces their effectiveness. Despite these challenges, the study highlights that SMCs have strong potential to improve school management and educational outcomes if provided with proper training, awareness, and continuous support. Strengthening the capacity and participation of SMC members can enhance their performance and ensure better implementation of RTE provisions at the grassroots level. Overall, the study concludes that School Management Committees play a vital role in school development and community participation in Bagra Circle. With improved functioning and support, SMCs can significantly contribute to enhancing the quality of education and creating a more transparent, inclusive, and effective school system.

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