



IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract : *The Kothari Commission (1964-66) focused on the need for decentralization of school education and the involvement of parents and local bodies in the school reform process. NPE 1986 mainly focused on decentralized planning and management of primary education. A report (1992) on decentralization of educational planning was submitted by Veerappa Moily to the Government of India on ensuring greater community participation in education. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) also emphasized the need to promote community participation as a means of enhancing quality education. The RTE Act 2009 provides for the formation of School Management Committees. This paper focuses on the policy and practices of community participation in school education in post-independence India. It also focuses on the national view of community participation in school education. It also identifies some of the problems for the proper functioning of school committees. Suggestions are given to improve the proper functioning of school committees.*

Index Terms - Community Participation, Responsiveness, Tutor.

I. INTRODUCTION

Policymakers, educators, and others concerned in training are looking for ways to utilize restricted resources efficiently and correctly in order to discover and remedy troubles in the training area and to furnish fine education for children. Their efforts have contributed to realizing the significance and benefits of neighborhood participation in education, and have diagnosed community participation as one of the strategies to enhance academic get right of entry to and quality.

This is not to say that neighborhood participation is something new in the schooling delivery, however. It did not unexpectedly show up as a panacea to remedy complex troubles associated to education. In fact, no longer all communities have performed a passive position in children's education. For instance, Williams (1994) stresses that till the center of the ultimate century, responsibility for educating adolescents rested with the community. Although there still are locations where communities prepare themselves to operate schools for their young people today, community participation in education hasn't been totally recognized nor extended systematically to a wider practice.

Increasing quantities of lookup on this subject matter have been performed on account that the late 1980s, and there are extra and greater resources turning into available. In preparing and imposing any efforts to promote neighborhood involvement in education, it is necessary to apprehend the complete photo of neighborhood participation: how it works; what forms are used; what advantages it can yield; and what we ought to anticipate in the technique of carrying out the efforts. A deeper understanding of this difficulty is vital given that the link between neighborhood involvement and academic get entry to and high-quality is now not easy and entails a number of forms. This paper attempts to summarize these issues, through turning to current literature. It also aims to examine the World Bank's practices on neighborhood participation in its schooling projects by scrutinizing 23 educational tasks which have been identified by using utilizing Image Bank and reading Staff Appraisal Reports¹. This find out about is designed to serve as a resource for Bank team of workers and clients who are searching for deeper appreciation of neighborhood participation in education in order to beautify their work in this field.

1.0 Concept of Community Participation Communities can be defined with the aid of traits that the individuals share, such as culture, language, tradition, law, geography, class, and race. As Shaeffer (1992) argues, some communities are homogeneous whilst others are heterogeneous; and some united while others conflictive. Some communities are ruled and managed by using leaders chosen democratically who act tremendously autonomously from other levels of government, and some are ruled through leaders imposed from above and symbolize central authorities.

Zenter (1964) factors out three elements of communities. First, community is a team structure, whether or not formally or informally organized, in which individuals play roles which are built-in round goals associated with the problems from collective occupation and utilization of habitational space. Second, participants of the community have some diploma of collective identification with the occupied space. Lastly, the community has a diploma of nearby autonomy and responsibility.

The term "participation" can be interpreted in somenumber ways, relying on the context. Shaeffer (1994) clarifies exceptional levels or tiers of participation, and provides seven viable definitions of the term, including:

1. Involvement through the mere use of a provider (such as enrolling teens in college or the usage of a predominant health care facility);
2. Involvement via the contribution (or extraction) of money, materials, and labor;
3. Involvement through 'attendance' (e.g. at parents' conferences at school), implying passive acceptance of selections made by means of others;
4. Involvement via consultation on a specific issue;
5. Participation in the shipping of a service, regularly as an accomplice with different actors;
6. Participation as implementers of delegated powers; and
7. Participation "in actual choice making at every stage," including identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Shaeffer stresses that the first four definitions use the phrase involvement and connote mostly passive collaboration, whereas the ultimate three items use the word participation instead, implying a plenty extra active role.

Shaeffer similarly presents some unique things to do that involve a high diploma of participation in a wider development context, which can also be utilized in the education sector, including:

1. Collecting and analyzing information;
2. Defining priorities and putting goals;
3. Assessing reachable resources;
4. Deciding on and planning programs;
5. Designing techniques to put into effect these programs and dividing obligations amongst participants;
6. Managing programs;
7. Monitoring growth of the programs; and
8. Evaluating effects and impacts.

1.3 Community participation in education. Education takes location now not solely in faculties however additionally inside families, communities, and society. Despite a range of degree of responsibilities taken with the aid of every group, none can be the sole agent to take a hundred % duty for teaching children. Parents and households can't be the only team of human beings for children's schooling as lengthy as their adolescents interact with and examine from the world outside their families. Communities and society have to guide parents and families in the upbringing, socializing, and instructing of their children. Schools are institutions that can put together children to make a contribution to the betterment of the society in which they operate, through equipping them with abilities necessary in society. Schools cannot and need to now not operate as separate entities inside society. Since every group performs an extraordinary position in contributing to children's education, there ought to be efforts to make a bridge between them in order to maximize the contributions. Education takes vicinity most effectively and efficiently when these specific corporations of people collaborate. Accordingly, it is vital to set up and consistently strive to improve partnerships between schools, parents, and communities.

Many research has recognized quite a number ways of community participation in education, presenting specific channels through which communities can be worried in children's education.

2.0 DIMENSION OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

1. Supervise School Building and Conservation and Amenities

School community member has a responsibility to monitor proper maintenance of the building and other infrastructure facilities such as garden, boundary wall, and availability of separate toilet for girls and boys, availability of drinking water, availability of library and laboratory etc. Community members have responsibility of supervision of school administration e.g. attendance and punctuality of teachers, attendance of students, timely supply of textbooks, notebooks and other teaching materials, abolition of corporal punishment and physical and mental harassment, regular health checkup for children, audit of financial grants etc.

2. LECTURER APPOINTMENT

If there is needed a teacher, then community members have a responsibility to hire teachers. Sometime community member can work as a volunteer. They provided awareness programme at all level.

3. RESPONSIVENESS

How effectively the schools are running and managing to bring quality education? It means willingness and readiness of community member to help students, teachers, and staffs, availability for guidance and advice, giving personal attention and curiosity to help students.

- 4. Involvement in Policy, Curriculum and Textbook Preparation and Distribution** The community member also involves in policy, curriculum and textbook preparation and distribution. The community members have responsibility to develop and design curriculum and learning materials accordingly the local context.

According to the World Bank (1999) ways through which communities can contribute to the school education

1. Advocating enrollment and education benefits.
2. Boosting morale of school staff.
3. Raising money for schools.
4. Ensuring students regular attendance and completion.
5. Constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities.
6. Contributing in labor, materials, land, and funds.
7. Recruiting and supporting teachers.
8. Making decisions about school locations and schedules.
9. Monitoring and following up on teacher attendance and performance.
10. Actively attending school meetings to learn about children's learning progress.
11. Providing skill instruction and local culture information.
12. Helping children with studying;
13. Garnering more resources from and solving problems through the education bureaucracy;
14. Providing security for teachers by preparing adequate housing for them;
15. Scheduling school calendars;
16. Preparing children's readiness for schooling by providing them with adequate nutrition and stimuli for their cognitive development.

3.0 Benefits of community participation for school education Most of the educationists are realizing the significance and benefits of community participation in school education and also recognized community participation is one of the ways to improve educational access and quality. Community participation is significantly correlated to school community relation (Hamdan 2013). Report of "save the children" (2013) also emphasizes the importance of community participation in the school education. Community-based approaches to educational development have the potential to enhance ownership, accountability, and efficiency. Community involvement in education facilitates the identification of community-specific education issues and informs the development of strategies to remove barriers to access and quality in education within a given community (Shilpi Sharma et. al. 2014). Deka A. (2016) found that the overall effect of community participation in school was positive. There are following benefits of community participation in school education.

1. Maximizing limited resources
2. Developing need and context-based curriculum
3. Identifying the problems and addressing
4. Promoting Girls' Education
5. Creating and Nourishing Community-School Partnerships
6. Realizing Democracy
7. Increasing Accountability
8. Ensuring Sustainability
9. Improving Home Environment

4.0 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN INDIA: POLICY REVIEW

Govt. of India has many policy and planning on community participation in school education after independent. Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) emphasized to construct a managing board of schools to ensure their proper running and the maintenance of proper standards. The

B.G. Kher Committee (1953) emphasized the need for decentralization of management to attract community involvement at the grassroots level and involvement of all types of local bodies to promote and manage education in the interest of mass education. Subsequently, the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) recommended that primary education should become the responsibility of the Panchayats. Kothari commission (1964-66) emphasized the importance of community participation in the school education. It recommended that it is essential to establish intimacy between local communities and school to develop quality education in the school. It also recommended that decentralization of education at all levels. It also says that only decentralization of administration and to vest it in the local authority is not enough but also provides local leadership and trained officers to prepare their duties and make the necessary resources available to the local authority. This will be a major task for states education department.

According to National Policy on education 1986, District boards of Education will be created to manage education up to the higher secondary level. Within a multi-level framework of educational development, Central, State and District and Local level agencies will participate in planning, co-ordination, monitoring, and evaluation. Local communities, through appropriate bodies, will be assigned a major role in programmes of school improvement.

The importance of community involvement has also been highlighted in National Policy on Education 1986 (programme of action 1992). It emphasized establishment of district boards of education, district institutes of education and training, and village education committees will go a long way towards the school improvement programme, the involvement of the community with the educational process, and creating a new form of accountability of the educational system.

The ministry of human resource development GOI, 1993, a committee on decentralization of educational planning was set up with Veerappa Moily as its chairman. This report proposed Panchayati raj structures for management of education and their responsibilities. According to this report there should be three levels for management of education and their responsibility as 1) Panchayat level where Panchayat comprises single village and village level where Panchayat comprises a group of villages, 2) Panchayat Samiti at the intermediate level, Zilla Parishad at the district level.

National Curriculum Framework 1975, 1988, 2000, 2005 have also strengthened the importance of involvement of community members for curriculum development and management of the school. It also focuses the importance of communities for providing local resource materials.

The Right to Education Act 2009 came into force on April 1, 2010. It was an important act in the Indian education. One of the important provisions of the RTE Act 2009 is to constitute school management committees. According to this act, at least 75 percent of the SMCs are to comprise parents, disadvantaged groups, and weaker sections of society and also there is a representation of minimum 50 percent representation of women in the committee. The role of SMCs in the school is assigned to monitor the working of school and grants received by the governments or local authority or any other source and preparing a plan for the school development which fosters quality education. So that it is clear that the role of community participation is to establish democratic value and ensuring the right to education is a fundamental right.

19 years' plan says that it is equally necessary that the problem of universal elementary education and literacy is tackled through a strong social movement with clearly perceived goals and involving the State and Central Governments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Urban Local Bodies, voluntary agencies, social action groups, the media and every supportive element in society. The tenth five-year plan also emphasized the involvement of the community and it will be made more systematic by involving the Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) and urban local bodies. VECs, Mother-Teacher Associations (MTA) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) would have a formal role in the management of schools in the village. Twelfth five years plan also emphasizes involvement of parents in the school management to bring quality education. Effective functioning of SMCs and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) is essential for quality education in the school. Special efforts and innovative approaches should be required to enable illiterate, semi-literate or less-educated parents to partner with schools in their children's learning process.

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched in 1994 with the assistance of World Bank, European Commission, and Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Its aim was to operationalize successful total literacy campaigns in a favorable climate. DPEP has provided training to over three million community members and about one million teachers.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, 2001) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of universalization of Elementary Education. It also ensures that involvement of community participation for the success of the programme. Many kinds of community-based institutions have been involved such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Mother Teacher Association (MTA), Village Education Committee (VEC) and Gram Panchayat. The government of India has initiated a programme for universalization of secondary education, "Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan" in 2009. According to RMSA, involvement of Panchayati Raj and Municipal Bodies, Community, Teachers, Parents and other stakeholders in the management of Secondary Education, through bodies like School Management Committees and Parent-Teacher Associations will be ensured in the planning process, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

After independence, time to time, Government of India has made policy and Act for decentralization of education. Many programmes have been initiated to achieve the goal of decentralization of education.

5.0 CURRENT STATUS IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

School level committees have been created in all most states under SSA programme. They are known as different name village education committee, school management committee, school development and management committee, parent-teacher association, academic monitoring, teacher association etc. In force of Right to Education Act 2009, School Management Committee (SMC) have been created by states to achieve the goal of decentralization of education.

5.1 AT PRIMARY LEVEL:

All government, government aided and special category schools shall have to constitute

SMCs as per Section 21 of the RTE Act. Since private schools are already mandated to have management committees on the basis of their trust/society registrations. It is a permanent body, the president and members shall have a term of three years. Key function of SMCs are

1. Making School Development Plan (SDP) as per the RTE guidelines/norms
2. Management of school
3. Supervising and supporting implementation of SDP
4. Supervision/monitoring of finance, management, academic progress, distribution of entitlements & other functions
5. Ensuring accountability and transparency in the system through the social audit mechanism
6. Keeping proper accounts of the fund available and sharing its deployment and utilization with the Aam Sabha.
7. Creating and maintaining an educational database
8. Coordinating with the local authority, generating funds from other sources for development of schools
9. Monitoring academic progress of the children
10. Instituting social audit mechanism and processes to bring transparency in the system and ensure universal participation

5.2 AT SECONDARY LEVEL

RMSA framework provides that every secondary school have to construct a school management and development committee (SMDC) at the school level. This committee is responsible for all the activities including, planning, a collection of data under Education Monitoring and Information System (SEMIS), implementation, monitoring, evaluation and taking corrective/remedial actions on all the components/interventions of the scheme- infrastructural as well as academic and others, at the school level. The committee maintain all the relevant records for recurring as well as non-recurring expenditure. These records are updated on regular basis and placed before the committee in every meeting. These records and progress on each component/ interventions of the scheme are also placed in the meetings of Panchayat / Urban Local Bodies.

The School Management and Development Committee is assisted by two sub committees, School Building Committee and Academic Committee, headed by the Principal and Vice Principal respectively.

The School Building Committee is responsible for all the activities including planning, estimation, management, monitoring, supervision, reporting, maintenance of Accounts, monthly squaring up of accounts, presenting accounts before the School Management Committee or Panchayat or Urban Local Bodies etc. relating to construction, renovation, repairing and maintenance and other related civil works.

The Academic Committee is responsible for all academic activities including planning, management, monitoring, supervision, reporting, and collection of data for SEMIS etc. The Academic Committee is responsible for ensuring quality improvements, equity, reducing barriers- like socio- economic, gender and disability, teachers and students attendance, recommending teachers for training, guidance, and counselling, students achievements, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and overall academic and personality development of students and teachers.

Parent teacher association and mother teacher association have co-existed with SMCs and SMDCs at both primary and secondary level. The role of PTA is to conduct meeting at least one day in a month and present before SMCs and SMDCs to register complain and give a suggestion for the proper functioning of the school. All states have been created their own guideline for SMC, SMDC.

6.0 PROBLEMS IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

According to recent research reviews, following problems are found in community participation in school education.

6.1 PROBLEM-RELATED TO SMC MEETING

1. Lack of co-ordination of teachers and parents. Teachers fail to communicate timings of the meetings and parents fail to attend. They also found that barriers for the functioning of SMC such as Cultural Barriers, Corruption, Political Pressure, communication.
2. The low percentage of meetings were organized at the cluster level for SMC member.

6.2 PROBLEM-RELATED TO AWARENESS

1. Lack of awareness among SMC about RTE 2009.
2. SMC members were not aware much regarding their duty.
3. Lack of awareness of PTA, lack of Membership in PTA, lack of participation in school planning, lack of training programme on the role of PTA, Lack of awareness of financial grants.
4. Local elitism, decreasing interest of community members, Illiteracy and low educational level, Lack of interest on the part of political leaders and bureaucrats, Dearth of human resources fit for the work is a major problem of the field, Lack of expertise in the planning, Lack of propaganda and ensuring awareness.

6.3 PROBLEMS RELATED TO DEVELOPING SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. Functioning of SMC such as no democratically elected body, totally HM has to lead SMC, no adequate resource material to develop skill, the gap among gram panchayat, SMC, parents and teachers (Pawar S. 2016).
2. Lack of SMC member's awareness, Lack of fund for School Development Plan, lack of interest among poor and illiterate parents is the main problem of participation in SMC meetings. (Mohalik R. & Bhattacharya D. 2015).
3. There was a significant relationship in the level of functioning of school management committee in awareness of RTE Act and utilization of grants, meeting of committee and preparation of school development plan (Mozhiyarasi K.S. 2016).

7.0 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

There are following suggestions for improvement in community participation.

1. The training programme should be given to all teachers, HMs and community member about current amendments (RTE, 2009).
2. Awareness programme should be organized at village level about community participation.
3. Democratically, community members should be elected.
4. Proper communication should be established between school and community members.
5. SMC should be straightened and monitored by higher authorities
6. Community linkage programme should be organized at all level.
7. The involvement of SMC members needs to improve in the daily activities of the school.
8. Meeting should be organized for SMC member at all level.
9. SMC members should be motivated to take part in all the school activities such as identifying school going children, admission drive, convincing parents for sending children to school.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Most educators claim that community participation enhances the quality of education. In a developed country, community participation is important for school management and its impact is positive. Community boards / councils have a lot of powers for school management such as education, administration, school operations, curriculum preparation, etc. But in India, parents are neglected in curriculum preparation.

Community participation is not an amulet for solving every problem and problem of school education but it facilitates bringing quality education in the school. It is the decentralization of school governance to enhance quality education. Foreign countries have different policies and practices of community participation. Communities are involved in many areas such as administrative, educational and financial power and school operations etc. In India, many policies are recommended for community participation in school education to enhance quality education. After the RTE Act 2009, it is necessary to create a community board for each school. Indian states have made their own rules for community building for school education. Many research findings show positive results of community participation in school education. But the reality is that in many places, communities are not working properly. So it is not enough for him to just make policies and acts. Now the education system is going to be privatized. Many schools are run under a private institution. Do they follow rules, regulations, policies and actions? So, how can we achieve the goal of decentralization of education? The objectives set out in the RTE Act of 2009 regarding community participation in school will only be realized if the training program, awareness and motivational program, is carried out properly at the grassroots level. The SMC should be overseen by higher authorities.

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