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## Research Article

### FUNCTIONING OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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#### ABSTRACT

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##### Key Words:

School Management Committee, teacher absenteeism, scholastic and non-scholastic activities, school development plan, Mid-Day-Meal scheme.

The present study investigates the functioning of SMC in elementary schools of Jharsuguda district. The main purposes of the study were to investigate the present status and functioning of SMC in elementary levels of Jharsuguda and to find out the problems faced by the SMC members in their smooth functioning. This study was delimited to the elementary schools of Jharsuguda district and the functioning part of SMC in those schools. For this study, descriptive survey method was employed. For this study, 30 elementary schools were selected from Jharsuguda district by adopting stratified random sampling procedure, out of which 15 from urban and 15 from rural areas. In order to collect data from the sample groups self-made open-ended questionnaires were prepared and administered before the SMC members of selected elementary schools. The obtained data was analysed through simple percentage technique. Finally, it was found that in all elementary schools SMC was constituted and it was functioning properly covering their aspects.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful tool that plays a vital role in improving the socio-economic conditions of any nation. It empowers citizen with analytic abilities that lead to better confidence and fortifies one with power and goal setting competencies. Education improves not only text book learning but also develops values, skills and capacities. This helps individuals to plan for their career as well as plays a useful part in building a new society with progressive values. Elementary education is the foundation of the pyramid of the education system. Stemming from provisions enshrined in the directive principles of state policy and the 86<sup>th</sup> amendment in the Constitution of India, Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) has been one of the most important goals of education developed in India since independence and created a tremendous awareness among the masses regarding the importance of elementary education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has brought elementary to the doorsteps of millions of children and enrolled them including first generation learners, through fast track initiative in either to unserved and underserved habitations. SSA is an effort to universalise elementary education by community ownership of the school system. The SSA programme is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capacities to the poorest children through the

provision of community. For realizing the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) under SSA, Govt. Of India laid emphasis on free and compulsory education for all the children belonging to the age group of 6 to 14 and finally in the year 2009, an Act entitled "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RCFCE)" for free and compulsory education in India. This act was passed in the parliament for achieving the goals of SSA. Finally, in order to achieve the goals of universalization of elementary education (UEE), the School Management Committee (SMCs) has been constituted in all elementary schools as mentioned in RTE Act, 2009. The followings are the related literatures of the present study.

Mehralizadeh *et al.* (2003) studied roles and functioning of village education committee and school management and development committee in Karnakata with special reference of Dharwad district and observed that there was wide gap between the performance by the school betterment committee and village education committee members. Roles and functions were not known to all members. However, they concluded that there was gestation period of few years, a phase of trial and error experimentation process of SMDC to gain root. Anton (2005) studied improving the quality of education through School-Based - Management: Learning from international

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experiences and found that school-based - management is being increasing advocated as shortcut to more efficient management and quality improvements in education. Teron (2012) studied the functioning of school management committee in Golaghat district of Assam and found that SMCs were formed as per the guidelines, regular meetings were conducted, training was imparted to SMC members regarding their roles and functions and SMCs were serious about their meetings. Rout (2014) conducted a case study on the functioning of school management committee in rural elementary schools and he found that the SMC discharged its roles actively for achieving universal enrolment by checking the attendance and absenteeism of the learners. It also showed interest in developing the infrastructures by communicating the authorities regarding different avenues of infrastructures and the SMC had utilized the allotted funds in proper means so as to develop the system. Kumar (2016) conducted a case study on the roles and functioning of school management committee of government middle schools in district Kullu of Himachal Pradesh. He found that SMC have been given higher responsibilities and functions as cent percent enrolment, enrolment out of children, retention till completion of elementary education, monitoring of school activities and preparation of school development plans. Parvaiz *et al.* (2016) examined the impact of school management committee on school management at elementary level in district Jhang and found that school management committees were working to solve the problems, further school council decisions were not being implemented accordingly.

#### **Rationale of the Study**

School Management Committee (SMC) performs different functions for the overall development of elementary schools. It monitors both scholastic and non-scholastic activities, mid-day meal schemes, health programmes etc. Apart from these, SMC also studies the dropout of children and teachers' absenteeism and works for enrolling the non - enrolled children and their retention. SMC also maintains the school amenities and properties and creates awareness among the community population about the rights of children. The present study is helpful for planning and chalking out different intervention strategies so that the functioning of SMCs in elementary schools can be strengthened. The present study is also helpful for identifying the awareness level of SMC members regarding their roles and responsibilities in promoting Universalization of Elementary Education, because until and unless, the SMC members are not aware about their responsibilities, the success of SMCs in terms of enhancing community participation cannot be achieved. Further the steps have been taken to identify different problems faced by the SMCs members towards the achievement of UEE, so that necessary suggestions can be laid down for making SMCs more effective and efficient to achieve the Universalization of Elementary Education. A number of studies have been conducted in India, but in Jharsuguda district a few studies have been undertaken on functioning of SMC at elementary level and also the status of elementary education in the rural areas of Jharsuguda district is not so encouraging at present as compared to the urban areas of the district. Therefore, the investigator has taken keen interest to study the proper functioning of SMCs in the elementary levels especially in Jharsuguda district.

#### **Research Questions**

Taking into consideration of the above needs of the study the following research questions were emerged in the mind of the investigator i.e.

1. What steps SMC take to monitor school health programmes, mid - day meal scheme etc. Properly?
2. What steps SMC take to enrol the non-enrolled children?
3. What steps SMC take to promote the achievement of enrolled children?
4. What steps SMC take to reduce the dropout rate of the schools?
5. What steps SMC take to minimize the absenteeism of teachers?
6. What steps SMC take to maintain school properties and amenities properly?
7. What steps SMC take to create awareness among the community population about the rights of children?
8. What steps SMC take to beautify school environment?
9. What steps SMC take to prepare school development plan?
10. What are the problems faced by the members of SMC in implementing different programmes in schools?

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the present study were

To study the proper functioning of SMC at elementary schools in terms of :

1. Enrolment of non-enrolled children and their retention.
2. Retention and achievement of enrolled children.
3. Reduction of dropout rate of schools.
4. Absenteeism of teachers.
5. Monitoring school health programme
6. Monitoring mid-day - meal
7. Creation of awareness about community rights
8. Maintenance of school property and amenities.
9. Beautification of school environment
10. Preparation of school development plans

To study the problems faced by the SMC members towards the smooth functioning of the schools.

#### **Delimitation of the study**

The present study was delimited to the functioning part of School Management Committee (SMSc) at Elementary level. The present study was delimited to the elementary schools of Jharsuguda district covering both rural and urban areas.

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The following materials and methods were used for the present study;

##### **Research Method**

The main purpose of the study was to inquire critically into the functioning of SMCs in the field of elementary education at present in Jharsuguda district. Hence, in order to achieve the major objective of the study, descriptive survey method was adopted by the investigator.

##### **Population and Sample**

All the elementary schools under Jharsuguda district and their SMC members i.e. headmasters, teachers, students, parents of

students, councillor/ward members etc constituted the population of the present study. Out of all elementary schools of Jharsuguda district, 30 elementary schools, 15 from rural and 15 from urban areas were selected through stratified random sampling procedure, which constituted the sample of the study.

**Tools and Techniques**

So far as tools and techniques are concerned, in this present study self - made open -ended questionnaires were used for the SMC members of elementary schools to collect in depth information and interview schedule was conducted for the parent members of SMC for collecting relevant data.

**Procedures of data collection**

The data for the present study was collected personally by the investigator in a phased manner. First of all, data was collected from the District Education Office about the elementary schools coming under Jharsuguda district. Then the investigator visited to the selected sample schools and administered questionnaires before the SMC members systematically. Then interview schedule was conducted for the parents of students (SMC members).

**Statistical Technique**

Simple percentage technique was employed for analysing the obtained data for drawing necessary conclusion.

**DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS**

The collected data of school members was analysed by adopting simple percentage technique, the data of both school member and parent member was analysed combined, which are as follows;

**Table 1** Enrollment of non-enrolled children and their retention

Area	Specification	No.of School	%
Urban	Direct contact with their parents	15	100%
	Discussion with the children to be enrolled	13	86.67%
	Creation of mass awareness among parents	15	100%
	Arrangement of public meetings	15	100%
Rural	Discussion with the parents and finding out the reasons	15	100%
	Interacting with the students	10	66.67%

The above table revealed that in cent percent schools of both rural and urban area public meetings were arranged, parents of students were contacted and discussion was made with parents to find out the problems of the non- enrolled children of the locality. In 86.67% school of urban area and 66.67% school of rural area direct discussion was made with the non-enrolled children.

**Table 2** Retention of enrolled children

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Creating effective learning environment	12	80%
	Follow student centred learning	13	86.67%
	Development of community plans	12	80%
	Providing incentives to learners	15	100%
Rural	Co-operation with parents	15	100%
	Increasing academic activities	10	66.67%

In order to increase the retention of enrolled children cent percent schools of rural area provided incentives to the students and maintained proper co – operation with their parents, 6.67%

school increased academic activities. On the other hand, 86.67% schools of urban area followed students centred learning, 80% schools developed community plans for the retention of children.

**Table 3** Achievement of enrolled children

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Promoting academic activities	14	93.67%
	Continuous & comprehensive evaluation	15	100%
	Providing home works (oral + written)	15	100%
	Continuous & comprehensive evaluation	15	100%
Rural	Motivating the teachers	13	86.67
	Providing home works (oral + written)	15	100%

In order to promote the achievements of enrolled children, cent percent schools of both rural and urban areas provided home tasks to students (both theory and practical) and assess the students through continuous internal assessment. 93.67% schools of urban areas promoted academic activities and 86.67% schools of rural areas motivated teachers to increase the achievements of enrolled children.

**Table 4** Reduction of dropout rate of the school

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Mutual co-operation with parents	15	100%
	Providing incentives	15	100%
	Student centred teaching	14	93.33%
	Providing incentives to the learners	15	100%
Rural	Creating conducive environment	12	80%
	Mutual – cooperation with the parents	15	100%

In order to reduce the drop – out rates, in cent percent school of both rural and urban areas incentives were provided to the students (school bags, cycle, scholarships, MDM etc) and mutual co-operation was maintained with their parents. In 93.33% schools or urban areas students centred learning was followed and in 80% schools of rural areas conducive environment was created to reduce the drop – out rate.

**Table 5** Absenteeism of teachers

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Providing incentives to the teachers	15	100%
	Encouraging ICT based teaching	15	100%
	Formation of teacher - support group	12	80%
	Discussing with the teachers	15	100%
Rural	Increase community supports	12	80%
	Providing required teaching materials	13	86.67%

In order to minimize the absenteeism of teachers, in cent percent schools of urban areas incentives were provided to the teachers and they were encouraged ICT based teaching, in 80% school teacher – support groups were formed. On the other hand, in cent percent school of rural areas direct discussion was done with the teachers about their problems, in 80% school community support was increased and in 86.67% schools adequate teaching materials were provided to the teachers to minimize the absenteeism.

**Table 6** Monitoring school health programmes

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Motivating Asha - Karmi	15	100%
	Provision of First - Aid	15	100%
	Assessment of health programmes	10	66.67%
	Provision of pure water	14	93.67
Rural	Periodic medical check-up of students	15	100%
	Co-Operation with health workers	15	100%

In order to monitor the school health programmes, in cent percent schools of urban areas the Asha Karmi were highly motivated and there was availability of first-aid facility, in 66.67% schools the health programmes were assessed by the SMC members. On the other hand, in cent percent school of rural areas proper co-operation was maintained with the health worker and the health condition of students was checked periodically, in 93.67% schools there was provision of pure water in the schools.

**Table 7** Monitoring mid-day - meal scheme

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Availability of food grains	15	100%
	Regular health check – up of cook	13	86.67%
	Involvement of community	14	93.67%
Rural	Appointing trained cook	13	86.67%
	Creation of clean environment	14	93.67%
	Providing quality food after testing	15	100%

In order to monitor the mid- day-meal scheme, the food grains were made available in cent percent schools of urban areas, in 93.67% schools community members were involved in MDM, in 86.67% schools the health condition of the cook was regularly checked. On the other hand, in cent percent schools of rural areas quality food was provided, in 93.67% schools clean environment was created and in 86.67% schools trained cook was appointed for monitoring MDM scheme.

**Table 8** Creation awareness about community rights

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Discussion in public meetings	15	100%
	Creating awareness through rally	15	100%
	Discussion in public meetings	15	100%
Rural	Creating awareness through rally	15	100%

In order to create awareness among the people about the community rights, cent percent schools of both rural and urban areas were operating rally in their locality and discussing about the matters in public meetings.

**Table 9** Maintenance of school properties and amenities

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Involvement of staff & students	15	100%
	Regular observation & analysis	13	86.67%
	Preparing maintenance plan	14	93.67%
Rural	Involvement of community members	15	100%
	Proper care during extreme weather	13	86.67%
	Preparing maintenance plan properly	15	100%

In order to maintain the school properties and amenities, cent percent schools of urban areas involved the staff and students, 93.67% schools were preparing maintenance plan and 86.67% schools observed and analysed the availability of resources regularly. On the other hand, cent percent schools of rural areas involved community members and prepared maintenance plans and 86.67% schools took proper care of the resources in extreme weather condition.

**Table 10** Beautification of school environment

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Drawing wall paintings	15	100%
	Availability of beautiful playground	15	100%
	Gardening with beautiful flowers	15	100%
Rural	Drawing wall paintings	15	100%
	Availability of beautiful playground	15	100%
	Gardening with beautiful flowers	15	100%

In order to beautify the school environment, cent percent schools of both rural and urban areas were increasing wall paintings, making beautiful playgrounds and developing gardens which were covered with different flowers.

**Table 11** Preparation of school development plan

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Estimate of class wise enrolment	15	100%
	Requirements of additional teachers	15	100%
	Plan for physical infrastructure	15	100%
Rural	Estimate of class wise enrolment	15	100%
	Requirements of additional teachers	15	100%
	Plan for physical infrastructure	15	100%

From the above table, it was found that cent percent schools of both rural and urban areas were developing school development plans, where focus was given to the estimate of class wise enrolment, requirements of additional teachers and availability of physical infrastructure facilities.

**Table 12** Problems of SMC members

Area	Specification	No. of Schools	%
Urban	Lack of interest of members	15	100%
	Lack of co-ordination among members	15	100%
	Infrastructural problems	15	100%
Rural	Groupism among SMC members	15	100%
	Lack of awareness among community	15	100%
	Lack of active involvement of parent member	15	100%

Different problems were faced by the SMC members in their smooth functioning. In urban areas cent percent SMC members faced problems like; lack of interest of some members, lack of co-ordination among members and problems related to the availability of infrastructures. On the other hand, cent percent members of rural areas faced the problems like; groupism among members, lack of awareness among community members and lack of active involvement of parent members.

## DISCUSSION

After going through the above analysis and results of the study, it can be said that in all elementary schools of Jharsuguda district SMC is formed and in almost all elementary schools SMCs are functioning properly for bringing out overall development of the schools. The findings of the present study is matched with the study of Anton (2005), who studied improving the quality of education through School – Based - Management: Learning from international experiences and found that school-based - management is being increasing advocated as shortcut to more efficient management and quality improvements in education. It is also matched with the findings of Teron (2012) who found that SMCs were formed as per the guidelines, regular meetings were conducted, training was imparted to SMC members regarding their roles and functions and SMCs were serious about their meetings. In this present study SMC members are taking essential steps for the betterment of the school and students’ achievement, which is matched with the case study of Rout (2014) who found that the SMC discharged its roles actively for achieving universal enrolment by checking the attendance and absenteeism of the learners. It also showed interest in developing the infrastructures by communicating the authorities regarding different avenues of infrastructures and the SMC had utilized the allotted funds in proper means so as to develop the system.

The findings of the present study is also matched with the findings of Kumar (2016) who found that SMC have been given higher responsibilities and functions as cent percent enrolment, enrolment out of children, retention till completion of elementary education, monitoring of school activities and preparation of school development plans.

### Suggestions

- All the SMC members should be aware about their roles and responsibilities.
- All the community members should take part for the smooth running of the school, SMC should maintain co-operation with the community members.
- Training programmes should be provided to the members of SMC in their locality periodically. Meetings should be on regular basis in all elementary schools.
- Girl students should get more facilities from the schools in order to attract them to minimize the girl dropouts.
- Some incentives should be given to the members of SMC for encouraging their effective participation.
- There should be effective convergence and collaboration with other SMCs at block and district level.
- The construction work of school buildings, toilets, boundary walls and playgrounds should also be given to the SMC members in order to spare teachers completely for the teaching and learning activities.

### CONCLUSION

After discussing the above finally it can be stated that the SMC members are taking essential steps to enrol the non-enrolled children, increase the retention of non-enrolled children, promoting the achievement and retention of enrolled children, beautify the school environment, protect the amenities and properties of the schools, minimize the absenteeism of teachers etc. They are also formulating school development plans annually in which proper planning is being made for bringing about overall development of the elementary schools of Jharsuguda district. So the functioning of school management committees at elementary level is praise worthy.

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