CHAPTER-5
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, RTE AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Introduction

The First Education Commission clearly spelled out the need for decentralization of school education and involvement of local bodies in the processes related to school improvement in 1966. According to the Commission, the immediate goal was to associate communities with the schools in their locality (GoI: 1966). Parent participation as a primary strategy for ensuring decentralization in school education got another major boost with the adoption of National Policy on Education, 1986.

This School Management Committee gave primary focus on decentralizing the planning and management of primary education in the country. The community involvement is possible through this policy in the form of School management Committees for management and improvement in school education.

Provided for decentralization of 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment activities and facilitated the transfer of power and participation of local self-government institutions or Panchayati Raj Institutions. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has given the most important importance for the formation of an effective system for the systematic alliance and decentralized decision-making of the community.

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act) 2009 was passed by the Parliament in August 2009. After receiving Presidential assent, it was notified for implementation from April 1, 2010. Section 21 of the RTE Act, mandates the formation of School Management Committees (SMCs) in all elementary government, government-aided schools. The RTE Act envisions an SMC as the basic unit of a decentralized model of governance with the active involvement of parents in the school’s functioning (The Hindu, 1 April 2010).

The chapter is in the context that the Right to Free and Compulsory Education for Children is landmark legislation. This Act has many provisions to ensure quality
education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Specific provisions have been made for democrat of schools and for parents and local communities to play their due roles in shaping and running of the schools in the form of School Management Committees (SMC) and preparation of School Development Plan. In this regards, chapter try to discuss the functioning of SMCs and also its relevancy. It also discusses the variation in the goal of RTE and actual status of SMCs and its responsibilities.

**Background of RTE and SMC**

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act) 2009 was passed by the Parliament in August 2009. After receiving Presidential assent, it was notified for implementation from April 1, 2010.

The RTE Act 2009 has generated a lot of debate. While on the one end, it has been opposed and condemned as a design of the neo-liberal state to sabotage school education further, on the other end it has been sighted as the most revolutionary Act. However, both positions are far from reality. While the first position leads to an all-out opposition of the Act and confrontation with the Government, the second position may also lead to inaction and illusion about the real intention and capacity of the current Indian state. Either of the two positions can cause harm to the cause of mass education (RTE Act: 2009).

Despite its limitations, some provisions of the RTE Act, such provision for better infrastructure, improving PTR and increased the role of School Management Committee, if properly utilized, then they are reborn The ability to do is almost the old government school which provides the common people of the country. These provisions can be realized through interventions of integrated civil society and creative engagement with the governments at the Center and at the state level.

Government school system in India meets the children living in small towns and villages, which is a large part of the Indian population. It contains 77 percent of our country's total population. The poor quality of education available to them ensures that the big children of India will stay behind till now. One of the main reasons, for this kind of disappointment of our public system of schools, it is that local
communities have not been able to fortify themselves and influence desirable changes.

It is ironical that education can be a great leveler and also be a means to perpetuate the existing social divide. Great hierarchy in schooling provisions exists in India. Equality of opportunity in terms of accessing schools has remained at best a political rhetoric. India’s middle class who can afford to pay for their children’s education opt for sending their children to high fee-paying private schools and for rest of the masses poorly equipped barely functioning government schools remain the sole option. The social and economic divide that exists in society is reflected in access to schools as well (RTE Forum: 2015).

Under the RTE Act 2009, parents have been entrusted with certain powers through the SMC elected by them; proper exercise of the same can initiate a process of improving schools. For that to get actualized, the community at large and the SMC members, in particular, have to be supported through training and handholding. They have to be made aware of the provisions of the RTE Act, the roles, composition and the process of formation of the SMCs (Dubey: 2010).

The RTE Act stipulates that SMCs should:

- Monitor the working of school (Mid-Day Meal provision, toilet facilities, teacher attendance, etc.)
- Monitor the utilization of grants received from the appropriate government, local authority or any other source
- Prepare and recommend the annual and three-year School Development Plan (SDP), which addresses infrastructure, academic achievement, etc (RTE, 2009). These plans should collectively feed into creating an Annual Work Plan (AWP) for every district, and subsequently, every state.

**Constitution, Functioning & Role of SMC**

Right to Education Rules, 2010 on Constitution of SMC
SMCs are to be constituted in every school (except unaided schools) within 6 months of the appointed date and reconstituted every 2 years;

75 percent of the strength of SMC shall be from among parents or guardians;

The remaining 25 percent shall be from:

- One-third from amongst the elected representatives of local authorities;
- One-third from amongst teachers of the school;
- One-third from among local educationists or children in the school, to be decided by the parents of the committee.

A chairperson and vice chairperson shall be elected from among the parents. The head teacher of the school (in case the school does not have a head teacher) or the senior most teacher of the school shall be the ex-officio member-convener of the SMC.

The SMC shall meet at least once a month and the minutes and decisions of the meetings shall be properly recorded and made available to the public.

**Functions of SMCs as per RTE Rules, 2010**

In addition to the RTE provisions, the RTE Rules, 2010, states that the following functions should also be performed by SMC, along with the functions specified in the Act (Oxfam India: 2014):

- communicate in simple and creative ways to the population in the neighborhood of the school, the rights of the child as enunciated in the Act; and the duties of the appropriate government, local authorities, school, parent, and guardian;
- ensure the enrollment and attendance of all children, especially, the disadvantaged and weaker sections;
- ensure that weaker sections are not discriminated;
- facilitate non-enrolled children to participate in special training;
- monitor the identification and enrollment of children with special needs;
- ensure that the rights of children specified in the Act are met promptly and the basic provisions entitled to children are provided in a timely manner;
- prohibit private tuition or private teaching activity by teachers;
- monitor that teachers are not burdened with non-academic duties.
Role and Responsibilities of SMCs

Based on the provisions mentioned in the RTE Act and Rules, there are at least four major roles that the SMC can play (RTE Forum: 2015):

a. All SMCs are management bodies created for the decentralized governance of the school to ensure that quality education is imparted to all categories of children, without discrimination. As a governance structure, SMCs are at the first level of the grievance redress mechanism.

b. SMCs can also be seen as a means of mobilizing community resources for the school- linking schools with the local community. The knowledge and skills available in the society can be transmitted to the school through the SMCs, and in turn, some constitutional values may be transferred to the society through children and school-based activities.

c. SMCs can create a sense of community ownership of school in their locality.

d. They are a potential agent for systemic change, through the creation of pressure groups, in the form of federations.

With the provisions, it is clear that the RTE Act has played a clear role in community involvement, which aims to assist in monitoring systems, development of school plans and local grievances. The RTE Act states the establishment of School Management Committees and the appointment of the local authority. One of the main objectives of establishing an SMC is: increase community ownership and participation in RTE. Every school should have an SMC, which is a community representative and meets the needs of all the children in an inclusive way.

RTE & SMC in the selected area

Data on the responses from Schools in Figure 5.1 School Management Committee in Schools reveal that about all school are with SMC i.e. 99 percent whereas 98.4 schools are with SMC in Lucknow and 97.7 percent in Unnao (NUEPA: 2015). As per Government Notification, the term of the SMC is for two years from the date of the constitution and the members of SMC change after every two years with a new SMC. It is also told by the teachers that SMC is formed last year in July but after 3 years.
In reference to community participation in education, most stakeholders agree to the need to conceptualize the meaning of community, the nature of participation and the aspects to which participation is referred to including resource mobilization, management, monitoring, and evaluation, advocacy, and policy design.

As the profile of primary and upper primary school shows that most of the students are studying in government primary schools are from lower caste and class. So, the SMC members are also from the same profile as they are the parents. Mostly SMC members are not literate i.e. 46 percent and 36 percent are under matriculate (Chapter 3, Figure 3.5). In the field, it is found that parents are not keen to educate their children. They engage them any types of household works and did not much aware of the importance of education. They take education as secondary while household work is primary. In all these regards try to find out linkages in SMC & teaching-learning activities, reflections, functioning and relevance of SMC.
Figure 5.2 reveals the problem in admitting the child in schools. It is important to know is the admission procedure and its complications because parents hesitate in facing school or any other government or private office. But in the village there is no such problem is found. About 95 percent of the parent respondents did not face any type of problem in taking admission of their child in school. Although, some of the parents and SMC members say teachers regularly motivate the villagers to send their child daily to school and admit them if they are not admitted yet. So it can be said there is an immediate need to aware and motivate the parents to educate their children.

It is an effort to know the awareness of parents towards the education of their children. Figure 5.3 ‘class of your child’ is to know the awareness of the parent towards their child. It is cleared from the figure 5.3 that about 1/3rd of the parents did not know the class of their child and some of them are not sure in which class did their child is studying. It shows that parents are not serious about their child’s education. The reason can understand that most of them are illiterate and no proper occupation, the result is they are poor and not able to afford family responsibilities. Most of the children are helping their parents in agriculture, household work, and cattle grazing. This is one of the main reasons the backwardness in the education of government school children. They never study at home and no one teaches them in the home.

![Fig. 5.3: Class of your child](image)

Figure 5.4 shows whether they ever met a teacher of their child. It shows only 46 percent of the parents met the teacher of the child whereas 42 percent never met the teacher and 12 percent argued that they did not feel any requirement to meet school
teacher of their child. It is also observed during the fieldwork that parents go to school only when any incentives is to be given to children like a uniform, books, bags, etc.

Teachers told that the guardian does not come even when they call them but they came when anything is distributed to children. Even the student who is not come to class regular and wandering here and there in the village they also came that very day and the interesting thing is parents are also coming with them and fight for the incentive provided by the schools. It shows that they are aware of the things provided by the school but they are not for the education which is the primary objective of the schools. It is also observed that most of the teachers are take this as their opportunity for them to escape from teaching students are did not teach them regular and proper.

It is prime duty of the parents to ensure that their child studies at home and complete the home work which given by school teacher. But figure 5.5 reveals only 12 percent of the parents ask their child to complete their homework or to study in the home. It is
a very miserable condition about 88 percent of the parents did not ask their child to study at home. Only school or any other educational body is not having all responsibility to educate the children and only these institutions are not sufficient to educate them. Some responsibilities are to be taken by parents that children get a quality education and can compete in educational society.

**School Management Committee and its functioning**

School management committee is formed in every government school where the head and members are from parents or guardian itself. They have to look after all school activities and monitoring the school teacher’s absenteeism and MDM of the school. Figure 5.6 reveals only 34 percent of the SMC members are familiar from the SMC and about 2/3rd of them are not even familiar. It is observed that SMC members do not even know that they are a member of any committee in school. Thus, it can be said that more than 66 percent of the respondents are members of School Managing Committee did not know about their participation in committee which shows that most of the members are not aware of monitoring of children’s schooling and teaching-learning activities.

In this regards when the about 2/3rd majority of the SMC members does not know about SMC how can anyone expect them that they know their role and functioning of the committee. As discuss above that even parents are not aware to educate their children and engage them in many household works because of several reasons; how they participate in this type of committee as they are engaged in agriculture and laborer work for their livelihood. I don't think this type of committee is helpful in facilitating quality education in government primary schools. The reason behind it is
when the community members where the school is located are such a background where people did not have any proper occupation for their livelihood; how can they give any time to school activities when they even did not give any time for their child's education at home.

The positions of different members of School Managing Committee constitute as an important variable in the analysis. In figure 5.7 the positions are Father President, Mother President, Father Member and Mother Member. All the positions are selected or elected through a general meeting during constitution of SMC, except the position of member-secretary. The position of member secretary is fixed for the concerned head teacher or headmaster of the school and by virtue of his or her post, he will remain as member secretary of the SMC.

Thus, this indicates that Father Members are 78 percent of which 25 percent are Male President of all the members. The composition of SMC is inclusive in nature. In the school managing committee, the parent members are more in number and their participation is also very important for any decision making related to the educational development of a school. But the financial power is limited only to the president and the member-secretary to execute any developmental activities of the SMC. But the constitution said that the female members are more than male members.

### Role of SMC Members in School Development Activities

The School Managing Committee has failed to perform its duties up to the level of people’s expectations. Though the SMC consists of 15 members, its utility, as well as its huge membership, needs to be questioned. The SMC is formed with the purpose of
giving proper representation to all communities in the panchayat as well as to oversee the management of the school. But statistics and performance of the SMC members need to be further scrutinized. To analyze the role of SMC members are shown in the following figure 5.8 Role as a Member of SMC.

The data reveal that more than half of the members 68.0 percent of the school management committee does not even know the committee so how can they know about the roles and responsibilities, while 1/5th i.e. 19.0 percent members who are also president of the committee only sign where ever is required. Only 5 percent are such members who accept that their responsibility is to monitor MDM and other school activities but 8 percent members argue ‘ham kisi committee ko nahi jante…. hamari kaisi jimmedari, hamko koi paisa thodi hi milta hai….. master logo ko milta hai to wokare……ham apna majdoori kare ki school ki rakhwali……. Sarkar kuchh detibhi to nahi hai’ ‘why they take responsibility, as they are not paid for this’. Thus, 95% of the respondents are not aware of their responsibilities and not know about the committee. This is the exact situation of SMC, how can think about is properly functioning and its relevancy for the betterment of any school.

As per the Government Notification, the SMC should meet at least once in every month and the 50% of the total number of members shall form the quorum. Since the SMC has the responsibility of approving the absentee statement of the teaching and the non-teaching staff of the school, this meeting is supposed to be held before the last working day of every month or early first week of the month.

To analyze when SMC meeting held, figure 5.9 shows the meetings held according to teachers; the SMC members and school record i.e. SMC register are shows this. It
reveals in the data that SMC meeting is held mostly every month but only on record maintain by the teacher.

According to the teachers 88 percent meeting is held every month and 7 percent says at sometimes and 2 percent are such who did arrange meetings whereas according to the SMC members only 17 percent says meeting is held sometimes in the schools and rest about 83 percent are not attending meetings but on record it is found about 98 percent of the SMC meeting is held every month. Thus it can be concluded that SMC is not active or functional in these districts. It is also observed during the field work of the study and verify from the office record that forge signature is made of SMC members by the teachers to fulfill the quorum. When try to know why they do this, they replied that members are not come to attend the meeting. One or two will come even not at the time. Some will come today, some two days, rest never come. This is a big challenge for us to conduct a meeting like a meeting. It can be concluded that SMC needs to be active so it can help various activities of schools and school development programmes.

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**Fig. 5.9: When SMC Meeting Held**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>SMC Member</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>On Record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every month</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some times</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No meeting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 5.10: SMC member participate in Monthly meeting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>SMC Members</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>SMC Register</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some times</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In figure 5.10 SMC members participated in the monthly meeting, the data show only 16 percent of the SMC members attended monthly meeting whereas teacher responded 34 percent and when verify it from SMC register, 82 percent of the members attending a meeting every month. Thus, more than 80% of the SMC members are not active and not attended any School Managing Committee meetings.

Strengthening of capacity building of School Management Committee members completed status of training is required time to time. It is also found that at least once or twice in a year training is organized at BRC or NPRCs. But again figure 5.11 shows only 9.0 percent of the members are get training and all rest 91 percent did not get any training according to the SMC members itself. Training has been imparted only in 2% schools in Bihar, 18.2% in Uttar Pradesh and 36% schools in West Bengal, these are states which need to expedite the process and adequate measures to train the SMC members for the smooth functioning of schools (UNESCO: 2005).

It is also found in last one year both the districts have SMC members training in NPRC level but there is no expert or trainer to train them. The training must be on module mainly highlights on; General Guidelines, experience narration, meeting, Interview on life stages, RTE role compliance, who gained what?

The main problem found in training and awareness of SMC members, the teacher itself is allotted as a trainer. So how can it possible that teacher trained or aware them against themselves.

![Fig. 5.11: SMC Training in last one year](image-url)
Main Agenda items of the SMC Meetings

Since the inception of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Assam, the School Managing Committee (SMC) has gained increasing opportunity as an approach for improving responsiveness and accountability in the deliverance of education services. As a form of decentralization, the SMC approach involves the shift of decision making authority over school operations to local agents. The SMC consists of teachers, parents/guardians and members of the community and they are empowered with the responsibility of monitoring school functioning and managing its finances. The committee can take different agenda items and also can take decisions in its meetings. A good SMC should take education as a prime agenda of development like community empowerment, participation in the planning of School Development Plan (SDP) formation and quality monitoring by all stakeholders of education. Integration of teacher and community effort can lead to the better education system with decentralized planning and management. About main agenda items taken up by the SMC meetings the respondents’ responses are classified into six categories: school attendance, fund generation, quality of education, corruption, and accountability of teachers. But no such agenda is found to be discussed in schools of both the district of Uttar Pradesh. It is observed that most of the members are not attending the meeting of SMC or even don’t know about SMC, so how they discuss any agenda.

Figure 5.12 show Problem discuss in the meeting, only 2 percent says that problem is raised in the meeting and rest 98 percent SMC members did not have any existence in committee. Teachers write agenda and minute before the meeting had been held after this teacher used to call members and ask to put their sign in SMC register if they do
not come teachers put SMC member’s signature or thumb mark by their own. This is the worse situation of SMCs; there are no means of having SMC in schools if such arrangement continues.

In a real situation the government PS and UPS schools suffering a lot of problems. Every year, the Government keeps announcing that all the problems like lack of toilets, lack of supply of good quality mid-day-meal, lack of drinking water, uniforms and textbooks in time would be solved before the commencement of the new academic year. However, a large number of schools continue to face these problems. RTE is also not properly implemented besides it all the problems are as earlier.

Figure 5.13 Problem faces by teacher in conducting a SMC meeting in School, shows 63 percent teachers argues that there is no proper means of communication to call them for conducting a meeting, the measure issue raise by the teacher that no member come at allotted time for the meeting or even allotted day of the meeting, about 98 percent have such problem. On another hand, mostly who are SMC members are farmers, laborers, peasants, daily workers etc, so they did not have proper time to be attained the meeting at the allotted time, they are also not aware the concept of SMC. Most of them feel it is surely related to the benefit of teachers. They also argue that they did not get any monetary help which is very necessary for them to arrange food for their family because they are daily wages laborer.
SMC have to develop a plan every year which is known as School Development Plan (SDP) with the help of school teachers. In this regards, figure 5.14 Know about School development plan, data reveals no SMC members know about SDP where it is also very surprising that only 8 percent of the teachers know about school development plan. So, how can it expect that a school can grow and provide quality education without proper implementation of rules and regulations by government officials?

Figure 5.15 reveals that what measure should be taken for proper functioning of school, in this regards teachers says following thing are as follows; 88 percent of the teachers says categories the duties of teachers in school because in basic schools all the works has to be manage by teacher like MDM, Cleaning of school and toilets, distributed books, provide uniform, arrangement of raw material daily as green vegetables, milk, fruits etc. beside this he/she have to maintain school building, provide medicine time to time and many other things. So, when can a teacher teach? About 82 percent of the teachers say that teacher should free for teaching only, they did not provide any other work. 76 percent of them want to hand over the MDM responsibility to other like Akshaya Patra, 91 feels insufficiency of basic facilities like proper building, toilets, electricity, seats, etc and 66 percent of the teacher are coming from about 100 km daily to teach early in the morning, it is not easy for anyone. So, School should be less than 20 km away from the residence so that they can reach school in time.
However, in order to strengthen the SMCs, it is critical to think on the future course of action. An important concern is the relationship of SMCs with the Panchayat. There is at least one representation from panchayat guaranteed by the RTE Act, but PRIs play little role in the functioning of schools in most of the States.

In this regards, the figure 5.16, done for strengthening SMC, proper training is suggested by 77 percent teachers and 57 percent SMC members, whereas 92 percent SMC members are in the favour to get some reimbursement and 69 percent of the teachers are also in the favour of the same. 95 percent of the teachers and 77 percent of the SMC members are the same suggestion is that to aware SMC member before making him/her a part of SMC.
The school has to be viewed as a social organization, organically linked to the community. The community must have an effective say in the management of schools. Over the years, an almost complete disappearance of this space for the local community in managing schools has significantly contributed towards the decline in the school system. Under the RTE Act 2009, there is an attempt to restore this valid space, to the community.

As a matter of concern, the main component of good school needs to be understood, particularly by the parents. Thus, it is important to understand teacher-child relationships, child learning processes, issues that school faces and role of SMCs etc. are some crucial issues in taking schools out of this present mess.

**Conclusion**

The focus of the chapter has been on the processes and practices of School Management Committee and its functioning. The chapter also goes through the relevance of the school management committee. In this regard, the data revealed some interesting insights into the functioning of the SMC in the villages selected for the study. For instance, the major source of information about the SMC to parents and SMC members was either from the school management committee itself or the school teachers. The level of awareness about the way in which SMC members are elected is found to be not clear among the committee members. Election as a means of electing this democratic body is not exercised at all. Rather, different other means are employed for the election of the SMC members and the chairperson. One way is by nomination, by the parents/guardians of the school going children, and the other way is by selection by few like Gram Pradhan and other dominant persons from the community.

The condition is such worse that about 2/3rd majority of the SMC members does not know about SMC how can anyone expect them that they know their role and functioning of the committee. As discuss above that even parents are not aware to educate their children and engage them in many household works because of several reasons; how they participate in this type of committee as they are engaged in agriculture and laborer work for their livelihood. I don't think this type of committee is helpful in facilitating quality education in government primary schools. The reason
behind it is when the community members where the school is located are such a background where people did not have any proper occupation for their livelihood; how can they give any time to school activities when they even did not give any time for their child's education at home.

Only 16 percent of the SMC members attended monthly meeting whereas teacher responded 34 percent and when verify it from SMC register, 82 percent of the members attending a meeting every month. Thus, more than 80% of the SMC members are not active and not attended any School Managing Committee meetings.

The Problem faces by teachers in conducting a SMC meeting in School, 63 percent teachers argues that there is no proper means of communication to call them for conducting a meeting, the measure issue raise by the teacher that no member come at allotted time for the meeting or even allotted day of the meeting, about 98 percent have such problem. On another hand, mostly who are SMC members are farmers, laborers, peasants, daily workers etc, so they did not have proper time to be attained the meeting at the allotted time, they are also not aware the concept of SMC. Most of them feel it is surely related to the benefit of teachers. They also argue that they did not get any monetary help which is very necessary for them to arrange food for their family because they are daily wages laborer.

There are many kinds of limitations many among the community members as well as teachers stated that experience of working with SMCs was not good. However, in order to strengthen the SMCs, it is critical to think on the future course of action.

As a matter of concern, the main component of good school needs to be understood, particularly by the parents. Thus, it is important to understand teacher-child relationships, child learning processes, issues that school faces and role of SMCs etc. are some crucial issues in taking schools out of this present mess.
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