

## **The Role of SMCs in Supporting the Schools Regarding Minor Repairs and Maintenance at Primary Level in Baluchistan:**

By

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### **Abstract:**

*This research paper is about the role of SMCs in supporting the schools regarding minor repairing and maintenance of the school building. School Management Committee (SMC) or in other words community participation in schooling is quite necessary in the sense that without community involvement the school cannot achieve the desired targets lonely. Through community participation both the school and community undertake joint decisions and efforts regarding educational booming.*

*This study was based upon the qualitative research method. The data was gathered from three union councils of the locale namely UC Nasar abad, UC Killi Sheikhan and UC Babo muhalla of district Zhob Baluchistan. The data was collected from the 30 key informants through face to face interview guide as the respondents were the main stake holders. Regarding sampling technique purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data.*

*The findings of the study show that large numbers of the SMCs in the universe were active regarding repairing and maintenance of the school buildings. The respondents shared that the committee members work actively in providing missing facilities to the schools. The members go behind different supporting organizations and other philanthropists of the community so that to fulfill the required needs of the school regarding minor repairs. The respondents viewed that the SMCs have done much work according to their capabilities. They have managed clean drinking water, repair the school walls, classrooms, toilets, white wash, electricity, fans, floor etc, however, the respondents regretted that the SMC members have not been given training and this is the reason that many of them don't know of their basic role and responsibilities.*

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### **Introduction:**

The involvement of community in schooling has been felt severely in each period, so on this behalf a strong bond between the school and community was considered necessary for the booming of standard and quality education at the dawn of the democracy in South Asia, where all of the stakeholders like political parties, business men and church were taken into confidence, because of their unique role to assemble the people to “work together”. The school and community had to work together in order to prepare the students to address their educational challenges in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Community involvement in school management is very old than the summit called in 1990 at Thailand named Education of All (EFA), the people earlier used to work for repairing and maintenance of the school. They co-operated the school administration regarding the improving the quality as well quantity of education and rested committed to donate the schools in the form of cash, labor etc at that time. (Yamada, 2014)

The world bank in its 2013<sup>th</sup> report defined community participation in such a way that it is not only the source to receive the share of project benefits, but rather work actively in the process whereby the beneficiaries divert the direction of development towards school betterment. The report further explains that SMC can play a vital role in motivating the community people in order to work in promoting education as well as developmental activities at primary school level, which will automatically reflect higher standard in the schools. (Ramachandran, 2013)

For the promotion of community and school relation it is in the interest of state to involve the community in school management, where there should be mutual sharing of resources, joint decisions making, which will increase the link between the community and school. The channel of communication should be kept open for facilitating such relationship and cooperation. An old dictum that “No communication no community”. So, this relation or communication could create harmony, cohesion, integration, unity, oneness and belongings between the school and community. The school should act as an effective forum for maintaining such interaction. (Condy, July 1998)

While keeping in view the absence of parental involvement in schools the standard of education is not praiseworthy in Pakistan. So, on this behalf many organizations have suggested that unless the community is not involved in schooling. The standard of

education could not achieve the set targets. The federal directorate of education in Pakistan in (2001) narrated that “Social development objectives and outputs can neither be pursued nor ensured either by the governments or the community alone. Social service delivery, particularly those related to education and learning thus needs to form sound and functional idea and effective partnership between the government and community”.

**The Structure of SMC:**

According to Ajay, “SMC is a democratic organization which attempts to bring parents and teachers together in the interest of the child”

The Federal Directorate of Education in Pakistan describes the structure of SMC in such a way that “SMC is an executive committee of the teachers of the school and community, which is elected for the period of two years. The members of the committee are those volunteer parents and guardians whose children are enrolled in the school. The members of the committee are elected through majority of votes. The committee creates awareness among the community people about the importance of education and persuades them towards the schools, so that they may send their children to school. The committee goes through the annual academic record and reports and minor repair of the school. It also provides counseling to the guardians and parents, teachers and students that how to generate the resources and chalk out the policies which can be implemented for the improvement of institution” (Javid Iqbal, 2011)

**The Objectives and Responsibilities of SMC:**

The major objectives and responsibilities of SMC as prescribed by constitution are as below.

- 1) To work for the well-being of every student, institution and society.
- 2) To improve the standard of institution and work for the benefit of students while mobilizing the resources of community.
- 3) To secure the school building from the external threats.
- 4) To work for the availability of all necessary things like clean drinking water, toilets, boundary wall, white wash, electricity etc in the school.
- 5) To create awareness among the community people that not only teachers are responsible but they have also a significant role in provision of quality education.
- 6) To create awareness among the people of community to devote optimum level of time for educational facilities offered by the government to catch the experts from the community members.
- 7) To instigate and motivate the parents to send the children to schools especially in rural areas.

- 8) To thought out the ways and means that how to decrease the dropout, retain the teachers' absenteeism in the schools and enroll maximum number of children into school.
- 9) To develop fraternity and harmonious relationship between the school and home or parents and avoid bureaucratic rigidity of the both side. (Javid Iqbal, 2011)

**Review of Literature:**

Involving community in schooling or forming SMC in schools is actually decentralization in the education, as this involvement was practiced in many developing countries of the world as part of public sector reforms. Through decentralization in education the power is devolved to the grass root level, where the decision making regarding school management is entrusted to the school as well as community both. So, for this purpose the community people and school teachers are given various training in order to strengthen their capacity building. Through community participation the budget is directly granted to the school rather than department to meet the school expenditures, which automatically devolve the power from higher level to the school and community. So, through this process the power and authority of decisions and policy making are transferred to the school, where not the school head teacher or other teacher solely make policy but the parent are equally given rights to share their ideas regarding future planning for the school, so this was the reason when SMCs became a popular administrative tool and an effective source of managing school finance and participation of the community in schooling, which caused the improvement of standard as well as the quality education, so, in this way the said committees contributed to achieve the targets of globally agreed summit Education for All (EFA). By having a sense of ownership, it is considered that the community people will contribute and donate in improving not only the effectiveness and efficiency of school administration but the quality of education too. (Yamada, 2014)

To promote quality education it is quite necessary that the SMCs should be present in all schools. The research studies reveal that in the USA the parent teacher associations were found in all schools. The prime motto of these organizations is to appreciate and facilitate the parental involvement in schools. The history of this involvement in schooling is quite old in the United States than the other counties of the globe. The national wide organization named National Parents Teacher Association (NPTA) was established in 1897, where every member of PTA in the country was automatically given membership of this organization. (Nasir, 2013)

Besides USA the community participation in schooling also was found very common in Europe especially in France, Italy and

Germany called School Based Management (SBM). The parental involvement in schooling is more attractive to government and proves to be inexpensive which could provide strategic benefits. (Bray, January 2000)

While making SMC more functional many countries in the world have evolved a new concept of School Supply (SS), through this concept the schools are provided with all missing facilities like building, hiring teaching staff and their encouragement to prepare them for good teaching. (Namukwaya, 2014)

The research studies show that the community involvement in schooling has greatly increased the social as well as academic targets of the students in many countries, while analyzing this development the government of Pakistan along with the government of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa decided to involve the parents in the education of their children on regular basis. So, to achieve these ends the above both mentioned government established Parent Teacher Council (PTC) in the educational institutions under their jurisdiction. Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa was the first province of all other provinces of the country to introduce PTCs in the schools in 1993. The basic task and responsibility of these councils or committees was to enhance the role of community in increasing the enrolment rate, keeping careful watch on the presence of teachers and students in the schools, decreasing or discouraging the absenteeism of them and minimizing the unnecessary interference in the schools. Besides this the PTCs have also role in spending the budget granted by the government for the purpose of minor repairing, maintenance and other commodities like clean drinking water, boundary walls, class rooms etc. the head teacher of the school was given the authority to call quarterly meeting of the committee to address the issues face by the school through mutual consultation.

The step which was taken by the federal and KPK governments for the involvement of parents in education of their children was praised by education policies of the state. The committees were appreciated in giving high value. The text of some two national education policies 1998 and 2010 are quoted here that “At the village level the chairman of the School Management Committee (SMC) will be an elected person. He shall constantly review educational development in the area of his/her jurisdiction and ensure implementation of key policy provision. The chairman shall also remain in close and constant contact with the educational authorities of the area and serve as the key supplier of information through supervisor as well as the assistant District Education Officer”. (Nasir, 2013)

**Rationale of the Study:**

This study explores The Role of SMCs in Supporting the Schools Regarding Minor Repair and Maintenance of the school building. The findings of this research study may become the source of knowledge for the students of sociology, social work and other social sciences and for the students of education, where they can easily understand the role of SMC in supporting the school regarding missing facilities in schools and know the true situation in the locale. The students may further explore the said problem on different angles and try to bridge the gaps. The findings of the study can prove a good tool and base for making policies and future planning to make SMC more effective and functional. The findings give a clearer picture of the situation of the community participation and identifying the gaps, which are present in this regard. The study suggests that so far the work done by the SMC has not achieved the desired targets regarding school minor repairing, so, there is more attention needed to focus the area.

In the present research study qualitative research method was adopted, because this method has been used in many research studies in the past and got rich and valid data on similar topics. Qualitative research method was also deemed relevant to the nature of the topic. Regarding sampling technique Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data only from those key informants, who were directly link to the problem. The sample size for the study was 30 key informants. The respondents were interviewed through unstructured interview guide, where they openly expressed their views. The respondents were from ESP-UNICEF staff, educationists, office bearers of Education Department, head teachers and other SMC members like parents.

**Methodology:**

In this research study exploratory research method has been used, where it explores “The Role of SMCs in supporting the schools regarding minor repairs and maintenance at primary level in Baluchistan”. It is a cross-sectional study and the data has been collected on the basis of qualitative research. Qualitative research method has been used in many studies in the past while exploring the role of SMCs in the school management and maintenance of the schools, which has proved relevant according to the nature of the problem and rich data has been collected.

**Universe:**

Universe is the geographical area where the research study is being carried out. This research work has been conducted in district Zhob, Baluchistan, and the data has been collected from three union councils namely U.C. Nasarabad Muhalla, U.C. Babo Muhalla and U.C. Killi Sheikhan.

**Sample Size:**

The data has been gathered from 30 key informants. They were ESP-UNICEF staff, educationists, office bearers of Education Department, head teachers and other SMC members like parents. The data can be generalized to the population of the entire district.

**Sample Design:**

Sample represents the whole population of a selected universe. The researcher has gone through the purposive sampling, where those respondents were selected, who were directly linked to the selected problem. The research problem in hand was not a general problem but it was directly linked with the educationists, SMC members and head teachers of the schools. So, only these relevant persons were interviewed. The researcher interviewed the respondents through face to face interview.

**Tool of Data Collection:**

In order to observe the problem within the locale, the researcher employed the interview guide tool to fetch the data from the respondents.

**Tool for Data Analysis:**

After conducting research, the data was analyzed by thematic analyses. The researcher converted collected raw data into neat data on the basis of similar answers and interpret by applying thematic analysis.

**Results/findings:**

- Key informants interviews were started by asking them about the meetings of the SMCs on regular basis or on the set frequencies, a large number of the key informants viewed that the SMCs are fail while calling meetings of the committee on the set frequencies. The respondents shared that there is no proper schedule for the meetings. The committees call meetings rarely, or sometime on emergency basis when there is an urgent issue faced by the school administration. The respondents shared that the members don't attend the meeting despite several calls, however, some of the committees were found while calling the meetings on regular basis.
- Asking the respondents about knowing the SMC members of their basic responsibilities, majority of the key informants shared that the SMC members are unaware of their basic responsibilities. It is because that they have not been given trainings, where they can understand their role and responsibilities. However, the head teachers of the school and the committee chairmen are comparatively good in understanding their responsibilities. The staff member of the supporting organization viewed that the SMC members are told their responsibilities informally in different meetings and occasions, but formally they have not been told their

responsibilities through trainings. One of the respondent shared that there are two types of activities which are performed by SMC, the one is hard which is also called material like minor repairing of the school building etc and the second is soft which is also called non-material like controlling absenteeism of teachers and students, increasing enrolment and dropout retention etc. The respondent went on to say more that unfortunately the SMC members just remember the hard activities and forget the soft ones.

- The results based upon the sharing of the key informants about asking them the role of SMCs in supporting the schools regarding minor repair and maintenance of school building, it was found that the SMCs of many schools in the locale were functional regarding school minor repair and maintenance. The respondents viewed that the SMC members are playing active role in maintenance of the school building. They further shared that the School Management Committees (SMCs) are formed by Education Support Program (ESP\_UNICEF). The organization provides the school with School Development Plan (SDP), through which minor repair is carried out in the schools, however, the respondents complained of the budget for the SMC meetings and other requirement which is too low to manage the expenditure.
- By asking the respondents about arranging the financial requirements of school minor repair the respondents of the committees where the SMCs were functional shared that the members of the committees go behind the supporting organizations and make them to support the community school regarding the missing facilities. The key informants viewed that the SMC members and the community people undertake joint efforts to manage or provide missing facilities to the school regarding minor repair and maintenance. One of the key informant viewed that one of his school committee member supported them by providing 50000 (fifty thousands) rupees in cash when flood collapsed the walls of their school. The key informants shared that the SMC members of their schools are very sincere in supporting the school, they told that every member of the committee contribute according to their capabilities, someone provides cash money, someone brings bricks, someone hire labor, someone rent rickshaw, someone bring cement, someone work as labor and so on and so forth. Some three or four respondents viewed that to collect required budget the SMCs of their school go behind the elected members of the community and other stakeholders who are rich to come up with good contribution regarding the school maintenance.



- Based upon the sharing of the key informants by asking about the prominent facilities provided by the SMCs to the schools the respondents viewed that SMCs of their schools constructed the boundary walls of the school, wherever, the boundary walls were present but short, the SMCs heightened and enlarged them, the committees constructed and lay floor of the school, planted trees, restored electricity and fans, repaired the doors and windows of the classrooms, repaired or built the main gate, did white wash and paint of the school, repaired washrooms and toilets of the school, managed clean drinking water and cleanliness of the school.

**Discussion/Conclusion:**

The present study is about “The Role of SMCs in Supporting the Schools Regarding Minor Repairs and Maintenance at Primary Level in Baluchistan” reveals that the involvement of community in schooling is greatly important. The school in a real sense is the property of the community, so when the community people does not own this property or participate in it, the school remains the hub of other activities rather than the education, thus this was the motto which was put forth to involve the community in school management. On the basis of such motto it was determined by the international community in different summits like EFA, MDG, SDG to form committees consist of the school teachers and community people, so that to achieve the desired targets by the time prescribed. The School Management Committees SMCs have very vast role and work on different angels regarding material and non-material aspects of the school management. The findings of this study reveal that SMCs in many schools in the locale were active in supporting the school regarding missing facilities and minor repairing. It was observed that approximately SMCs were present in all schools of the locale, but some of them were not functional. The members of the functional committees persuade the supporting organization to support the school. They go behind the prominent figures and philanthropists of the community to make them contribute for the school minor repairing and maintenance. The respondents shared that they are supporting the school through different means, like they have managed clean drinking water, repair the school walls, doors, windows, classrooms, the main gate, toilets, washrooms, restoration of electricity and fans, planted trees, painted school, laid floor and so on and so forth, however, many of the SMC members were found unaware of their basic role, which should be addressed.

**Suggestions:**

Based upon the findings/results and discussion of the research study following suggestions are presented to make the SMCs more dynamic and functional in order to provide more and more facilities to the

schools, which could automatically reflect higher concentration of the community.

- Through the key informants interviews it was noticed, that the SMC members were not given training, which is the basic need to orientate and understand the members of their basic responsibilities. So, there is dire need of scheduled and emergency training for the SMC members.
- As a result of no training and understanding of their basic responsibilities the key informants shared that there is no frequent contact between the SMCs and education department, which has slowed down the pace of the work. So, it is needed to arrange at least a quarterly meeting between SMCs and education department in a year, so that to make the SMC accountable and dynamic.
- Based upon the sharing of the respondents it was observed that the meetings of the SMCs were not carried out the set frequencies. The meetings were called without any schedule and on offhand basis, so, which could not reflect higher outcome in providing more facilities to the schools, thus, it is suggested to arrange the meetings on the set frequencies, so that to boost up the efficiency of the SMCs.
- In the locale there were found almost SMC in each and every schools, but there was no contact and sharing among the committees as expressed by the respondents, so, in order to make the SMCs more effective and efficient there is the need to arrange a joint meeting among all SMCs in the locale, so that they may share their progress and problem and suggest best reasonable solution for these problem.
- Selection of the SMC members should be on experience basis and volunteer persons. The members should have knowledge, exposure, qualification and relevant to the education field, so that they may contribute more for fortifying the SMC objectives.
- The education department should interfere and create liaison and contact between SMCs and other supporting organizations to support the school management committees in repairing and maintenance of the school required facilities. As the respondents viewed that the school management committees are established by the ESP (UNICEF), so, a frequent contact with the organization may ease the burden of SMCs.
- As expressed by the respondents the budget for SMCs is very low, which is only 3000 per year, which is too low to manage the expenditure of the school in the year, so it is suggested to increase the budget so that the committees may accommodate the school expenditure. Besides this the DSA (Daily Service Allowance) should be given to the committee members during the meeting

days, which can make the SMC members more regular and punctual.

- The SMCs should give more opportunities regarding decision making in the school management so that they can play vibrant and functioning role.
- Based upon the findings of the respondents there are multiple obstacles for SMC for undertaking their role, the government should help the committees and mobilizing the community so that to over through the resistance in the path.

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