



Role Of Parental and Community Participation in the Effective Management of Primary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The effective management of primary schools is greatly enhanced by parental/community involvement in school administration, support and educational programs. The current research explores the levels of parental and community engagement, its role in school accountability, student attendance, learning, and school development. It also highlights the key challenges to stakeholder engagement. The study used quantitative descriptive and analytical research design and the sample consisted of 200 respondents which comprised of parents/guardians, teachers, School Management Committee members and community representatives. Frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations are used to analyse data. These results revealed that home monitoring of children's learning was the most common way in which children's learning was engaged, with 55% of respondents indicating frequent involvement in home monitoring, and 45% reporting that they were involved in parent-teacher meetings. The highest perceived contribution score is given to school accountability (4.20) and the lowest score is given to school development and resource mobilization (3.85). Lack of awareness (35%) was the top barrier and was followed by work related and time constraints (32.5%). The study concludes that if parents and community are involved in the process of good enough, good accountability, communication and school management can be developed. These relationships could be explored further in future studies between schools from various geographical regions and various school types, with verified survey data and objective school performance data.

Keywords: Parental Participation, Community Engagement, Primary Education, School Management, School Management Committees, Educational Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Primary education is a stepping stone to children's intellectual, social, emotional and moral development. Managing primary schools effectively ensures quality education, enhances student learning and provides a supportive learning environment. Management in the School is planning, organizing, coordinating and monitoring the academic and administrative activities so as to meet the educational goals. While the role of school leadership and staff is important, the active involvement of parents and community members also helps to ensure effective functioning and development of primary schools.

Parental involvement is the involvement of parents and/or guardians in their children's learning by monitoring their academic progress, ensuring their regular school attendance, communicating with teachers and engaging in school activities or events. This engagement

with the community is supported by a wide range of individuals who represent the community, members of the School Management Committee, social groups and other stakeholders involved in the planning of the education, mobilization of the necessary resources and development of the school. By working together, these groups can help schools determine students' needs, meet challenges faced in the community, and enhance accountability in administration and instruction. In India, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 establishes a proper mechanism for community involvement in covered schools through School Management Committees. These committees are involved in school monitoring, planning and management of school grants. Likewise, the National Education Policy 2020 underscores the need to engage parents and communities to support schools. All these programs understand that school development is a collaborative enterprise and that genuine stakeholder involvement can help meet school goals. Even with these measures, there can be barriers to effective parental and community involvement, such as lack of information, time pressures, and poor communication as well as not participating in decision-making. Sometimes, involvement can be restricted to attending meetings and/or occasional support in planning and management work within the school. These challenges must be met with clearer lines of communication between schools and families, in which decisions are made together, and opportunities for families to participate in school development.

Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

- To examine the extent of parental and community participation in the management of primary schools.
- To assess the contribution of parental and community participation to school administration, accountability and development.
- To analyse the role of parental involvement in students' attendance, learning and discipline.
- To identify the major barriers to stakeholder participation and suggest measures to strengthen participatory school management.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

O'Toole, et al. (2019) explored how parents are involved, engaged and partners in their children's education in their first years of schooling. They emphasized the need for the collaboration of parents and schools to promote children's learning. The authors pointed out that parental involvement in school activities was not limited to school meetings, but also involved communication with teachers, helping students at home, and engaging in learning activities at home. Their work laid the groundwork for understanding how parents can be involved as an integral part of the primary education process. It also highlighted the need for the reinforcement of the family-school partnership to enhance children's learning experiences.

Durišić, Bunijevac (2017) studied Parent involvement as an important factor in successful education. In their research, they highlighted the importance of the role of parents in



children's educational development, motivation, and academic achievement. Communication between parents and teachers and a supportive home environment were emphasized. Their work indicated that parental involvement could enhance the bond between family and school, and could be a part of the effective education process. These viewpoints were appropriate for the current research, as they related to the overall goal of enhancing primary school operations, which is parental involvement.

Wilarsati, et al. (2026) examined the role of the principal in enhancing parental involvement in improving the quality of education in Kalongan 02 Ungaran Public Elementary School. Their research was concerned with the impact of school leadership on educational improvement and parent involvement. The research noted the significance of managerial practices in facilitating parents' involvement in school activities and improving educational quality. It highlighted how key school leadership is in supporting communication, fostering collaboration and providing opportunities for parent involvement. This work was relevant to the present study because in order for the schools to be effective, the parents had to be willing to be involved and the school authorities had to be able to encourage and organise the involvement of parents.

Oduro, et al. (2026) conducted a scoping review of community and parental engagement in quality education in rural primary schools. Their work focused on the importance of families and communities to the quality of education, especially in rural areas. The review offered a way to think about participation in a variety of ways, including the connection between school engagement and family and community involvement. It also brought to the forefront issues of the factors that affected meaningful engagement in school education. This research was relevant for the present study, because it expanded the scope of involvement from the personal involvement of parents to the community involvement in school development and management.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study uses quantitative descriptive and analytical research design to study the role of parent and community involvement in effective management of primary schools. The descriptive approach investigates the nature and level of stakeholder involvement in school administration and academic support, accountability, student attendance and institutional development, and the analytical approach assesses the perceived contributions of stakeholder involvement to these areas. The study also highlights the key challenges to participation and explores strategies for boosting the partnerships between parents, the community and schools.

Population of the Study

This population includes parents / guardians of primary school students, primary school teachers, members of School Management Committee and other community representatives who have connections with primary education. These groups share various views on school performance, parental engagement, administrator decision-making, community involvement and educational growth.

Sample Size and Distribution

The study involves a sample of 200 respondents who belong to four stakeholder groups:

Table 1: Proposed Distribution of Respondents

Respondent category	Proposed sample	Percentage
Parents or guardians	100	50%
Primary school teachers	50	25%
School Management Committee members	30	15%
Community representatives	20	10%
Total	200	100%

Sources of Data and Research Instrument

The present study is based on the primary data gathered by using the structured questionnaire and secondary data gathered from research articles, books, government policies and educational reports. The questionnaire asks participants to rate their perceptions on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) regarding several aspects of school management and academic support and obstacles to participation.

Data Collection and Analysis

Informed consent is obtained and data collected from selected respondents. Completed questionnaires are coded, analysed and computed with frequencies, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations. Data are displayed in tables to consider the patterns of participation, perceived role in school management and obstacles to parental and community engagement.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides an analysis of parental and community involvement in the primary school management. The results focus on the distribution of respondents, patterns of participation, perceived contributions to effective school management and barriers affecting stakeholder involvement. The results are discussed with reference to the role of parents, teachers, members of School Management Committee and community representatives in enhancing school administration and educational development.

Profile of Respondents

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by stakeholder category. It highlights the representation of parents, teachers, School Management Committee members and community representatives in the study.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Stakeholder Category

Respondent category	Frequency	Percentage
Parents or guardians	100	50%
Primary school teachers	50	25%
School Management Committee members	30	15%
Community representatives	20	10%
Total	200	100%

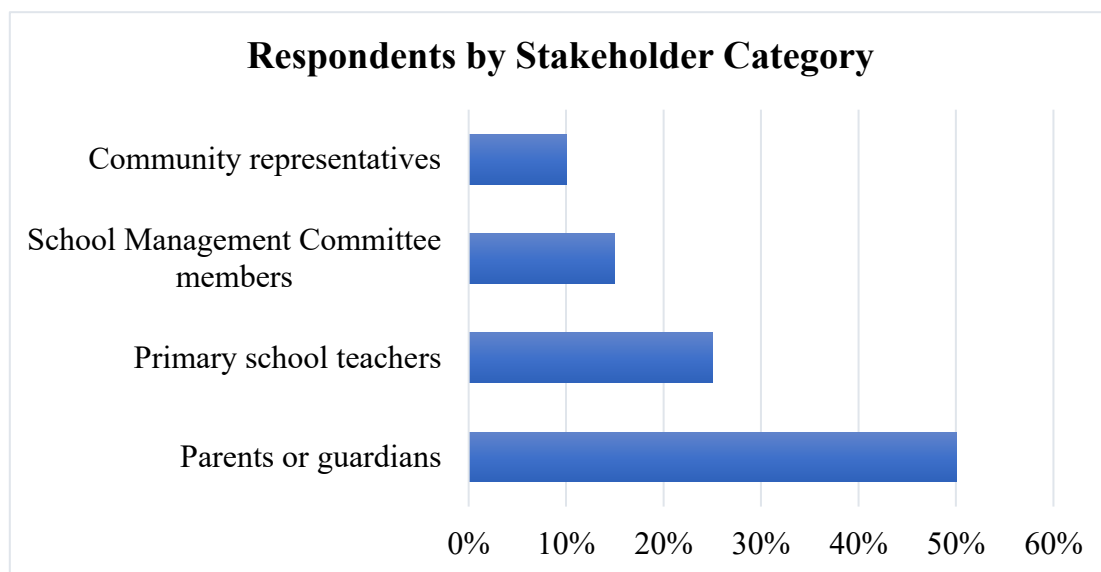


Figure 1: Visual Representation of Respondents by Stakeholder Category

Table 2 shows that the parent/guardian group accounts for 50% of the total respondents with 200 respondents, while the primary school teachers account for 25% of the respondents. The remaining 10% is made up of the community representatives and the 15% of the members of the School Management Committee. Parents/guardians are over-represented reflecting the value of understanding family involvement in primary school management. The presence of teachers, committee members and community representatives offer other views and perspectives on school administration, decision making, accountability and institutional development. The distribution in turn provides a wide range on which to view the contribution of various stakeholders to effective primary school management.

Forms of Parental and Community Participation

Table 3 shows the types of parental and community involvement in primary school activities. The table provides a comparison of involvement in parent–teacher meetings, monitoring children's learning at home, School Management Committee meetings and school cleanliness and development activities.

Table 3: Respondents' Participation in School Activities

Participation activity	Frequently participates	Sometimes participates	Rarely or never participates
Parent–teacher meetings	90 (45%)	70 (35%)	40 (20%)
Monitoring children's learning at home	110 (55%)	60 (30%)	30 (15%)
School Management Committee meetings	60 (30%)	70 (35%)	70 (35%)
School cleanliness and development activities	50 (25%)	80 (40%)	70 (35%)

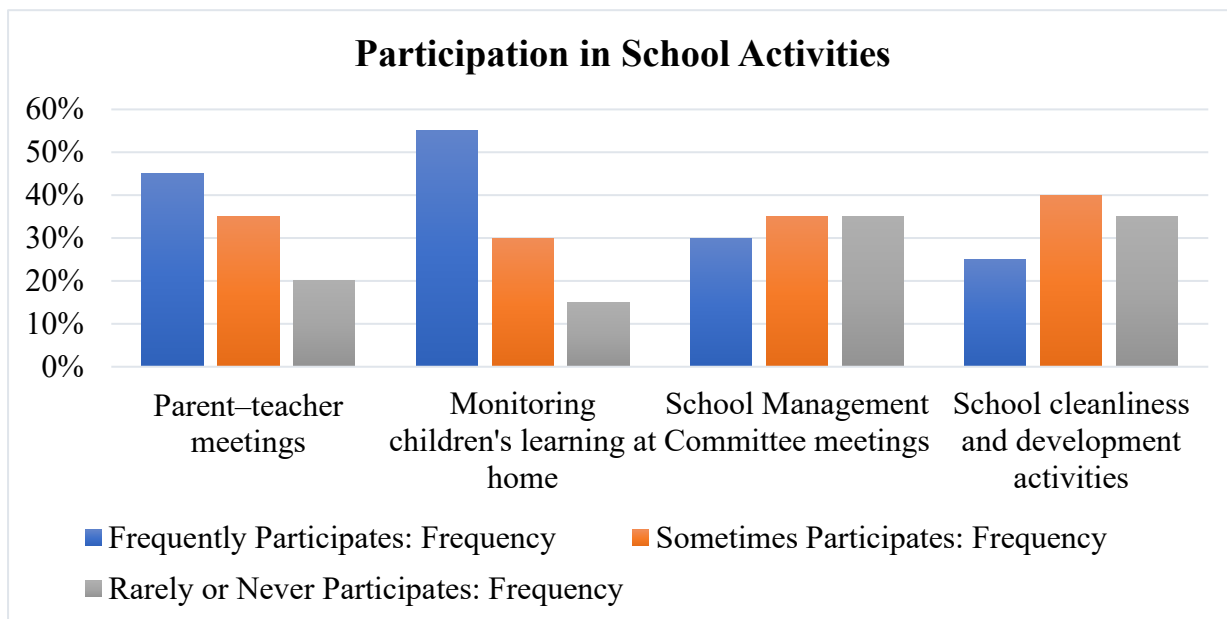


Figure 2: Visual Representation of Respondents' Participation in School Activities

As shown in Table 3, the most common activity at home that parents and carers report is monitoring children's learning at home with 55% of respondents reporting they do this frequently, followed by parent-teacher meetings at 45%. Compared, 30% of the students attend the School Management Committee meetings frequently, and 25% are involved in School Cleanliness and Development activities frequently. The results indicate that parental engagement is higher in activities that are directly related to children's education than in formal school governance and development. In addition, 35% rarely or never attend School Management Committee meetings and school development activities, respectively. The patterns indicate that greater involvement in the planning process, committee meetings and community development programmes within the school is needed to ensure that the responsibilities are shared and to enhance the overall primary school management.

Perceived Contribution to Effective School Management

Table 4 shows the view of parents and community participation in effective school management. Five dimensions are reviewed: school accountability, student attendance and discipline, communication, academic learning and school development resources.

Table 4: Perceived Contribution of Participation to School Management

Dimension	Mean score	Standard deviation
Improvement in school accountability	4.20	0.68
Support for students' attendance and discipline	4.15	0.72
Improvement in home-school communication	4.10	0.70
Support for academic learning	4.05	0.76
Assistance with school development and resources	3.85	0.81
Overall mean	4.07	—

Lickert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

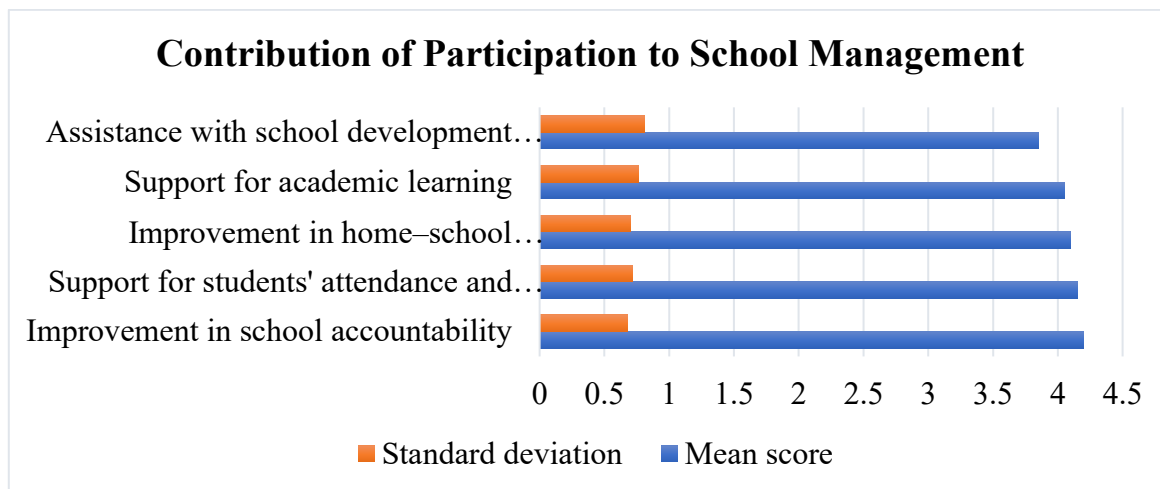


Figure 3: Perceived Contribution of Participation to School Management

As can be seen from the mean scores in Table 4, parental and community involvement in school management is perceived in a positive way in all five dimensions. Improvement in school accountability comes in at the top of the mean score, followed by support for students' attendance and discipline with a mean score of 4.15, and improvement in home-school communication with a mean score of 4.10. The academic learning section gets a mean score of 4.05 and the lowest mean score is for assistance with school development and resources at 3.85. The overall mean score of 4.07 indicates generally positive views of stakeholder involvement in good school management. The standard deviations (0.68 to 0.81) suggest that there is variation among the respondents on the dimensions. The results highlight the stakeholders' perceived value of participation in enhancing accountability, enhancing communication and supporting student learning. But further efforts are needed to mobilise resources and develop school in a manner that involves all components of school management in a balanced manner.

Barriers to Effective Participation

Table 5 shows the main challenges for parents and communities to engage in primary school management. These are the difficulties that can be identified in the table concerning awareness, time limitations, communication, decision-making and financial or transport limitations.

Table 5: Barriers to Parental and Community Participation

Reported barrier	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of awareness about participation opportunities	70	35%
Work-related and time constraints	65	32.5%
Inadequate communication from schools	55	27.5%
Limited involvement in decision-making	50	25%
Financial or transport difficulties	40	20%

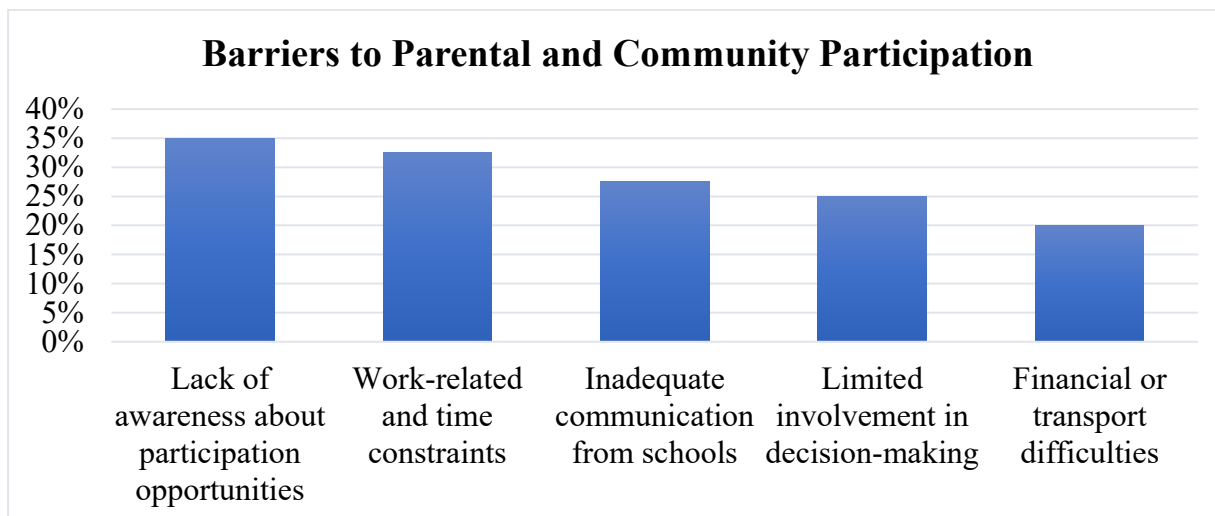


Figure 4: Barriers to Parental and Community Participation

As seen in Table 5, the lack of awareness about participation opportunities is the most commonly reported barrier, with 35% of respondents, followed by work-related and time constraints with 32.5%. Twenty-seven and a half percent of the respondents noted poor communication with schools as a barrier, and 25% said they were not involved in decision-making. 20% of respondents say they face financial or transport problems. The results suggest that lack of information and practical problems, as well as lack of opportunities for meaningful involvement in the school activities, can limit participation. The lack of awareness implies the need for more communication about school meetings and responsibilities of committees and development programmes. Likewise, the flexibility of meeting times and consultation methods could be used to address the issue of time and extent of involvement in decision making. Enhancing the process of communication with schools, parents and community member representatives can lead to a more inclusive school community where they are able to take an effective part in the planning, monitoring and development of primary schools.

5. CONCLUSION

Parent and community involvement are key factors in good primary school management as it allows for a sharing of responsibility as well as fosters communication and educational development in the school. The results show that parent participation in children's learning at home and parent-teacher meetings are an important component, whereas participation in formal school governance and development is still a point that needs to be strengthened. School accountability is seen as having the highest contribution score with resource mobilization and school development as areas that need more attention. High levels of unawareness, constraints at work and lack of communication are also barriers to meaningful participation. Hence, it is recommended that primary schools foster frequent parent-teacher communication, enhance School Management Committees, involve parents in inclusive decision making and create awareness of opportunities for community participation. Further research on the basis of reliable field data and objective measures of school performance will



be able to better elucidate the role of stakeholder involvement in school performance and effectiveness.

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