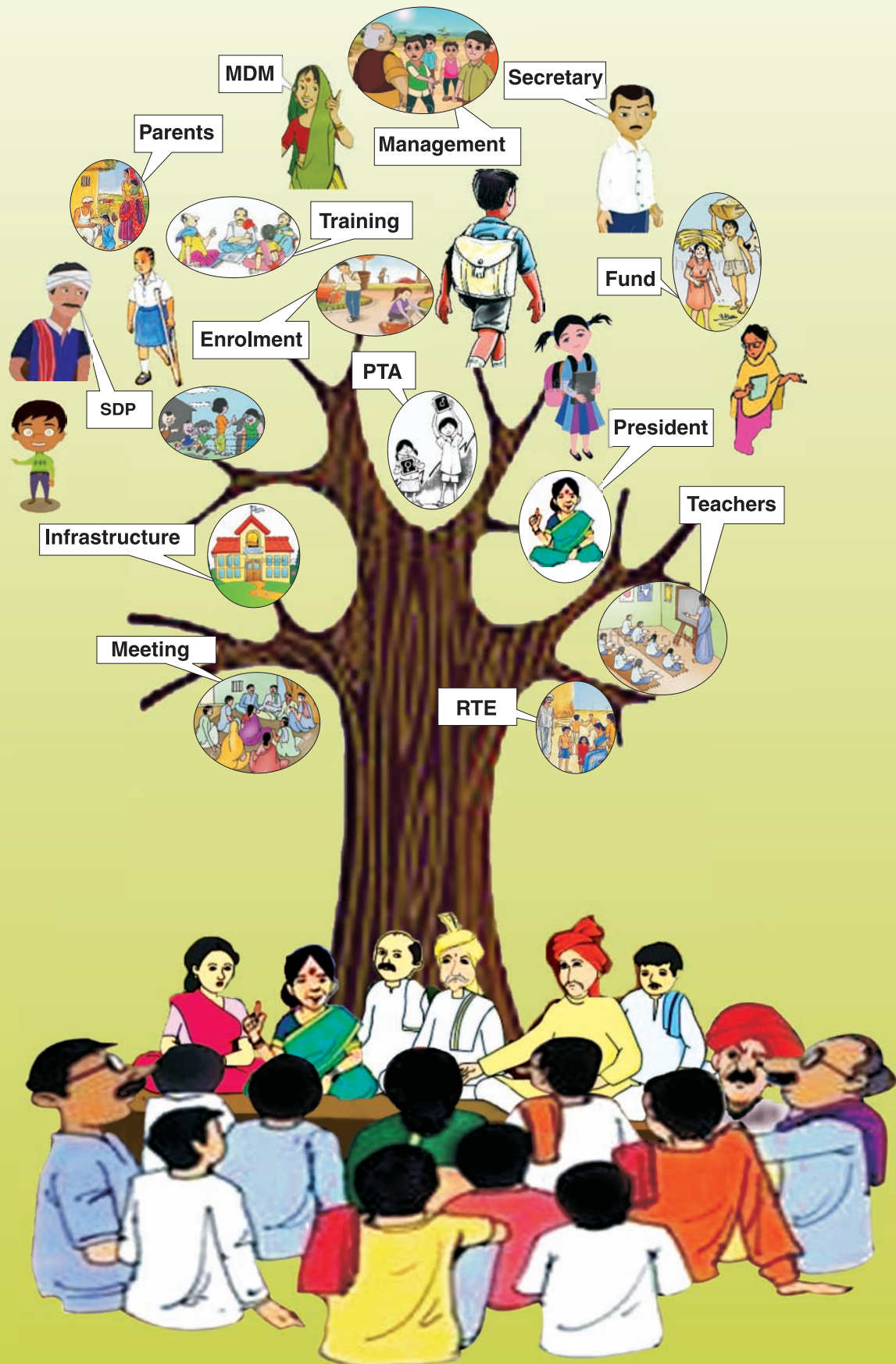


# Are SMCs FUNCTIONAL?

A Study of SMC Functioning in 5 States of India



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# Foreword



It gives us immense pleasure to bring out this publication 'Are SMCs functional? A study of SMC functioning in 5 states of India' which has been conducted by National Coalition for Education with the help of its partners. We believe that School Management Committees have important role in governance and realization of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act 2009). Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act envisages community participation and participatory management in school functioning by introducing the provision of School Management Committee (SMC) in the Act.

Our team has tried to find out the actual participation of SMC in the school functioning, identification of school going aged children, school mapping and preparation of School Development Plans. The study was conducted in 5 states of India by a mix methodology of quantitative and qualitative tools. This included collection of information by questionnaire, interview of SMC members, community people, school teachers, children and parents and observation by the investigating team.

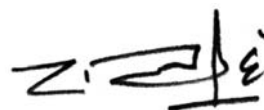
We are thankful to our research team headed by Ms. Priya Bhakat. We are also thankful to our partner organizations for their cooperation and help in making this study a success. We are also thankful to school teachers for their support and help as and when our team required. Ms. Noopur deserves our special thanks for her inputs in finalization of the report.

We hope this report will be of great help in further research, planning and advocating for strengthening people's participation in making the right to education a people centric movement.

Any critique, comments or suggestions will be whole heartedly welcomed by us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rama Kant Rai', written over a horizontal line.

**Rama Kant Rai**  
Convener

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ram Pal Singh', written over a horizontal line.

**Ram Pal Singh**  
General Secretary



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# Abbreviations



CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
DISE	District Information System for Education
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GB	General Body
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RTE	The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
SDMC	School Development and Monitoring Committee
SDP	School Development Plan
SMC	School Management Committees
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
VEC	Village Education Committees
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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# I. Introduction

In the light of recent passage of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 as a fundamental right to all children between 6-14 years of age in India where millions of children are still either out of schools or drop out of schools before completion of elementary education, there is a critical need to find out ways in which this fundamental right can be realized. It is also now widely acknowledged that without community as a primary stakeholder in the process, this right would not meet its intent. Schools are a focal social institution that is intrinsically linked to their community's welfare and growth (Dayaram, 2011). Strong, sustained community participation in the management of local schools can enhance transparency and accountability in the education system and promote a sense of ownership, agency and responsibility for positive change. Most people would agree that involvement of the community is important to strengthen education. Governments, leftist leaning organizations, bilateral funding agencies and international organizations too perceive it as a crucial component for strengthening the education system. Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, (2010) argue that combating educational exclusion is closely associated with an increase in awareness among local governing agencies about local educational problems and their effective participation in day today functioning of schools as well as in decision making processes.

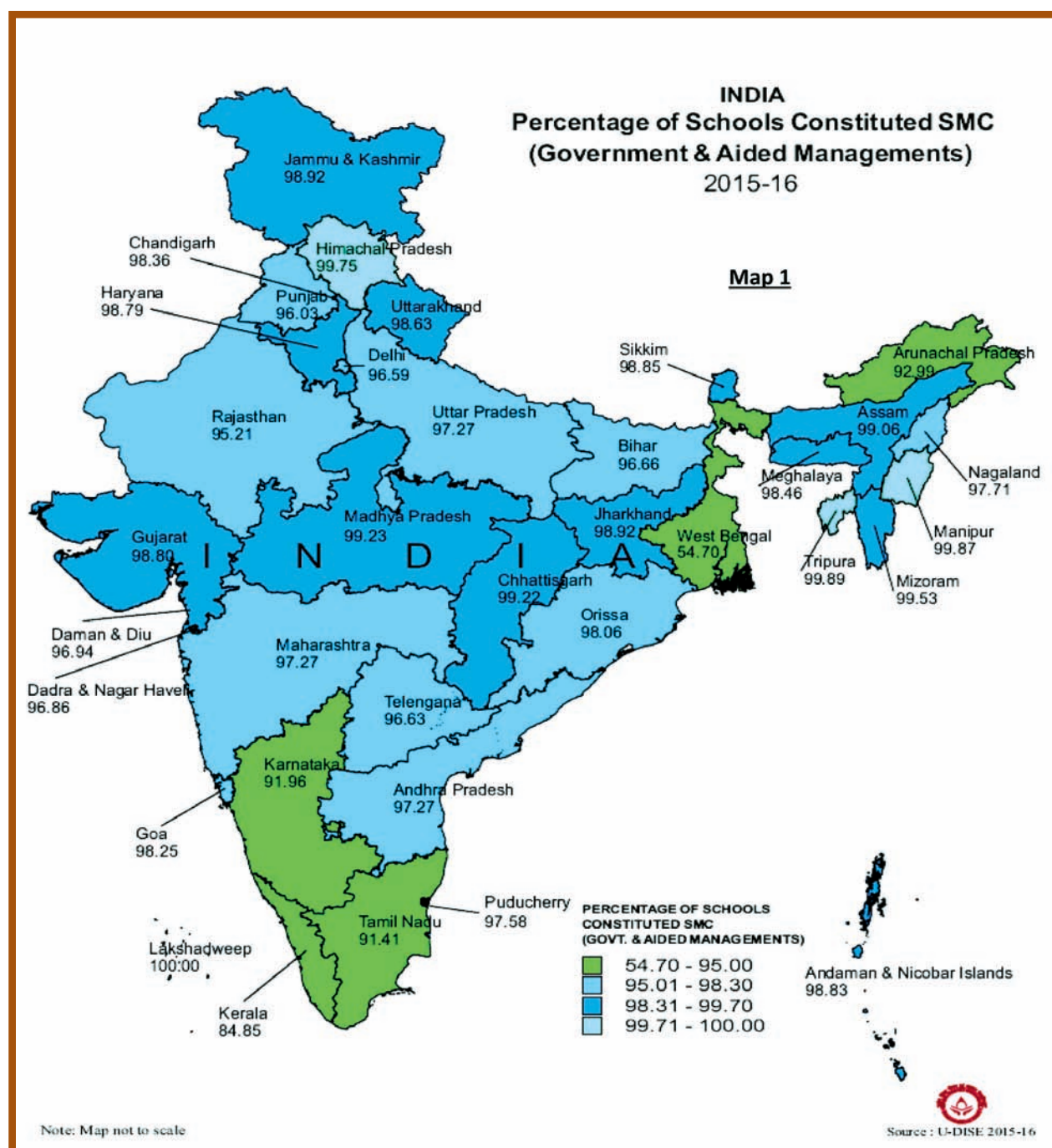
The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) committee had proposed a broad framework for managing education. A crucial feature of the framework was the provision for Village Education Committees (VECs). The committee was expected to have the power to check attendance registers and report on, among other things, regularity of students, teachers' attendance and the overall functioning of the school. A variety of projects have experimented with community participation in the education system, with mixed experience of success and failure. For example, DPEP (District Primary Education Programme), Bihar Education Project, Shiksha Karmi and Lok-Jumbish projects in Rajasthan, Mahila Samakhya Project and Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project included a strong component of community participation.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was initiated in 2000 as India's government flagship program for universalizing primary education. To help accomplish this goal, SSA legislation mandated community involvement in the school system. The intention was to democratize education in the country's rural communities by ensuring that parents and local communities play a central role in the functioning of their school systems. The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) provides for various entry points for such a purpose, most critical of them being School Management Committees. It is to improve school infrastructure, teacher-pupil ratio and enhanced roles and responsibilities for School Management Committees (SMC).

The constitution of School Management Committee (SMC) for each government funded school as envisaged in sections 21 and 22 of the RTE Act is a crucial step in the implementation of the right to free and compulsory education for the child. The inclusion of this provision is to ensure community participation in proper functioning of schools. School management committees (SMC) play a very important role in determining the goals and strategic plans of the schools which result into achieving high academic performance. School Management Committees also acquire both human and material resources which are very vital aspects in teaching and learning activities and they also create a link between the local communities and the schools hence enhancing conducive atmosphere for learning (Dean, 1995).

## II. Status of SMC in India

According to UDISE data 2015-16, 97 percent of Government & Aided schools have constituted SMC and 85.87 percent of schools have constituted SMC and prepared School Development Plan. While the north-eastern states like Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and Himachal Pradesh are the best performing states with more than 99 percent of schools having formed SMC, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Gujarat are the best performing states with 98 percent of schools with SMC and having developed a School Development Plan. In terms of School Development Plan, West Bengal (40.74) shows very poor performance both in terms of constitution of SMC and as well as preparation of SDP. Other states with poor performance in constitution of SMC are Kerala (84.85), Tamil Nadu (91.41), Karnataka (91.96) and Arunachal Pradesh (92.99).



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### III. Review of Studies

Community participation is increasingly encouraged in education as a means of achieving accountability and enhancing the quality of education offered in schools. These committees are supposed to encourage communities to participate and “assume ownership” of the education system, which would ostensibly increase accountability. It can take different forms, ranging from parents sending their children to school to active participation in school-related meetings, assisting with school construction and supporting teachers in achieving positive outcomes (Coppola, Luczak & Stephenson; cited in Pailwar & Mahajan, 2005). It will strengthen governance, and the resources available for primary education will be better used (Antonowicz et al., 2010). Irvin and Stansbury (2004) believe that citizen participation will produce more public preference in decision making. Improved governance of education has been identified as one way through which levels of access, quality and participation in education can be improved (UNESCO, 2009) and which can reduce various problems related to inequality which accentuates exclusion (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2010). According to Wainwright & Wehrmeyer (1998), participation by citizens and users present an important concept and strategy for planners, designers, community organizers, and government officials. According to Searle (1988), Nurick (1982), and Hunter (1982), participation in decision-making reflects opportunities for influence and as a result, needs satisfaction. Colletta and Perkins (1995) describe various forms of community participation which include (a) research and data collection, (b) dialogue with policymakers, (c) school management (d) curriculum design, (e) development of learning materials, and (f) school construction. Visualising this important role of governance, the 2009 Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act emphasises the involvement of communities in school governance through SMCs to ensure school quality with equity.

Numerous studies conducted show that the parental involvement is directly linked to the learning outcomes of students and as a whole, to the betterment of the school. (Aronson, 1996; Ballantine, 1999; Brown, 1999; Chen & Chandler, 2001; Columbo, 1995; Gonzalez, 2002; Huss-Keeler, 1997; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Norton & Nufeld, 2002; Vincent, 1996; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). However, many opportunities for participation are met with little enthusiasm or cooperation by citizens (Wandersman, 1980) and policy makers, which makes the success of participation efforts a mystery. A recent evaluation in Karnataka, India, by Gowda et al. (2014) analysed the impact of an NGO providing training to School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) members for a four-year period. While results showed an improvement in the managerial quality of the SDMC, there was only a negligible impact on student learning levels. The study found an improvement in scores on school tests that SDMCs hold teachers responsible for, but no corresponding increase in scores on tests conducted by the researchers. Findings from the study also indicated that SDMCs with longer tenures had a more sustained impact on student test scores (as cited in a report by Central Square Foundation). A study in Kenya by Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2007) analysed the role of parent committees empowered to recruit a local contract teacher, perform attendance checks on teachers on a regular basis and monitor teachers’ performance. Findings revealed that this school-based management training had a positive effect on student learning, more so among the contract teachers than regular teachers. The biggest gains were found when local committees were specifically trained and empowered to oversee the recruitment process and to effectively monitor teachers. The enhanced transparency in the local teacher recruitment process led to

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both an improvement in learning outcomes and a significant reduction (by about 50%) in the appointment of contract teachers purely based on their relation to an existing teacher (as cited in a report by Central Square Foundation).

Nayak, P.M. (2009) in his book on Community Participation in the Universalisation of Primary Education explores the actual and expected roles of the School Management Committees (SMCs) in school governance. The study found that working of the SMCs was not at all satisfactory. Various problems perceived as impediments in the working of the SMCs were inadequacy of teachers, poverty of members, lack of sufficient financial aids, lack of coordination among members, inadequacy of classrooms, lack of incentives for SMC members, political interference and reservation of SMC seats in the village community. Interestingly gender of the chairman of SMC was perceived to be important for the effective functioning of these bodies. The men argued that they are better in governing the SMC than their women counterparts. The study further underlined that caste, class; gender and political affiliation of members do affect the functioning of the SMC in multiple ways.

Several studies have suggested that, an overall improvement in the school system and its delivery depend on effective “community participation”. Community Participation constitutes an efficient strategy for achieving objectives such as improved access and quality, voicing community-specific needs and objectives, developing the curriculum collaboratively with school authorities, reaching marginalized groups, creating accountability and ensuring sustainability of programs that are implemented (Pailwar & Mahajan, 2005). In fact, lack of community participation in terms of active parent-teacher interaction is a serious impediment to the effective functioning of the schools in the backward areas of the country<sup>1</sup>. Some of the key reasons for poor performance of the SMC in India were low member participation, corruption, cultural barriers such as the caste system, and political pressures (Nayak, 2009). Suggestions for improving participation include: increasing general understanding of the meaning of participation and how people can participate. On-going trainings that use the language and concepts of participation are needed to build and sustain the capacity of SMC. Committees such as Mothers Groups, PTA and SMC should develop fixed guidelines for operationalizing their unique roles to avoid redundancy, even as they explore areas for mutual community-building and collaboration (Sharma et. al 2016).

Chisamya, (2010), emphasizes that a strong management system of education is pertinent in ensuring efficient and effective accountability at various levels of education. Antonowicz et al., (2010) observed that financial management training has a positive influence irrespective of the original level of education of the SMC members. It was further found that there was a greater reduction in malpractice when the SMC involved has capacity in financial management. The high level of SMC members who are not trained in financial management limits the quality of oversight over school finances, opens the door to financial mismanagement and undermines the ability of management to detect corruption. ROK (2005) asserts that the Government proposes a capacity building and support component to enhance programme capacity at school level for SMCs they need the right skills and facilities to implement new procedures and guidelines and to effectively manage their financial resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Community participation as strategy in enhancing quality of primary education in Karnataka State: A Case study of Namma Shaale initiative of Azim Premji Foundation and Government of Karnataka by A Kher, K Attavar, P Ramavath, R. Prakash  
<ftp://solutionexchange-un.net.in/public/edu/resource/res06121001.pdf>.



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A well-organized, well-managed and transparent education system is essential for achieving quality primary and basic education (Antonowicz, 2010). Interventions that work towards providing school-relevant information to parents and local stakeholders have been found to increase transparency and influence school functioning. For instance, an intervention in Uganda allowed schools and parents to monitor how local authorities utilised of school grants - by publishing data on monthly transfers in local newspapers (Reinikka and Svensson 2004). Findings showed a significant reduction in the diversion of school funds at the district level, and a positive effect on enrolment and student learning. Similarly, in Pakistan, a campaign that collected and disseminated detailed information on school and student performance to parents, teachers, and school administrators to an entire education market caused underperforming schools to either improve or shut down (Andrabi et al. 2009). This transparency was found to have significantly improved school functioning and student test scores. In India, a study across three states found that information campaigns regarding roles and responsibilities mandated in school management had an initial positive impact on learning outcomes and teacher effort (Pandey, Goyal, and Sundararaman 2009). However, not all awareness campaigns, have resulted in measurable impact. An intervention in Uttar Pradesh, India found that information campaigns had no impact on school functioning (Banerjee et al. 2008). The project stimulated awareness about the roles, rights and responsibilities of school oversight committees, promoted the use of self-assessment tools and contracted remedial teachers for reading instruction. Findings, however, revealed only slightly increased awareness of roles, rights and responsibilities, and no significant impact on behaviour or learning outcomes in 'information-only' interventions. Another study in Uganda found no measurable impact on school functioning of merely providing information to parents and no relationship between the frequency of parent-teacher association meetings and teacher attendance (Chaudhury et al. 2006). This review highlights that interventions targeting local community awareness have generally been found to lead to improved parental engagement, student enrolment and teacher effort. While alleviating information asymmetry is a first step, merely providing parents with information on school and student performance is insufficient; parents need to have the ability to make their voices heard.

## **IV. Rationale of the Study**

Community Mobilisation had been recognized as one of the important aspects of enhancing Quality Education. School Management Committees (SMC) is intended to determine the goals and strategic plan of the school with active involvement of parents in the school's functioning. The idea is that the parents are the main stakeholders in the education process and hence they should be the change leaders who initiate the reversal of inefficiencies in the system through constructive, collective engagement (Dayaram, 2011). However, accountability at the ground level is hindered by various factors. A study conducted by Pratichi (India) Trust in 2002 entitled "The delivery of Primary Education: A study in West Bengal", found that there is wide gap between the role perceived and role performed by the members. Thus, the study seeks to assess the functioning of SMCs in terms of awareness about its roles and responsibilities, SMC training, preparation of SDP, the relationship between the school and the community and the major interventions to improve the performance of SMC.

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## V. Objectives and Methodology

**Objectives-** The major objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the functioning of SMC in terms of its performance and to study the hindrances in its effective functioning.
2. To document best practices of SMC.
3. To lay down recommendations for more effective functioning of School Management Committees.

**Sampling-** The study covers 600 SMC members from 300 schools of 5 different states of India- Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, West Bengal and Meghalaya. The states have been selected based on the percentage of schools having constituted SMC and prepared School Development Plan (DISE 2014-15). Gujarat and Punjab were the best performing states while West Bengal and Meghalaya were the worst performing states. Uttar Pradesh lies in the middle when states were ranked based on schools having constituted SMC and prepared School Development Plan. Two districts were selected from each state based on the availability of partner organization. Schools were selected on the basis of the availability of the head teacher and the SMC member at the time of survey.

**Table 1: State wise sample distribution of the study**

State	District	Total SMC members
Punjab	Hosiarpur	60
	Jalandhar	60
Uttar Pradesh	Sonbhadra	60
	Meerut	60
Gujarat	Ahmedabad	60
	Amreli	60
West Bengal	North 24 Parganas	60
	Darjeeling	60
Meghalaya	East Khasi Hills	60
	West Khasi Hills	60

**Tools for the study -** Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. Based on the objectives of the research study, tools were designed for data collection. Interview schedule of the head teacher (if no head teacher, the senior most teacher of the school) and SMC member (parents of the children studying in that particular school) was designed. Data was also collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with teachers and with members of School Management Committees (SMC). Two FGDs were conducted in each district – one with trained SMC members

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(those who have received any SMC training atleast once) and another with untrained SMC members (those who never received any SMC training).

**Analysis of Data** - Quantitative data derived from the questionnaires and other closed questions were coded and analysed using descriptive statistics as frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data generated from open ended questions in the research instruments were organized in themes and patterns, categorized through content analysis and then tabulated. The analysed data was presented as tables and bar graphs.

## **VI. School Management Committee**

### **Composition of SMC**

Bearing in mind the heterogeneous nature of the community and the need to ensure representation of different segments of the community, the RTE suggests the following composition for SMC:

- ❖ Three fourth (75 percent) members of the SMC should be parents/guardians of which 50 percent should be women. It should represent equal proportion of the parents or guardians of children belonging to disadvantaged group and weaker section.
- ❖ Rest one fourth (25 percent) should be local authorities, school teachers and academics/students in equal proportions (1/3rd local authorities; 1/3rd school teachers; 1/3rd academicians/students}.
- ❖ To manage its affairs, the School Management Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among the parent members. The Head teacher of the school or where the school does not have a head teacher, the senior most teacher of the school, shall be the ex-officio Member-Convener of the School Management Committee.

### **Formation of SMC<sup>2</sup>**

The process of constituting SMC could be as follows:

1. General Body (GB) meeting of parents/guardians - all parents/guardians of children studying in the school will constitute the membership of the GB of the SMC.
2. The GB members will elect representation of parents as per RTE norms for the executive committee of the SMC, by consensus or, if needed, by voting.
3. Teachers and other members (1/3rd of the SMC) along with the elected members from the parents will constitute the Executive Committee of the SMC
4. In turn they will elect office bearers of the SMC as per norms specified in the Act. The Office Bearers suggested in Central Model Rules are as follows:
  - (a) Selection of the President and Vice President to be from among Parents.
  - (b) Convener/Secretary, suggested by the School, could be either the Headmaster or a teacher. Convener will bear the overall responsibility of providing administrative support to the SMC. S/He must ensure the notification of the SMC formation, and provide linkages with the government departments.

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<sup>2</sup>American India Foundation (AIF) 2011; School Management Committee and The Right To Education Act 2009 Resource Material for SMC Training

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5. The SMC can also constitute sub-committees including members from the GB for specific functions, and all these committees would be responsible towards the GB of the SMC.

## **Roles and Responsibility of SMC**

The School Management Committee shall perform the following functions, namely:

- (a) Monitor the working of the school
- (b) Prepare and recommend School Development Plan
- (c) Monitor the utilization of the grants received from the appropriate government or local authority or any other source, and
- (d) Perform such other functions as may be prescribed.

The School Management Committee shall, in addition to the functions specified in clauses (a) to (d) of section 21 (2), perform the following functions, for which it may constitute smaller working groups from amongst its Members:

- (a) Communicate in simple and creative ways to the population in the neighbourhood of the school, the rights of the child as enunciated in the Act; as also the duties of the State Government, local authority, school, parent and guardian;
- (b) Ensure the implementation of clauses (a) and (e) of section 24 and section 28,
- (c) Monitor that teachers are not burdened with non-academic duties other than those specified in section 27;
- (d) Ensure the enrolment and continued attendance of all the children from the neighbourhood in the school;
- (e) Monitor the maintenance of the norms and standards prescribed in the Schedule;
- (f) Bring to notice of the local authority any deviation from the rights of the child, in particular mental and physical harassment of children, denial of admission, and timely provision of free entitlements as per section 3(2).
- (g) Identify the needs, prepare a Plan, and monitor the implementation of the provisions of Section 4.
- (h) Monitor the identification and enrolment of, and facilities for learning by disabled children, and ensure their participation in, and completion of elementary education
- (i) Monitor the implementation of the Mid-Day Meal in the school.
- (j) Prepare an annual account of receipts and expenditure of the school.

Any money received by the School Management Committee for the discharge of its functions under this Act, shall be kept in a separate account, to be made available for audit every year.

The accounts referred to in clause (j) to sub-Rule (6) and sub-Rule (7) should be signed by the Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson and Convenor of the School Management Committee and made available to the local authority within one month of their preparation.



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## VII. State Rules of the study area

Every state has its own rules on RTE. The tenure of SMC and the number of member in the committee varies in each state.

**Gujarat** - In Gujarat, the SMC was constituted after the enforcement of RTE Act in February 2012. The tenure is two years and the committee shall be required to be reconstituted in every two years. The committee shall consist of 12 members, of which 50 percent shall be women. The SMC shall prepare School Development Plan. The SDP shall be a three years plan comprising three annual sub plans.

**Punjab** - A School Management Committee shall be constituted in every school other than an unaided school, after the enforcement of RTE Act in 2011, and reconstituted every two years. There shall be a general house and an executive committee of the SMC. One parent of each student, all the teachers, and staff, all the elected representatives of the concerned PRI, all students of class IV and above shall be the members of general house. Out of them minimum of 12, 24 and a maximum of 32 members of the executive committee, shall be elected by the General House respectively for the schools having student strength of up to 100, 101 to 250 and above 250. Seventy five percent of the strength of the School Management Committee shall be from amongst parents or guardians of children out of whom at least 50% shall be women. The SMC shall prepare School Development Plan. The SDP shall be a two year plan comprising two annual sub plans.

**West Bengal** - A School Management Committee shall be constituted in every school, other than an unaided school after the enforcement of RTE Act in West Bengal in March 2012 and re-constituted every three years. Seventy five percent of the strength of the School Management Committee shall be from amongst parents or guardians of children studying in the school. The SMC shall meet once in every two months and the decision of the committee shall be recorded properly and made available to the public. The SMC shall prepare School Development Plan. The SDP shall be a three years plan comprising three annual sub plans.

**Uttar Pradesh** - A School Management Committee shall be constituted in every school, other than an unaided school after the enforcement of RTE Act in Uttar Pradesh in July 2011 and re-constituted every two years. The committee shall consist of 15 members, out of which 11 shall be from amongst parents or guardians of children, of which 50 percent shall be women. The guardian member of SMC shall include the parent/guardian of one child each belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and weaker section. The selection of guardian members of the SMC shall be made through consensus in the open meeting, provided that the committee shall include parent/guardian of minimum one child from each class of the school. The SMC shall prepare School Development Plan. The SDP shall be a three years plan comprising three annual sub plans.

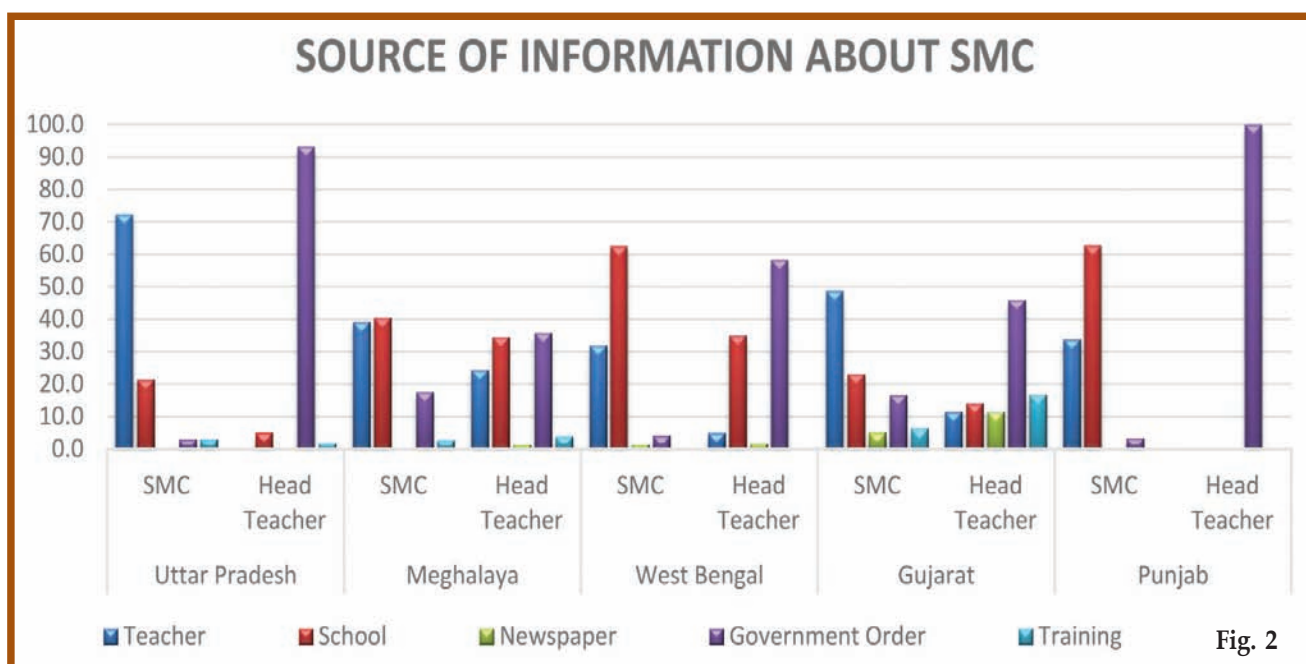
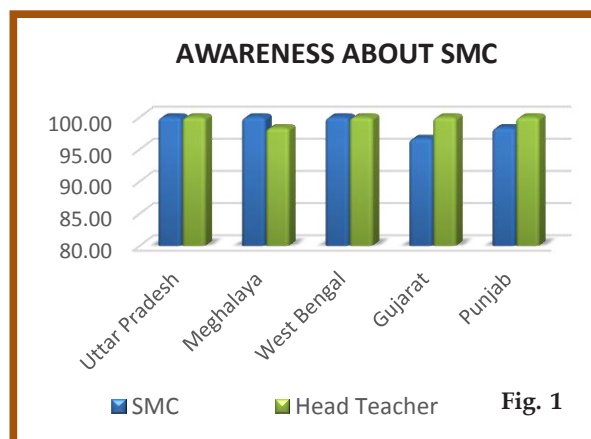
**Meghalaya** - A School Management Committee shall be constituted in every school, other than an unaided school after the enforcement of RTE Act in Meghalaya in August 2011 and re-constituted every two years. Seventy five percent of the strength of the School Management Committee shall be from amongst parents or guardians of children studying in the school. The SMC shall prepare School Development Plan. The SDP shall be a three year plan comprising three annual sub plans.

## VIII. Analysis

This section deals with the response and opinion of SMC members and Head teachers on various questions related to the awareness level about SMC, the roles and responsibilities of the SMC, SMC performance, training received, benefits of SMC, challenges faced in SMC functioning and other related issues.

### Awareness about SMC and Source of information-

Almost in all the 5 states, SMC members and Head teacher are aware about SMC. In West Bengal, there is an ambiguity with the term VEC and SMC, and are used interchangeably many a times. Teachers shared that schools have VEC instead of SMC and the composition of VEC is similar to that of SMC. However, in a group discussion it was found that no VECs have been formed after 2011 and all the work is being done by the school administration. While high percentage of teachers in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab received information regarding SMC through government orders, only 36 percent of the respondents from Meghalaya, 58 percent of respondents from West Bengal and 46 percent from Gujarat informed that they received information regarding SMC from the government orders. Other important sources of information were teachers and trainings. Seventy two percent of SMC members in UP, 39 percent in Meghalaya and 48 percent in Gujarat received information from the teachers of the school. In some cases, members came to know about SMC only after attending the training, for which they were invited by teachers of schools.



**Perception regarding the need of SMC in a school** - To understand the perception regarding the need of School Management committees, teachers and parents were enquired. Most of the head teachers responded that SMC helps in building good relation between parents and teachers. Some teachers also shared that SMC should be formed for smooth functioning of the school, strengthening school administration and active parent participation. Likely, SMC members, commenting on

the need for SMC, mentioned development of children and school as an objective behind SMC formation. They also added that if SMC works properly, school would be managed in better ways, there will be increase in enrolment and quality education will be provided to children.

**Process of SMC formation** – The SMC members were asked about the process undertaken for the formation of SMC. Maximum responses received point that SMC was formed during parents’ teachers meeting. Only few responses received said that it was formed by gramsabha/local panchayat members. In few instances, SMC members were informed about them being an SMC member and were nominated by the head teacher of the school.

**Awareness regarding the roles and responsibility of SMC-** Unlike the head teachers, SMC members were unaware of their specific roles and responsibilities as SMC members. In West Bengal, head teachers mentioned about school management and development as the major role of SMC members. In Gujarat, members mentioned that the main role and responsibility of SMC member is to look into the enrolment of children and their regular attendance, monitoring of mid-day meal, teacher regularity, infrastructure, uniform, sanitation etc. Besides management of school and monitoring the mid-day meal, one member in Meghalaya responded that SMC members should also maintain the meeting minutes of every meeting. Managing funds and providing quality education to the children was further added by the members. In a group discussion, SMC members talked about their role in awareness generation about the importance of education through campaigns, parent meetings and home visits. It was also discussed that SMC members can improve the ratio of girl child in schools by creating awareness amongst parents.

**Frequency of SMC meetings** – In Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, SMC meetings are held once a month. In Meghalaya, SMC meetings are held with a gap of 4-6 months. In Gujarat, the meetings are held once a month in few schools and once in 6 months in others. However, in West Bengal, majority of the schools informed that meeting is held once a year. About 21 percent of the SMC members shared that they don’t have any information about SMC meeting.

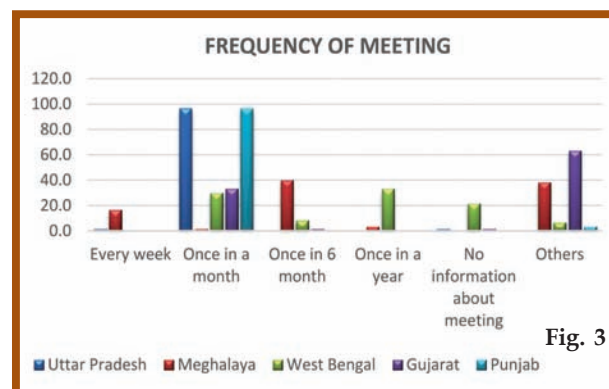


Fig. 3

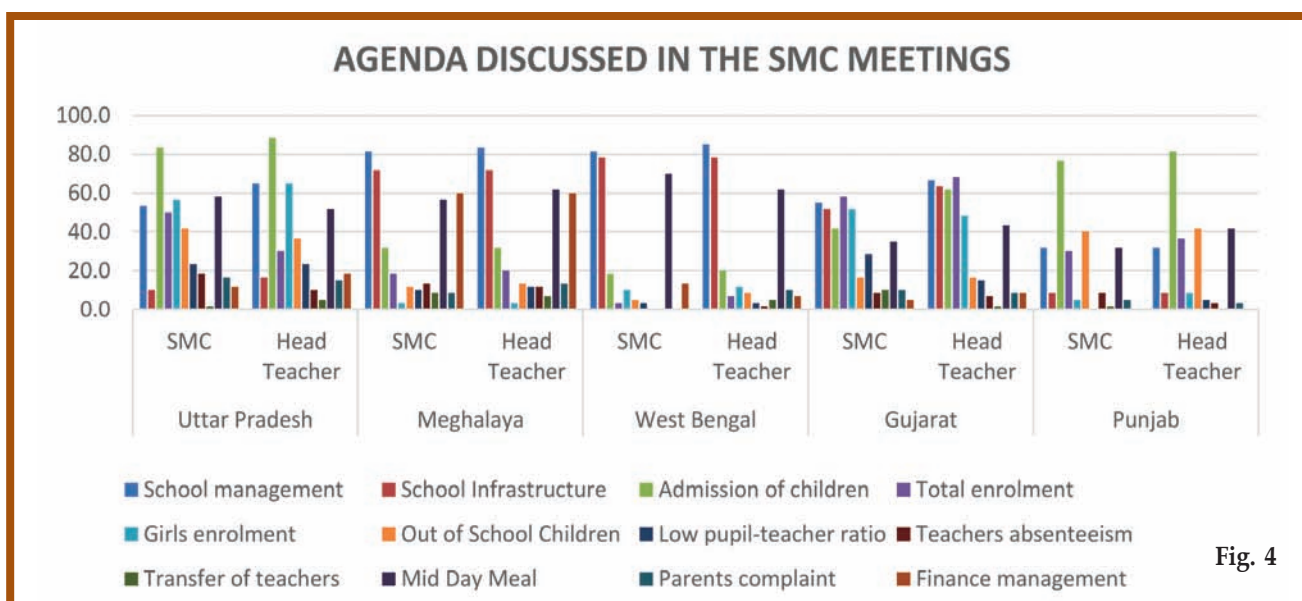
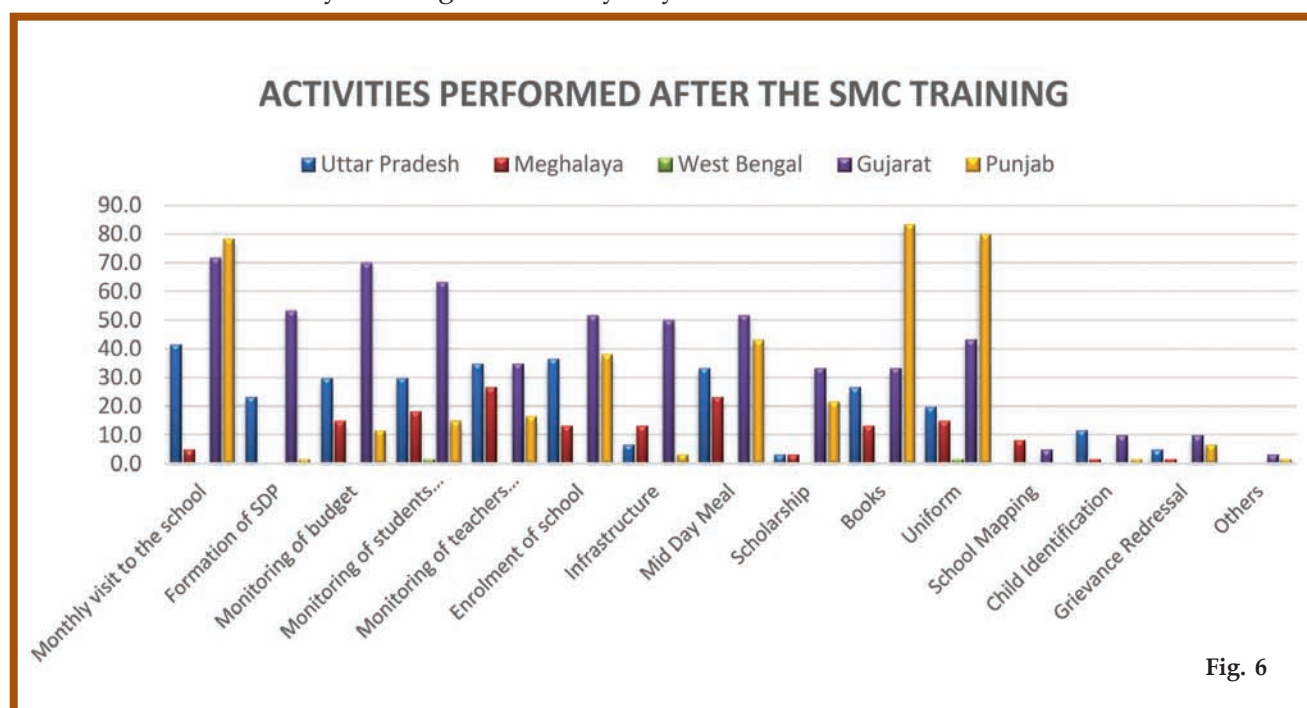
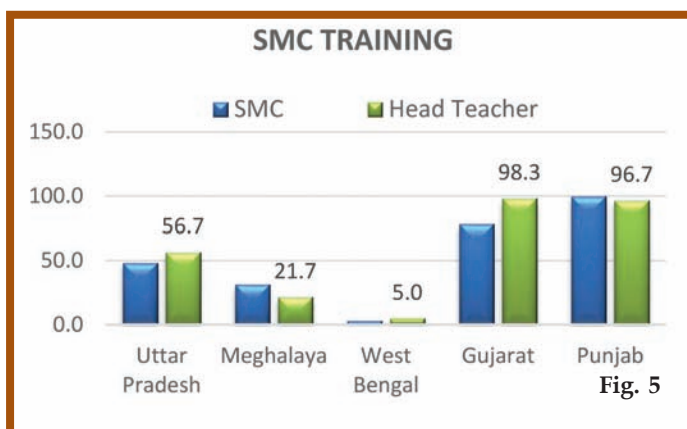


Fig. 4

**Agenda of SMC meeting** - Figure 4 depicts the responses of members and head teachers on the issues discussed in the SMC meetings. In Uttar Pradesh, maximum issues discussed were regarding admission of children followed by girls' enrolment, mid-day meal and school management. According to the responses of members and Head teacher in Meghalaya, the important issues of discussion were school management, school infrastructure, Mid-day meal and finance management. In West Bengal, 49 percent of SMC member and 51 percent of Head Teacher responded school management as the most discussed issue followed by school infrastructure and Mid-day meal. In Gujarat, various issues were discussed in the meeting. Some of the most discussed issues shared during the interview were School management, School Infrastructure, Admission of children, Girls enrolment and Mid-day meal. In Punjab, issues related to admission of children and out of school children were majorly discussed.

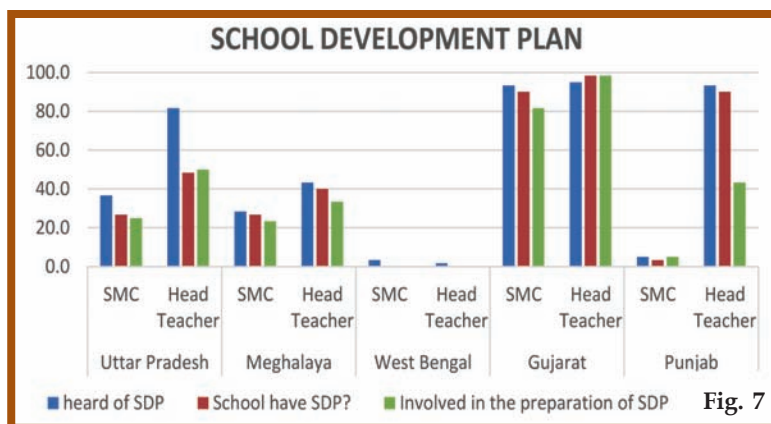
**SMC training** - SMC members were further asked about the trainings received. Above 90 percent of members and head teachers in Punjab informed that they have received SMC training. In Gujarat, 98 percent of head teachers and 78 percent of the SMC members have received SMC training. In Uttar Pradesh, 56 percent of Head Teachers and 48 percent of members have received the training. However, in Meghalaya, it was found that higher number of members have received training as compared to head teachers. About 95 percent of the training was conducted by Block/Cluster Resource centers (BRC/CRC). Only few members from Uttar Pradesh mentioned about training conducted by NGOs. West Bengal shows the lowest percent of training received by head teachers (5 percent) and SMC members (3 percent). Some of the members shared that they have never heard of any training received by any member.



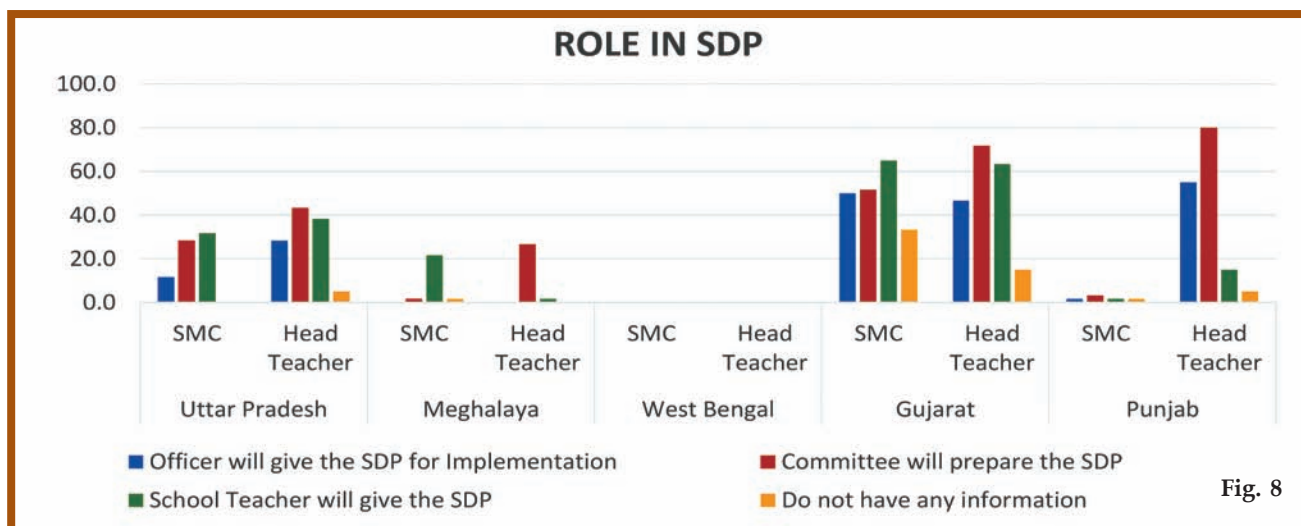


SMC members and Head Teachers were asked about the effectiveness of the training to which most of them responded as being effective. In Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, teachers believed that the training has been effective and has strengthened SMCs in their schools. They further added that there is a need to conduct the trainings regularly to keep the committees motivated. Figure 6 gives the details of the activities taken up by the committee after the SMC training. It was found that activities like monthly visit to school, formation of SDP, monitoring of Budget, monitoring of teachers, distribution of books and uniforms were undertaken in Punjab, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. However, the committee did not give much importance to activities like school mapping, child identification, scholarship and mechanism for grievance redressal.

**School Development Plan**—As per section 22 of RTE Act, every SMC should prepare a School Development Plan. The SDP shall be the basis for the plans and grants to be made by the appropriate government or the local authority. The committee members were asked about the School Development Plan of their schools. Figure 7 reveals responses of members and head teachers about



their awareness regarding SDP. It also depicts responses from SMC members and head teacher regarding their participation/involvement in developing SDP for their school. From the figure, it can be observed that, in Gujarat, more than 90 percent of the schools have developed SDP and both member and head teacher were involved in its preparation. In Uttar Pradesh, 26 percent of SMC members and 48 percent of Head Teacher reported about their schools having prepared SDP and further informed that 25 percent and 50 percent of members and Head Teachers were involved in the preparation of SDP respectively. Interestingly, in Punjab, as shared by the Head Teacher, 90 percent of the schools have prepared SDP, however, only 3 percent of the SMC members were aware about schools having prepared a SDP. This could be inferred as either the schools have not prepared SDPs or SMC members have not been involved in its development. In West Bengal, only 3 percent of the members and 2 percent of head teachers were aware of SDP. Several untrained



SMC members were totally unaware about School Development Plan, many responded that the plan has not been developed. When asked about their role in the preparation of SDP, 43 percent in Uttar Pradesh, 26 percent in Meghalaya, 71 percent in Gujarat and 80 percent in Punjab said that the committee prepared the SDP, 31 percent of member in UP, 21 percent in Meghalaya and 65 percent in Gujarat responded development of SDP to be teacher's responsibility.

**SMC performance**—To analyse the performance of SMC members, questions were asked about their activities undertaken by SMC. Figure 9 shows that SMC members (parents) are well aware of their child's academic performance as test results are discussed with the parents. In Meghalaya, 90 percent of the members said that SMC sensitizes parents to contribute towards quality education, supports Head Teachers and Staff members and motivates hardworking teachers to improve their performance. Only 5 percent of SMC members in Punjab responded that they help in organising in-service training for teachers. Except for West Bengal, more than 60 percent of the members in other states agreed that the conflict between teachers and other members are resolved by the committee. Only few members responded that they award/recognize teachers for good performance. More than 50 percent of the SMC members shared that better performing students are motivated with scholarships and books. In Meghalaya, Punjab and Gujarat 85 percent of SMC members said that committee also supplies teaching learning materials to the schools from funds collected through donation. It was observed from the field study that Gurudwara samiti and NRIs provides financial support to many of the government schools in Punjab.

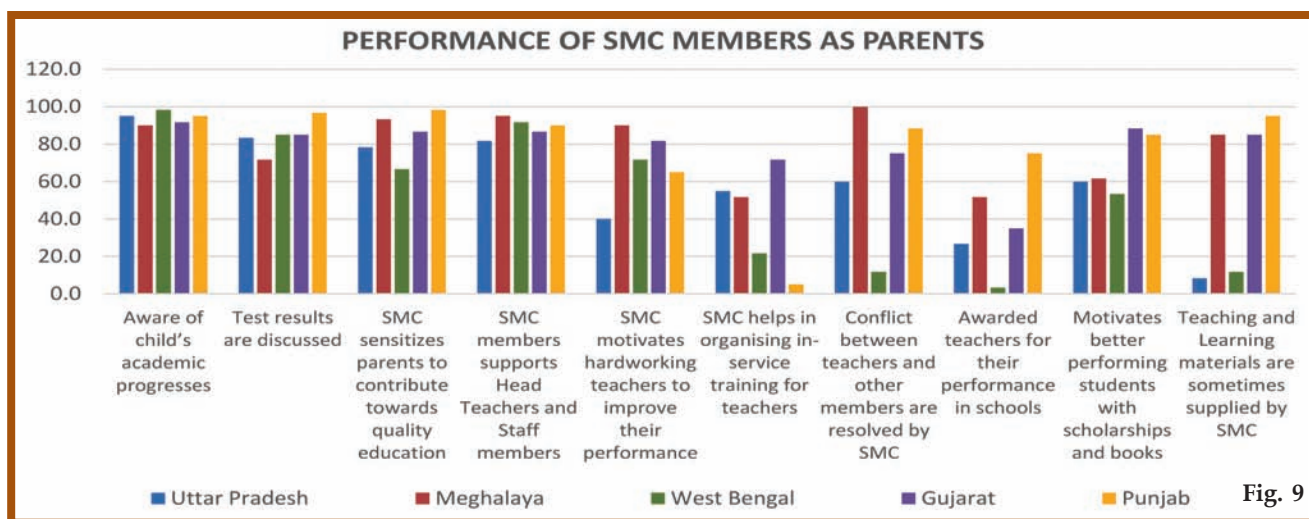


Fig. 9

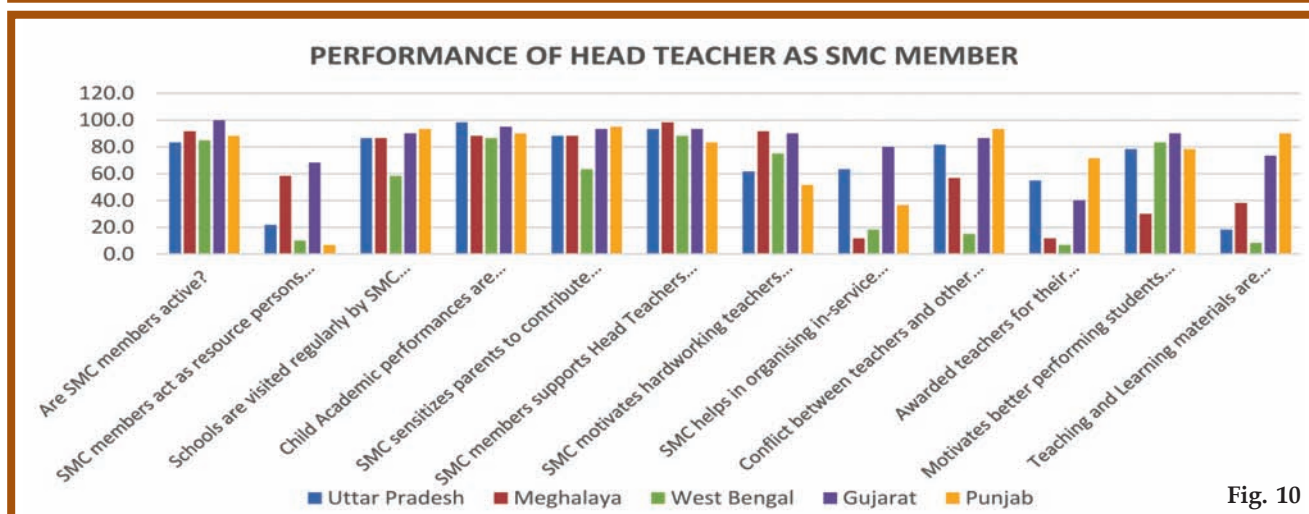


Fig. 10

Similarly, study further enquired about the performance of head teachers' as members of school management committees. More than 50 percent of head teachers from all the states agreed that the teachers sensitizes parents to contribute towards quality education. Ninety-eight percent of teachers in Uttar Pradesh, 95 percent in Gujarat and 90 percent in Punjab responded about discussing child academic progress with their parents. Except for Meghalaya, head teacher as a SMC member from other states motivates hardworking students with scholarships. According to 90 percent of the head teachers in Punjab, SMC members sometimes supply teaching learning materials to the schools.

**Fund and bank account**—One of the important roles of SMC is to monitor the utilization of grants received by schools from different sources. Data reveal that more than 90 percent of SMC member in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Punjab responded to have separate bank account of the school. This percentage is 70 and 80 in West Bengal and Meghalaya respectively. Further, 40 percent and 50 percent of SMC members and Head teachers respectively shared that the annual financial expenditure is shared every year.

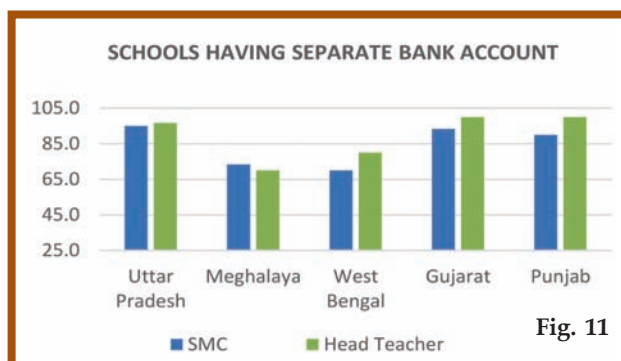


Fig. 11

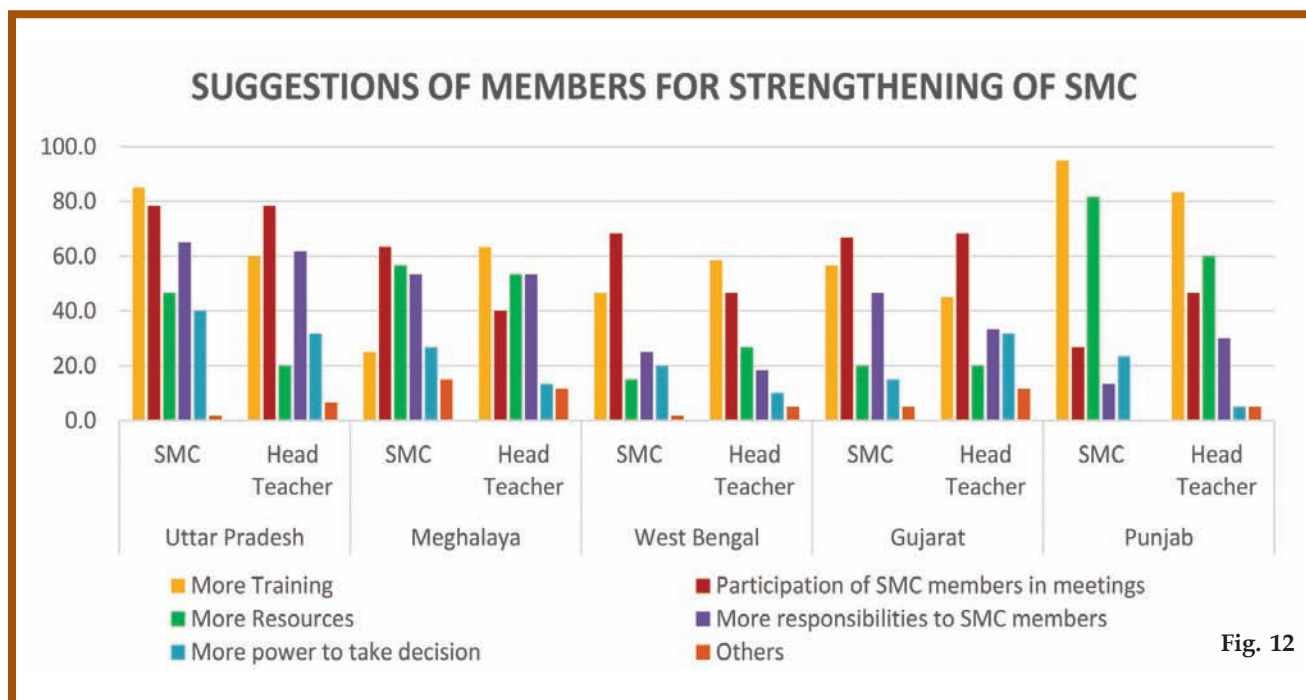
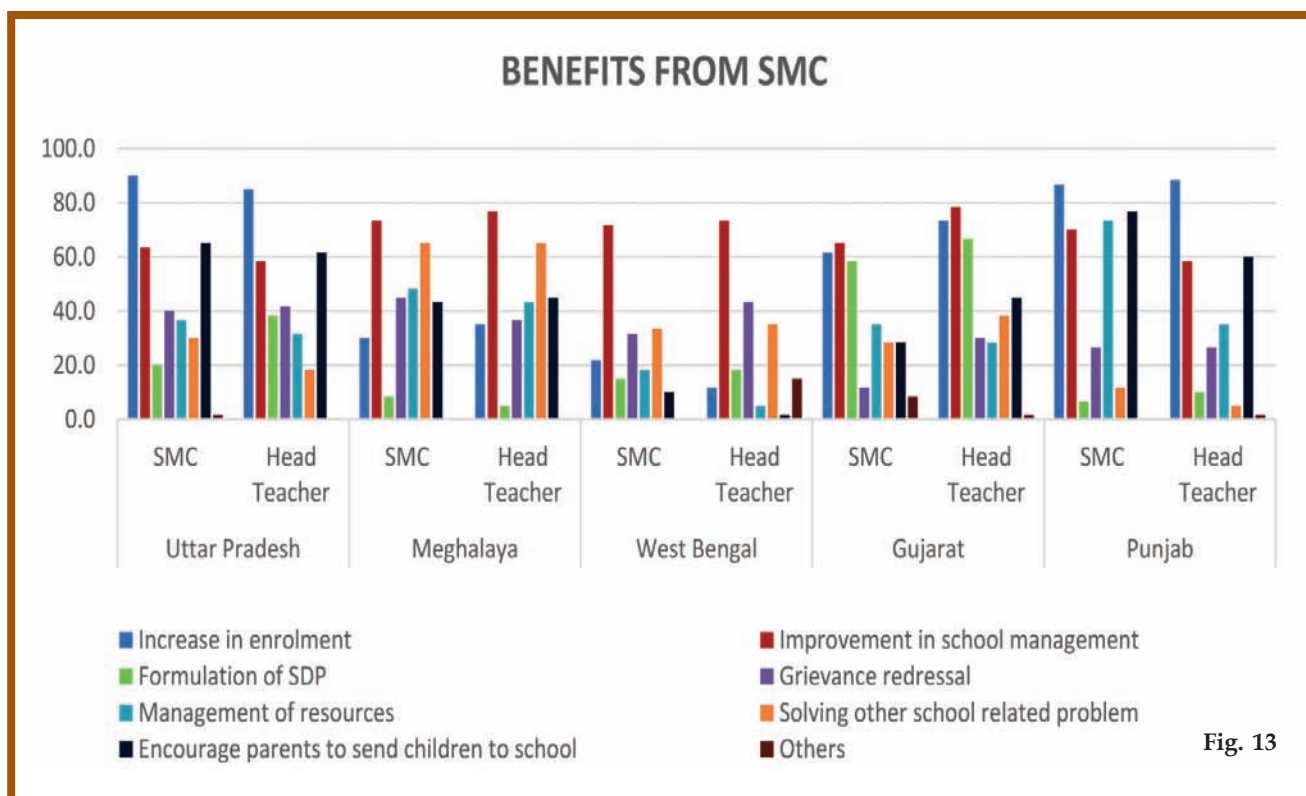


Fig. 12

**Strengthening of SMC** – Figure 12 depicts SMC members' responses regarding interventions required to strengthen the School Management Committee. Eighty-five percent of the members in Uttar Pradesh and 95 percent of the members in Punjab shared that more training should be conducted to strengthen the committee which would result in increase in awareness about the roles and responsibilities of the members in the committee. Head Teachers in Uttar Pradesh (78 percent) and Gujarat (68 percent) suggested active participation of members in the meetings to strengthen the committee. In Punjab, both SMC members (81 percent) and head teachers (60 percent) suggested increase in allocation of resources to strengthen the committee. In Uttar

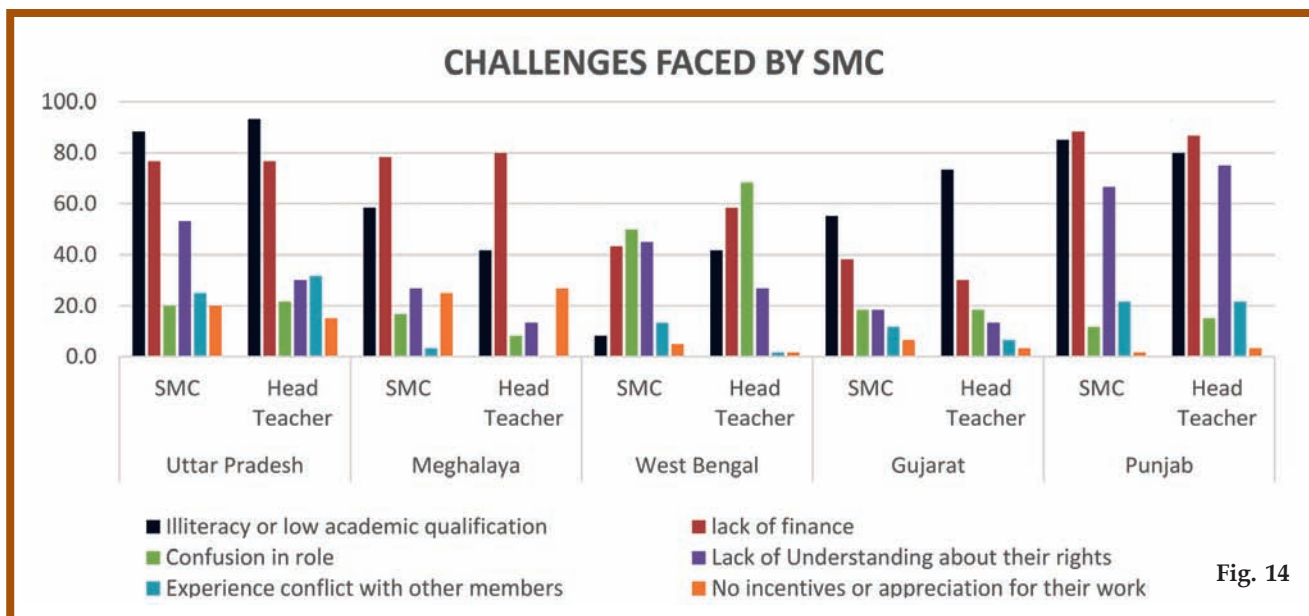
Pradesh (61 percent) and Meghalaya (53 percent) both the members and head teachers said that SMC member should take up more responsibilities to strengthen the committee.

**Benefits from SMC**—The committee members were enquired about the benefits observed after the formation of SMC in schools. Figure 13 depicts the responses of SMC members and head teachers of the schools. In Uttar Pradesh, 90 percent of members and 80 percent of head teachers shared increase in enrollment as a result from SMC formation. In Meghalaya and West Bengal, above 70 percent of members and head teachers reflected on their experience of better school management after the formation of SMC. In Gujarat, maximum benefit received was in terms of increase in enrolment, improvement in school management and formulation of SDP. In Punjab, 86 percent of members and 88 percent of head teachers shared that formation of SMC has led to increase in enrolment, 70 percent of members and 58 percent of head teacher have experienced improvement in school management, 73 percent of members and 35 percent of head teachers reported better management of resources and 76 percent of members and 60 percent of head teachers shared that SMC has motivated parents to send their children to school.

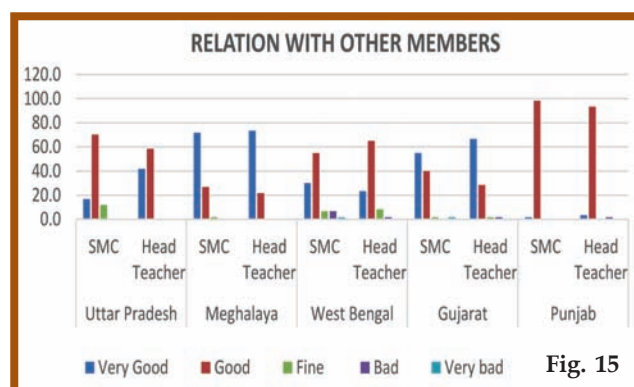


**Challenges faced in SMC functioning**—The committee members shared problems faced by them in smooth functioning of SMC. About 93 percent of head teachers in Uttar Pradesh, 73 percent in Gujarat and 80 percent in Punjab shared illiteracy or low academic qualification among SMC members as one of the major impediments faced in efficient functioning of SMC. Lack of finance is also considered as a hurdle by members and the head teachers in smooth functioning of SMC. In West Bengal, 50 percent of members and 68 percent of head teachers pointed towards ambiguity in roles and responsibilities of the members and the teachers leading to ineffective functioning of the committee. Likewise, in Punjab, 66 percent of the member and 75 percent of the head teacher faced problem due to lack of understanding regarding their rights as SMC members.





**Relation of Teacher and Parent as SMC member-** Relation between teachers and parents as SMC members was also analysed in this study. Majority of the response described relation as 'good'. In all the 5 states, only 1 percent of the head teachers in West Bengal, Gujarat and Punjab shared about their relationship with the parents as 'not good' while 6 percent of parents in West Bengal said that they are not in a good relationship with the teachers of the school.



## IX. Best practices adopted by the SMC members

The study brings out some of the good practices adopted by SMC members in 5 states of India. The best practices adopted by the SMC members are as follows:-

- ☞ *Mainstreaming children to school* - In Meghalaya, SMC members hold meeting with parents to encourage them to send their children to school. In West Bengal, committee members' hold meetings with the ICDS workers to get information about the children and take necessary steps according to the information received. ICDS workers visit children homes of their respective areas and collect information regarding the school going children, drop out children and marginalized children. In Gujarat, SMC members have motivated tribal people to send their children to school.
- ☞ *Management of the school* - SMC members in Meghalaya adopted some good practices for the development of schools. They are inspecting the school regularly and looking into the management of the school.
- ☞ *Distribution of teaching learning material* - In Meghalaya, SMC members distribute books and provide teaching aid to the children. SMC members also collect fund from the village to provide books, uniforms, and shoes to the children; furniture, water cooler and stationary items to the schools.

- ☞ *Increasing enrolment* – In Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, SMC motivates parents and helps in increasing the enrolment of children in school and maintaining regularity of students. In Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, the committee looks after the school management and helps in the admission of children in school. ‘School Chalo’ Abhiyan drive was conducted by the SMC members to increase the enrolment in schools.
- ☞ *Development of infrastructure* – In Punjab, SMC members have arranged facilities for safe transportation to school and proper sanitation facility i.e. separate toilets for boys and girls. In Meghalaya SMC organizes cleaning drives, construct footpath to the school, level the school compound, awareness programs regarding sanitation, organize school sports annually.

## X. Hindrances faced in effective functioning of SMC

The SMC members were also asked about the hindrances faced by the committee in proper functioning. Major challenges faced by the members are as follows:-

- ☞ *SMC members lack in clarity about their roles* – SMC members were unsure about their roles and rights, which is a major hurdle to proper functioning of SMC.
- ☞ *Parent's lack of interest in SMC* - In East Khasi hills, members expressed that the local authority are not much interested in the committee primarily due to lack of awareness regarding roles and responsibilities of SMC. In Gujarat the teachers shared that it is difficult to convince the parents of children to get involved as most of the parents are illiterate or fear facing higher authority. They also shared that even if meetings are called, parents do not come for the meeting as they do not have enough time. In Uttar Pradesh, teachers shared that parents do not attend the meeting and thus are not involved in SDP preparation.
- ☞ *Paucity of funds* – SMC shared that lack of funds, irregular distribution of schemes and teachers grant act as obstacle in operational works of SMC.
- ☞ *Ineffective training* – Trained SMC members from West Bengal complained about ineffective training and it was further suggested that training using audio visual could be one of the efficient ways of conducting trainings. Teachers in Gujarat shared that training should be provided on the process of preparing SDP as most of the SMC members are not aware about it.
- ☞ *Complication faced in SMC formation* - In Amreli district of Gujarat, members shared that the members were selected by the head teachers without any prior notice to the villagers. In group discussion with the SMC members of Hosiarpur district in Punjab, members shared that they face problem during SMC formation (selection of members). However, with the approval of all, educated and committed people are only selected as members of the committee.
- ☞ *Low female representation* – Teachers shared that it is difficult to gather female candidates in the SMC meeting. The SMC members shared that most of the women in the committee are untrained and are not well informed about the schools.
- ☞ *Dissatisfaction with the committee* - In a group discussion in West Bengal, teachers shared their dissatisfaction with the committee. They further shared that in most of the cases, the members are politically very active and they try to influence the administration of the school with their political agenda. Nonetheless, some members shared that these committees are important for proper functioning of the school, but their power should be limited.
- ☞ *Corrupt practices adopted by SMC members* – In the group discussion, members shared that Chairman of the committee (elected panchayat member) demands 15-20 percent of the total

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fund utilized for the school. So, it was suggested that politically active persons should not be incorporated in the committee.

- ☞ *Obstacles faced by the parents* - Parents shared that meeting during their working hours and lack of awareness are some of the obstacles faced by them in participating as an SMC member. In some villages, school authority does not allow involvement of new committee. They only allow the person those do not interfere in their work.

*Issues related to enrolment and Dropout* - The SMC members shared that most of the parents send their children to private schools thus enrolment is low in government schools. It was further discussed that improving condition of government school will surely lead to better enrolment in government schools.

## **XI. Findings of the Study**

Some of the major findings of the study are as follows:

- ☞ Study found level of awareness regarding School Management Committee to be high amongst teachers and members who have received trainings. The Head Teachers received information regarding formation of SMC through Government orders. Further, teachers acted as source of information for parents. In some cases, members became aware about SMC only after attending the training. In Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, even untrained SMC members were aware about the functions of SMC.
- ☞ Although trained SMC members are aware about roles and responsibilities of SMC members in general, they lack clarity with the roles of parents and the roles of teachers in particular. Further, untrained SMC members are not much aware of SMC formation, roles and responsibilities. SMC members in Punjab shared that parents were called in the school and their names were written in the committee. Most of the female members of the committee in Uttar Pradesh are untrained and inactive in the functioning of the committee.
- ☞ It was observed that there is poor participation in the SMC. Teachers blamed parents for not attending meetings while parents blamed teachers for lack of information about meetings.
- ☞ A comparative study of 5 states brings out the variation of SMC training received in better and low performing states. Only 5 percent of members in West Bengal received SMC training whereas 90 percent of members have received SMC training in Punjab.
- ☞ It was found that SMC members in Punjab, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, after receiving the training, participated in activities like monthly visit to school, formation of SDP, monitoring of Budget, monitoring of teachers, distribution of books and uniforms. However, the committee did not give much importance to activities like school mapping, child identification and mechanism for grievance redressal.
- ☞ Although 80 percent of members in Gujarat said that they were involved in the preparation of SDP, when asked in details about their role in preparation of SDP, 65 percent of the members informed that SDP was prepared by the teachers and handed over to them. Most of the schools in Meerut do not have SDP.
- ☞ Data on SMC performance show different responses of Head Teachers and parents which reflect discrepancy. It could be because of lack of communication among the teacher and the parents and varying level of exposure to support and training.

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- Although 90 percent of the members in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Punjab are aware of separate bank account but when questioned in detail, it was found that members were unaware about the funds released and spent by the school.
  - In West Bengal and Gujarat, teachers complained about the SMC members, especially local authority, in few cases, as politically corrupt.

## **XII. Conclusion**

As a matter of priority, one of the essential components of a good school is a better functioning School Management Committees (AIF 2011). Present study shows that although SMC has been formed, there is lack of awareness about the, functioning of the SMC and their roles and responsibilities as a member. Due to inadequate knowledge, members are not aware about the issues to be raised. Most of the challenges faced by the SMCs are because of the lower involvement and lack of training on relevant skills pertaining their management functions. The study also shows that teachers in West Bengal are not convinced about the relevance and desirability of strong SMCs due to corruption and high level of political interference.

It is highly recommended that schools should aim at revitalizing and strengthening the SMCs to ensure quality education for all. There should be an increased and active participation of community members for effective functioning of SMC. The trainings can be a very powerful and cost-effective tool for the capacity building of SMC members. Government should consider appreciating the SMC members for the services render by them to encourage and motivate them.

## **XIII. Recommendations**

Based on the above findings, set of recommendations have been listed:

- Inclination of parents towards being a part of the School Management Committee needs to be fostered. To achieve this objective a common understanding regarding the importance of community participation in School Management needs to be developed amongst community members through conducting orientation meetings with parents.
- There is a lot of ambiguity regarding the process of formation of the committee. Greater transparency and accountability in the process of formation is required. The process needs to be democratic, as also marked in the RTE Act and Rules.
- Findings from the study raise the concern regarding members not adequately prepared or equipped to carry out their roles and responsibilities. There is gap between norms and practices due to lack of knowledge of the law among members of SMC. This points towards the need to capacitate members to be able to have clarity regarding functions of SMC and their specific roles and responsibilities as members of SMC.
- It further brings towards the need to revisit the training strategies and modules. Trainings have been conducted as found in the study, but the effectiveness of these trainings need to be evaluated to come up with better methodologies to be inculcated in the training modules.

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- Focused discussions about the School Development Plan needs to be facilitated by BRC/ CRC at school level. It was found that not many members were the part of preparing SDP which necessitates facilitation of the process of preparation of SDP by government authorities. Higher participation of CSOs in conducting such trainings can also be explored as an option.
  - Active participation of women needs to be highlighted. There is a need for schools and authorities to take efforts to improve women's participation in the School Management Committees.
  - There is a need of providing allowances to the members coming from socio-economically weaker backgrounds to increase their participation and motivation to attend meetings and fulfill the roles. For active participation of parents, it's important that they do not lose out on their income due to their participation in meetings and therefore an amount to compensate member's income loss should be brought under discussion.
  - Socials structure of India is such that discrimination based on caste, ethnicity, and religion exists both overtly and covertly. This brings in the need to look at participation in SMC from the perspective of marginalized. Further study needs to be undertaken to also look at the level of participation of parents from the socially marginalized background.

## Other Recommendations:

The primary objective of the research was to study the status of functioning of SMC, however, the present issues/concerns that education is grappling with directs towards other important interventions required to be undertaken. Below are two other recommendations:

- With the recent incidences of violation of child rights, especially of girls, Muslims and Dalits, in schools, it becomes a matter of prime importance that SMC and Teachers are trained regarding the rights of Children. Also, while local authority remains the first Grievance redressal body, there is need to capacitate them towards the redressal mechanism. Training of SMC members on legal processes related to violation of child rights, for eg. POCSO Act, is must and should be taken into action immediately.
- SMC members should take in cognizance and act appropriately, regarding the special needs children with the support from local authorities.

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## Annexure

**Table 2: State-wise percentage of schools having constituted SMC and prepared School Development Plan (Government & Aided Managements)**

Rank	State/UT	Percentage of Schools having Constituted SMC and Prepared School Development Plan (Government & Aided Managements)		
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1	Tamil Nadu	98.09	98.35	98.73
2	Punjab	98.19	98.73	98.69
3	Gujarat	97.80	98.32	98.67
4	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	98.92	98.57	98.56
5	Haryana	94.11	96.24	97.06
6	Karnataka	96.63	96.55	96.66
7	Nagaland	93.08	94.20	96.48
8	Maharashtra	91.76	94.06	95.44
9	Andhra Pradesh	95.08	96.73	94.96
10	Chhattisgarh	91.15	93.71	94.87
11	Telangana	-	94.28	94.70
12	Madhya Pradesh	91.81	92.30	92.67
13	Chandigarh	89.83	87.39	91.67
14	Arunachal Pradesh	92.70	92.25	90.91
15	Himachal Pradesh	90.13	90.16	90.64
16	Uttarakhand	86.04	87.62	89.26
17	Manipur	87.70	89.83	88.80
18	Kerala	81.98	84.14	88.30
19	Rajasthan	84.81	85.73	87.52
20	Uttar Pradesh	86.58	87.45	87.46
21	Assam	81.05	83.26	84.75
22	A & N Islands	81.90	83.98	84.32
23	Daman & Diu	90.91	84.04	84.21
24	Tripura	71.98	75.65	82.45

Rank	State/UT	Percentage of Schools having Constituted SMC and Prepared School Development Plan (Government & Aided Managements)		
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
25	Puducherry	73.41	77.38	81.26
26	Odisha	71.45	77.53	80.72
27	Goa	71.44	77.78	79.35
28	Delhi	71.56	77.59	79.27
29	Jharkhand	70.78	75.19	77.70
30	Bihar	65.05	69.42	71.78
31	Sikkim	61.65	63.89	66.16
32	Jammu & Kashmir	40.99	49.84	54.96
33	Mizoram	59.26	50.51	52.26
34	Lakshadweep	74.42	72.09	46.34
35	West Bengal	40.15	39.35	40.74
36	Meghalaya	37.40	37.67	39.52
	All States	83.65	84.94	85.87

Source: DISE 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16

**Table 3: Field Study Team**

State	District	Partners
Punjab	Hosiarpur	En Bloc-on the way to humanity
	Jalandhar	En Bloc-on the way to humanity
Uttar Pradesh	Sonbhadra	Dudhi Gram Vikas Smiti
	Meerut	Bharat Udai Education Society
Gujarat	Ahmedabad	Ganatar
	Amreli	Shikdhak Ane Samaj Kalyan Kendra
West Bengal	North 24 Parganas	Vikramshila
	Darjeeling	Individual
Meghalaya	East Khasi Hills	Grassroot
	West Khasi Hills	Individual



# ABOUT NATIONAL COALITION FOR EDUCATION (NCE)

## Vision

National Coalition for Education (NCE) aspires to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

## Mission

National Coalition for Education (NCE) strives to advocate for the Right to Education for sustainable development with active participation of Civil Society Organisations, Teachers' Unions, Community and Policy makers to make education a reality for all by 2030.

## Genesis

The creation of national coalition for education in India was highly influenced by the global political atmosphere on right to education. Beginning in 1990 with the Jomtien Conference and the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All there has been a continued push to get every child into school. However, there was very little progress being made and ten years later, in 2000, the World Education Forum was held in Dakar, Senegal, and an agreement was made on the objective of having EFA by 2015. Six targets were set up stating that quality education should be available for free for everyone. One of the biggest players present at the forum was the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) that was created from the efforts of INGO's Action Aid, Oxfam GB, and Education International that wanted to set up a global coordinated funding initiative. The GCE promised to mobilize and create public pressure on governments to follow up on their promises to provide free high quality education for all people, especially for children and women (GCE 2009).

The NCE was formed as a product of the prolonged struggle of like-minded organizations, groups and individuals on the issues of education in India. The idea of establishing a national coalition in India initially began in 1996 when several of the current members began working together on the issue of EFA.

## Composition

Since its official inception in 2002, the NCE has brought together a varied group of member organizations, uniting teachers unions, non-governmental organizations, and other social movements. At this time, the NCE has seven member organizations:

- All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF), a union of more than 3 million primary teachers,
- All India Federation of Teachers Organization (AIFTO), a union of 1.2 million teachers,
- All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF), a union of 0.85 million teachers,
- All India Association for Christian Higher Education (AIACHE), an association of 300 college principals,
- World Vision India, a foundation working for child rights, education and development,
- Parliamentary Forum for ensuring right to Education, a group of existing and newly elected Parliamentarians.
- People's Campaign for Common School System (PCCSS) an organisation working for common school system.
- Besides these partners NCE has around 150 NGOs, individuals, networks and fellow travellers from community as well as at national level.



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