

Habib, Zahida

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Role of School Council in the Performance of Primary Level Students

Zahida Habib

Assistant Professor, University of Education Lahore, Pakistan

E-mail: zahidatariq_77@live.com

Abstract

In this era of globalization school council plays a vital role towards the performance of students in primary education. Comparative research may help to assess the pace of project development, and explore the impediments for adopting timely remedial measures. This research aims to explore the role of school council in Community Model Schools and Govt Girls Primary Schools. The target population of the study comprises of all Community Model Schools and Govt Girls Primary Schools in Punjab, Pakistan. However, the accessible population was three fifty schools (175 Community Model Schools and 175 Govt Girls Primary Schools) from thirty five districts of the Punjab. To see the role of school council and academic performance of students, a sample from each district is selected based on ten head mistresses, twenty teachers, ten administrators, one hundred students and one hundred parents are randomly selected. Documentary facts were used for seeing the role of school council and academic performance of students in both types of schools, as well as a questionnaire of five point Likert scale was designed to investigate and collect data about the students' performance and role of school council. Data is analyzed by using descriptive statistics as well as t-test to compare both types of schools at 5% level of significance. Results indicate that Community Model Schools are better in students' performance due to the role of school council than Govt. Girls Primary Schools.

Keywords: school council, students' performance, primary education, community model schools, girls' primary schools.

1. Introduction and Literature Review

Many traditions are commonly practiced throughout Pakistan. Urban communities were less traditional as compared to rural ones. The role of communities has been identified by many educators therefore Pakistani government had formed school councils to assist in teaching practices in the schools. Ayub (2001) indicates that parents' involvement in the educational activities had positive impact on the achievements of their children. It had also been found that the parents' and family environment were important factors responsible for improving the achievement level of students in schools. The co-ordination of parents, school and community was very necessary to educate the children, especially at primary level. Hildebran (1997) stated that every family lived in the same type of community where school and other institutions were found. All these influenced families

through the services they provided. He further added that parents were most effective teachers far better or worst. Children learn from their parents daily in very natural ways.

School and Society were inter-linked to each other. Schools were not only transmitting cultures but also educating the children, it was a social tool, an instrument for changing human life and curricula. It could be the agents of social production and reproduction (Hamilton, 1999). Mirza (2003) reported that Parents Teacher Association (PTA) had been established in other provinces as well. But the concept of PTA was closed to the village education in other provinces. The role of the PTA becomes very significant.

The main objectives of the PTA's are as given under (Mirza, 2003):

- To work for the students at home, in institution and society.
- To develop and enhance awareness among parents.
- To provoke the thoughts among the people about educational facilities given by the government and the community members.
- To create a special sense of motivation among the parents to send their children to school.
- To calculate the passage and approach to minimize dropout ratio with absenteeism in the working place.
- To give a sense of relationship between parents and teachers.
- To comprehend the mobility and resources of the community helpful for the institution and the students with remarkable zeal of parents.

According to Campbell and Palm (2004) parents' education was an important factor in the improvement of child's personality and also a service to parents. They stated that during the last 25 years the merger of universal access programs for parents of young children in Missouri and Minnesota (U.S.A) has been turned into parents' education as a service that could be beneficial to all parents had gained deep roots.

Community Model Schools were developed parallel to the Govt. Girls Primary Schools. Govt. Girls Primary schools are the schools with two PTC teachers and less physical facilities run by the government funds in a stereotypical fashion. The Community Model Schools had the financial assistance from the Government and the specific concern of the community. Community Model Schools were like other Govt. Girls Primary Schools but significantly different in respect of qualifications of headmistresses, availability of physical facilities and community mobilization. The educational initiative taken by the Govt. of Pakistan to increase girls' primary education was reinforced by a loan to the value of \$64.2 million approved by the Asian Development Bank for the Girls Primary Education Project. These funds were to be employed for construction of 980 Community Model Schools. These Community Schools meant to be a cooperation of national, state and local organizations working in the education sector.

A typical Community Model School in Pakistan included a building encompassing well lit class rooms provided with desks, chairs, fans; a play ground equipped with recreational opportunities in the form of slides, swings and see saws; further infrastructural support extended to the construction of a headmistress room, a staff room, a store, toilets and water facilities. Five female teachers and a headmistress with higher qualifications were to be recruited and trained for each school. Further a community

committee was to be formed to manage the school and to persuade local parents to send their daughters to attend school on a regular basis. The average cost of a typical Community Model School was an estimated 3,000,000 Pakistani rupees. The land for the school was provided free of cost by the community in each Union Council evidencing the contribution of the community towards educational empowerment in their locality. This method is used by the Pakistani government to reduce the cost of establishing rural schools by requiring communities to donate a plot of land for the school (Government of Punjab, 2004).

These Community Model Schools were established in the last decade of twentieth century. The second phase had the objectives to induct all children of project areas into class I, bring the dropout rate to zero%, providing optimum facilities for monitoring and preparation and provision of educational materials. Girls Primary Education Project (GPEP) was stretched over the period 1990-95 but it could not be completed earlier than 1998. The targets were augmentation of participation rate of girls, development of girl's education, training of female teachers, amplification of the number of female teachers, provision of supporting environment for continuity in education and the establishment of Community Model Schools for girls in the whole country. The underlying principle of focusing on girls in the context of basic education reform continues to be simply this: the higher development returns to national investment that accompanies the education of girls (Government of Punjab, 2003).

In view of the investments, innovation in the idea, determined targets it becomes imperative to know the ground realities regarding the Community Model Schools in terms of the role of school council and academic performance of students with respect to catchment areas.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gather and utilize documentary data and perceptual data from the headmistresses, teachers, administrators, students and parents in order to see the difference in the role of school council on students' performance in Community Model Schools (CMS) and Govt. Girls Primary Schools (GGPS) in Punjab.

3. Research Question

- What is the difference between the role of school council in CMS and GGPS?
- How do headmistress, teachers, administrators, parents and students perceive the role of school council in CMS and GGPS?

4. Methodology and Data Analysis

The study was a mixed qualitative and quantitative descriptive design. The data were collected through document analysis and administering a questionnaire for the headmistress, teachers, administrators, parents and students of CMS and GGPS. A sample of 350, 700, 350, 3500 and 3500 of headmistress, teachers, administrators, parents and students were respectively taken from 300 schools of 35 districts of Punjab. The equal number of schools (175) and equal number of teachers (two) were selected from CMS and GGPS. The simple random technique was used to select the schools and headmistress, teachers, administrators, parents and students. The answer of the first and second research questions was obtained from the responses of the teachers' questionnaires and documentary data from both schools.

4.1 Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected by administering the questionnaire. Questionnaires were administered by the researchers personally. The response rate for the questionnaire was 100%.

4.2 Data Analysis Procedure

All of the administered surveys that had been received from respondents were examined and incomplete surveys were again sent and collected then included in analysis. The data was divided into two parts. The first part was covering the answer of first research question. The statistical technique mean, standard deviation and multiple bar charts was used to describe the answer of the research question two.

4.3 Research Question 1

What is the difference between student performance of CMS and GGPS?

The answer of the first research question was discussed through the actual observations of the both type of primary schools and documentary analysis.

4.4 Comparison of Results of Class 5th Students (2001-2005)

To compare the performance of students, the data was taken from the school results. The data has been presented in the following table:

Table 1: Comparison of Community Model Schools and Govt. Girls Primary Schools

Result Range	Community Model Schools		Govt. Girls Primary Schools	
	N	%	N	%
60-70	2	1.14	22	13
71-80	8	4.57	25	14
81-90	45	25.71	38	22
91-100	120	68.51	90	51
Total	175	100	175	100

Table 1 above indicates that 13% Govt. Girls primary schools have 60-70% results as compared to 1.4% Community Model Schools having the same percentage. 14% Govt. Girls Primary Schools have 71-80% results as compared to 4.57% Community Model Schools. 25.71% Community Model Schools have 81-90% pass percentage as compared to 22% of Govt. Girls Primary Schools. 68.5% of Community Model Schools have 91-100 percentage result as compared to 51% Govt. Girls Primary Schools.

4.5 Research Question 2

How do headmistress, teachers, administrators, parents and students of CMS and GGPS perceive the role of school council for the performance of students?

Table 2: Comparison of the Role of School Council CMS and GGPS

Respondent	N	Mean \pm S.D		t-test (p-value)
		CMS	GGPS	
Headmistress	350	79.5 \pm 15.79	67.89 \pm 18.57	6.22 (0.000)
Teachers	700	64.9 \pm 12.09	60.11 \pm 14.98	4.78 (0.006)
Administrators	350	73.57 \pm 0.87	64.97 \pm 0.69	17.47 (0.000)
Parents	3500	78.82 \pm 23.65	71.50 \pm 27.41	8.46 (0.000)
Students	3500	81.02 \pm 28.05	75.59 \pm 22.23	12.67 (0.000)

The Table 2 clearly shows the mean score of all the variables of CMS is greater than the mean score of GGPS according to all respondents point of view and is significantly different than GGPS

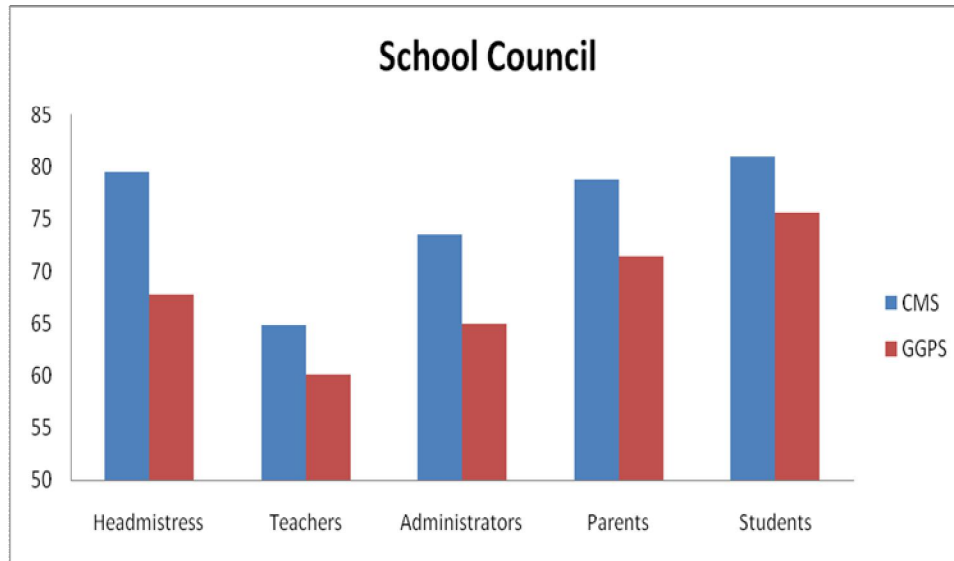


Figure 1: Role of School Council in CMS and GGPS

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The school performance was measured through the better functioning of school council in this study. The Community Model Schools were established to enhance the school performance through participation of the community under the GPEP (Phase-I and Phase-II). It was found that Community Model Schools had better performance regarding the functioning of school councils as compared to Govt. Girls Primary Schools in Punjab. The study of Kateeba (2006) concluded that there was remarkable improvement in the management of the school activities, which resulted in the improvement of quality and teaching in the schools due to the good role and responsibilities of school management

committee. The present study also found that Community Model Schools had better performance of school councils as compared to Govt. Girls Primary Schools in Punjab.

In the light of the above discussion, it is clear that the role of school council for the performance of the students of CMS were better than the GGPS. On the basis of the findings of the study reported here, it is recommended that the GGPS should be funded.

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