

Reconceptualizing the Role of School Committees in Enhancing Educational Quality: A Community-Based Governance Perspective

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims to describe the role of the school committee in improving the quality of education. The research is based on the fact that education plays a very important role in enhancing the quality of human resources and is integrated with the overall process of human resource development. One of the objectives of establishing school committees is to increase public responsibility and participation in organizing education at schools. This implies that community involvement is very strategic and essential, not only in terms of providing material support but also contributing ideas, innovations, and creative solutions for school development. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed in this study because the phenomenon under investigation is holistic, complex, and dynamic. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving principals, vice principals, committee heads, committee secretaries, parents, and teachers. The findings indicate that the school committee must establish strong relationships with schools and the community to represent the interests of students' guardians effectively. Enhancing the socialization of the school committee's role is essential so that the surrounding community better understands its functions and contributions toward improving education quality.*

Keyword: *education quality, role, school committee.*

ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan peran komite sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh fakta bahwa pendidikan memiliki peran yang sangat penting dalam meningkatkan kualitas sumber daya manusia serta menjadi bagian integral dari keseluruhan proses pengembangan sumber daya manusia. Salah satu tujuan pembentukan komite sekolah adalah untuk meningkatkan tanggung jawab dan partisipasi masyarakat dalam penyelenggaraan pendidikan di sekolah. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan masyarakat sangat strategis dan penting, tidak hanya dalam memberikan dukungan material, tetapi juga dalam menyumbangkan gagasan, inovasi, serta solusi kreatif bagi pengembangan sekolah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif karena fenomena yang diteliti bersifat holistik, kompleks, dan dinamis. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah, ketua komite, sekretaris komite, orang tua siswa, serta guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komite sekolah perlu membangun hubungan yang kuat dengan pihak sekolah dan masyarakat guna mewakili kepentingan orang tua atau wali siswa secara efektif. Selain itu, peningkatan sosialisasi mengenai peran komite sekolah juga sangat diperlukan agar masyarakat di sekitar sekolah lebih memahami fungsi dan kontribusinya dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan.

Kata kunci: komite sekolah, mutu pendidikan, peran.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a very important role in improving the quality of human resources and is a key factor in the success of national development. In order to strengthen community involvement in educational management, the Indonesian government enacted the Decree of the Minister of National Education Number 044/U/2002 dated April 2, 2002, concerning the establishment of School Committees as a replacement for the Education Implementation Support Agency (BP3). This change in nomenclature and institutional function is not merely an administrative reorganization, but reflects a shift in the paradigm of educational governance that emphasizes the principles of participation, transparency, and accountability.

The school committee is established as a strategic partner of educational institutions, playing an active role in improving the quality of educational services through planning, supervision, and evaluation of educational programs. The role of the school committee is not limited to providing material support, but also includes contributing ideas, offering innovative suggestions, and overseeing the implementation of educational policies. In practice, the school committee functions as an advisory, supporting, controlling, and mediating body between the school and the community (Mursidi, 2013).

Previous studies indicate that the existence and active role of school committees have a significant impact on improving the quality of education, including aspects of input, process, and learning outcomes (Irawan et al., 2021; Kasroni & Susanto, 2025). This suggests that school committees are an important element in promoting systematic and sustainable improvements in educational quality. However, research findings also reveal several challenges that hinder the optimization of school committee roles. Limited human resource capacity, low understanding of duties and functions, and a lack of effective communication between the committee and the school are major factors contributing to the weak performance of school committees (Wardiah et al., 2015; Fatimah, 2016).

Furthermore, Rahmawati and Kardoyo (2019) found that school committees often play a passive role in school activities and are rarely involved in strategic decision-making. In response to this issue, Prasetyo et al. (2023) emphasized the need to strengthen the organizational structure and working mechanisms of school committees through training and mentoring to enhance their role in supporting the quality of basic education. This urgency becomes increasingly relevant in the era of educational decentralization and school autonomy, where multi-stakeholder involvement is a critical factor in the success of educational implementation. In this context, school committees are no longer merely administrative complements, but essential components in community-based policy-making (school-based management).

Based on this background, this study aims to describe and analyze the role of school committees in supporting the improvement of educational quality, as well as to identify the factors that support and hinder the effectiveness of their performance. The main focus of this study is directed at understanding how school committees can serve as a driving force for community participation in the planning, supervision, and evaluation of educational policies at the school level. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational management science and provide

practical implications for strengthening school committee institutions, enabling them to play a more optimal role in improving the quality of education.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the role of school committees in improving the quality of education. This approach is chosen because the issues under study are holistic, complex, and dynamic, thus requiring an in-depth exploration of phenomena based on factual data. According to Ishak Bagea et al. (2025:15), qualitative research is built upon a phenomenological paradigm that seeks to understand the true meaning of an experience and emphasizes consciousness, reason, and logic.

The research subjects include the school principal, vice principal for student affairs, the chairperson and secretary of the school committee, teachers, and parents. Informants are selected using purposive sampling, which involves deliberate selection based on their roles, experiences, and knowledge relevant to the research focus.

Data are collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation in the form of meeting records, activity reports, and supporting photographs. Data analysis is conducted using the Miles and Huberman (1994) model through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The validity of the data is ensured through source and method triangulation by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to enhance the credibility of the findings.

RESULTS

The Strategic Role of School Committees in Educational Programs

Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, the findings indicate that school committees hold a strategic position in supporting the improvement of educational quality within educational institutions. School committees actively serve as strategic partners to school principals in planning, implementing, and evaluating various educational programs, including annual work plans and student extracurricular activities at local, national, and even international levels. According to one informant, Mr. Madini, a teacher at the school, the contribution of the school committee is not limited to material support but also includes providing ideas, policy recommendations, and direct involvement in school activities. These findings are consistent with the study by Kasroni and Susanto (2025), which shows that school committee management plays a role in improving the quality of educational services through strengthening teacher competence, providing facilities, and optimizing supervisory and mediation functions between schools and communities.

The Main Functions of School Committees in Educational Governance

School committees also play a crucial role in supporting strategic school management through their functions as advisory bodies, supporting bodies, controlling

bodies, and mediating bodies, as emphasized by Dermawan (2020). The presence of school committees strengthens the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM), increases public participation, and promotes the achievement of quality education. Furthermore, effective collaboration between school committees and principals is considered capable of bridging school needs with community resources in a sustainable manner (Azzahir et al., 2024). Other studies also highlight the importance of involving school committees in the preparation of School Activity and Budget Plans (RKAS) and in providing recommendations to local governments to improve the quality of educational services (Wardiah et al., 2015). Active involvement of school committees has been proven to significantly influence the success of educational programs, particularly in creating a conducive, participatory, and quality-oriented learning environment. Such collaboration contributes to achieving the vision and mission of national education in a holistic and sustainable manner.

School Committee Involvement in Program Planning and Evaluation

The findings reveal that school committees play a significant role in building communication and coordination among schools, parents/guardians, and the community. This involvement is not limited to a consultative function but also reflects the committee's role as a bridge between educational institutions and surrounding communities. Information from interviews with Mr. Madini confirms that school committees should ideally be present and actively involved in internal school forums, such as program planning meetings and activity evaluations. This direct involvement enables committees to fully understand the main duties and functions of each educational component, as well as to recognize the real dynamics and needs of the school. This aligns with the findings of Kasroni and Susanto (2025), which emphasize that active participation of school committees in planning and implementing school programs positively impacts public accountability and institutional transparency.

The Role of School Committees in Social Activities and Community Empowerment

The involvement of school committees in internal activities also strengthens social networks and collaboration among school members, creates participatory spaces in decision-making, and encourages the integration of social values in educational management. Moreover, the role of school committees extends beyond internal functions to external contributions, such as supporting community-based social activities initiated by schools. Field findings reveal that committees contribute to social service activities, health campaigns, and community empowerment programs around the school. This involvement positions school committees as collaborative agents that bridge school needs with community aspirations (Fauzan & Huda, 2022; Islami, 2020). Satria et al. (2019) further emphasize that strengthening school-community relations cannot be separated from the strategic role of committees as facilitators of external communication. Therefore, it can be concluded that school committees play an important role in promoting open, participatory, and socially oriented educational governance.

The Contribution of School Committees to Educational Facilities and Infrastructure

In relation to supporting educational implementation, the role of school committees is not limited to supervision or policy input but also extends to technical aspects, such as the provision of educational facilities and infrastructure. School committees provide strategic considerations and recommendations to schools regarding various learning facility needs that support the continuity of the teaching and learning process. This participation is crucial in ensuring the availability of adequate and relevant educational facilities, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of learning. Research by Kasroni and Susanto (2025) confirms that school committees contribute to the planning and strengthening of educational infrastructure through synergy between schools and communities. Similarly, Dermawan (2020) emphasizes the importance of committee involvement in supervisory functions and in mapping educational facility needs to create adaptive learning environments.

Challenges in Understanding and Socializing the Role of School Committees

The findings from interviews also reveal challenges that cannot be overlooked, particularly the limited understanding among some parents regarding the existence and strategic role of school committees. Although the formation of school committees has been socialized, some community members still lack a comprehensive understanding of their functions and contributions to educational management. According to Mr. Madini, this issue is often found in certain schools where the socialization process has not been carried out intensively and systematically. This phenomenon is in line with the findings of Yuliani et al. (2021), which indicate that low parental participation is caused by a lack of awareness of committee structures and roles due to insufficient dissemination. Studies by Siregar (2023) and Islami (2020) further confirm that communication between schools and communities greatly determines how effectively committees are accepted and functioned.

In this context, the socialization of the roles and benefits of school committees becomes a crucial instrument in building trust and encouraging active community participation. School committees should ideally represent the voices of parents and communities in the formulation and implementation of educational policies at the school level. This communicative bridging role will have a significant impact if supported by collective understanding built through participatory approaches. Satria et al. (2019) emphasize that a healthy partnership between schools and communities must be established through open, dialogical, and sustainable relationships, with school committees acting as the primary facilitators. Therefore, increasing the intensity and quality of socialization regarding the roles and functions of school committees is a strategic step toward fostering more meaningful community involvement in education.

DISCUSSION

The Strategic Role of School Committees in Educational Programs

The role of school committees in the implementation of education occupies a strategic position within the framework of improving the quality of educational services. It is no longer limited to administrative functions; rather, the school committee has transformed into a substantive and transformative partner in community-based educational management (school-based management). The active participation of school committees in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs reflects an equal partnership between educational institutions and the community. School committees function not only as providers of input and oversight but also as drivers of collective participation in strategic decision-making at the school level (Nurmaning et al., 2023).

Research indicates that optimal involvement of school committees can enhance the quality of both learning processes and outcomes through support for curriculum development, improvement of teacher capacity, and provision of infrastructure aligned with students' needs (Paramitha et al., 2024). School committees also play a key role in bridging communication between the community and the school, thereby fostering transparency and public accountability in educational management (Cahyadin et al., 2022).

Furthermore, a school-based management approach that involves committees in decision-making structures has been shown to strengthen the responsiveness of educational institutions to community aspirations and enhance school autonomy in managing educational resources (Neupane, 2023). However, challenges remain, including limited managerial capacity among committee members and insufficient understanding of their roles and functions (Amirudin, 2020).

Capacity-building programs through training and mentoring have proven effective in improving both understanding and active participation of school committee members in strategic decision-making, particularly in curriculum development and educational budget management (Haryanto & Rohani, 2025). In addition, other empirical studies highlight that the success of school committee involvement is strongly influenced by effective communication and synergy among principals, teachers, and committees in planning and implementing school programs (Walewangko et al., 2023).

The presence of well-trained and organized school committees not only strengthens accountability mechanisms but also creates space for substantive community participation in achieving relevant, inclusive, and sustainable education (Sati & Sati, 2023). Therefore, strengthening the institutional capacity of school committees becomes a crucial element in designing community-based educational policies.

The involvement of school committees has also been shown to support the successful implementation of extracurricular activities aimed at developing students' non-academic potential. This support includes financial, moral, and strategic contributions to ensure the sustainability of student development programs at local, national, and even international levels. Prasetyo et al. (2023) note that the committee's role is highly significant in developing the organizational structure of extracurricular

activities and in providing the necessary facilities and resources to support student activities outside the classroom. These activities not only contribute to character building but also serve as platforms for self-actualization, enhancing students' social competence, leadership, and creativity.

Moreover, the participation of school committees in evaluating educational programs demonstrates their contribution to strengthening accountability and transparency within educational institutions. Program evaluations become more inclusive and responsive to community needs when committees are involved in monitoring and reflecting on school activities. Dermawan (2020) states that community involvement through school committees is a key strategy in optimizing the management of educational quality, as it allows for the integration of local, social, and cultural values into school policies. Satria et al. (2019) further emphasize that the committee's role as a bridge between schools and communities is crucial in building public support for the school's vision and mission, as well as in strengthening the legitimacy of educational policies at the grassroots level.

Therefore, school committees should not merely be positioned as formal institutions providing input, but as essential elements within the educational ecosystem that have the capacity to strengthen strategic planning, oversee program implementation, and ensure successful evaluation. Strong collaboration between schools and committees is an important indicator of democratic and quality-oriented educational governance. In this context, the involvement of school committees also reflects the spirit of educational decentralization, positioning the community as an active subject in educational development rather than merely an object of policy. Thus, school committees play an indispensable role in achieving holistic, adaptive, and sustainable national education goals.

The Main Functions of School Committees in Educational Governance

School committees are a vital element in supporting participatory, transparent, and accountable educational governance. Conceptually, they have four main complementary functions: advisory, supporting, controlling, and mediating. Dermawan (2020) explains that these functions operate in an integrated manner to strengthen the effectiveness of School-Based Management (SBM). As an advisory body, the committee provides input on policies, planning, and school programs aligned with community needs and aspirations, thereby ensuring responsiveness to local contexts and student characteristics (Kasroni & Susanto, 2025).

As a supporting body, the committee contributes resources, both material and non-material, often collaborating with external institutions, businesses, and community leaders to strengthen school funding and expand student access to development programs (Prasetyo et al., 2023). Azzahir et al. (2024) emphasize that such support becomes more effective when accompanied by collaborative and open leadership from school principals.

The controlling function relates to supervising policy implementation to ensure compliance with established quality standards. Committees monitor budget transparency and program execution, thereby promoting public accountability (Siregar, 2023; Marwan et al., 2021).

As a mediating body, the committee serves as a strategic link between schools, parents, communities, and government. It facilitates two-way communication and conveys community aspirations to school management (Islami, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2021). This function is crucial in preventing communication gaps that may hinder program implementation. Satria et al. (2019) add that strong social relationships fostered by committees enhance public acceptance and legitimacy of school policies.

Together, these functions form the foundation for effective SBM implementation, expanding community participation and positioning school committees as transformative agents in educational governance.

School Committee Involvement in Planning and Evaluation

The involvement of school committees in planning and evaluation processes represents a concrete manifestation of participatory and accountable educational governance. Their role is substantive, ensuring that policies and programs align with the needs of students, teachers, and the community. Research by Kasroni and Susanto (2025) shows that active committee participation in strategic planning forums, work meetings, and program evaluations directly enhances institutional transparency and public accountability.

Their presence in internal forums fosters synergy among school stakeholders, enabling the development of realistic and quality-oriented programs. This involvement also allows committees to understand school dynamics and provide appropriate input (Satria et al., 2019; Prasetyo et al., 2023). Additionally, committees help identify implementation challenges and propose improvements (Marwan et al., 2021).

Azzahir et al. (2024) highlight that the effectiveness of committee involvement depends on the quality of collaboration with school leadership. Their evaluative role includes monitoring teaching and learning processes, ensuring budget transparency, and following up on evaluation results (Siregar, 2023; Dermawan, 2020). This fosters a reflective culture and continuous improvement within schools.

As mediators, committees also bridge school and community interests by conveying public aspirations in evaluation processes (Islami, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2021), creating inclusive dialogue and strengthening community ownership of education.

The Role of School Committees in Social and Community Empowerment Activities

School committees play a strategic role in extending the impact of education beyond academic domains into social and community empowerment activities. They act as collaborative agents connecting schools with communities through social initiatives such as community service, health campaigns, and environmental conservation. Fauzan

and Huda (2022) emphasize that committees help integrate community aspirations into relevant school social programs.

Islami (2020) notes that this external role enhances two-way communication, enabling programs that create broader social impact. Satria et al. (2019) show that strong school-community relationships depend on active and responsive committees. In this context, committees function not only as implementers but also as facilitators of social relations that strengthen public trust.

Prasetyo et al. (2023) highlight that organizational strengthening of committees improves social collaboration effectiveness. Activities such as environmental campaigns and humanitarian programs require synergy among schools, committees, and communities (Marwan et al., 2021), demonstrating the committee's strategic role in building social networks.

Contribution to Educational Facilities and Infrastructure

School committees play a crucial role in planning, procuring, and evaluating educational facilities and infrastructure. Their involvement reflects a commitment to creating safe, adequate, and adaptive learning environments. Research shows that committees provide strategic recommendations regarding infrastructure needs, including classrooms, laboratories, sanitation facilities, and educational technology (Kasroni & Susanto, 2025).

Their participation ensures that decisions are contextually relevant to local socio-economic conditions (Satria et al., 2019). In some cases, committees also help secure additional funding through partnerships, CSR programs, and community initiatives (Prasetyo et al., 2023), demonstrating their role in resource mobilization.

Challenges in Understanding and Socialization

Despite their vital role, challenges remain in public understanding of school committees, particularly among parents. Studies show that socialization efforts have not reached all community levels effectively (Siregar, 2023; Yuliani et al., 2021), resulting in low participation.

Islami (2020) identifies one-way communication as a key barrier, leading communities to perceive committees as merely formal entities. To address this, more inclusive, dialogical, and continuous socialization approaches are needed, including face-to-face forums and participatory discussions.

Through improved communication strategies, communities can become more actively and constructively involved in supporting education via representative and democratic school committees.

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, the conclusion of this study is that school committees play a highly strategic and essential role, particularly as a bridge or medium connecting the community with educational institutions. Members of the school

committee are selected through an open and accountable process, witnessed by representatives of parents or guardians. The members are recruited from parents and the community, positioning the committee in a neutral and balanced role, while still being responsible for representing and voicing the aspirations of the community, especially parents.

The objectives and roles of the school committee significantly influence various aspects related to educational institutions. The most expected impact is its contribution to improving the quality of education. The school committee functions as a forum and a channel for conveying community (parental) aspirations, continuously encouraging schools to enhance their services to students. Improved services, in turn, create a learning environment that is safe, comfortable, conducive, and enjoyable, ultimately contributing to the overall improvement of educational quality.

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