Research Article

The Challenge of School Governance: Role of Elementary School Committees in School Governance at Banyumas

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Abstract.
This study aimed to explore the challenges of school committees (SC) associated with participating in school governance, especially in elementary schools. SCs have a strategic role in participating in advancing education at the elementary level and for accountability for the implementation of school programs and activities. However, not all SCs have not been able to carry out their role as strategic partners for the development of primary school governance. This study used a qualitative approach in which the researchers collected data from the results of in-depth interviews and focused-group discussions (FGD). The FGD was used to enable the researcher to consider the investigation from the perspective of the interviewees. This approach also enabled the informant to involve more deeply in an in-depth study of the duties and functions of the SC in the selected schools. The research findings showed that some patterns of relationships exist between the SC and school management. The better the relationship pattern between the two institutions, the more optimal the role of the SC tends to be. On the other hand, the committee's role is ineffective when the relationship pattern is less balanced and harmonious. The study concludes that to encourage the active involvement of parents in the education of their children at the community level, school administrators and committee members need to be continuously encouraged and empowered through continuous training and intensive communication between principals.

Keywords: accountability, School Committee, governance

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1. Introduction

More than a decade, the notion of 'governance' has been incorporated into educational research to analyze the changes in the regulation of school systems. The governance approach offers a general analytical framework for examining all types of actor coordination issues [1], where the school systems are not shaped by a single dominant actor, e.g., by the government and its administrative employs. A system develops with the participation of more actors [2]. The implementation is by involving stakeholders in school governance, consisting of the government, school principals who carry out of

tasks on behalf of the government. The school governing can be represented by School Committee (SC) as stakeholder forum consisting of parents, the community, education observers and experts, private institutions, and other institutions that have an interest in education [3,4]. SCs are formed to give consideration in determining education policies, raising public funds, supervising education services in schools and following up on community aspirations [5]. Villarreal, and Rodríguez [6] also describe the relationship model of parent and community engagement in school-community governance, where parents and students play four major roles model: as co-designers; as partners and critical friends in the educational process; as pro-active feedback providers; and as gatekeepers and guardians of success. The productive participation of parents or local community members in education is paramount importance to the achievement of quality education accountable governance

Many studies have been carried out related to the role and support of the community who are members of the SC in school governance, especially in school base management. many researchers have conceptualized different models and frameworks based on empirical evidence since the booming model of SBM in the 1990s. Suryadarma, et all. 2013, concluded that, SC that enhance its social capital in the community show positive effects on learning while interventions that enhance its financial [7]. Abigail [8] concludes that the participation of the community in school management has led to strengthening accountability, improvement in students learning and performance, maximization of limited resources, efficiency, and effectiveness of school management. Olajide [9] has also conclude that SC have been playing significant role on promotion of basic education in Sabon Gari local government area, but the rate of its role on engaging to raise awareness on basic education in the study area is low. Because of the limited resources to spur their full capacity on promotion of basic education. However, this study takes the other side of the research focus from that of others, namely by looking more closely at the role of school committees in different background and characteristics. namely people who live in cities and rural areas. [10] Conceptually the characteristics of the two communities tend to be different not only in social environment but also for quality of life, socio-economic, education [11].

Hence, the literature on models and practices on the role of the community who are members of SC shows number of similarities in the development process and recognizes the synthesized model of community-school relations in which community participation has become a model that is currently being developed in education governance, especially basic education in development. Therefore, the author intends to use this

model to analyze the collected data and investigate the relevance of existing role models for the improvement of the community and school relations model.

Theoretically, the committee's position in school governance is a manifestation of the application of governance principles, especially the principles of accountability and responsibility. The application of this model is in line with the thinking of Crawford & Helm [12] which states that the application of the principles of accountability and responsibility in education governance is very important. (This accountability orientation carries the notion that parent, and other stakeholders play a significant role in school governance [13]. As Maile [14] wrote, 'there must be a balance of powers of the school governing body and the principal to accomplish quality education service deliver'. Parents are responsible for school governance and principals deal with professional management without clearly demarcating roles and indicating their meeting point.

In it there is a process of stakeholders interacting and working together to solve public problems, through a series of decision-making activities and joint actions. [15,16,17]. In other words, community involvement in school management is essential in promoting development in education system. This is because parents have the right to be involved in the management of schools in their environment. Likewise, the community can provide the resources needed by schools, which can be in the form of voluntary support, free labor, and financial support for schools. However, community involvement tends to improve student outcomes as well as increase school accountability [18]. It is imperative that education, an institution which is everyone's business, should involve all citizens and stakeholders, particularly parents, to get the best education possible for children [19].

In the education system in Indonesia, community involvement in education has been explicitly stated in Article 56 (paragraph 3), Law Number 20 of 2003 [20] that 'The SC as an independent institution is formed and plays a role in improving the quality of services by providing consideration and support for personnel, facilities and infrastructure as well as education supervision at the education unit level'. While the role of the SC is stated in the ministerial regulation number 75 year of 2016 [21] which includes: giving advice; giving supports to educational quality; controlling; and as a mediator of the government.

This paper is intended to present the results of research in Banyumas Regency on whether SC still have a strategic role in school governance in the disruptive era. This is based on the reality that on the regulatory side, the SC is given a strategic role, but on the other hand, the SC has not been given a maximum role.

2. Method

The study employed qualitative research methods to explore the extent to which the school board committee fosters community involvement in basic school governance. This study focused on three elementary schools located in three Banyumas' districts which were purposively selected based on that represent the characteristics of flat rural areas, hilly rural areas, and urban areas. Those districts were Cilongok, Somagede and West Puwokerto. This approach emphasizes the context, research setting and subjective references [22]. This approach requires a researcher to have skills, adequate theoretical and social sensitivity, and the ability to carefully observe and interact [23]. The analysis design uses a descriptive-qualitative format, which is intended to understand the symptoms that do not require quantification or because the symptoms do not allow them to be measured accurately [24].

Based on the design, the data is constructed from the results of interviews and FGD on the data needed to be described and summarized. The use of FGD in this study was also justified in that the approach enabled the researcher to consider the investigation from the perspective of the interviewees [25]. The purposively selected informants represented SC members from three district areas., including school principal, teachers, head and SC members, district educational bureaucrats. This approach enabled the informen to involve more deeply in an in-depth study of the duties and functions of the SC in the selected schools. Through this approach, the participants could express their experiences as members of their respective schools' committees. Bryan and Bell [26] affirm that most qualitative researchers express their commitment to viewing events and the social world through the eyes of the subjects they are studying. The social world, to the qualitative researchers, should be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied, rather than as though those subjects were incapable of reflecting on their social world.

The analysis of research data using the flow model which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification [27]. Data condensation including summarizing, choosing the most significant components, putting more emphasis on them, and extracting patterns and themes from the vast quantities of data gathered in the field. This procedure was continued until the research's findings were attained. Data display, including the taking of actions and the forming of conclusions may be influenced by the presentation of material that is only one piece of organized information. Researchers now know what truly happened and need to finish up based on the data that has been supplied. Conclusion drawing or verification, involving the process

of drawing conclusions or verification. At this point, the researchers began attempting to interpret the data by identifying patterns, explanations, causal chains, regularities, and potential configurations

3. Results and Discussion.

3.1. School Committee and its Characteristics

SC is a partner organization that is expected to be able to become a balancer and controller for the ongoing governance of the education unit. Thus, SC have a strategic role in school governance because schools as education providers always receive supervision from SC School governance based on the School-Based Management (SBM) model requires the role of other institutions outside the school that can control school activities to apply the principles of school governance which include Non-Profit, Accountability, Quality Assurance, Transparency and Fairness [28]. This is in line with the Saharma [29) that, 'The Involvement of the community facilitates the relation between the school and community, where it can bring parents, teachers and school together in shared decision-making, and it could be a way to reduce "adversarial relations" and to contribute to better decision making; parents and community can provide much needed resources and other volunteer support to the school, such as financial and expertise, so the involvement of community can improve school accountability and make school more responsive to community needs. [30]

Based on the results of the study, the role and contribution of the SC is conditional, which is influenced by the characteristics of the area where the school and committee are located. In accordance with the research conducted, there are data that describe the role model of SC in urban rural areas and favorite schools in cities, as presented in table 1 below.

Table 1 shows that there are differences in the depth of the committee's role in terms of community characteristics based on their location. Elementary schools located in urban areas, especially favorite schools, tend to be easier to manage than those in rural areas. The categorized favorite Schools, SC members tend to consist of people who have high social status both economically and socially. And this condition is different from schools in rural areas, where the SC members tend to medium social status. Many schools in rural areas find it difficult to find people to sit on the SC members.

The research found that there is different closeness of the relationship between SC and school principal of schools in rural areas and those in urban areas. The SCs in

TABLE 1: Characteristics of SC by Location of Elementary Schools in Banyumas District.

Dimension	Characteristics of School Area		
	Favourite School	**Urban Area**	**Rural area**
SC Background	Most of the m are Officials	Official/Community Leader	Community Leader
Committee Management Education Level	In general, higher education level	High Enough	In general, intermediate education level
Parents' Social and Economic Conditions	Medium-high	Medium	Tend to be low
Parents' Awareness Level of Education	High	High enough	Tend to be less
The committee's proximity to the principal	be familiar	Tend to be familiar	Tend to be Enough
Ease of Fundraising	Easy	Easy Tend	Tend to be difficult

Source: Primary data, 2021.

urban areas are usually more familiar with school principals, compared to SCs in rural areas

Judging from the socio-economic conditions of the parents, guardians of schools located in rural areas tend to be at a low level compared to those in urban areas which are relatively medium and high. This is directly proportional to the level of awareness of parents of students on the importance of education, where schools located in urban areas have a higher level of awareness than those in rural areas. Such conditions are in line with the level of convenience in the process of raising funds to assist the education process. It is easier for the school in urban areas to raise funds than in rural areas. This was in line with the concluded study by Quan-Baffour, Kofi Poku that the school governance body (SGB) in the rural communities promotes the involvement of parents, lack of basic knowledge, skills and experience among many members remains a critical hindrance to their productive involvement in crucial school matters. [31]

With the above characteristics, elementary schools in urban areas tends to be more advanced, both in the school governance system, as well as in the condition of educational infrastructure. Adequate support from SC by their awareness and experiences, and social status gave beneficial for the school. This can be seen for the school activities, planning system, implementation and program monitoring system in schools which tend to run well. Elementary school education facilities and infrastructure located in urban areas are more complete than elementary schools located in rural areas. The awareness of parents to participate in the process of providing educational facilities and infrastructure, especially school libraries, tends to be better.

Hence, the role of the SC in school governance also depends on the relationship pattern that runs between the SC and school management. The results showed that

the more harmonious the relationship between the SC and school management, all the roles of the SC could be carried out. On the other hand, the less good the relationship between the SC and school management, the more difficult it is to run school programs.

The study also found that there were some schools that had poor governance due to the lack of harmony in the relationship between the SC and school management. These conditions can be categorized into four patterns of relationships that exist between them: Firstly, there is a lack of understanding between the SC and school management (principals) regarding school programs. This disharmony can stem from individual conflicts from one of the SC administrators with the principal. Secondly, School governance where the principal is more dominant than the SC, so that the principal tends to ignore the involvement of the SC in the decision-making process in such conditions, school management makes SC only as a means of legalizing activities and programs made by schools. This happens when the SC lacks adequate capabilities, so it tends to be subordinated to the principal. Thirdly, the dominance of the SC in decision making, so that the principal is forced to participate in part of the will of the SC. This condition occurs when the SC members have a better social status and position than the school principal. Finally, there is a balanced and harmonious relationship between the principal and the SC. This condition is created when the principal and the SC have the same awareness that for creating good quality school need a cooperation among school stakeholders.

Such a pattern of relations, of course, cannot be avoided, because of the heterogeneous situation and condition of the community, both in terms of socio-economic status, level of awareness of the importance of education and the cultural conditions of the local community. Likewise, the conditions of rural communities are certainly different from those of urban communities.

Among this condition, - the fourth pattern- the school management who has a harmonious relationship with the SC is ideal model of school governance. it is easier to run its programs. Even the school management can take advantage of this harmony to further 'exploit' SC by creating many programs for school activities and encouraging SC to participate in financing school programs, with 'arguments' for improving the quality of education. Although the withdrawal of funds from the community is no longer allowed, from the reality, there are still many schools through the SC that withdraw school fees to their parents in the name of 'infaq'.

3.2. The Challenge of School Committee in Elementary School Governance

This result may be explained by the fact that there are still many challenges faced by school principal and SC related to education governance at the elementary school level. These challenges include: first, basic education governance, which is conceptualized as a form of education decentralization, is still administratively in action. Schools as education provider at the lowest level have not real autonomy yet. In other words, the education management model based on Government Regulation Number 66, year 2010 [32], detailed through Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation Number. 75 of 2016 [33] does not provide sufficient opportunity for schools to carry out more activities, these regulations are limited to functional decentralization [34], or administrative de-concentration [35], where the school as both an educational unit entity and as a subordination of the local government, only carries out the authority of the education office to provide education. This condition is reinforced by the results of research that almost all the education budget for schools comes from allocations given by the government (both central and local governments), through the BOS fund mechanism. Schools are only authorized to make plans in accordance with the allocations given and carry out and account for activities in accordance with applicable regulation.

Second, the SC, which acts as a controller, director, and giver of considerations, in every activity carried out by the school, tends to be inconsistent with what the SC should do. SC are often asked to participate in accountability for their role for school programs and activities, even though what they are currently doing tends to only serve as a legalization for activities carried out by schools. When a school activity has received approval from the committee, then the activity is considered to have received approval from the community, even though judging from the process, many committees do not know much about the process of preparing and implementing activities.

Third, the SC as a partner in education governance has not fully carried out its roles and functions in accordance with the provisions [36]. The existence of SC is still perceived as mere formality, and the parents of students also do not fully know about their roles of SC in each education unit. The function of the SC is just likely to be more only as a partner in raising funds but is rarely involved in supervisory activities. Even in some cases, the SC is often only a 'stamp' for the ongoing violations in the school, or vice versa, the SC is only a tool for the legalization of activities carried out by the school. [37]

Fourth, the capacity of human resources involved in SC varies, because the membership and management come from the local community where the school is located. This condition is often an obstacle and a challenge for schools in communicating their programs to the community.

As a form of democratization in education governance, especially in pursuing the value of accountability, the existence of SC is still needed. SC still have a strategic role in participating in advancing school programs and activities, especially for funding school activities. In addition, SCs have a strategic role in ensuring accountability for the implementation of programs and activities in schools. In addition to helping to enhance the way that education is delivered, parents and communities can also serve as the main source of funding and material support for that delivery [38]. In other words, although SC always been faced by their limited resources as well as strategies to recognize and address issues in the education sector, it is possible and inevitable that high-quality education will be provided [39].

4. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that community involvement can support the delivery of education through a variety of channels. Most elementary schools' successes in Indonesia depend on the existing community participation. The SC as a forum for community participation has a strategic role in participating in advancing education at the elementary level and for accountability for the implementation of school programs and activities. However, this role is not always optimal in each school. This condition depends on the pattern of relationships that exist between the SC and school management. The better the relationship pattern between the two institutions, the more optimal the role of the SC tends to be. On the other hand, the role played by the committee is not effective when the relationship pattern is less balanced and harmonious. To maintain momentum in efforts to improve the quality of school governance, this study concludes that to encourage active involvement of parents in the education of their children at the community level, school administrators and committee members need to be continuously encouraged and empowered through continuous training and intensive communication between principals. school with parents and community

Conflict of Interest

We want to reaffirm that this article is free of any known conflicts of interest and no significant financial support that might have affected the research's conclusion.

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