

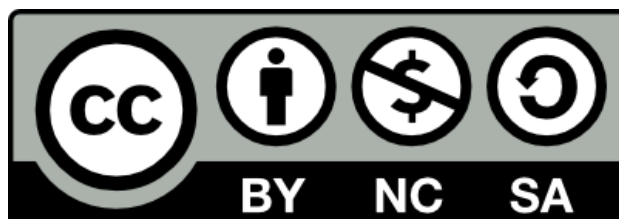


Channelling Collective Power for Cluster Improvement: A Case Study



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Abstract

System leadership, or leadership that focuses on collective rather than individual improvement, has emerged in education as one of the most important ways to achieve collaborative success. In the specific context of schools, research has stressed that system leaders needn't be restricted to school leaders; teachers, community members, and parents also make effective system leaders and help influence aspects of education that the school leader cannot access. This paper explores the impact of a system leadership structure through the case study of a voluntary committee established to lead cluster improvement: specifically, the cluster development committee in Dommasandra, Bengaluru. While the committee has brought about positive and tangible changes within the cluster, along with a sense of motivation and optimism regarding cluster-level initiatives, the structure of the committee poses questions about its effectiveness and inclusivity going forward.

Key Words

Cluster, cluster improvement, system leadership, voluntary committee, community participation, teacher leaders, government schools

Introduction

Mantra Social Services is an NGO based in Bengaluru that enables under-resourced schools to deliver quality education. Mantra's school improvement projects include STEP (School Transformation and Empowerment Project), which works with low-fee private schools, and PACE (Project for Active Cluster Engagement), which works with government schools on a cluster level. PACE, begun in 2017, is based on one key understanding: the core problem we need to address is the ineffective functioning of the cluster. A cluster is the administrative unit above schools in India's government education system; it is a group of 10-15 schools connected geographically, in a structure that allows them to share resources and work together for the improvement of all the schools in the cluster.

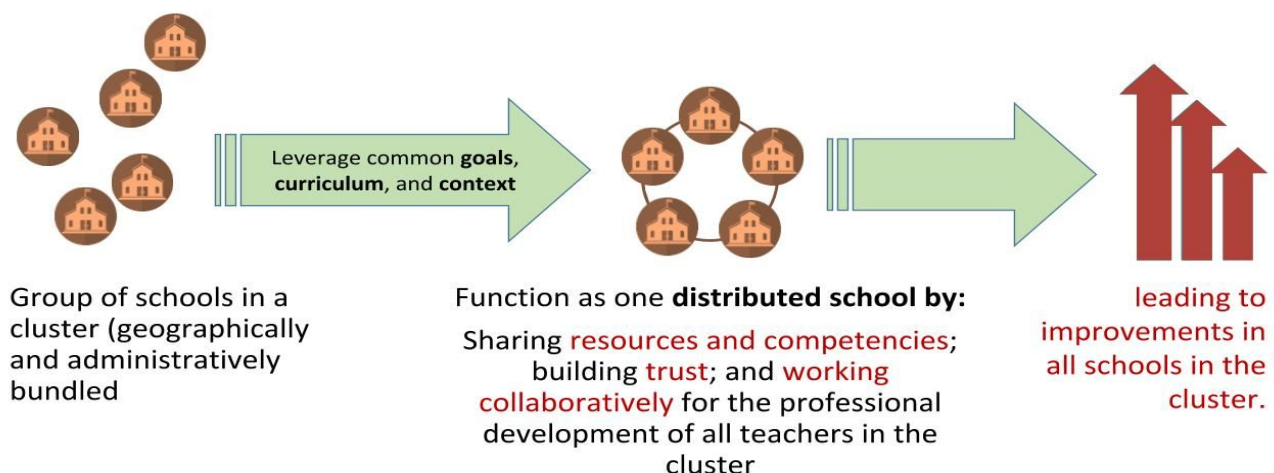
This cluster-based approach was born out of the realization that working with a single public school was not sustainable or effective. By moving one administrative level above the

school, we could leverage a wider set of resources and structures to foster collective school improvement. A key belief of PACE is to envision the cluster as a distributed school where teachers and administrators work with and for one another.

In most cases, however, clusters do not function effectively. We identified five causes that are primarily responsible for this ineffectiveness:

1. Isolated and disconnected schools
2. Ineffective utilization of resources at the cluster level
3. Ineffective or nonexistent cluster-level processes
4. Lack of cluster-level improvement strategies
5. No sense of cluster as a unit among teachers.

Based on our understanding of these problems, we envisioned how an effective cluster would in turn lead to effective government schools:



In thinking about how ineffective clusters could begin to take collective ownership of improvement processes, system leadership emerged as a key concept. That is, there will develop a set of stakeholders in the cluster who will:

- collaborate with each other for planning, implementing and reviewing cluster improvement,
- drive the vision of a cluster in all the stakeholders, and
- promote collaboration of stakeholders across schools.

The system leaders will be from diverse stakeholder groups (teachers, HMs, Formal Education System Leaders, community). They will also actively identify others from the cluster to join them. Hence, the system leadership culture at the cluster level will lead to more effective and sustainable results than would be possible under only one person (Cluster Resource Person) with a fixed tenure.

The cluster development committee in Dommasandra was an initiative started as part of PACE; it was established with a view to foster a culture of cluster-wide ownership and initiative within school leaders, teachers and community members. The committee was envisioned as a voluntary team of system leaders (from both in and outside the school) coming together to enable sharing of resources, ideas and solutions to cluster-wide problems.

This paper explores a key question: how do voluntary committees influence improvement in clusters in Bangalore? Through a case study of the cluster development committee in Dommasandra cluster, the paper aims to understand:

- impacts of the committee on cluster improvement;
- functioning of voluntary committee in the cluster:
 - patterns and trends in the functioning of voluntary committees;
 - teacher and parent involvement in the committee;
 - factors motivating voluntary participation in the committee.

In Dommasandra, where this committee was piloted, the committee currently consists of 12 members who meet once every month (currently, the meeting includes CTLs working in Dommasandra as well). Open to everyone, the committee is currently comprised of school leaders, stand-ins for school leaders, and SDMC members — with representatives from almost every school in the cluster.

A defining feature of the committee is its group on WhatsApp; while teachers and other community members do not partake in the monthly meetings, most of them are part of the WhatsApp group where updates, ideas and suggestions are regularly communicated back

and forth. This committee is one of the first initiatives established in the cluster with a view to build and encourage system leaders.

System Leadership: A Review of Literature

An Introduction to System Leadership

One of the key tenets of PACE is for an educational cluster to conceive of itself as a distributed school. System leadership, which is the leadership style that focuses on collective improvement rather than just individual development, is an inextricable part of achieving that goal. While system leaders can differ widely in personality and style, genuine system leaders have a remarkably similar impact. Over time, their profound commitment to the whole inspires a similar commitment in others. System leaders have the ability to see reality through a range of perspectives, which encourages others to be more open as well. (Senge et al 2015)

Based on their review of international literature, Sammons and Day (2006) propose the following four core functions of system leaders: building vision and setting directions, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the teaching and learning program.

In particular, for our work with school leaders and teachers in the clusters, there is a need to redefine and broaden roles and responsibilities — of teachers, community members, and school leaders alike. This means changing the way school leadership is developed and supported. It implies improving incentives to make school leadership roles in particular more attractive for existing heads and for those who will be taking up school leadership positions in the future. It also implies strengthening training and development approaches to help leaders face these new roles. (OECD 2008)

Teachers as System Leaders

Typically, literature on system leadership tends to focus on HMs and school leaders. Boylan (2013) seeks to include teachers in the conversation. He identifies three meanings of system

leadership: leadership exercised beyond a single school; leadership practice that has a systemic orientation related to systems thinking; and a system leadership paradigm that examines how school leaders influence the system as whole and advocate for system-wide leadership. Boylan argues that teacher system leadership is an important extension to these three identified meanings of system leadership.

Primarily, the argument is that there are four distinct contexts that have created opportunities or the need for teacher system leadership: subject specific and pedagogical professional development programmes and projects; interschool collaborations; teacher leader designations that involve working beyond the teacher's own school; and shared governance arrangements. Another lens proposed for considering teacher system leadership is as an extension of distributed leadership in a context where organizational boundaries between leadership roles are increasingly blurred.

Boylan further argues that system-wide change should and can be led by schools, stressing that the power to influence change distributed across the wider educational system should not be limited to those with executive leadership roles.

Community Participation

As mentioned earlier, the cluster development committee aims to cultivate this culture of system leadership among stakeholders both within and outside the school. This means that members of a school community — parents, committee members, governments, and local businesses — have as much to contribute to cluster improvement as do school leaders.

Community participation in education is not a recent development by any means: Williams (1994) stresses that until the middle of the last century, responsibility for educating children rested with the community. There are still places where communities organize themselves into educational communities, but their role as supporters or collaborators in public education systems across the world remains largely non-institutionalized. Countries facing significant educational challenges, such as from South Asia and parts of Africa, are turning to community as a way forward. (Nishimura 2017)

First, however, it is important to define what community means. In general, a community is group of people bound by religion, language, ethnicity, or specific goals and interests. Uemura (1999) synthesizes learnings from Bray (1996) and Shaeffer (1992) to provide models of visualizing and analysing community participation in education.

According to Bray, there are three different types of communities with respect to education. The first is a geographic community, defined based on physical borders such as villages, cities or districts. The second type — ethnic, racial, and religious communities — often cuts across membership based on geographic location. The third one is communities based on shared family or educational concerns, which include parents associations and similar bodies that are based on families' shared concern for the welfare of students.

Our interest here is primarily in the third type of community, given that the cluster development committee is a group bound by their interests in educational welfare, but the intersection of the second and third types is of interest to us as well. The cluster studied in this paper is populated with families from different linguistic and religious backgrounds, making the committee an example of an educational community that is formed from many other communities. It helps us answer the question of patterns and trends in and to see if the socioeconomic makeup of the population makes any difference to participation trends.

Shaeffer (1992) found that the degree of community participation is particularly low in socially and economically marginal regions. This is because such regions tend to have the following elements: (a) a lack of appreciation of the overall objectives of education; (b) a mismatch between what parents expect of education and what the school is seen as providing; (c) the belief that education is essentially the task of the State; (d) the length of time required to realize the benefits of better schooling; and (e) ignorance of the structure, functions, and constraints of the school.

Nishimura (2017) analysed community participation in such contexts in countries from South Asia and parts of Africa, concluding that community participation in school management has great potentials for removing mistrust and distance between people and

schools by nurturing transparency of information and a culture of mutual respect and by jointly pursuing improvement of school by sharing vision, process, and results. The study also concluded that community participation in school management will result in a long-term impact only if it involves a wide range of actors in the discussion and application of its possible methods, including revisiting the definition of community and the way it should be.

Of course, community participation is not without its challenges: according to Uemura (1999), both teachers and parents can display resistance to community participation in education. Teachers often tend to feel that they are losing authority within schools, as power is taken by community and parents. At the same time, they are encouraged to involve community members who sometimes are unwilling to participate. Parents, on the other hand, often feel uncomfortable getting involved with school activities. Reasons vary: some are illiterate and don't feel comfortable talking to teachers, while others feel they don't have control over the school. Some parents and families are not willing to collaborate with schools because they cannot afford to lose their economical labor by sending their children to school.

System leadership thus has great potential to be an inclusive, collaborative and collective model of leadership. In the specific context of education, system leaders can and should come from anywhere — the community, the school, or other local bodies — which in turn increases their capacity to make widespread and collective change. However, this inclusiveness can also be hard to achieve; teachers and parents can often be reluctant to join school leaders in taking up leadership initiatives.

Methodology

To truly understand how the cluster development committee functioned on a cluster level, we decided to conduct a qualitative case study of Dommasandra cluster, where the committee was established and already working on various initiatives. A qualitative approach worked best for this case study as our interest was in finding out how the cluster was responding to the committee. Our focus was more on teacher/community perceptions,

opinions and suggestions surrounding the committee than on the physical or tangible impacts of the committee's activities.

Interviews were conducted with teachers, administrators, members of the committee, as well as SDMC (School Development and Monitoring Committee) members. The data collection process also included field observations, notes, and conversations with Cluster Transformation Leads in Dommasandra. Once the data was cleaned, thematic coding was used to understand the patterns within the responses. The insights generated from the qualitative analysis are presented below and categorized according to themes that emerged in the analysis.

Analysis

Perceptions of the Cluster Development Committee: Goals and Impacts

Both teachers and members of the committee generally agreed on the goals and functions of the cluster development committee. Responses about the goals of the committee fell into four categories:

- Academic improvement: to improve quality of education in school and student performance across learning levels.
- Community: to communicate to parents and the larger community the value of government schools.
- Cluster improvement: to help the cluster function as a distributed school.
- Development: to help develop the school infrastructurally.

Most respondents also had a good understanding of what projects and initiatives the committee was involved in; even if the term “cluster development committee” was unfamiliar to some teachers, they all instantly recognized the committee's projects. The projects cited most were the enrolment drive and the summer camp — others include nalli kalli training, English training, and a cluster-wide newsletter. The enrolment drive was a cluster-wide procession aimed at promoting government schools and educating parents about the benefits of sending their kids to government schools. The drive has already begun

to show its impacts: teachers and school leaders from various schools expressed their enthusiasm over increased enrolment rates in their schools.

The summer camp was received with similar excitement. One teacher had a profound insight about how the program had opened up possibilities for students. She said:

“The kids liked it so much – they had never been to one of those camps before in their lives. I tell you that’s a plus point for me. The kids who come from this locality, they don’t have parents who give them the facility to take money and go to these summer camps. ... The kids learned a lot! There was entertainment, cultural events, crafts, it is useful in their life. Because their routine, where they live with their parents, live with their problems — if you teach them something new it makes them think that they can change in their life and future.”

In terms of their own duties, teachers also mentioned the revival of the Cluster Resource Center (CRC) as a source of relief in their everyday duties. The CRC was also set up with a computer, internet access, and printers, all of which frequently came up in the teachers’ responses. “We don’t have computers here, and in times of emergency we cannot do anything, so if we have to print something we go over there and take their support,” said one school leader who is also a member of the committee. Other teachers echoed the sentiment, saying that their administrative duties almost always required either internet or printing services; in this regard, especially, the CRC’s new facilities are of great help to them.



Image 1: A committee meeting in progress in the CRC.

Relationship with Community:

Members of the cluster development committee all reported smooth functioning overall: despite a few challenges relating to geographical distance of schools from the CRC and opposition from private schools in the area, the projects have all gone smoothly and more or less achieved their purposes. All the projects and initiatives that the committee has taken up have been need-based and thus supported by the teachers and the larger community. One teacher even mentioned increasing parent engagement as a result of the committee's initiatives — even though the parents of most students are daily workers with little time to spare, some of the well-to-do parents have come forward and keep in contact with the SDMC and cluster development committee.

When asked about what motivates the committee to keep working, a recurrent theme was the support and cooperation of the rest of the community. “Not just the teachers of Dommasandra, but even SDMC members support (the) committee and are involved as well, also the Panchayat members ... hence with everyone's good intentions and goodwill the committee will continue and do well,” said one committee member.



Image 2: Committee members present their cluster-wide newsletter.

Several committee members also said that the needs of the cluster were a motivating factor for members to continue their work. The members were united in their desire to keep working to meet those needs and solve the problems plaguing the cluster. Apart from this intrinsic motivation, there is also a culture of appreciation surrounding work done in the committee.

The project lead of PACE pointed to successful results as another source of motivation. “There is a lot of appreciation going on — every time they do something, their name is up/around ... I think they also found it easier to pool in the resources together. So once they saw a success, the second and third time it became [easier].” The committee thus draws inspiration and motivation from several possible sources.

Additionally, the working culture within the committee is positive and keeps the committee members appreciative of working with each other. Members see the committee as a “go-to space” for collective problem solving. One committee member said, “As a newcomer in 2017 when the committee was created, I was able to gather a lot of ideas on strengthening

my own school from other HMs.” Another added, “We are 12 members in the committee. There is no separate roles defined as such. They all meet and decide unanimously on what should be done next.”

The committee is thus extremely motivated to drive change in the cluster; the motivation stems both intrinsically and extrinsically. The dynamic between the members of the committee only helps further this motivation.

Relationship with Teachers:

Although aware of the various initiatives and projects being implemented, many teachers are not sure what the cluster development committee is. They may have heard of the committee, or recognize the name, but the committee itself is vague to them. Those teachers who did have an active interest in the committee expressed a desire to be a bigger part of it. Despite being open to everyone, the cluster development committee in Dommasandra cluster essentially functions as a committee for school leaders from each school to come together every month. One teacher said:

“Only HM ma’am interacts. We haven’t attended any trainings so we couldn’t interact with them there also. There is no direct interaction with them. Only in WhatsApp group we can interact with them. We can suggest ideas. If I get chance, I would like to join.”

Teachers across schools echoed the sentiment. “It would further benefit teachers greatly if such committees were created in individual schools too, so everyone could be a part of it,” said another teacher.

Teachers who are involved in the committee are usually only involved because they are standing in for a school leader or because of their seniority within their school. Interestingly, members of the committee had differing views on membership; while most said that

membership was open and that anyone could join, one school leader mentioned that it was enough for a representative for each school to be in the committee— the reasoning being that the school leaders would pass on updates to the teachers anyway. There is thus a difference in perceptions of membership rules (both formal and unspoken) within the committee.

Another feature of teachers' interviews about the cluster development committee was an ambiguity towards what the committee actually was — even among those who recognized and followed its work. Perhaps because of their lack of participation in the actual meetings, or because of the high visibility of CTLs in new cluster initiatives, teachers spoke of Mantra Social Services and the cluster development committee synonymously.

For example, one teacher described the enrolment drive like this: “ ... But we didn't do it like that. Along with Mantra Foundation, that is, the committee, we did a procession around the village. They told us to start 2018 admission right from then on, and after making lines we marched around.” This ambiguousness was reflected across multiple responses. When asked if she perceived a difference between Mantra and the committee, a teacher responded, “Nobody knows the difference... Together they work on every project.”

This trend points toward two insights. First, there seems to be a communication gap between committee members and teachers in terms of the logistics surrounding the committee. Second, fueled by the ambiguity around what the committee is, teachers are not yet seeing the committee as their own — to them, the committee remains an external fixture in their cluster.

Other than this discrepancy in perceptions of membership, however, the culture within the committee is seen as extremely positive by the teachers. Teachers remarked on three general aspects of the committee that they particularly appreciated (here, of course, it is important to keep in mind that the distinction between Mantra staff and the committee is still quite ambiguous):

- Relationship with teachers: Teachers reported an extremely positive working relationship with the cluster development committee. They feel comfortable making demands or requests, and several cited the committee's "helping nature" as a positive trait in members of the committee. Teachers also mentioned that committee members were usually easy to reach and were always available for help. They also trust the committee to act in the school's best interests: "Whatever they ask us about the children's education, they are always thinking about what's good and bad for the children - so we never feel like they are thinking something wrong for us. There is no question of them thinking something bad about our kids," said one school leader. Another common response was that the teachers felt respected and valued by the committee, particularly the CTLs. This trait makes it easy for the teachers to communicate freely and frequently with the committee.
- Impacts beyond dreams: Teachers also repeatedly expressed how the initiatives and projects of the cluster development committee were producing results beyond their imagination. Teachers' general excitement surrounding new projects such as the summer camp — something their students had never had before — is fueling their enthusiasm for future projects. "For poor children, this is a really good thing. We feel very happy thinking about all this, what is happening is more than we thought. For example, day before yesterday they gave us track shoes. We were so happy - wouldn't even have imagined in our dreams that these kids could be wearing 1000 rupee dresses," said a teacher. Teachers were excited about the exposure that their students were getting through projects like the camp, mock parliament, and even visits with members of the government to talk about their schools.
- Access: Teachers also honed in on an important aspect of what the committee does — give teachers access and exposure to other organizations working in the educational space. Rather than see the committee simply as a group of people appointed to solve the cluster's problems, teachers also recognize and appreciate that the committee can function as a bridge to other organizations. Overall, teachers were excited about the exposure that the committee promised: both for themselves in connection with other organizations, as well as for their students.

The Future of the Cluster Development Committee:

Teachers and committee members were both full of ideas for what initiatives the committee could get involved in in the future: several teachers mentioned spoken English training for students and student skill development programs in general. A few teachers simply wanted the current programs to continue, while another mentioned the reduction of teacher burden as a possible direction for future initiatives. Respondents across the board also saw private schools as a model for their own schools' future. Several teachers and school leaders compared what was happening in their schools to what was happening in private schools, using private schools as a measure of progress. There is widespread enthusiasm about all the things that the committee could accomplish in the coming months.

Members within the committee are also actively thinking about sustainability: a CTL recalled a conversation he had with a committee member where he was assured that the committee knew how to take over once Mantra was no longer in the picture. Members also are confident that the committee will continue to thrive even without external organizations in the cluster. Somewhat in contrast to that sentiment, however, is the fact that much of the committee's current work is initiated externally, usually by a CTL. When asked how the committee picks its projects, a committee member described it this way: "During CRP meetings, where all the HMs and committee members are present, and then we all discuss. Then they tell us the work that needs to be done and tell us that there is so-and-so NGO here today. So today this is our program." New ideas and initiatives are thus usually generated outside of the committee.

This external initiative could be a result simply of the fact that the committee is new and is taking time to come into its own — the members are in fact extremely committed and motivated — but a continuation of this pattern could go on to impact the effectiveness of the committee.

As many teachers observed, the committee is also currently defaulting towards being a committee of school leaders alone. As their presence in the committee grows, says a CTL, the focus on academics increases. This, along with the ambiguous membership rules, means

that teachers and community members are somewhat left out of the core decisions of the committee. If this trend continues, it could mean a redefinition of the original vision of inclusive system leadership that the committee was started with.

Conclusions

When considering how the cluster development committee has influenced cluster improvement, the results are overwhelmingly positive. The committee has not only brought about tangible results such as an increase in enrolment rates or the revival of the CRC, but has also brought about a general feeling of motivation and enthusiasm toward cluster-improvement projects in general. The committee is also still working towards being completely independent from external organizations such as Mantra, but the most significant pattern at this stage is teachers feeling disenfranchised from the core processes of the committee.

Currently, we could think of the cluster development committee as being at a crossroads. With membership rules remaining vaguely restrained, and the focus of the meeting turning more academic, the committee leaves very little for SDMC members or parents to contribute. This signals a turning point for the committee — going forward, it could either open up and increase its scope or close further into itself, in turn necessitating the formation of different committees for different purposes. Considering the current level of motivation and cooperation in the cluster, the possibilities for both options are optimistic.

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Notes

PACE - Project for Active Cluster Engagement.

HM -Headmaster/mistress.

FESL - Formal Education System Leader: government-appointed educational functionaries at the cluster level.

CTL - CLuster Transformation Lead: members of the field team of Project for Active Cluster Engagement.

SDMC - School Development and Monitoring Committee: government-mandated committee of elected representatives working for school improvement; includes students, community members, and school leaders.

CRP - Cluster Resource Person: government-appointed instructional leader.

CRC - Cluster Resource Center: government-mandated space with common resources for cluster-wide activities and/or events.

Annexure 1: Interview Tools

Structured Interview with Teachers in Dommasandra Cluster:

1. Tell me a bit about your work and position at this school.
2. What do you know about the cluster development committee?
3. How often do you interact with the committee?
4. What are some projects you have seen them involved in?
5. What has been the biggest impact of the committee's involvement in your cluster?
 - a. How has parent engagement with schools changed since the committee began its work?
 - b. How have students been influenced by the committee's activities?
6. Have you worked with the committee in any capacity? If so, elaborate.
7. What do you think are the goals/aims of the cluster development committee?
8. What kind of support does the committee get from other members within/outside schools?
9. What are some projects you want the cluster development committee to work on in the future?

Annexure 2: Sample of Thematic Coding

TEACHERS' RESPONSES
Whatever they ask us, about the childrens' education, they are always thinking about what's good and bad for the children - so we never feel like they are thinking something wrong for us. There is no question of them thinking something bad about our kids. When you come from outside, we would never tell you anything, whether it is committee or Mantra, so there's nothing like that.
with the committee, they have a helping nature. They are doing good work for the children, We mingle with NGOs also.
Nobody asks us why we're here, or what we're doing. They always invite us in. Mantra Foundation give us that respect, and their work is just as good. So we are very happy.
Wherever good work is going on, whatever message needs to be given, the committee does it very fast. Whatever happens in our schools, immediately they will go tell another school, look at Girls School in Dommasandra, all this has happened. You also do this, Whatsapping, messaging, programs for tomorrow message will be given in advance. There are solutions. Planning and communications are quite good.
I was involved in the committee from the beginning partly because of the absence of our HM. At present, I'm a part of the larger WhatsApp group that comprises of all teachers and HMs from the schools in our cluster (Dommasandra).
It would further benefit teachers greatly if such committees were created in individual schools too, so everyone could be a part of it.
Not yet, but I would love to if given the chance.
We are only in whatsapp group. Teachers don't know anything about us. Teachers will get some information which is very important alone from the HM. This is lagging. Teachers have to know what is going on in the committee. Everyone has different ideas. When she takes our ideas, also there will be diverse ideas.
Only HM mam interacts. We haven't attended any trainings so we couldn't interact with them there also. There is no direct interaction with them. Only in whatsapp group we can interact with them. We can suggest ideas. If I get chance I would like to join
There is zero communication gap. So they are always there, and whenever we ask a question, they are always responsive. They always support us. In fact, I want to ask, who teaches you at Mantra to do such good? I don't know but it's very good. They talk with us very well, give us a lot of respect.
Whenever they call, I come. They tell us that it's this way or that, we also accept, and give them suggestions, and then we take our suggestions together and are currently on a route like that.
Teachers are also added whoever active. In the whatsapp group I am there. In the community, only SDMC members and HMs
they come visit our schools any time, they ask if we have any problems; if there are any programmes then they give us information about it. Sometimes they come even on a weekly basis -- just this week, they came 2-3 times -- for example, to ask us about a programme, and to see if someone from our school wants to participate. If we need something, we can also contact them on the phone ...
They have a very helping nature. They are always ready to – whenever we ask, they will tell us yes, this way or that way. They help.

Image 1: After sorting through interview transcriptions, responses were cleaned and listed out.

THEMES	TEACHERS' RESPONSES
trust, belief in the committee	Whatever they ask us, about the childrens' education, they are always thinking about what's good and bad for the children - so we never feel like they are thinking something wrong for us. There is no question of them thinking something bad about our kids. When you come from outside, we would never tell you anything, whether it is the committee or Mantra, so there's nothing like that.
teachers want to be part of it	We are only in whatsapp group. Teachers don't know anything about us. Teachers will get some information which is very important alone from the HM. This is lagging. Teachers have to know what is going on in the committee. Everyone has different ideas. When she takes our ideas, also there will be diverse ideas.
committee relationship - helping nature	with the committee, they have a helping nature. They are doing good work for the children, We mingle with NGOs also.
relationship with teachers	Nobody asks us why we're here, or what we're doing. They always invite us in. Mantra Foundation give us that respect, and their work is just as good. So we are very happy.
teacher involvement	I was involved in the committee from the beginning partly because of the absence of our HM. At present, I'm a part of the larger WhatsApp group that comprises of all teachers and HMs from the schools in our cluster (Dommasandra).
teacher wants to be part of it	Not yet, but I would love to if given the chance.
communication of the committee, kind of mantra conflation	Wherever good work is going on, whatever message needs to be given, the committee does it very fast. Whatever happens in our schools, immediately they will go tell another school, look at Girls School in Dommasandra, all this has happened. You also do this, Whatsapping, messaging, programs for tomorrow message will be given in advance. There are solutions. Planning and communications are quite good.
teachers want to be part of it	Only HM mam interacts. We haven't attended any trainings so we couldn't interact with them there also. There is no direct interaction with them. Only in whatsapp group we can interact with them. We can suggest ideas. If I get chance I would like to join
communication, respect	There is zero communication gap. So they are always there, and whenever we ask a question, they are always responsive. They always support us. In fact, I want to ask, who teaches you at Mantra to do such good? I don't know but it's very good. They talk with us very well, give us a lot of respect.
relationship with teachers	Whenever they call, I come. They tell us that it's this way or that, we also accept, and give them suggestions, and then we take our suggestions together and are currently on a route like that.
teacher membership restricted to whatsapp	Teachers are also added whoever active. In the whatsapp group I am there. In the community, only SDMC members and HMs
relationship with school	they come visit our schools any time, they ask if we have any problems; if there are any programmes then they give us information about it. Sometimes they come even on a weekly basis -- just this week, they came 2-3 times -- for example, to ask us about a programme, and to see if someone from our school wants to participate. If we need something, we can also contact them on the phone ...
teachers want to be part of it	It would further benefit teachers greatly if such committees were created in individual schools too, so everyone could be a part of it.
relationship with teachers	They have a very helping nature. They are always ready to -- whenever we ask, they will tell us yes, this way or that way. They help.

Image 2: Codes were assigned to each response, and similar codes were grouped together.

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	TEACHERS' RESPONSES
Teacher involvement in the committee	teacher involvement	I was involved in the committee from the beginning partly because of the absence of our HM. At present, I'm a part of the larger WhatsApp group that comprises of all teachers and HMs from the schools in our cluster (Dommasandra).
	teachers want to be part of it	It would further benefit teachers greatly if such committees were created in individual schools too, so everyone could be a part of it.
	teacher wants to be part of it	Not yet, but I would love to if given the chance.
	teachers want to be part of it	We are only in whatsapp group. Teachers don't know anything about us. Teachers will get some information which is very important alone from the HM. This is lagging. Teachers have to know what is going on in the committee. Everyone has different ideas. When she takes our ideas, also there will be diverse ideas.
	teachers want to be part of it	Only HM mam interacts. We haven't attended any trainings so we couldn't interact with them there also. There is no direct interaction with them. Only in whatsapp group we can interact with them. We can suggest ideas. If I get chance I would like to join
	teacher membership restricted to whatsapp	Teachers are also added whoever active. In the whatsapp group I am there. In the community, only SDMC members and HMs
behavior of the committee; relationship with teachers	relationship with school	they come visit our schools any time, they ask if we have any problems; if there are any programmes then they give us information about it. Sometimes they come even on a weekly basis -- just this week, they came 2-3 times -- for example, to ask us about a programme, and to see if someone from our school wants to participate. If we need something, we can also contact them on the phone ...
	relationship with teachers	They have a very helping nature. They are always ready to -- whenever we ask, they will tell us yes, this way or that way. They help.
	communication, respect	There is zero communication gap. So they are always there, and whenever we ask a question, they are always responsive. They always support us. In fact, I want to ask, who teaches you at Mantra to do such good? I don't know but it's very good. They talk with us very well, give us a lot of respect.
	relationship with teachers	Whenever they call, I come. They tell us that it's this way or that, we also accept, and give them suggestions, and then we take our suggestions together and are currently on a route like that.
	trust, belief in committee	Whatever they ask us, about the childrens' education, they are always thinking about what's good and bad for the children - so we never feel like they are thinking something wrong for us. There is no question of them thinking something bad about our kids. When you come from outside, we would never tell you anything, whether it is the committee or Mantra, so there's nothing like that.
	committee's relationship - helping nature	with the committee, they have a helping nature. They are doing good work for the children, We mingle with NGOs also.
	relationship with teachers	Nobody asks us why we're here, or what we're doing. They always invite us in. Mantra Foundation give us that respect, and their work is just as good. So we are very happy.
	communication of the committee, kind of mantra conflation	Wherever good work is going on, whatever message needs to be given, the committee does it very fast. Whatever happens in our schools, immediately they will go tell another school, look at our school in Dommasandra, all this has happened. You also do this, Whatsapping, messaging, programs for tomorrow message will be given in advance. There are solutions. Planning and communications are quite good.

Image 3: As the codes came together to make a pattern, responses were grouped according to similarity.