

# Involvement in Participation of The Family Committee in School Education Management: Basis for an Improved School Education Management

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*Abstract* — In 2010, the first primary school in Zhongguancun started to establish a class family committee, with each class having a family committee. The Family Committee works with the principal, faculty, and administration, or school management in general, to create a successful partnership between home and school. The Family Committee's lack of involvement in the management of the school's educational program causes an increase in the number of problems, all of which are detrimental to the students. Problems had been identified at Beijing Zhongguancun Primary School for some time, but measures of existing actions and instruments had not been evaluated. Furthermore, no scientific research, specifically a mixed methods study, was conducted with the participation of the Family Committee to improve School Education Management. Therefore, this research was executed to know the problems and measures of participation of the Family Committee in school education management in Beijing Zhongguancun Primary School as basis for an improved school education management. The study used a mixed methods research design tapping 376 parents who are members of the Family Committee during the school year 2022-2023. Both survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were utilized in the implementation of the study. Results revealed that family committee are somewhat involved in the school education management in terms of curriculum development, facilities improvement, student activities, family committee participation and community involvement. In terms of sex, nature of employment and educational attainment, there were no significant differences on their participation and involvement in school education management in terms of curriculum development, facilities improvement, student activities, family committee participation and community involvement except for the variable age. These results were further explained by their experiences extracted from the conducted semi-structured interview. Their experiences show that other family committee members are involved, but not everyone participates and is involved. From on the results of the study, the school managers are recommended to craft programs that will fully involve family committee members in strengthening school programs that will benefit everyone in the school and the community thus an improved school education management is proposed.

*Keywords* — *School Education Management, Curriculum Development, Students' Activities, Family Committee, School Facilities, Community Involvement*

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## I. Introduction

Parental involvement in education and school administration fosters transparency, adapts to family needs, and promotes a shared responsibility for education. European laws recognize and protect parents' rights to be involved in schools, allowing them to participate in school boards and councils. Family Committees, collaborating with school management, help create successful home-school partnerships. Research shows that students perform better when parents and teachers work together. Parents' Councils can provide guidance on matters like bullying, security, and enrollment. The importance of strong alliances between schools, communities, and families is evident in various studies, emphasizing improved student academic achievement. National education policies, such as the National Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020), call for the establishment of parent committees in primary and secondary schools. In line with this policy, Beijing has actively promoted the formation of Parent Committees, with the implementation of a three-level parent committee system in primary and secondary schools. This initiative underscores the government's commitment to involving parents in school education management.

The implementation opinions led to the rapid establishment of parent committees in primary and secondary schools in Beijing, such as Zhongguancun No.1 Primary School in 2010. However, despite recognizing problems in school education management, there has been no mixed-methods research conducted to improve it through Family Committee participation. Empirical research on the impact of family committees in school education management in China is lacking, as is understanding the factors affecting their involvement, and the barriers and challenges they face. Many studies carried out over time have stressed the crucial role of fostering a robust alliance among schools, communities, and families. The primary objective of this collaboration is to enhance students' academic achievements. Recognizing the significance of collaboration, the National Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) has emphasized the creation of parent committees in primary and secondary schools as a crucial component in upgrading the education system. Additionally, the Ministry of Education's Guiding Opinions on the Establishment of Revised: Parent Committees are an essential component of the modern school system and should be actively promoted and encouraged in primary and secondary schools as well as kindergartens. Moreover, wherever possible, schools should endeavor to establish parent committees. The provisions and norms applicable to the formation of parent committees at the national education policy level reflect the importance that the government places on this initiative. The implementation of this policy has effectively facilitated the establishment of parent committees in primary and secondary schools across the country.

There is limited knowledge about the potential benefits of family committee participation in managing school education, such as improved student performance, parental engagement, and school-community connections. Given the importance of parental committee participation in educational governance and the existing research gap, it is crucial to study the factors influencing participation, barriers to effective involvement, and potential impact on students, parents, and

schools. This research aimed to identify problems and measures of Family Committee participation in school education management at Beijing Zhongguancun Elementary School to improve it. The theory of collaborative education highlights the roles and synergy of families, schools, and communities in the education system, providing a framework for understanding various issues, such as why parents' committees should participate, what to participate in, and how to effectively participate. The Family Committee, as an essential part of Beijing Zhongguancun Primary School, helps advance children's academic success and wellbeing. Members work to enhance programs and services, improving School Education Management. This study, anchored in the theory of collaborative education, explores the Family Committee's involvement in school management, including curriculum development, facilities improvement, student activities, and community involvement.

This research aimed to identify the problems and extent of the Family Committee's involvement in school education management at Beijing Zhongguancun Primary School. Specifically, the study addressed the following questions: 1) What is the demographic profile of the Family Committee members in terms of age, sex, nature of employment, and highest educational attainment? 2) What is the extent of the Family Committee members' involvement in school management concerning curriculum development, facilities improvement, student activities, Family Committee involvement, and community involvement? 3) Are there significant differences in the extent of involvement in participation of the Family Committee members in school management when grouped according to their demographic profile? 4) How do participants describe their experiences regarding the involvement of Family Committee members in school management? 5) What themes emerged based on participants' responses?

## II. Methodology

This section outlines the research processes used in this research, including the research design, research location, population and sample, participants, research tools, validation and reliability of research tools, data collection procedures, and statistical analysis of the data.

### Type of Research

The study employed a mixed-methods research approach to comprehensively investigate the research problem. It combines both quantitative and qualitative research methods within a single study. The research was carried out at a primary school in Beijing's Haidian District, specifically at Zhongguancun Primary School. This school is of significant size, comprising 117 teaching classes and employing nearly 300 teaching staff to serve its student body of 5248. The participants in the study consisted of the members of the Family Committee at Beijing Zhongguancun Primary School for the 2022-2023 academic year.

### Respondents/ Sampling Method/ Sources of Data

The sample size was determined using Sloven's Formula, and in the quantitative stage, simple random sampling was employed to select a smaller group from the larger target population. The qualitative stage utilized the nested sampling technique, where the participants selected for an interview were subsets of the participants chosen for the quantitative phase of this research. The research work involved 376 parents who are members of the Family Committee during the school year 2022-2023. This is based on the students' population of 5248 students. From the qualitative sample, 5 parents were the participants in the qualitative method. These participants were selected as part of the nested sample of the study. The parents who were tapped for interview were randomly selected from the existing pool of respondents in the quantitative phase of the study.

### **Instrument**

The survey questionnaires are researcher-made instruments. The research instrument is divided into three (3) parts namely Demographic Profile, Involvement in Participation of the Family Committee Members in School Management Scale (IPFCMSMS) and semi-structured interview. The research instruments will have English and Mandarin translations. This survey questionnaire is a researcher-made instrument based on the extent of involvement in participation of the family committee members in school management. It is a self-report tool consisting of 25 items which is divided into 5 subscales namely (1) curriculum development, indicators 1 to 5; (2) facilities improvement, indicators 6 to 10; (3) student activities, indicators 11 to 15; (4) family committee involvement, indicators 16 to 20; and (5) community involvement, indicators 21 to 25. This tool also uses 4-point Likert Scale and total score for each subscale should be calculated. Below is the figure that shows the scale, range modal response and verbal interpretation that the instrument will use. Thematic questioning is a data collection method that follows a predetermined thematic framework but does not require a specific order or phrasing for the questions. This involves three (5) central questions formulated by the researchers that focused on the personal experiences of the Family Committee members in relation to the involvement in participation in School Education Management. Interview questions were checked by an expert in qualitative studies especially in thematic approach.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The primary methodology of this research was based on the mixed methods design. The first phase was the quantitative method which uses descriptive and comparative analysis. The second phase was the qualitative method which utilized a descriptive and thematic analysis. Integration of quantitative and qualitative results were conducted. Frequency and percentage were utilized to describe demographic profiles of the parent-respondents. To describe the extent of the problems and the effectiveness of the measures implemented, the researchers utilized the weighted mean as the statistical treatment. Analysis of Variance was used to measure the results of the extent of involvement in participation of the family committee members in school management according to the respondents' profile. Thematic analysis was used to determine the patterns or themes that are important in the study. It further explained and interpreted the quantitative results of the study.

Thematic analysis, as defined by Caufield (2019), is a qualitative method for analyzing data that is typically applied to a collection of texts, such as interview transcripts.

### III. Results and Discussion

This part of the study presents the findings of the research. The interpretation and analysis of the results of this undertaking were also discussed in this section.

#### 1. What is the demographic profile of the Family Committee members in terms of age, sex, nature of employment, and highest educational attainment?

In terms of age, 17.18% of the respondents are aged above 60 years old (27 of 376), 16.49% are 51–60 years of age (62 of 376), 33.51% are from 41–50 years old (126 of 376), 30.32% are 31–40 years of age (114 of 376) and 12.5% are aged 26–30 years old (47 of 376). The data reveals that most of the survey participants fall within the age bracket of 41 to 50 years old, which aligns with the information presented in a 2020 report by China Daily. According to the report, the typical age for Chinese men and women to get married for the first time was roughly 29.38 and 27.95 years old, respectively. According to the World Data Atlas, the average age of childbearing in China was 27.64 years in 2020. This implies that Chinese couples who are married will have children in the primary level when they are approximately 41–50 years old. Age of pregnancy of China fell slowly from 29.46 years in 1975 to 27.64 years in 2020.

In terms of sex, 20.74% are male (78 of 376) and 79.26% are female (298 of 376). Evidently, majority of the respondents are female as traditionally, in China, the mother's role was to fulfill domestic duties and care for the children (Chara Scroope & Nina Evason, Cultural Atlas, 2017). In China, the slogan "women hold up half the sky," which originated from socialist ideology, laid the groundwork for women's involvement in education, as noted by Zhang et al. (2018). The lower percentage of Chinese father (male) who participated in the school activities may be due to a very strong traditional ties among Chinese. According to Zhiang's (2019) research, almost half (45.1%) of fathers were found to be inactive in their children's education, while over a quarter (25.8%) did not have enough time to spend with their children. The study also identified a correlation between father involvement in education and their occupation and education level. Regarding the nature of employment, the data indicates that 84.31% of the respondents (317 out of 376) are currently employed, while 15.69% (59 out of 376) are self-employed. This suggests that a significant majority of the participants are employed, which can be attributed to the Chinese government's prioritization of employment as a crucial component of people's livelihood and societal stability (Yan Di, n.d.). However, the employment rate in China has seen a slight decline in recent years, dropping from 64.84% in the previous year to approximately 64.77% in 2021. Despite the overall improvement in working conditions, China's working-age population has been steadily decreasing, which can be attributed to the country's low birth rate despite rapid economic growth (Textor, 2022).



In terms of highest educational attainment, 0.8% are primary graduates (3 of 376), 8.78% are lower secondary graduates (33 of 376), 18.88% are upper secondary graduates (71 of 376), 41.49% are Tertiary – Bachelor’s degree graduates (156 of 376), 20.21% are Tertiary – Master’s degree graduates (76 of 376) and 9.84% are Tertiary – Doctoral degree (37 of 376). It seems that the majority of the participants, amounting to 41.49%, hold a Bachelor's degree from a tertiary institution. According to Xinhua (2022), China's high enrollment rate in higher education, which reached 57.8% in 2021, is consistent with the results of the study. The State Council of the People's Republic of China further reports that there are currently over 44.3 million students enrolled in higher education institutions across the country, making China's higher education system the largest in the world. Additionally, the enrollment rates of 18-year-olds, 19-year-olds, and 20-year-olds in tertiary education were 28%, 39%, and 40%, respectively, in 2019, which is considerably higher than the average rates of 18%, 34%, and 39% among OECD countries (OECD-ilibrary, 2021).

## **2. What is the extent of the Family Committee members' involvement in school management concerning curriculum development, facilities improvement, student activities, Family Committee involvement, and community involvement?**

It is evident that the family committee members were “somewhat involved” in the development of a comprehensive plan for the school that sets goals for academic and social standard (Indicator 1,  $\bar{x}=2.37$ ,  $\sigma=14.8$ ), in determining educational objectives, academic priorities, and teachers’ qualification (Indicator 2,  $\bar{x}=2.32$ ,  $\sigma=15.5$ ) and, in the selection of instructional and reference materials (Indicator 3,  $\bar{x}=2.50$ ,  $\sigma=14.9$ ). Consequently, the family committee members were “involved” in the conception of co-curricular activities (Indicator 4,  $\bar{x}=3.24$ ,  $\sigma=15.1$ ). While, they were “highly involved” in the design of extra-curricular activities (Indicator 5,  $\bar{x}=3.34$ ,  $\sigma=15.3$ ). The overall assessment of the extent of the involvement in participation of the family committee members in school management in terms of curriculum development is “involved” ( $\bar{x}=2.76$ ,  $\sigma=14.8$ ). The findings indicate that members of the family committee are actively engaged in contributing to the development of the school's curriculum management. Parental involvement has been consistently shown to have a significant positive impact on the academic performance of their children. This was demonstrated in a meta-analysis of over fifty studies that focused on high school parent involvement (Delgado, 2019). The findings revealed that parental engagement in their child's education was associated with better academic achievement, higher attendance rates, and improved behavior. Furthermore, the positive effects of parental involvement were evident across diverse populations, including low-income families, ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities. Therefore, encouraging parental involvement is crucial for promoting academic success and improving educational outcomes. Parents have unique insights into their children's strengths and weaknesses, making their involvement in curriculum development as co-implementers and supporters critical for enhancing student learning and shaping their behaviors (Beah, n.d.).

The result of the study shows that the family committee members were “involved” in the four (4) indicator statements presented, i.e., providing financial contribution in the facilities development (Indicator 6,  $\bar{x}=2.55$ ,  $\sigma=14.87$ ), participating in facility development projects like classroom painting, landscaping (Indicator 7,  $\bar{x}=2.55$ ,  $\sigma=14.68$ ), looking for donations and sponsors for the procurement/construction of school facilities (Indicator 8,  $\bar{x}=2.58$ ,  $\sigma=15.18$ ), and in involving in any way in the maintenance and repair of school facilities (Indicator 10,  $\bar{x}=2.51$ ,  $\sigma=14.70$ ). On the other hand, the family committee members were “somewhat involved” in determining what facilities students will need (Indicator 9,  $\bar{x}=2.48$ ,  $\sigma=15.46$ ). The overall assessment of the extent of involvement in participation of the family committee members in school management in terms of facilities improvement is “involved” ( $\bar{x}=2.52$ ,  $\sigma=14.98$ ). The findings suggest that Family Committee members actively participate in enhancing the school's facilities. Eslabon's (2019) research shows that parents' involvement in improving the learning environment is grounded in their belief that they should be contributing to the provision of facilities that would aid the school. Nonetheless, only a quarter of the parents were observed to be actively involved in school development.

Based on the assessment, parents' family committee members were “involved” in four (4) indicator statements, i.e., giving financial contributions for students' programs and activities (Indicator 11,  $\bar{x}=3.23$ ,  $\sigma=14.78$ ), contributing financially to the students' programs or extracurricular activities (Indicator 12,  $\bar{x}=3.22$ ,  $\sigma=14.97$ ), planning or decision-making processes for student activities (Indicator 13,  $\bar{x}=2.64$ ,  $\sigma=15.42$ ), and in taking part in the monitoring or evaluation of student activities (Indicator 14,  $\bar{x}=2.55$ ,  $\sigma=14.69$ ). While, the committee family members were “somewhat involved” in the development of student handbooks and school policies (Indicator 15,  $\bar{x}=2.45$ ,  $\sigma=15.20$ ). The overall assessment on the extent of participation of the family committee members in school management in terms of student activities is “involved” ( $\bar{x}=2.82$ ,  $\sigma=15.01$ ).

The family committee members were “involved” in four (4) indicator statements such as requiring member's attendance during Family Committee's meetings, programs and events (Indicator 16,  $\bar{x}=2.93$ ,  $\sigma=14.94$ ), having parent-teacher conferences and events (Indicator 17,  $\bar{x}=2.76$ ,  $\sigma=15.44$ ), having informational campaign about its programs and activities (Indicator 18,  $\bar{x}=3.11$ ,  $\sigma=14.57$ ), and taking part on board of regent meetings (Indicator 19,  $\bar{x}=2.54$ ,  $\sigma=14.18$ ). However, the family committee members were “somewhat involved” in student disciplinary and formation processes (Indicator 20,  $\bar{x}=2.48$ ,  $\sigma=15.80$ ). The overall evaluation of family members committee in school management in terms of family community involvement is “involved” ( $\bar{x}=2.76$ ,  $\sigma=14.99$ ).

The study findings suggest that the family committee members are actively participating in the school management, specifically in the context of family committee involvement. These results are consistent with the findings of Delgado's (2019) study, which showed that although parental involvement can have a positive impact on students, it can also have negative

consequences. Some parents may become overly involved, frequently contacting teachers to monitor their children's progress, which can consume a considerable amount of the teacher's time and potentially harm the self-esteem of both the teacher and the student.

The table shows the outcome of the study on the extent of participation of the family committee members in school management in terms of community involvement as evaluated by three hundred seventy-six (376) parents' committee members. Five indicator statements were presented to the parents' committee members for them to evaluate.

The family committee members were "involved" in contributing financially to any of the school's community initiatives (Indicator 21,  $\bar{x}=3.20$ ,  $\sigma=14.90$ ), formulating plans or in making decisions regarding community involvement initiatives (Indicator 22,  $\bar{x}=2.72$ ,  $\sigma=15.44$ ), and in participating in social gatherings that promote school-community relations (Indicator 24,  $\bar{x}=2.72$ ,  $\sigma=14.19$ ). On the contrary, the family committee members were "somewhat involved" in overseeing and evaluation of community-based initiatives (Indicator 23,  $\bar{x}=2.50$ ,  $\sigma=14.67$ ) and, hosting special events like health fairs, techno nights, or other learning opportunities to educate parents and families about available resources and services (Indicator 25,  $\bar{x}=2.45$ ,  $\sigma=15.81$ ).

### **3. Are there significant differences in the extent of involvement in participation of the Family Committee members in school management when grouped according to their demographic profile?**

The study used ANOVA to analyze the involvement of family committees in school management in curriculum development and facilities improvement, with a focus on age-based differences. Results showed significant differences in involvement based on age for two curriculum development indicators, specifically, goal-setting for academic and social standards and selecting instructional materials. However, no significant differences were observed for other indicators like educational objectives, academic priorities, and extra-curricular activities. In facilities improvement, significant differences were found across all indicators for different age groups. For student activities, no significant differences were found in the family committee's involvement when grouped by age, suggesting that family committees do not significantly impact students' programs and activities. Significant differences were observed in the first and third indicators of family committee involvement related to attendance and informational campaigns when grouped by age. In community involvement, significant differences were found in the first and sixth indicators related to financial contributions and hosting special events. The Tukey Pos Hoc analysis showed that respondents in the 51-60 age group were more involved in hosting special events compared to the 26-30 age group. This suggests that age may play a role in the family committee's involvement in school management. The study investigated the family committee's involvement in school management, focusing on curriculum development and its relationship to respondents' highest educational attainment. Using ANOVA, significant differences were found in two out of five curriculum development indicators. Tukey Post Hoc analysis revealed that respondents with lower-secondary education had higher involvement in



facilities improvement, while those with tertiary-doctorate education had lower involvement. No significant differences were found in the involvement of the family committee in managing student activities when grouped by age. Additionally, the family committee's involvement in community initiatives was not affected by members' educational attainment.

#### **4. How do participants describe their experiences regarding the involvement of Family Committee members in school management?**

Participants described their involvement in the Family Committee's involvement in managing school education. It was revealed that some of them are somewhat involved in curriculum development, facility improvement, student activities, family commitment, and community involvement, but that some do not participate in any of the aspects of the school management program. Participants discussed their involvement in the family committee's involvement in managing school education. It was revealed that some of them are somewhat involved in curriculum development, facility improvement, student activities, family commitment, and community involvement, but that some do not participate in any of the aspects of the school management program.

#### **5. What themes emerged based on participants' responses?**

**Table 1. Superordinate Themes and Subthemes of the family committee members on their Involvement in Participation of the family committee in school education management**

<b>Superordinate Themes</b>	<b>Subthemes</b>
<b>Curriculum Development</b>	Leaders' Role and Responsibility Localization and Contextualization Philosophy of Education as Foundation Creation of Education Framework Establishment of Research and Development Holistic Evaluation Mastery of Lesson Exposure of Students to Different Types of Learning Inclusion And Participation in The Development of Curriculum Integration of Technology in Teaching No Participation in Curriculum Development
<b>Facilities Improvement</b>	Improving Students Learning and Communication Classroom Set Up Appreciation of Additional New Facilities No Consultation from Family Committee as facilities are paid by the government Helping Maintain Cleanliness and Orderliness of Classroom Development of Students' Spaces

<b>Students' Activities</b>	Strengthening Cultural, Ideological and Moral Foundation of Students Hands on Organization and Participation in Students' Activities Formation of Study Groups and Interest Groups Spirit of Volunteerism During Students' Activities (Listening, Suggesting and Sharing Best Practices)
<b>Family Commitment</b>	Designing, supervising, and monitoring Communication with parents, meeting, follow up Adherence to the family commitment plan Educating the children
<b>Community Involvement</b>	All Out Support to Community Activities Parent's Appreciation of Teacher's Expertise and Help in Educating the Community Volunteerism

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The following themes were generated. For curriculum development the subthemes were leaders' role and responsibility, localization and contextualization, philosophy of education as foundation, creation of education framework, establishment of research and development, holistic evaluation, mastery of lesson, exposure of students to different types of learning, inclusion, and participation in the development of curriculum, integration of technology in teaching, no participation in curriculum development. for the faculty's improvement, the generated subthemes were improving students learning and communication, classroom set up, appreciation of additional new facilities, no consultation from family committee, helping maintain cleanliness and orderliness of classroom; and development of students' spaces. In terms of student's activities, the emerged subthemes were strengthening cultural, ideological, and moral foundation of students, hands on organization and participation in students' activities, formation of study groups and interest groups; and spirit of volunteerism during students' activities (listening, suggesting and sharing best practices). for family commitment, the subthemes were designing, supervising, and monitoring, communication with parents, meeting, follow up, adherence to the family commitment plan and educating the children. lastly for the community involvement, the subthemes were all out support to community activities, parent's appreciation of teacher's expertise and help in educating the community and volunteerism.

#### IV. Conclusion

The study found that Family Committee members, predominantly female and working professionals with a bachelor's degree or higher, were preoccupied with career, family, and personal obligations, limiting their involvement in school education management. They were somewhat active in curriculum creation and more involved in extracurricular activities, while lacking participation in other areas like facility improvement and student activities planning. Age significantly influenced their participation, as older members had less availability. The research revealed significant differences in family committee involvement based on age, but not sex or employment type. It also showed that lower-secondary educated respondents were more involved in some areas than those with tertiary education. However, no significant differences were found based on age or educational attainment in student activities and community involvement.

Schools should focus on improving family committee involvement by addressing attendance, informational campaigns, financial contributions, and hosting special events. The family committee remains an essential partner in school-community relations and can contribute to various community initiatives to enhance the school's academic and social standards. Further research is needed to understand the factors influencing family committee involvement in school management programs.

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