

Educational governance mustn't regress

Don't relax qualifications for chairpersons of governing bodies

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We are concerned by recent discussions about relaxing the educational qualifications for chairpersons of the managing committees and governing bodies of private educational institutions. The Ministry of Education is reportedly considering lowering the requirement for chairpersons of these committees to hold at least a bachelor's degree, with some proposals even suggesting the complete removal of formal qualifications. This has raised serious concerns among education experts about the impact this change may have on the quality of education.

We have nearly 35,000 private institutions functioning at the secondary and college levels. They are governed by managing committees and governing bodies, which oversee almost all administrative and operational tasks—from fund collection and teacher appointments to payroll approval, budget management, and the maintenance of school assets. Chairpersons of these bodies are expected to lead effectively, ensuring that schools provide quality education and sound management.



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In the past, no formal educational qualification was required to become the chairperson of a private educational institution's managing committee. However, in May 2024, regulations mandated at least a higher secondary certificate for chairpersons. This requirement was later raised to include bachelor's or master's degrees, depending on the level of the institution. These changes were intended to improve leadership and uphold educational standards. Relaxing these requirements now risks reversing progress and undermining governance at a time when the sector is already struggling to maintain quality. This also raises a crucial question of whether the proposed relaxation intends to allow politically affiliated individuals to occupy these positions.

Our education system has long suffered from policy gaps and a lack of consistent reforms. Although various commissions were formed during the interim government's tenure to drive reforms across various sectors, the education sector was overlooked. Furthermore, low investment has left both public and private institutions struggling to meet even basic educational standards. Therefore, the government must avoid decisions that could prove detrimental to the sector in the long run.

It must prioritise genuine reforms in the education sector, protecting it from political influence, and ensure that qualified and capable individuals fill leadership positions. Any decision that lowers standards would be deeply damaging to the sector. Instead, the focus should be on strengthening governance, providing leadership training, and enabling private institutions to deliver quality education. We hope the government will refrain from taking a decision that undermines the standards of our education system.