

# Institutionalisation of School Based Management: Implementation in Indonesia

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**Abstract**—School based management (SBM) is one strategy for providing school and community with more opportunities to make decisions that determine the goals and future direction of the school by relocation decision-making authority. This paper examines the concept of SBM, approaches and processes for its institutionalisation and provide the example of implementation in Indonesia. SBM can improve educational outcomes by improving accountability of principals and teachers to students, also parents and teachers by allowing local decision-makers to determine the appropriate inputs so that the education policies can be suitable to local realities and needs. The process of SBM implementation should begin by defining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the SBM team members, so the whole stakeholders can understand what SBM is and how it is implemented. After SBM implemented in Indonesia there is an increased of school attendance, created a sense of responsibility, raised the level of trust, motivation and support from parents and the community and raised the amount of funding from the community to support their schools. However, SBM implementation is not a simple effort and should be carried out under right condition. To create a school-level decision making team, should be composed of representatives from a variety of stakeholder groups which may need several stages and requires support of different level of governance as well as the community.

**Keywords**—school-based management, institutionalisation, SBM implementation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The decentralisation and devolution of authority to school level have emerged as a phenomenon in most education systems since 1980s. This has occurred in the search of strategies to improve student outcomes and the effectiveness of the school systems. School-based management (SBM) is one strategy for providing school and community with more opportunities to make decisions that determine the goals and future direction of the school by relocation of decision-making authority [1].

This paper examines the concept of SBM, approaches and processes for its institutionalisation. The first part provides definition and origins of SBM, followed by rationales for SBM implementation. Next part discusses approaches and processes

for introduction and institutionalisation of SBM, including some recommendations in implementation and subsequently SBM implementation in Indonesia, as a concrete sample of SBM institutionalisation. Conclusion is drawn at the last part.

### A. Definition

There are many definitions have been proposed in the literatures for SBM as a consequence of various experiences in SBM implementation [2]. SBM as well as the concept of decentralisation, devolution, democratisation of school management is a continuous process of centralisation to decentralisation and there is no ideal or absolute implementation model [3]. Thus, this might resulted in different definition of SBM in educational practice.

SBM consist of delegation as its fundamental feature and may be defined as “a decentralised organisational structure in which the power and decisions formerly made by the superintendent and school board are delegated to the teachers, principal, parents, community members, and students of the local school” [4]. Accordingly, SBM can be described as a set of practices to involve more people in the school decision making processes which consist of delegation of power in certain extent to school level [5].

SBM decentralisation to the school level of authority and responsibility includes “significant matters related to school operations within a centrally determined framework of goals, policies, curriculum, standards, and accountability” [6]. In current practices, SBM transfers the authority over financial management, human resources development, curriculum development, textbook and other educational material procurement, infrastructure upgrading and enhance academic schedule development which meet the specific needs of the local community. Moreover, SBM not only conducts the monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance and student learning outcomes but also includes development plans, grants, and sometimes information dissemination of educational results [7].

Thus, definitions and descriptions of SBM seem to consist following elements:

- Is a form of district organisation
- Alters the governance of education which represents a shift of authority toward decentralization.
- Identifies the school as the primary unit of educational change
- Moves increased decision-making power to the local school site [8].

SBM accommodates the delegation of authority to schools within a centrally coordinated framework in order to increase schools' control over the educational processes and its correspondence to the local needs [9]. This is based on an assumption that schools' relevancy for pupils is most likely to increase when they are able to control their budget and personnel and to plan their educational agenda in accordance with the local needs which presented by parents, students and people of the local community. Therefore, it is believed that SBM is fundamental for school effectiveness.

### *B. Origins*

School-based management is not a new initiative. An idea of community control over the local school emerged in the United States around the mid-17th century [10]. The origins of SBM may be found in the demands for decentralisation and community control of schools and the school-site budgeting plans in the United States [11].

Some early forms of SBM began to appear in 1970s which continued during educational reforms of the 1980s [12]. Since the late 1980s, the concept of SBM has become a major theme and has been largely accepted as a policy initiative in school reforms in a significant number of education systems [10]. SBM can be viewed as a strategy of community participation, decentralisation or teacher empowerment, SBM has been on the educational reform agenda for last decades and has become a major change initiative implemented in a large number of educational systems around the world [13].

After initial implementation in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, SBM currently have been implemented and developed in a number of countries in Asia and Africa. The goals of the SBM programs are vary among countries, however the common characteristics are: increasing the participation of parents and communities in schools, empowering principals and teachers, building local level capacity, and improving quality and efficiency of schools to improve student achievement levels proportionately more than is customary [7].

## II. RATIONALES AND BENEFITS

Rationales driving the tendency to SBM are include demand for less control and uniformity and an associated demand for greater freedom and differentiation, concern in reducing the size, the cost of maintaining a large central bureaucracy, commitment to empower the community, and

desire to achieve higher levels of professionalism at the school level [6]. SBM is rising from two propositions:

- 1) *The school is the principal decision making unit; and*
- 2) *Ownership is required in change and it may arise from chance to contribute in defining change and flexibility to adapt the change with individual conditions* [14]. In other words, SBM is a result from efforts which are conducted to change highly centralised bureaucratic educational systems, which tend to characterized by apathy, inefficiency, and long delays for any decisions, even for only a small problem [8]. The centralized structures also fail to encourage school personnel to have the requirement attitudes and behaviours to bestow the educational improvements. Summary of rationales for implementing SBM which is drawn from studies of several scholars are:

- The school is the primary unit of change.
- Those who work directly with students have the most informed and credible opinions as to what educational arrangements will be most beneficial to those students.
- Significant and lasting improvement takes considerable time, and local schools are in the best position to sustain improvement efforts over time.
- The school principal is a key figure in school improvement.
- Significant change is brought about by staff and community participation in project planning and implementation.
- School-based management supports the professionalism of the teaching profession and vice versa, which can lead to more desirable schooling outcomes.
- School-based management structures keep the focus of schooling where it belongs on achievement and other student outcomes.
- Alignment between budgets and instructional priorities improves under school-based management [8].

It is conceivable that SBM can improve educational outcomes by improving accountability of principals and teachers to students, parents and teachers by allowing local decision-makers to determine the appropriate inputs and education policies which are adapted to local realities and needs [7].

Based on the research conducted in Australia, found that SBM has created more autonomous and effective schools compared to centralised bureaucratic schools. Representative governing body at the school structures have encouraged wider involvement of parents and community [15]. Consequently, there are five most recurrent arguments to defend the introduction of SBM, which are: more democratic as allowing teachers and parents to take decisions rather than to keep it in the hands of a select group of central-level officials, more

relevant, less bureaucratic, provide stronger accountability, and allowing greater resource mobilization [2].

### III. APPROACHES AND PROCESSES IN INSTITUTIONALISATION

The literature of change and innovation clearly note that implementation of SBM involves not only change the visible forms of school's operational, such as instruction or school climate, but also alter the patterns of school culture and the mind-sets which inspire everyday behaviour in the school [11]. Practical approaches of SBM advocate the increase of autonomy in a number of areas expected to form their organisational behaviour. These include school flexibility in determining their curriculum and educational agenda, principal authority regarding human resources, parental involvement in the school management, and financial autonomy which consist the increase of governmental budgets and let the school to search financial resources from private sector or outside governmental budget [9].

SBM means that the management task of the school are tailored to suit with the characteristics and needs of the school and consequently stakeholders have a wider autonomy and responsibility for the use of resources to solve problems and conduct effective academic activities for long-term development of the school [16].

Based on research of some experts, the approaches to SBM are as follows: (1) puts real authority in the hands of largely representative stakeholder groups, (2) assures that those groups receive the training and resources they need to exercise that authority well, it is expected can improve school governance, operations, and outcomes [8]. In the line of this argument, there are some key factors that associated with successful implementation of SBM, which are include:

- A vision focused on teaching and learning that is coordinated with student performance standards.
- Decision-making authority used to change the core areas of schooling.
- Power distributed throughout the school.
- The development of teachers' knowledge and skills that is oriented toward change, a professional learning community, and shared knowledge.
- Mechanisms for collecting and communicating information related to school priorities.
- Monetary and non-monetary rewards to acknowledge progress toward school goals.
- Shared school leadership among administrators and teachers.
- Resources from outside the school [17].

The process of SBM implementation should begins by defining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the SBM team members, so all stakeholders can understand what SBM is

and how it is implemented. This can be achieved by training program, such as pre-service and in-service training for school leaders, and training for school-board members. After such understanding be ensured, school and district leaders must be encouraging of SBM and make sure that communication channels continuously open and give the SBM time to succeed, with at least a 3-year period of transition [1].

In addition to the school readiness for implementing SBM, there are outline for four external elements that must be systemically incorporated:

- Maintain decentralisation;
- Provide for local capacity-building;
- Establish rigorous external accountability;
- Stimulate access to innovation [18].

The research-based recommendations for implementation of SBM in schools and districts consist of:

- Recommendations to States: States have significant power to help SBM to succeed by providing real support of the concept and practice.
- Recommendations to school districts: Research indicates that districts can increase the possibility of success implementation of SBM by several actions, such as communicate to all educational stakeholders in the district about SBM, delegate real authority to schools to make decisions and plan, provide information and training to schoolsite councils, and other activities.
- Recommendations to school: The forms of SBM at the school usually specified to some degree by the district. However, the principal continues to have considerable influence over SBM operations and is advised to help stakeholders to understand what SBM is, communicate the willingness to share power, involve the teaching staff in making substantive decisions about the school's technical core, such as the curriculum and instructional program [8].

### IV. SBM IMPLEMENTATION IN INDONESIA

Indonesia formally adopted a policy of SBM for its 216,000 public and private schools, and madrasah (Islamic schools) when the 2003 Education Law was introduced [19]. Experiences in Indonesia show that a pilot project in 79 schools in three provinces, have resulted in impressive improvements, particularly in rates of attendance and in test results. The project was known as "Creating Learning Communities for Children", consist of four strategies:

- 1) Providing each of the 79 schools with a small budget,
- 2) Conducting professional development programs for teachers on new approaches to curriculum and teaching,
- 3) Engaging in community development to encourage parents to support schools, and

- 4) Re-invigorating the school experience for students, or expressing it more bluntly, to make it worthwhile for them to come to school, in an initiative known as “Active Joyful Effective Learning” [6].

The report from Managing Basic Education also demonstrates the excellent result that after SBM implemented in Indonesia there is an increased of school attendance, created a sense of responsibility, raised the level of trust, motivation and support from parents and the community and raised the amount of funding from the community to support their schools [20].

## V. CONCLUSION

SBM has introduced widely in various forms as a foremost transformation initiative which is believed can contribute to school improvement and fulfil the expectation of school reforms. However, SBM implementation is not a simple effort and should be carried out under right condition. To create a school-level decision making team composed of representatives from a variety of stakeholder groups may need several stages and requires support of different level of governance as well as the community.

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