

# Study on school-based management



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In the non-centralization system, school-based management (SBM) has been common practice in which the school and its surrounding community possess the power and resources to develop and govern the school in whatever manner suitable. However, in the centralized education systems in the world school-based management seems to be a novel idea because education is not viewed as the means to the unification of diverse communities in a nation state, and thus SBM has been mooted with great caution and apprehensive. The main purpose of SBM is sever administrative and educational focus on education system which is due to the transferring authority and participating all individuals in decision making and planning related to education, specially schools staff.

The underlying innovative agendas of SBM in many countries are decentralization, local authority, and local empowerment for the sake of making education in schools more relevant and suitable for the local context. Centralization of education has been viewed as the chain that shackled meaningful education. Nowadays decentralization is one of the main guidelines in education system in developed countries and developing ones that increasing teachers, principals, parents and community member's involvement and sometimes students at the school practices (Osorio et al., 2009: 1-2), which its realization requires running school-based management policy. Osorio et al. (2009) argued that the decentralization of education is a process that involves the transfer of authority and responsibility from the central government to the local level. This process is aimed at making education more relevant and suitable for the local context. The decentralization of education is a process that involves the transfer of authority and responsibility from the central government to the local level. This process is aimed at making education more relevant and suitable for the local context. The decentralization of education is a process that involves the transfer of authority and responsibility from the central government to the local level. This process is aimed at making education more relevant and suitable for the local context. Osorio et al. (2009) argued that the decentralization of education is a process that involves the transfer of authority and responsibility from the central government to the local level. This process is aimed at making education more relevant and suitable for the local context.

The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009 were focus on the strategies of educational management; governance and financing that contribute to overcoming inequalities in education. As one of the main

strategies, the report aims to show how a stronger voice and strengthened accountability can play a critical role in raising access, improving learning outcomes, and empowering people to secure the education of children.

Among several possible issues, this background focused on school-based management (Shoraku, 2008).

Many countries acknowledged that positive benefits of SBM and the refusal to practice SBM would cause lag in their education systems and perhaps to correct this backwardness, should spend too much money and time.

Therefore, they accept this project as a national policy and strategy extended in their duties and planning. Across the countries the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) there is trend toward increasing autonomy, devolving responsibility, and encouraging responsiveness to local needs, all with the objective of raising performance levels (OECD, 2004).

Attention is now paid to review of school-based management, emergence and extend of SBM and the theory behind of this method.

## **1. 1 WHAT IS SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT**

### **1. 1. 1 Definition and Concepts of the SBM?**

There are many descriptions about SBM in different countries. Some of these terms are includes: school-based management, school-site management, site-based management, school-site decision-making, self-managing school, self-determine school, school-based budgeting, school-shared governance, and participatory management. A variety of countries used different terms to describe SBM, for example, site-based management is used mostly in the

USA, while 'local management of schools' mostly used in Britain. In Australia terms such as 'self-governing school' 'self-determining school' and 'school-based decision-making' are used to describe this form of decentralized school management (Naidoo, 2005: 243).

The basis of school-based management is that people, who are closer to students, should decide about their educational programs such as curricula, equipment, schedule and individuals, facilities and other sources. SBM is based on assumption that such a method would increase student's success through organizing (Murphy, 1995: 21).

SBM reform decentralizes responsibility and decision-making powers to local school management committees (World Bank 2003). In this reason, SBM takes on many different forms, both in terms of who has the power to make decisions as well as the degree of decision-making. (Gertler et al 2006). But, the basic principle around SBM is that giving school-level actors more autonomy over school affairs will result in school improvement as they are in a better position to make decisions to meet the school needs in a more efficient manner (Malen, Ogawa and Kranz 1990).

Murphy (1997) argued that, SBM includes kind of decentralized redistribution of authority from central and region offices to local schools. Effectiveness of local schools and the impact of parent's participation and the rest of society members -sometimes students themselves- would increase. Thus, sharing fundamental interested factors in the region is the main characteristic of SBM. Oswald (1995) about this method asserted that SBM is a strategy to reform education system via transferring decision authority from general

offices of education to schools. In other words, SBM is defined as decentralization from decision authority and transferring it into schools.

SBM is the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level (Caldwell, 2005: 1). He also continued that school-based management is the systematic decentralization to the school level of authority and responsibility to make decisions on significant matters to school operations within a centrally determined framework of goals, policies, curriculum, standards and accountability (Caldwell, 2005: 1).

Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1996) highlighted the function of school-based management as an enabling force that reconfigures power relationship between the central educational system and schools, to facilitate continual and responsive school improvement. They argue that:

" School-based management is a popular political approach to redesign school management and governance that gives local school participants, educators, parents, students and the community at large, the power to improve their school" (Wohlstetter and Mohrman, 1996: 4).

Leithwood and Menzies (1998) identify four types of SBM reforms that involve: administrative control, professional control, community control and balance control. Administrative control focuses on increasing accountability to the central district or regional office for the 'efficient expenditure of resources'(Leithwood and Menzies, 1998) point out that the advocates of this reform of SBM argued that such authority, together with an efficient use of resources enables schools to get more resources into the direct service of students.

Professional control focuses on the use of teachers' knowledge in making key decisions in areas such as budget, curriculum and personnel (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998). This form of SBM is based on the assumption that professionals closest to students have the most relevant knowledge for making such decisions. It is argued that teachers' knowledge and experience should be include in key school decision and therefore 'teachers are expected to play role in staff development, mentoring and curriculum development and become key parents in schools' (Behrman et at. 2002: 26).

Community control focuses on increasing accountability to parents and the community at large (Ibid). The basic assumption underlying this form of SBM is that the curriculum of the school should reflect the local values and preferences of parents and the local community. The advocates of this form argue that power to make decision regarding curriculum, budget and personnel should be in the hands of parents and community members (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998).

Balance control includes both community control and professional control forms of SBM. From the point of view of advocates of this form of SBM, balance control aims at making 'better use of teacher's knowledge for key decision in schools, as well as to be more accountable and the local community' (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998: 333).

SBM encompasses a wide variety of strategies ranging from fully autonomous schools with authority over every educational, financial and personnel matter, to more restrictive versions that allow autonomy over certain areas of school operations. Another dimension of variability revolves

around to whom greater decision power and accountability are transferred. Similarly, the goals of SBM reforms vary substantially although they typically involve: (1) increasing the participation of parents and communities in schools; (2) empowering principals and teachers; (3) building local level capacity; (4) creating accountability mechanisms for site-based actors and improving the transparency of processes by devolution of authority; and (5) improving quality and efficiency of schooling, thus raising student achievement levels. Only recently has SBM been adopted as a mean to an end, which is providing good quality education to students and improving school management, transparency and accountability. In the early years of SBM, the mere transferring of autonomy and authority to the school local agents was considered a goal on its own (Gertler et al 2007).

### **1. 1. 2 What is the Theory Behind of School-Based Management?**

Good education is not only about physical inputs, such as classrooms, teachers, and textbooks, but also about incentives that lead to better instruction and learning. Education systems are extremely demanding of the managerial, technical, and financial capacity of governments, and, thus, as a service, education is too complex to be efficiently produced and distributed in a centralized fashion (King and Cordeiro-Guerra, 2005; and Montreal Economic Institute, 2007).

Hanushek and Woessmann (2007) suggest that most of the incentives that affect learning outcomes are institutional in nature, and they identify three in particular: (1) choice and competition; (2) school autonomy; and (3) school accountability. The idea behind choice and competition is that parents who

are interested in maximizing their children's learning outcomes are able to choose to send their children to the most productive (in terms of academic results) school that they can find. With enhanced school choice and differentiation, central controlling authorities have often seen fit to implement greater accountability measures at the system level and within the school site to ensure that the State's core purpose of public education is not contaminated by the new powers of school-based decision-making.

The World Development Report (WRD) 2004, *Making Services Work for Poor People*, presents a very similar framework, in that it suggests that good quality and timely service provision can be ensured if service providers can be held accountable to their clients (World Bank, 2003a). In the case of the education sector, this would mean students and their parents.

SBM in almost all of its manifestations involves community members in school decision-making. Because these community members are usually parents of children enrolled in the school, they have an incentive to improve their children's education (Patrinos and Kagia, 2007; and Karim et al., 2004). In every country, parents are the first educators of their children and are responsible for children's early socialisation (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation 1997). As Wils et al. (2005, p. 8) stress, parents play significant roles in ensuring access to education for their children:

Whatever the contextual factors, whether government policy, external support, or demand from the economy, it is individual parents and children who decide whether the benefits of the schooling system are worth the investment and opportunity costs. Schooling can only grow if parents are



motivated to provide their children with education and the children are motivated to stay in school.

A common characteristic of school-based management concerns the unrelenting focus on learning outcomes for all students in every setting. This issue has its foundation in the belief that the effective implementation of school-based management can improve the school and student educational outcomes. This issue is closely linked to school effectiveness and school improvement theory. Educational systems worldwide have been determined to ensure that the focus of decentralization through school-based management has been to improve the learning outcomes of all students.

In the context of developed countries, the core idea behind SBM is that those who work in a school building should have greater control of the management of what goes on in the building. In developing countries, the idea behind SBM is less ambitious, in that it focuses mainly on involving community and parents in the school decision making process rather than putting them entirely in control. However, in both cases, the central government always plays some role in education, and the precise definition of this role affects how SBM activities are conceived and implemented (Osorio et al, 2009).

Notwithstanding the basic theory of SBM, no theorist disputes the interdependence of government, school administration, teacher classroom behavior, and, in most case, parental attitudes. However, developing power to the school level means some groups outside of the school, such as, local education offices, are likely to lose some of their power, thus changing the

power dynamics within each school (Cook et al., 2000; and Abu-Duhou, 1999).

Also, SBM often requires teachers to play greater roles in the governance and management of the schools where they teach. While this enlarges the scope of their job, it also requires more time and energy from them and can sometimes limit their traditional freedom to do whatever they want inside the classroom. Not all teachers appreciate having to take on additional managerial roles and responsibilities, even when these changes are marginal (; Wylie, 1996; and Whitty et al., 1998; Cook, 2007).

As more decision-making reverts to school staff, parents, and local community members, it is central and local government officials who are most likely to lose the authority that comes with making budgetary decisions and with hiring and firing personnel, and many are likely to resent the loss. (Cook et al., 2000; and Abu-Duhou, 1999).

### **1. 1. 3 The Emergence and Extend of School-Based Management**

There are conflicting views of the origin of school-based management. Some authors suggest (Caldwell, 1993) that the development of school-based management had its origin in Tasmania, spreading first to Victoria and New Zealand and then to the United Kingdom, the United States and elsewhere. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) suggest that school-based management's origin was within the North America Education Systems of the United States of America and Canada in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994) track school-based management implementation from the

North America continent to Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Europe, South Africa, parts of South East Asia and the Pacific and more recently to the nations of South America. Whatever its journey, it has now touched almost all western nations and many in Asia, Africa and Sought America as well.

Although widespread and implemented in diverse political and educational systems, there remain an identifiable number of characteristics specific to school-based management. Caldwell (2000: 4) describes the first of these as the building of systems of self-managing schools wherein significant authority, responsibility and accountability is decentralized to schools that continue to operate within a centrally determined framework of goals, priorities, policies, curriculum and standards. This tension between centralized standards, frames of reference and policy and the decentralized processes that accompany school-based management, such as local decision-making, school-based governance and autonomy, are common to many of the school-based management initiative operating throughout the western world's public education systems. Cheng Kai-Meng (2000) describes this tension in Singapore's " Autonomous School scheme". He states:

" Worldwide, teachers face a paradoxical situation where although educational decentralization has become the trend. School reforms are accompanied by complex systems of indicators, centralized policy and evaluation mechanism. Structural decentralization has rather ironically also brought about more detailed and severe procedural monitors and outcome measures" (Cheng Kai-Meng, 2000: 1-2).

The emergence of the school-based management is seen by some (Darensbourg, 1996 and Cookson, 1994) as a direct political response to provide greater parental choice in the school their children attend, as well as the programmes that are offered within the school. Through developed strategic decision-making, school communities may now provide a variety of programmes that differentiate them from other local district schools and therefore may better cater for the needs of the school community.

School improving is a common theme embedded in many of the school-based management goals espoused by educational authorities around world. As a result, SBM can be expected to improve student achievement and other outcomes as these local people demand closer monitoring of school personnel, better student evaluations, a closer match between the school's needs and its policies, and a more efficient use of resources. (Patrinos and Kagia, 2007; and Karim et al., 2004).

## **1. 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

School-based management can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained, ( Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz, 1990).

A conceptual framework for SBM can be presented in the terms of the messages in The World Development Report (2004), (World Bank, 2003a). The WDR 2004 presented evidence that increasing school autonomy and

accountability can help to solve some of the most fundamental problems in education. According to this evidence, while increasing resource flows and other support to the education sector is necessary to give the poor greater access to quality education. Schools should be given some autonomy in using their inputs and be held accountable to the users for using these inputs efficiently.

Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1996) review of the literature identifies three different models of SBM. In the first model, the community has most control over decision-making and the objectives of the reform tend to focus on accountability to parents and choice; in the second model it is teachers who receive most of the authority, and many of these reforms have teacher empowerment as a primary objective; lastly, the third model has the principal as the key decision-maker and is intended to provide increased accountability to central or local authority and improve efficient use of resources.

Decentralization involves the transfer of decision-making powers and responsibility from central government to lower levels of government institutions or private institutions. This could be a transfer of responsibility such as that of distribution of resources, administrative and management tasks, and planning (Dyer and Rose, 2005 and Abu-Duhou, 1999). The local entities may be provinces, regional offices, municipalities, districts or schools; depending on the context of a country.

Typically, the decisions that decentralized are those that directly affect the student, such as, programme decisions, curriculum decisions, time-

allocation decisions and instructional decisions (Candoli, 1995, p. 1). Caldwell and Spinks (1992) argued that the school remains accountable to a central authority for the manner in which resources are allocated, these resources are defined broadly to include:

Knowledge: decentralization of decisions related to curriculum, including decisions related to the goals or end of schooling;

Technology: decentralization of decisions related to the means of learning and teaching;

Power: decentralization of authority to make decisions;

Material: decentralization of decisions related to the use of facilities, supplies and equipment;

People: decentralization of decisions related to human resources, including professional development in matters to learning and teaching, and support of learning and teaching;

Time: decentralization of decisions related to the allocation of times; and

Finance: decentralization of decisions related to the allocation of money.

Jenkins (1988) defined empowerment as giving stakeholders share in the movement and direction of enterprise. Others have viewed empowerment as enabling staff members to initiate and to carry out new ideas which, subsequently, should create enhanced learning opportunities for students (Lieberman and Miller, 1984; Short and Green, 1989). Defining empowerment as involvement in decision-making is limited. According to <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-school-based-management/>

Short and Rinehart (1992), empowerment not only includes involvement in decision-making, but it also includes autonomy, self-efficacy, professional growth, status and impact. An increasing number of developing countries are introducing SBM reforms aimed at empowering principals and teachers or at strengthening their professional motivation, thereby enhancing their sense of school ownership (Osorio, Fasih, Patrinos and Santibanez, 2009).

In general, school-based management programs transfer authority and autonomy over one or more of the following activities: budget allocation, the hiring and firing teachers and other school staff, curriculum development, establishing incentives for teaching staff, funding teacher training, setting the method of instruction, setting the school calendar, establishing school fee, conducting administrative activities, the procurement of textbooks and other educational material, infrastructure improvement, the monitoring and evaluation of school, principal and teacher performance and student learning outcomes.

### **1. 3 SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE IN IRAN**

School-based policy has received a very good welcoming from many developed countries such as United States, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Netherlands, and United Kingdom in the past three decades and is implementing in other developing countries such as Kenya, Madagascar, Uganda, Brazil, Mexico, El Salvador, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Qatar and others.

The initial steps of school-based management reform in Iran were initiated in 1997s. The main goal of this policy was tracking and executing school based

policy, which is one of the important issues in the world education system, and then encouraging people in schools affairs, decreasing the centralized system governing education system, promoting participation, decision, responsibility, granting authority to people, improving the quality of education activities and supporting management and executive system at schools (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2004).

### **1. 3. 1 Background and Development of the SBM in Iran**

School-based management discussed for the first time via Mozaffar-Education minister of Iran- in education administrator's meeting in 1997s. He said that school based policy as education management doctrine is " a copy of healing to promote schools quality and eliminate the chronic and complex problems in this Department" (Mozaffar, 2000: 11).

Regarding to strategic policies of education system in the Third-Five Year Development Plan of Islamic Republic of Iran (2000-2004) which was based on increasing peoples participation, reforming organizational structure in education in order to reduce the concentration and increasing principles authorities in different levels (PBO, 1999: 332); therefore, the executive regulations of Iran schools were edited in detail and given to schools in 652 meeting of Education Supreme Council in 2000s -regarding to education policies and fundamental strategies such as decentralization, school based and developing people's participation- and all the primary, guidance, high schools and pre-university should apply this regulations (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2004).



It is noted in article 17 chapter 25 of third development plan of I. R of Iran: "in executive education organization, school is the core and activities pivot, and required authorities and facilities would be provided in a way which necessary field would be created to promote the quality of educational activities at school" (Country Planning and Management Organization, 2001).

In order to research and move towards SBM and decentralization of decisions, Iran Education System has taken initial and basic steps by organizing provinces, cities and regions education councils. These are also centres for initiating various methods of providing financial resources, organizing public contributions and improving the effectiveness of educational-executive affairs. The members of these councils are the experts and authorities of the offices of education, religious scholars, and local authorities, authorized persons in educational affairs and peoples representatives. The council's financial resources are provided through public aids and contributions, municipalities, government charges and aids.

According to Mozaffar (2000) after this act, the Ministry of Education has made important steps in order to realize and make this project possible: (1) 'creating provinces, cities and regions of educational councils'; (2) 'increasing the provinces education council's authority'; (3) 'reforming schools executive regulations due to SBMs policy'; (4) 'transferring part of decision makings like disciplinary regulations of internal examination'; (5) 'commissioning student council and their participation at school's internal affairs'; (6) 'having optional courses at schools for 2 hours'; (7) 'decision on deposit more than 70% of schools per capita to their account and reducing

the share of focused credit'; and (8) 'eliminating coordinator exams and domain scheme of final exams in primary schools (fifth grade)'.

Despite numerous efforts, inter alia, to forecast proceedings listed above, this plan did not receive much attention from politicians and individuals involved at school decision and society, because of the barriers and limitations until 2004: political considerations, factional governing

In Iran, highly centralized structure, bureaucracy, management instability and legal barriers, insufficient budget to change education system specially at schools, lack of clear laws, regulations, policies and dominance of administrative system on educational system.

For expanding peoples and school staffs participation in managing schools and in order to achieve SBM policy, Education Supreme Council in 706 meeting in 2004s, approved administration of some public and charity schools as the 'Council of Trustees (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2004). At the first step about 1000 schools around the country allowed to become council of trustees. The council of trustee's members are: " principal as secretary of the council, one of the educational assistant selected by the principal, two of education staff selected by teacher's council, the chief of principals and teachers association, one of the parents, two of educational or cultural experts and scholars, one of the benefactors of trustees and one of the members of local council" (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2004).

According to Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire (2004) duties and authorities of council of trustees schools are includes: (1) 'review and approval of the annual school program'; (2) 'review and approval of the annual budget and credits and supply the sources and credits required for school'; (3) 'review and approval of suggestions, plans of the council's and union's programs related to school'; (4) 'review and approval of development, equipping, repair and maintaining programs and supply the credits necessary for school'; (5) 'the suggestion of appoint schools' principal'; (6) 'asking to hire teachers needed for school'; (7) 'review and approval of the payment terms partially, commission and personnel's salary'; (8) 'attract and accept grants and gifts from natural and legal persons, cash or non-cash'; and (9) 'supervising for costs and approving the school's financial balance'.

In order to execute article 13 of the civil service management and article 144 of Forth Cultural, Social and Economic Development Plan and for promoting public and charity schools` management according to council of trustees, and with emphasis on school based policy, once again in 887 meeting, Education Supreme Council in 2009s, reformed the previous legislation and has notified to education administration of provinces in order to continue execution. More than 2000 schools in the country will be managed as council of trustees until the end of 2009 (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2009).

In article 14 of this regulation, non-governmental schools organization and peoples participation development is responsible for policies in order to

execute, manage and macro control on council of trustee schools (Office of Development and People Participation in Councils Affaire, 2009).

### **1. 3. 2 How decision-Making Take Place in Iran Schools**

This is necessary have to mention some special points about authorities, duties and the way of making decision in Iranian schools with school-based point of view. In council of trustees schools, immense policies of education system are approved by Ministry of Education (MoE) and sent to the general education administration, and then schools to be performed; based on terms, interests and demands of students, teachers and staff, the schools interpret and execute these laws and regulations and somewhat have freedom in details of these policies.

Each school has five essential pillars and each of them has been different duties and authorities in schools executive regulation of Iran: principal, teacher's council, parents and teachers of association, school council and student's council.

#### **Principal**

According to experts, principal has an important role in changing situation and supporting teachers at schools and they have different role in school-based policy, because they do not decide about all school's affairs and should understand that this system works with teacher, student, and community member's participation. (Romanish, 1991)

Conley (1991) believes that principals can review teacher's participation in four fields:

Guidance: decide about the goal or the activity.

Organizing: decide about the relations structure such as status of agenda.

Support: decide about human resource allocation such as teacher.

Supervising: decide about collection and evaluation of performance.

Considering that Iran Education System is run completely centralized for many years and most of principals in this system do not intend to transfer part of decisions and management to others, such as teachers- because participation and flexibility is not spread well- with commissioning these schools in our country and regarding to this point that principles would be one of the members of council, in fact council secretary, we have more freedom to present new opinions and apply other's experiences and conference (specially teachers) about developing and teaching strategies and have close relationship with staff like teachers council, students council, school