

SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT: VIEWS FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL HEADMASTERS IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

In this study the opinions of Public and private school Head Masters in Hyderabad (Pakistan) have been collected through a questionnaire. The Chi square test was used to analyze the data. Statistical analyses indicated many differences in the degree of inference reported to be present on the part of Head Teachers, parents and other groups on important decisions made at schools. Difference between Public and Private schools were also linked through literature review.

Introduction

School-based management or site-based management (SBM) is a strategy to improve education by transferring significant decision-making authority from state and district offices to individual schools. SBM provides Head Teachers, teachers, students, and parents' greater control over the education process by giving them responsibility for decisions about the budget, personnel, and the curriculum. Through the involvement of teachers, parents, and other community members in these key decisions, SBM can create more effective learning environments for children through a shared decision-making model, engaging various stakeholders and facilitators rather than directive leadership.

Origins of SBM

The philosophy supporting school-based management has its roots in industry and business. In the last half of the 20th century, an industrial model praising the benefits of empowering factory workers to change their work roles gained widespread celebrity and credibility. Spurred by the

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economic success and high quality achieved by Japanese car manufacturers that gave factory workers greater latitude to manage their own teams, a number of U.S. factories and businesses gave employees a greater role in decision making in their jobs. Business gurus such as author Tom Peters praised the results of these experiments in white-collar and blue-collar environments. When the industrial and, later, business model was transplanted into school systems, the approach was named site-based, or school-based, management.

Advantages of School Based Management

According to the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National Association of Elementary School Head Teachers (NAESP), the National Association of Secondary School Head Teachers (NASSP), and other sources, school-based management can:

- Allow competent individuals in the schools to make decisions that will improve learning;
- Give the entire school community a voice in key decisions;
- Focus accountability for decisions;
- Lead to greater creativity in the design of programs;
- Redirect resources to support the goals developed in each school;
- Lead to realistic budgeting as parents and teachers become more aware of the school's financial status, spending limitations, and the cost of its programs; and,
- Improve morale of teachers and nurture new leadership at all levels.

Several arguments have been advanced by proponents of decentralization in support of the superiority of this form of governance arrangement over centralized structures (Murphy, 1991). First, it is argued that decentralization gives communities, parents and teachers a stake in local educational decision-making. Second, decentralization is seen to contribute to the evolution of greater levels of professional commitment by allowing teachers to exercise a voice in decision-making. Third, the suggestion is preferred that the creation of decisions at levels that are closest to students, results in better outcomes, as those making the decisions are more acutely aware of the needs of these students. Fourth, decentralization is viewed as a mechanism that has the potential to promote greater efficiency in the utilization and expenditure of resources.

This is achieved, since the decisions are being made by those closest to the point where services are being delivered, thereby resulting in a greater match of services to needs. Fifth, since bureaucracies are perceived to be ineffective in meeting the needs of students, decentralized structures are considered to have the potential to be more responsive to student needs than are bureaucratic organizational forms.

Murphy and Beck (1995) suggest that school based management typically assumes one of three ideal forms; administrative control SBM (in this model the Head Teacher is the primary decision maker), professional control (teachers are the primary decision makers) and community/parent control (community members and parents comprise the major decision making groups). A fourth though less popular form is defined by Malen and Ogawa as balanced control (Hanson & Ulrich, 1994; Malen & Ogawa, 1988). In this model an attempt is made to establish a balance in decision-making among all stakeholders. Within the context of New Jersey, it is clear from the regulations that the Department of Education promulgated that the attempt was to create a model that approximated a balanced control form of SBM. The guidelines stated that the model to be adopted by schools was one, which restricted the membership of any given stakeholder group to less than 50 percent of the total membership

Public and Private School in Pakistan

The government's intervention in education has evolved since independence in 1947. At that time, the educational system comprised largely of private and local schools run by district councils and municipal governments. It was a system in which the central and provincial ministries of education played only a limited role in the operation of schools (Ahmad and Mirza, 1975).

In 1962, the picture began to change with the emergence of a trend toward centralization. Schools previously run by local bodies were brought under the control and finance of the provincial and central governments. In primary and lower secondary education, however, some schools in the urban areas remained under the control of municipal governments.

Changes in government policy in the late 1960's and early 1970's have focused largely on the regulation and financing of private schools. Thus, it is difficult to assess broader issues regarding the decentralization of public schools and the role of local/ municipal authorities in educational financing and administration.

Government intervention in the private sector reached a high point in 1972. That year marked the nationalization of all private schools with the implementation of Martial law Regulation 118 (Government of Punjab, 1982). Under its provisions, the rights, properties and assets of private colleges and schools were taken over by the central and provincial governments without compensation to the owners.

A few schools thus escaped being taken over by the government, but most of them were either religious schools or elite institutions such as Aitchison College in Lahore and Hyderabad Public school. By 1977, there were only 927 private primary and secondary schools left in the country, down from 3,814 in 1968. Similarly, the number of private colleges dropped sharply, from over 100 in 1968 to only 17 in 1977 (table 1).

Table 1
Government and Private educational institutions, 1971-78

Schools (Primary and Secondary)				Colleges		
Year	Govt.	Private	% Private	Govt.	Private	% Private
1972-3	54,296	2,198	4.1	244	90	37.4
1973-4	55,726	2,182	3.9	337	17	5.0
1974-5	56,034	2,317	4.1	336	25	4.7
1975-76	58,527	2,103	3.6	380	24	6.4
1976-7	60,437	927	1.5	417	17	4.1

Sources: Calculated from Pakistan, 1979

The latest policy shift occurred in 1979 under a new government. The ban on private schools was lifted with the announcement of the National Education Policy and Implementation Programme. Private individuals or groups were allowed to open their own schools "provided the administration of these institutions ensures availability of **suitable** physical facilities like buildings, playgrounds, laboratories, libraries and adoption of prescribed standards of qualifications and scales of pay for teachers" (p.26). The private sector was given added impetus in the sixth five-year plan (1983 - 88). That plan supported the earlier decision to encourage the opening of new private schools, and called for the return of nationalized schools to their original owners "whenever it can be ensured that the quality and coverage will not suffer as a result" (Government of Pakistan, 1983a, p.319). The government also announced its intention "to motivate and encourage" the expansion of private education through

grants-in-aid, and to decentralize public education, particularly in basic education, by involving local bodies in "planning, management and maintenance of educational facilities." At present private sector is playing a key role in educating the youth from primary school to university level. The schools in private sectors are independent in many decisions at school level, and school based management in a way can be seen in those schools.

Current Policies:

The present emphasis on decentralization and privatization is motivated in part by the failures of past policies. The greatest problems were identified as follows in the sixth five-year plan (Government of Pakistan, 1983a): The nearly comprehensive nationalization of educational institutions and the accompanying policy of free education ten years ago had at least two casualties. An already impoverished Government was landed with a large financial burden which restricted it from expanding education. And many of the schools of high quality, some of them run by education-conscious communities, lost their excellence under the public control. This, in both quantity and quality, was counter productive (pp. 318-9). Public spending on education in fact declined steadily as a share of total government spending -- from 7.4 percent in 1965 to 5.0 percent in 1980 (UNESCO, 1974 and 1984). Correspondingly, the enrollment ratio at all levels of education grew slowly. Thus, contrary to the international evidence showing that investing in education yields high social returns (Psacharopoulos, 1985), the sector received low priority in the allocation of government spending. Another efficiency loss is that despite the lower social payoffs to higher education relative to other levels (Jimenez and Tan, 1985), it tended to receive more resources than is economically justified. A recent assessment of the situation noted that "while the base of the pyramid did not grow satisfactorily, its top was raised further by the opening of new colleges and universities" (Government of Pakistan, 1983b p.50). Under funding of primary schooling was so severe that a significant number of children now attend "shelter-less" schools -- that is, schools without buildings. The misallocation of resources stem in part from the forces affecting decision making in a centralized system of education: the expansion of higher education satisfied the demands of the more articulate socioeconomic groups, and it worked in the interest of the policy makers themselves. Inefficiency also resulted from the sharp deterioration in school maintenance under nationalization. In many places,

school buildings have fallen into such disrepair that it became safer for classes to meet outdoors (United Consultants Ltd., 1984). And the conditions at some nationalized schools were so deteriorated as to discourage their original owners from reclaiming the property. In the past, communities participated in school maintenance because schools belonged to the local district; but when the government took over, the incentives for local participation weakened considerably.

Research Question

The following research question has been addressed in this study. Is there any significant difference in the extent to which school-based management has been experienced in public and private elementary schools in Hyderabad (Pakistan)?

Methods and Procedures

Sample

In this study, 145 primary school Head Masters were included in the survey. Of these 145 Head Masters, 80 surveys were completed by public primary school Head Masters and 65 surveys were completed by private primary school Head Masters.

Instrumentation

Primary school Headmasters were asked to complete self-administered questionnaires during February 2005. They were asked to provide information on the physical, organizational, and fiscal characteristics of their schools and on the school's learning environment and programs.

The questionnaire was divided into six sections. These sections could have been answered either by the Head Teacher or by a designee who was able to provide the requested information.

Table 1
Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding the Influence of Decision Makers On The Hiring and Firing of Teachers

Decision Makers	Public	Private
Administrator Input To Hiring/Firing Teachers		
No Influence	64	1
Some Influence	8	6
Major Influence	8	58

Teacher Input To Hiring/Firing Teachers

No Influence	70	60
Some Influence	4	3
Major Influence	6	2

Parent Input To Hiring/Firing Teachers

No Influence	75	62
Some Influence	2	2
Major Influence	3	3

Table-2

Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding the Influence of Decision-Makers on Selecting Textbooks

Decision Makers	Public	Private
Administrator Input On Selecting Textbooks		
No Influence	72	3
Some Influence	6	8
Major Influence	2	54
Teacher Input On Selecting Textbooks		
No Influence	73	47
Some Influence	5	8
Major Influence	2	10
Parent Input On Selecting Textbooks		
No Influence	8	57
Some Influence	0	3
Major Influence	0	5

Table-3

Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding the Influence of Decision Makers On Setting Curricular Guidelines and Standards

Decision Makers	Public	Private
Administrator Input On Setting Curricular Guidelines and Standard		
No Influence	5	2
Some Influence	7	8
Major Influence	68	55
Teacher Input On Setting Curricular Guidelines and Standards		

No Influence	18	5
Some Influence	15	3
Major Influence	57	57
Parent Input On Setting Curricular Guidelines and Standards		
No Influence	79	58
Some Influence	5	3
Major Influence	1	4

Table-4

Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding the Establishing Policies and Practices for Student Grading/Evaluation

Decision Makers	Public	Private
Administrator Input On Establishing Policies and Practices for Student Grading/Evaluation		
No Influence	67	5
Some Influence	7	2
Major Influence	6	58
Teacher Input On Establishing Policies and Practices for Student Grading/Evaluation		
No Influence	40	4
Some Influence	10	16
Major Influence	30	45
Parent Input On Establishing Policies and Practices for Student Grading/Evaluation		
No Influence	47	60
Some Influence	8	3
Major Influence	25	2

Table-5

Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding the Influence of Decision Makers On Deciding How School Discretionary Funds Will Be Spent

Decision Makers	Public	Private
Administrator Input On Deciding How School Discretionary Funds Will Be Spent		
No Influence	4	3
Some Influence	8	5

Major Influence	68	57
Teacher Input On Deciding How School Discretionary Funds Will Be Spent		
No Influence	72	71
Some Influence	5	6
Major Influence	3	30
Parent Input On Deciding How School Discretionary Funds Will Be Spent		
No Influence	76	61
Some Influence	3	3
Major Influence	1	1

Table-6

Public and Private School Head Masters Responses Regarding Professional Development

Decision Makers			Public	Private
Administrator	Input	On	Professional Development	
No Influence			10	2
Some Influence			5	8
Major Influence			55	55
Teacher Input On Professional Development				
No Influence			16	5
Some Influence			22	12
Major Influence			42	48
Parent Input On Professional Development				
No Influence			18	2
Some Influence			16	20
Major Influence			46	43

Pearson chi-squares were calculated to ascertain the extent to which differences were present between public and private school Head Masters for each individual decision and each individual decision-maker. This procedure permitted a detailed analysis of specific differences in the views of headmasters in the public and private schools.

Administrator Input:

Six Pearson chi-squares were calculated to determine whether public and private school Head Masters reported a different amount of Head Teacher influence (i.e., 0, 1, or 2) in each of the six decision categories. The first chi-square revealed a statistically significant difference between public and private elementary school Head Teachers in the degree of Head Teacher influence regarding establishing criteria for the hiring and firing of teachers, $\chi^2(2) = 98.73$, $p = .01$. As reported in Table 1, private elementary school Head Teachers (58) indicated they had significantly more influence in the hiring and firing of teachers than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers (08). A second chi-square yielded a statistically significant difference in the degree of Head Teacher influence regarding the selection of textbooks, $\chi^2(2) = 111.7$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 2, private elementary school Head Teachers (54) indicated they had significantly more influence in the selection of textbooks than was indicated by public elementary school Head Teachers (02). A third chi-square did not reveal the presence of a statistically significant difference in the degree of Head Teacher influence in the setting of curricular guidelines and standards, $\chi^2(2) = 1.187$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 3, private elementary school Head Teachers (55) indicated that they had a slightly less influence in the setting of curricular guidelines and standards than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers (68).

In the fourth chi-square, a statistically significant difference was noted in the degree of Head Teacher influence on establishing policies and practices for student grading and evaluation, $\chi^2(2) = 97.9$, $p = .01$. As shown in Table 4, private elementary school Head Teachers (58) indicated that they had significantly more influence in establishing policies and practices for grading and evaluation than was reported by the public elementary school Head Teachers (6).

In terms of school discretionary funds, no statistically significant difference was noted between public and private elementary school Head Teachers. See Table 5 for exact responses. Regarding professional development, a chi-square did not yield a statistically significant difference in the degree of Head Teacher influence between public and private elementary school Head Teachers, $\chi^2(2) = 6.72$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 6, private elementary school Head Teachers (55) indicated that there is not any significant influence in professional

development planning than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers. See Table 6 for exact responses.

Teacher Input:

Another chi-square did not reveal a statistically significant difference between public and private elementary school Head Teachers in the degree of teacher influence regarding establishing criteria for the hiring and firing of teachers. See Table 1 for exact responses. A second chi-square yielded a statistically significant difference in the degree of teacher influence regarding the selection of textbooks, $\chi^2(2) = 10.21$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 2, private elementary school Head Teachers (10) indicated that they had significantly more influence in the selection of textbooks than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers (2). A third chi-square revealed the presence of a statistically significant difference in the degree of teacher influence in the setting of curricular guidelines and standards, $\chi^2(2) = 11.618$, $p = .0001$. As depicted in Table 3, private elementary school Head Teachers (57) indicated that they had significantly more influence in the setting of curricular guidelines and standards than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers (57). A fourth chi-square yielded a statistically significant difference in the degree of teacher input on Establishing Policies and Practices for Student Grading $\chi^2(2) = 32.637$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 4, private elementary school Head Teachers (45) indicated that they had significantly more influence in the selection of textbooks than was indicated by the public elementary school Head Teachers (30).

In terms of school discretionary funds, a statistically significant difference was noted between public and private elementary school Head Teachers regarding teacher influence, $\chi^2(2) = 18.680$, $p = .01$ as depicted in Table 5. Regarding professional development, a chi-square did not yield a statistically significant difference in the degree of teacher influence between public and private elementary school Head Teachers. See Table 6 for exact responses.

Parent Input:

Another chi-square did not reveal a statistically significant difference between public and private elementary school Head Teachers in the degree of parent influence regarding establishing criteria for the hiring and firing of teachers. See Table 1 for responses. A second chi-square yielded a statistically significant difference in the degree of parent influence

regarding the selection of textbooks, $\chi^2(2) = 10.421$, $p = .01$. As depicted in Table 2, private elementary school Head Teachers (5) indicated that they had significantly more influence in the selection of textbooks than was indicated by private elementary school Head Teachers (00). A third chi-square did not reveal a statistically significant difference in degree of parent influence in the setting of curricular guidelines and standards. See Table 3. In the fourth chi-square, a statistically significant difference was noted in the degree of parent influence on establishing policies and practices for student grading and evaluation, $\chi^2(2) = 22.13$, $p = .01$. As shown in Table 4, public elementary school Head Teachers (25) indicated that they had significantly more influence in establishing policies and practices for grading and evaluation than was reported by the private elementary school Head Teachers(2). In terms of school discretionary funds, no statistically significant difference was noted between public and private elementary school Head Teachers. See Table 5 for exact responses. Regarding professional development, a statistically significant difference was noted between public and private elementary school Head Teachers, $\chi^2(2) = 11.92$, $p = .01$ as shown in Table 6 for exact responses percentages.

Discussion

It was revealed from above analysis that private schools in Pakistan are more independent in many decisions regarding daily school matters. Private school-head teachers have more influence on hiring and firing of staff, selection of text books and setting of school policies, and on the other hand public schools are run by district administration, and almost all the decisions are taken by EDO's and ADOE's at District and Subdivision level. There is very less role of teacher and parents in private schools but any role of parents or teachers is not seen in public schools.

Though centralized system of education is good at some extent but it cannot solve the day to day problems of a school. Each school works under a different circumstance, and Head or teachers may be given some authority to handle the matters of the school. They should be delegated some authority to decide the main matters of school or design the policies of the school.

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