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School Committee: an Implementation of School Based Management Policy at School Level in Indonesia

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Abstract. The collapse of the New Order regime in 1998 made many significant changes to Indonesia. In the education sector ideas about school based management have become increasingly popular and public regarded as best solution to the school system. Four years later, Indonesian's ministry of national education released a decree which regulate school based management with the introduction of school committee that to be established at school level. Using qualitative inquiry, the researchers approached the study in two ways: document analysis of the decree regard to school committee issue; and collected data from schools and district level stakeholders in Mataram through questionnaire, interview, observation and document analysis to reveal their perception about school committee. It is found that the regulation apply 'one size fits all' model regard to different type of education institutions in the school system; the schools follow the policy and establishing school committee, but still continuing earlier practices like previous body.

Keyword : school committee; school based management; Indonesian education development; public secondary school

Introduction

Daun (2002, p. 75) states that policy of the educational decentralisation "has become the most commonly implemented restructuring policy". It can be identified in both developed and developing countries (Bullock and Thomas, 1997; Abu-Duhou, 1999; Fullan and Watson, 2000). This policy has been initiated by democratic governments, such as in Australia and the United States (Murphy and Beck, 1995), autocratic military regimes, such as in Argentina and Chile (Fiske, 1996, Schieffelin and Schieffelin, 2000), and even by a country with a rigid centralisation ideology like China (Hawkins, 2000). Then, school based management policy is a popular form of educational reform that practiced in many parts of the world. To make it as successful, the policy should take into account the real situations of schools, in particular the views and practices of educators. The researcher has published regard analysis of SBM policy in Indonesia (Sumintono, 2009) and thus this paper will discuss the practices and views of school stakeholders about school committee as implementation of school based management policy in Indonesia in state secondary schools in Mataram, Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat. It will consider the views of principals, teachers, and school committee members. The paper will firstly explore school based management issues as appeared in international scholarly publication, followed by

research methodology and background information about respondents presented to give a context for the analysis of the data. Some studies like Chen (2011), Heyward, Cannon and Sarjono (2011), and Bandur (2012) discuss about primary school situation regard to the issue. This study intended to reveal stakeholders' understandings, perceptions and practices regarding the SBM policy and its implementation at public general secondary schools context.

Literature Reviews

School based management (hereafter called with SBM) is a terminology given in North America and by UNESCO (Brown, 1990; Leithwood and Menzies, 1998; Abu-Duhou, 1999; Payne, 2008; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009) regarding to “decentralization of decision making, increasing local authority and enhanced autonomy of schools have been common features of the reorganization of public education” (Ainley & MacKenzie, 2002, p. 1). Like decentralisation, the characteristics of SBM and issues related to it can also vary depending on different perspective. Beck and Murphy (1998, p 359) for instance, claim that SBM is “a complex phenomenon that may be implemented in a variety of ways”. Several other writers have already categorised SBM (Murphy and Beck, 1995; Leithwood and Menzies, 1998) and have identified key central elements, which are discussed in the sections which follow. They include definition and models, and emerging formal structures.

Definitions and Resources Transferred

From their extensive research on school based management in North America, Murphy and Beck (1995, p.13) conclude that many definitions emphasise “a major shift in the locus of decision-making responsibilities and alterations in the members of the decision making cast”. The definition shows that in schools which practice SBM policy, transfer of authority takes place, giving school's some degree of decision making. In other words, autonomy is based on stipulated regulations. This is different from independent, private or non-state schools which are not supported regularly by public funds (Payne, 2008). The latter schools operate as self-governing schools.

The range of resources that devolved to SBM can also vary. Wohlstetter and Odden (1992) list at least three areas that schools minimally have authority over: budget, curriculum and personnel. More broadly, Caldwell and Spinks (1988, p. 5) explain that SBM authority can involve:

knowledge (decentralisation of decisions related to curriculum, including decisions related to the goals or ends of schooling); technology (decentralisation of decisions related to the means of teaching and learning); power (decentralisation of authority to make decisions); material (decentralisation of decisions related to the use of facilities, supplies and equipment); people (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of people in matters related to teaching and learning); time (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of time); and finance (decentralisation of decisions related to the allocation of money).

It appears that prior to the SBM movement, public schools in most countries were rigidly controlled, without much scope for those in leadership in governance roles to exercise full responsibility.

However, many empirical studies about SBM have shown that the authority transferred to schools is often restricted. To illustrate, Wohlstetter and Odden (1992, p. 532) conclude, following reviews of several research projects, that “in sum, even where decision-making authority appears to have been delegated, the degree of real authority given to the site is often remarkably limited”. In addition, a study by Meuret and Scheerens (in Leithwood and Menzies, 1998, p. 325) based on decisions at school level in public school systems in 14 countries, show that percentage of decision making approximate proportions to illustrate: “Ireland and New Zealand, greater than 70%; Sweden, 48%; Austria, Denmark, Finland, and Portugal, 38% to 41%; Belgium, France, Germany, Norway, Spain, and United States, 25% to 33%; and Switzerland, 10%.” One of the explanations for this situation comes from Wohlstetter and Odden (1992), who suggest that where a district sees the school as its subordinate then that makes any authority relationship difficult to change.

Site Council and SBM Models

Murphy and Beck (1998, p. 14) noted that a “central feature of SBM is the site council”. While site councils vary in composition and responsibilities, most writers agree that it is within a site council that school stakeholders such as principals, teachers, parents, community members and students do participate in decision making.

The site council is a form of community involvement in school governance, based on regulation, with elected but voluntary membership. Certainly the intention behind site councils is to implement democratic participatory decision making. Rose (2003) differentiates community participation in schools as ranging from genuine participation to pseudo-participation. Rose (2003, p. 47) writes that:

genuine participation, implying the ability to take part in real decision making and governance, where all members have equal power to determine the outcome of decision and share in a joint activity... ‘pseudo participation’ is, at best a consultative process whereby citizens are merely kept informed of developments at the school level, and are expected to accept decisions that have already been made.

McGinn and Welsh (1999) illustrate participation as a series of steps. The lower steps refer to exercising authority about building maintenance, then authority relating to budgets, then transferred authority to make budgets (which involves hiring and firing personnel). The final step relates to authority over curriculum decision making.

A study by Rentoul and Rosanowski (2000) offers a useful map of the site council continuum from advisory role to governing role (from informing, to influencing, co-determining and finally determining). Shown as Figure 1 the conceptual map of the site council is modelled on the experiences of countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and several in Europe. One example, in the beginning of SBM implementation in Alberta, Canada, there were no site councils (Caldwell, 1994), but then in the 1990s site councils were established, although they generally played an advisory role to the principal.

A number of models have also emerged from empirical studies on school based management. Wohlstetter and Odden (1992), and Murphy and Beck (1995) propose three models, based on who has control over decision making: administrative control (the principal is dominant in terms of power and control), professional control (teachers are dominant), community control (parents/community members are dominant). Leithwood and Menzies (1998) propose a model they call balanced control, where parents and teachers are equally dominant.

school business, this model increases employee involvement, thereby improving efficiency, effectiveness and better results (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998). Wohlstetter and Odden (1992) noted that in Los Angeles, California, this model of SBM emerged because half of the composition of site councils was reserved for teachers and the council had discretion to make decisions.

A community controlled model of SBM exists when parents and community members are the majority on a site council. This model works well as governing body when its roles are clearly defined by regulations. This can lead to increased accountability to the community and greater customer satisfaction. As its name implies, in this model it is community people not professional in schools who are in control. The model promotes the preferences and values of parents in terms of what they think are best for their children. McGinn and Welsh (1999, p. 32) argue that this model “signals a loss of public confidence in professional expertise”. Since 1989, New Zealand’s education reform has adopted this model of SBM. For secondary schools, SBM extended the existing roles of its governing body, but for primary schools SBM was a really significant change (Wylie, 1995). Boards of trustees in New Zealand, the name given to the site council, have five elected parent representatives, one teacher representative (elected), the principal and one student for high schools, as stipulated by the Education Act (Wylie, 1995). Somewhat similarly, in Chicago, USA, the majority of the local school council should be 6 parents and 2 community representatives, out of total 11-12 members (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998).

The balance control model is intended “to make better use of teachers’ knowledge for key decision making in the school, as well as to be more accountable to parents and the local community” (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998, p. 331). Both parents and teachers have equal numbers on the site council, with decision making powers regarding the budget, personnel and curriculum. This model requires that parents and the local community act as partners with the school. The model also calls teachers to be responsive to the values of the communities in which schools reside.

One negative aspect of site councils, Bray (2003, p. 37) suggests, is that they “in many cases lack expertise and understanding of their responsibilities”. Bray argues that this is because members are volunteers. Furthermore, in developing countries, site councils are generally made up of

people who mainly come from elite sections of the community, do not always have concerns for disadvantaged groups, and sometimes take school resources for their own purposes (Bray, 2003).

Methodology

According to Merriam (1998), research orientation in social sciences can be divided into three perspectives: positivist, interpretive and critical research. Interpretive orientation is used in this research. This means the researcher doing inductive reasoning to explain educational activities comprehended by stakeholders. Interpretive research tries to uncover “the rules of the game” which deal with multiple realities that are constructed by respondents; whereas the ‘game’ in this study is school committee as implementation of based management policy, the ‘rules’ is the regulation (SBM policy), and respondents’ opinions and experiences related to the issue.

SBM practices at public general state secondary schools in Mataram, Lombok, is the phenomenon and the unit of analysis in this study. Mataram is the capital city of West Nusa Tenggara province chosen as one of the vibrant city in Eastern part of Indonesia. There were five state secondary schools participated out of seven when data collection were conducted. Although a study might take place on several sites, it can be counted as a single phenomenon. This fits with Stake’s (2000, p. 437) classification on the nature of the case which can be identified as a ‘collective case study’. A case study approach is also useful in terms of gathering data for qualitative analysis (Yin, 1994; Stake, 2000).

The participants of this study involve people from both district and school level. The researchers collect data using four data collection methods: questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis. The different instruments are adopted to ensure that rich data and information can be obtained in this research (Punch, 2009). The questionnaires were only given to respondents at school level, there were 5 principals, 57 teachers and 21 school committee members who participated. There were 4 principals, 6 teachers and 5 school committee members were individually interviewed at the time and place convenient to both the researchers and participants. The questions asked to the participants are meant to find the answers of the questions that are posed in this study. All the interviews were recorded, then later transcribed. A number of observations were conducted in schools and classrooms to obtain a deep understanding as to the process that relate to school based management issues (two out of five secondary schools participated in site studies during two months). These observations were used

as a means to validate the information provided by the participants in the interviews. Documents such as school committee reports, school strategic plan and school budget were collected and analyzed. Analyzing these documents enrich the information obtained in this research.

The data analysis involves the process of data reduction and simplification (Miles & Huberman, 2005). The data of this research uploaded into NVivo software. With this tool, themes emerging from the data were identified and coded. These themes supported with important narratives from the interviews were included in the reporting the findings of this research.

Findings and Discussion

The Policy

The implementation of SBM policy in Indonesia officially happened with the stipulation of Minister of National Education Decree (Kepmendiknas) 044/U/2002. This decree is regulating about school committee (*komite sekolah*), which is an Indonesian term for site council. The writer already discussed this decree in the context of district level (Sumintono, 2009). This article particularly analyse and discuss about the site council according to the policy that appeared in the decree's appendices.

The definition of school committee according to the decree is:

an autonomous body which provides a place for societal participation to increase quality, equity and efficiency of educational management in each educational institution which is involved in pre-school education, schooling system or out-of-school education.

The decree appendix states that the school committee is a required body to be established not only for schools but also for pre-schools and out-of-school education institutions. This means that educational institutions at any level, in any system and of any status must establish a school committee. This requirement implies that when institutions establish a school committee, they can be regarded as practising school based management. The belief is that the school committee is autonomous and will facilitate community aspirations and practice transparency, accountability and democratic management. The decrees impresses on the public that the era of the BP3 (similar to parents teacher association), where the focus has been on collecting funds from parents, is over.

Regarding its roles and functions from the perspective of SBM, the School Committee is seen principally as an advisory council. In this regard, the committee has a mediation role between the

government (executive) and the school community. So, when disputes arise between the school and community, these are directly handed over to the government, by-passing the principal and the education district office.

Regarding of the committee roles and functions, there appears to be a close relationship between the school committee as a supporting agency (third role) and a fund raising agency (sixth function). Under the previous institution system (which is called with BP3), collecting funds was the only real role. Under the decree this close dual role is still ambiguous at the school level. How can the committee that gives financial support not be given authority as well? At the same time, the guidelines on school committee do not mention anything about authority. Consequently, it seems that the intention of the decree's designers regarding financial support to the school is similar to the thinking and practice of the previous system.

The decree does not clarify the committee's roles, even as these relate to parental fund raising or other financial matters. This may also be interpreted as another hidden agenda that is embedded in the decree from the central government to hide incapability to support school operations adequately. Unlike school based management policy initiatives in other countries, the decree in Indonesia has not provided national standards for school funding or finance in general.

In the section on organisation, the decree documents state that the "chairman position is not assumed by the school principal". This statement is inconsistent with the statement on membership of the School Committee which, by default, does not list the school principal as eligible for membership. It could be that the principal of the school is automatically a member of the school committee. However the designers of the decree did not write this in the appendix. Similarly, the decree provides for parents to be members of the committee, but there are no guarantees or obligations for parents to be involved on it.

Regarding organisational arrangements as shown in part B of the Appendix 3, the decree puts the School Committee below the school for which the committee is established. This may be interpreted as the school committee being seen as having a less than significant role. The school committee is neither an equal partner nor does it have a horizontal position as a governance entity within the school. Further, the diagram states that other institutions that have responsibilities in educational management have mutual horizontal relationships. In terms of the

state school system, the institution that has ‘responsibility in educational management’ is the educational district office, but the nature of the relationship is direct and instructive to the school. Again, inserting the school committee within an already crowded and hierarchical system may not be appropriate.

The Practice at School Level

The emergence of a new body at the school level will undoubtedly make adjustments, adaptations and may even contribute to some innovations. This section deals with the dynamics of the school committee issue at the school level. Participant responses from the questionnaires and interviews provided colourful descriptions about this new body at the school level.

Table 1 summarises all participants’ responses to the five questions about the school committee. The response to the question was similar for all groups - more than half perceived that the school committee was not an independent body. The response was really interesting, particularly from principals who were the first in the school who knew about the decree that stated that the committee *is* an independent body. It seemed that the majority of participants’ responses could be based on the reality they actually experienced about the school committee. They saw that the committee was not independent. Instead they perceived the committee as being dependent on the school. That the committee was not considered an independent body, reflected the power relations that existed in most state secondary schools. An illustration from an educator indicated the reason for this:

In all schools, the committee is highly dependent on the school’s host in terms of financing their existence; one example ... conducting a meeting and purchase of food ... the committee cannot do it. This is because the committee does not have authority in terms of funding (I-6¹).

¹ I-6 is, ‘I’ was the code for data from interview, and ‘6’ was the number of the participants in my list.

Table 1. Participants' view about School Committee

Q1	School Committee is an independent body?			
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
	Principal	2	3	-
	Teachers	21	35	1
	School Committee	8	13	-
Q2	School Committee members were decided by principal?			
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
	Principal	1	4	-
	Teachers	7	45	5
	School Committee	2	18	1
Q3	School Committee roles is different from BP3?			
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
	Principal	4	1	-
	Teachers	41	10	6
	School Committee	17	4	-
Q4	School Committee has right to control educational implementation?			
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
	Principal	5	-	-
	Teachers	56	1	-
	School Committee	21	-	-
Q5	School Committee approval is needed for school budget?			
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
	Principal	5	-	-
	Teachers	48	5	4
	School Committee	21	-	-

The majority of participants responded that membership on the committee was not decided by the principals (Q2). Instead, the recruitment method used to select individuals to be school committee members, while facilitated officially by the school was decided by others. Around 78% of teachers as well as 86% of committee members also responded that the principals did not directly decide on the committee composition. However, participants' responses from the interviews reveal several issues regarding committee formation and methods of recruitment.

Firstly, all schools elected their own school committee members at the annual school meeting. Parents, mostly of new students, were invited and the meeting's agenda was to form a school committee and at the same time to decide about the amount of the school fee. The meeting itself, however, is fully controlled by the principal. Parents' participation was somewhat limited:

Researcher: Were all parents coming to the meeting?

Participant: It never happened. All over Indonesia never do all parents come to the meeting. As a maximum there are around 20 to 40% [parents of new student] (I-14).

From this small proportion who came, usually a few would speak about their concerns in the limited time available. A school committee member noted:

The school committee in our school was directly appointed, and then the principal made a decree to stipulate that. The first thing was a plenary meeting with all parents, which coincided with the ending period of the BP3; then a direct appointment occurred with regard to who will represent parents, fortunately I was involved in the last two periods of the BP3. Some of the board members came from BP3, some as community figures, and also a teacher representative (I-11).

Secondly, people nominated as school committee members were regarded as community figures.

One school committee member was convinced that:

The person who can become a member of board of school committee was not restricted to parents of students. We can elect for instance a governor [of the province] as a board member or a kapolda [chief of the police in the province]. It is dependent on the school meeting decision (I-5).

This indicates that unlike the BP3, which is restricted to parents' representatives, the school committee has flexibility to recruit from any part of society. Of the five state secondary schools that participated in this study, it was revealed that the chairman and secretary positions in each school committee were filled by well known figures and authorities. One school had a rector of the only state university in the province, and a school supervisor as chairman and secretary

respectively. Other schools had success in recruiting the head commissioner of the state bank, high echelon officials from provincial or district government, prominent businessmen and public figures. This was planned by the principals. One principal acknowledged what he had done in the school annual meeting:

In terms of the formation of the school committee, I have to put in the right people as board members. I should know him/her personally, s/he has interests in education and be useful for the school. If the committee makes too many troubles, I can dismiss it, that's my perception....For the chairman position, of course, it should be someone who I know more. And I told the parents in the school meeting when they asked about the committee positions, 'don't worry I know good people who are knowledgeable about education and they are willing to be involved'. So, there was no tension in the meeting, it went smoothly, and I can put the right people on the committee's board (I-12).

The motive for recruiting prominent figures of the community was based on the assumption that their influence can be used to help the school. One teacher gave an example of this,

When we started to recruit people for school committee's board, the principal and teachers maintained that s/he should be an important person who has power in executive or legislative. This is because s/he can help the school whenever the school makes any kind of proposal, so s/he can facilitate our plan and make recommendations. Then s/he can directly say to the executive to approve our proposal (I-17).

One difficulty, however, was time restriction. High profile people are also busy people and one teacher described:

The real obstacle with the board of the school committee is to find time for meeting. Sometimes we have to come to their workplace, because there is no alternative. For instance, the treasurer of our school committee is working at the mayor's office, and then we have to meet there. This is because all of them are busy and important people (I-15).

Since the principal controlled the meeting, he was the significant individual who arranged for the people to be available for appointment. Recruiting of high profile people had its advantages for the principals. It improved the school's bargaining position in the society in general, and on the other hand it could be used in the principal's best interest for any kind of problem. For example, parents who complained about the amount of school tuition fee would feel hesitant to confront community figures. The committee was also comprised of representatives of the administration, the teaching staff, students and alumni. Several responses from the participants revealed that principal's vested interest was evident in nominating people for the school committee. One

teacher (I-18) claimed that the principal himself purposely put him on the committee as the teacher representative; similar practices also happened in schools of I-15 and I-19 (teachers) and I-11 (school committee member). In one school, even the alumni representative (according to a teacher I-17) was a permanent teacher in the school. These actions drew criticisms - one teacher was convinced that the school committee had become the principal's puppet. He commented:

Many facts suggested that bureaucratic [district education officials and principals] interference was too much in the formation of school committee. This does not support the democratisation process that was intended by regulation. So, it shows that democratisation in schools is not something wanted by the bureaucrats (I-6).

However, as suggested previously, the regulation itself gave many privileges in terms of process to committee members and yet still fulfilled the regulation's mandate.

Thirdly, in terms of school committee composition, it is found that in most schools the majority of members had served on the BP3 board or as common members. Several participants suggested that they only practiced changing the name of BP3 to school committee to comply with the regulation. One teacher stated this experience as it happened in his school:

Researcher (R): How was the formation process of school committee in your school?

Participant (P): It is just continuing of the BP3, old board members just change the name to school committee.

R: all the same personnel?

P: Apparently.... from the BP3 members like Mr X [the chairman of school committee], he is a community figure in Mataram, though he didn't have a child in the school. The treasurer, Mrs Y, who still has a child who is a student in the school; the secretary is a figure of one of the non-governmental organisation. This is because the old board members fulfilled the requirements needed [that stated by the regulation], then we just changed the name from BP3 to school committee (I-21).

Another teacher from a different state school noted:

As far as I know, the BP3 held a meeting which also invited several people who were nominated to be included in the school committee. Because, it was still periods of service of the BP3, then we just changed the name to school committee. Automatically the chairman and other board members were similar to the BP3, and some new people as additional ordinary members to become the required community representatives (I-22).

These explanations revealed what could happen in practice to the creation of the committee in the school. Previous practice by the BP3 had not seemed to change (see sub-section 7.4.2). However, there was one school that used this opportunity to completely transform the BP3 and recruit all new people for the school committee. One teacher explains this:

Our school committee members are all new people. This was because the last chairman [of the BP3] was interfering too much, mainly in the refurbishment project that occurred in the school. He was not a developer, but he took the project. Then, we considered this with other teachers, and concluded he was not the right person to help the school, we have to get rid of him. Beside in the 3 years in his service as the BP3 chairman, the previous principal clashed with him....the school tuition fee was not increasing at all in those periods (I-15).

Participants' responses to the question Q3 regarding the committee's roles, indicated that all groups of the stakeholders were generally aware of the changing roles. This is not surprising since the main and only role and function of the BP3 was to collect money from parents, whereas the committee as stipulated had four roles and these were promoted extensively. The interview responses indicated that the educators and committee members responded similarly about the broadening role of the committee and felt that it was a beneficial development. For instance, a principal commented:

There are bits of difference, but mainly the same. School committee's authority is more far ranging [than the BP3], such as the committee can give many inputs regarding design and planning of particular programs to the school (I-16).

However, not all of the committee's roles have been apparent. A comment from one school supervisor illustrates this as follows:

The role as advisor is rarely used by the committee; supporting role is limited only to supplying the funds that the school needed; as a controlling agency.... only practiced when there was the annual school meeting just to stipulate the amount of money that had to be paid by parents regularly; and mediator role was only used when they thought it was necessary to get involved (I-1).

Several teachers also confirmed that many suggestions regarding the school programme arose mainly from them, while the committee simply approved the ideas. Typical remarks from teachers in two different schools were:

It could be good if the committee would give inputs with anything that needed to be supported. But, right now everything is proposed by the school. The committee is actually always in agreement with the program that we propose (I-15).

I think the committee is always cooperative with us. Everything that we proposed is approved by them. In terms of fund raising for that program, school policies, is always accepted (I-21).

These explanations suggest that some committees tend to agree to most things that the school suggests. An expansion of roles assigned to the committee is still to occur. By contrast, according to one school committee member who served as a board member of the BP3, there was no difference between BP3 and the school committee:

I think when we were running the BP3; we already practiced what we now call the school committee's role. From my point of view, what we have done is just like that (I-14).

It seems that, although the BP3's role was not similar to the school committee, the latter is administered like the former. This indicates that previous practices and procedures are still used in the committee, because it is operated mostly by the same individuals.

The two last questions regarding school committees (Q4 and Q5) asked about the committee's real influence in the school as perceived by school stakeholders. All principals, all school committee members and the majority of teachers responded that the school committee has the right to control educational implementation and their authorization is compulsory for school budgets. This view reflects the broadening of the committee's roles and functions, and all groups of respondents felt that this kind of power-sharing should happen.

However, data from the interviews revealed different picture. Generally, respondents perceived that there was limited power sharing in terms of the control of the committee in relation to educational implementation. A school committee member explain this issue as follows:

We try to be independent, this means that the mandate from parents is something that we are all committed to. For instance, in terms of budget, we are very strict, the fund that came from the parents has to be accounted for accurately, how it is spent and it should be based on a budget plan that we agreed on....We asked those kind of questions of the principal. But we are also cautiously not to interfere in the education process, we are still in the corridor which means not involved in school technical matters (I-14).

Another committee member (I-11) from another school responded similarly:

Researcher (R): What are the committee's involvements in educational implementation based on given authority?

Participants (P): We always cooperate; consultative process is how we deal with the school. Frankly, in our school, we as the school committee do not interfere much, there were many things we were not involved in .

R: What if there is a lack of teachers?

P: We are not involved at all.

R: So what really happened then?

P: We just pleased the principal; we only supported the school in terms of financial, fund raising and the like.

These two interview participants' descriptions indicate that, although all groups of respondents felt that the committee had rights in terms of control of school business, in reality this only involved marginal supervision of the budget. This new is in accordance with those already discussed in previous sections (section 7.5).

Regarding the committee's endorsement of the school budget, the practice in all state schools was the same. A school principal (I-20) explained the main reason for the continuation of the practice:

Researcher (R): Did you ask the district government for all the actual money that the school needed yearly so you don't have to collect money from parents?

Participants (P): Off course we did. We made an official request to the parliament and the executive based on our annual expenditure outside teachers salary.

R: Was it granted by them?

P: Oh, you don't have to ask that. If we asked for ten, actually they would give us about half. I think it is impossible. We asked the government about the funds we needed, it is always refused, what can we say? No other choice but to ask parents for help. Even, in this early academic year the district government promised to give us 750 thousand rupiahs [equal to US\$ 75] as a subsidy for the new student admission process in every school. The fund is needed because we conducted student's entrance test mandated by the government which is for transportation, consumption and to buy office stationary. However, they only gave us the money after tremendous effort and so we informed the local newspaper about that. That's the reality, and it is difficult to deal with.

In practice, the limited amount of non-salary budget for a state secondary school located in the city is only enough to administer the school for four months. As a result, money from parents becomes a strategic source of income enabling the school to function for the whole academic year. Two teachers (I-15 and I-21) who were involved in budget planing revealed that total parental money compared to the full amount of money from the government (salary and non-salary fund annually) was at a ratio of 1:2.5. This significant contribution then led to increasing the committee's bargaining position at least in terms of authorization of the school budget. Because of the considerable amount of money involved, a dedicated employee in the school is

made responsible for it. His/her job is usually to collect school fees from the students regularly and to deposit these in the school committee's bank account (I-13, I-15, and I-21).

Like principals, teachers and administration staff who have an extra income from the school budget (in addition to their salary as civil servants, see sub-section 7.4.2), the committee members also have this additional funding source. Although the proportion has not reached more than 5% of the school budget, it was bigger than the amount a teacher would receive. Comments from principals and teachers from two different schools confirmed this:

R: Does the committee member receive an honorarium like BP3 in the past?

P: It is the same, that is our policy, and it is an agreement reached between the committee and the school. Well, we also understood, actually they own the money. It can be given to them as a meeting stipend, monthly honorarium, or in terms of goods, basically it depends on the agreement. Usually at the end of the school financial periods, there is still money left in the balance, so we buy thing like clothing (etc) for them (I-16).

What really happened in our school... the committee members themselves who already know amount of fund from parents and its allocation, also asked about regular honorarium? They think, they fill the positions, doing the job and have responsibility, so automatically they should take a share from it (I-17).

Conclusion

This paper has unfolded the perspectives and practices about school committee as the SBM policy implementation as perceived by school stakeholders regards to devolving authority to school level. Analysis of the policy shows that its construction and content has some limitation of empowering school in terms of the context of decentralisation to school level. Instead, the emergence of school committee can be seen as establishing another institution based on bureaucratic perspectives as sign of change happened.

On the practical aspects it is revealed that the school principal's power is salient, and this also acknowledged in terms school committee members recruitment. This also means that principals highly influenced the kinds of implementation of the SBM policy in the public state secondary schools. It is interesting to know that teachers and school committee members mostly agreed with this situation, especially related to school committee task regarding financial matters.

The findings provide suggestions for reform of the existing SBM policy in Indonesia. It is suggested that the policy-makers who wanted to transform the education system, can construct a policy that actually became an instrument to strengthen if it is clearly stated rights and authority

for each stakeholder could lead to different and more positive outcomes in the context of school committee.

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