Stepping Up in Harmony: Achieving Cluster School Excellence (CSE) Status for Non-CSE Malaysian Secondary Schools

Bhattacharyya, E.*, Sabdin, M. and H. Shaari, Z.

Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, 31750 Tronoh, Perak, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes how aspiring non-CSE secondary schools can be on a par with CSE secondary schools through implementing school-based management (SBM). Though Malaysia aims to provide quality education for all children and produce quality human capital for the nation as envisioned in its Education Development Master Plan (EDMP) 2006-2010 through the CSE merit system, of date, only 1 % of Malaysian schools have been identified as holding CSE status (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011; Malaklolunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). The percentage of CSE schools can be increased if more non-CSE secondary schools are groomed to meet the CSE requirements. For the purpose of this study, the researchers reviewed journal articles on SBM, and provide some insights on the challenges of implementing SBM. The research identified that non-CSE secondary schools have to overcome three challenges of SBM, namely, programme, participation and support to achieve CSE status.

Keywords: School-based management, cluster school of excellence, secondary school, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Since 2006, 'cluster schools of excellence' (CSE) is the brand given to schools in Malaysia that have been identified as being excellent within their clusters in

management and student excellence. Management excellence incorporates the leadership and administrative capability of the Principal and staff of the school while student excellence embraces the outstanding merit of students both in academic and co-curricular activities. Of date, only 1 % of Malaysian schools have been identified as holding CSE status (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011; Malaklolunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). As of 2013, 263 schools have been accredited as cluster schools

of excellence. Over and above these 263 schools, 60 schools have attained High Achiever or High Performing School status (Hamzah, 2013). The Education Ministry targets to create 300 such schools by 2015 (Bernama, 2011).

CSE is a merit system that grants high achieving educational institutions autonomy in administration and extra allocation for advancement of specific fields like academic, co-curricular and sports achievements. The merit system offers benefits which are similar to school-based management (SBM). Essentially, SBM is an organisational decision-making model that seeks to decentralise decision-making to the school site (Murphy, 1997). To Yin and Ching (2007), SBM is often specified as the "important approach in improving school practices to meet the diverse expectations of stakeholders in a changing environment through autonomy and decentralization" (p.518). The SBM system permits school personnel to make decisions for learning improvement, the school community to have their say and be accountable for making major decisions and to plan realistic budgets for schools, resources to be redirected to support the goals of particular schools, programmes to be designed with creativity, morale of teachers to be boosted and new leadership to be nurtured (Wohsletter, 1993; Malaklolunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). Meanwhile, another research study (De Grauwe, 2004) highlighted five most repetitive benefits with the implementation of SBM. Among them is that SBM-run schools have more democratic, relevant and responsible decision-making exercises and greater resource (i.e. funds) mobilisation than non-SBM run schools.

Where the Malaysian Education Development Master Plan (EDMP) 2006-2010 aims to provide quality education for all children and produce quality human capital for the nation (Ministry of Education, 2006), it actually promotes the implementing of SBM. One of the core strategies of achieving the objective of EDMP is to foster a culture of excellence in educational institutions through the formation of CSE. CSE status is achieved through excellence in school niche areas such as student achievement in academic or co-curricular activities or personality traits such as confidence and leadership (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011). The niche areas often help cluster schools distinguish themselves from each other and eventually accelerate the speed of achieving excellence in the specific fields. In order to attain CSE status, cluster schools decide to choose the external experts as coaches, collaborate with external institutions to gain insight and input, provide training for teachers' professional development and monitor the progress of CSE programmes and activities (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011). Another study mentioned that CSE implementation requires a three-pronged approach: learning and mental reorientation of school community, empowerment of decision-making to school authorities and development of leadership skills among school principals (Malaklolunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). The above findings indicate that efforts in attaining CSE status

should start with the school community's readiness in implementing SBM.

At the moment, for a school to be awarded CSE status, it has to meet a series of criteria that include i) Academic Evaluation of school standard which must be classified as at least Excellent based on the Malaysian Education Quality Standard, and ii) Curriculum excellence (secondary school) where average grades for public examinations are evaluated over 3 consecutive years. The Education Ministry indicates curriculum excellence as reflected when 80 % and more of students of a school have passed all subjects in public examinations or indicate increase in academic performance in public examinations in the said schools (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2012). The CSE requirements have been made transparent for aspiring schools in order that they may plan their route for achieving them. This paper proposes how aspiring non-CSE secondary schools can be on par with CSE secondary schools by implementing school-based management (SBM). This paper also highlights the challenges of SBM and suggests ways to incorporate SBM in non-CSE secondary schools.

CHALLENGES OF SBM

In spite of efforts to attain greater autonomy in SBM, it must be pointed out that SBM is not without its challenges (De Grauwe, 2004). A series of issues preoccupy the introduction and implementation of SBM in developing countries (De Grauwe, 2004). SBM may in fact, on the contrary, lead to

a slow and frustrating decision-making process (Wohsletter, 1993). In developing countries, for example, a participatory decision-making process is not commonly practised. In many cases, the implementation of any policy is a top-down approach that may be subject to resistance and non-support from the masses. Besides, lack of a support system may also jeopardise the effectiveness of SBM implementation. Any setbacks that slow down the process and impede the successful implementation of SBM may be caused by weak governments, a limited communication network, lack of well-trained principals, overloaded administrative and managerial responsibilities for principals, gender-related leadership preferences, imprecise power division and accountability between school board or councils and school authority, conflicting interests among school key stakeholders and the danger of treating education as achieving private good instead of public good (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011).

SBM is also subject to a debate on its impact on quality. A global report reminds SBM enthusiasts that "SBM has seldom been introduced in order to improve quality of teaching and learning" (De Grauwe, 2004, p.7). Teachers in Israeli schools were found to have improved their motivation and sense of commitment when they were given greater autonomy (Gaziel, 1998). Innovative programmes and practices were churned when UK and New Zealand school principals were empowered to make decisions (Williams & Portin, 1997). In addition, studies conducted in Nicaragua indicate positive correlation

between student academic performance and staff selection and staff monitoring, made possible through SBM initiative with relative autonomy to schools (King & Ozler, 1998). Jimenez and Sawada (1999) provided a well-cited example of El Salvador's community-managed schools or *Education con Participacion de la Comunidad* (EDUCO) schools where improvement in student performance and motivation was accredited to amplified community and parental participation. Sawada and Ragatz (2003) extended Jimenez and Sawada's (1999) study a step further and found that staff selection is a crucial determinant in student performance. The findings of these studies suggest that student performance is correlated to the participation of critical school stakeholders. In other words, high involvement of key stakeholders facilitates the schools in making decisions in implementing SBM effectively and ensuring positive impact of SBM on school performance.

Despite the issues preoccupying the introduction, implementation and impact of SBM, the concept is still widely adopted by policy makers around the world. The implementation often materialises in various forms such as school-based governance, school self-management and school site-management. In Malaysia, SBM has been introduced through CSE, which gives recognition of excellence for 5 main categories of educational institutions, namely, primary schools, secondary schools, special education and vocational schools, international and private schools and matriculation colleges and teacher training institutes (Ministry of Education, 2006). The high achieving institutions in each category are branded as cluster schools. The establishment of cluster schools in Malaysia was aimed to promote a culture of excellence in educational institutions relevant to students' needs and aspirations, and was adapted from the British concept of school diversity (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011).

INCORPORATING SBM AT NON-CLUSTER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA

Drawing on the findings of previous studies, the implementation and evaluation of SBM are subject to some prerequisites: the identification of niche areas, the orientation of the school key stakeholders and the identification of external supports. In essence, non-cluster secondary schools have to prepare themselves by implementing programmes and activities that match their current strengths, to educate and train the school key stakeholders (i.e. Headmasters; Head teachers and Teachers) with necessary skills and to identify the external supports they will require.

PROGRAMMES FOR NICHE AREAS

According to Lingard *et al.* (2002), SBM was introduced to Queensland schools in Australia in the 1980s in order to improve student outcomes. However, Lingard *et al.* (2002) mentioned that there is limited evidence to indicate the success of the decentralisation system. Thus, in 2000, efforts were pooled to revisit professional

concerns and school-based management on teaching and learning. As it was a longitudinal study, the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QSRLS) was developed to study the relationship between school-based management and improved student outcomes (if any). The QSRLS worked on improving authentic pedagogy and school reform and their mediation by teachers' professional learning communities (Lingard *et al.*, 2002, p. 8). Lingard *et al.* (2002)'s study indicated that for SBM to be successfully implemented, government efforts are required at all levels i.e. policy and funding strategies and social democratic discourse are essential at all stages of discussion from decision-making policies to active implementation (Lingard *et al.*, 2002). Such efforts, if not synergised, may result in an uphill task and continued struggle in the implementation of the programme.

In comparison to the study by Lingard *et al.* (2002), an earlier study by Gamage *et al.* (1996), however, mentioned that the success of SBM implementation in Victoria, Australia was dependent on the involvement of school councils for changes to occur in the general education policy of the school (p. 26). The study reinstated the crucial involvement and participation of school councils in implementing greater autonomy towards school and members of the school staff and community.

In addition, the success of SBM implementation is evidenced in a recent study conducted by Bandur in Indonesia (2011). To Bandur, the implementation of SBM can lead to improvement in

teaching-learning environments and student achievement (Bandur, 2011, p. 845). Bandur made mention how the decentralisation of autonomy to schools could create partnership in participatory school decision-making in terms of goal, mission, vision, budget, textbook allocation, school curriculum, school buildings and even students' discipline policies (p. 845).

In order to strive for successful SBM implementation, there is a need to achieve excellence in both academic and co-curricular programmes. Typical programmes comprise objectives, activities and assessment. The programmes have to represent the schools' niche areas (i.e. academic and co-curricular achievements). Before programmes can be planned, non-CSE secondary schools need to identify the niche areas that they would like to excel in. Specifically, they have to audit the schools' current strengths. The audit will indicate whether the schools should focus on academic performance, co-curricular activities or character development, such as confidence and leadership.

In terms of academic performance, non-CSE schools have to identify students' outstanding academic performance at all levels in both examination and non-examination classes. Academic excellence is measured by students' outstanding and excellent academic performance to be among the best students of the school (Malaklolunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). Students in CSE schools are driven by the school's culture of excellence to continuously perform their best academically. This culture of excellence

is marked by the students' need to excel and compete among themselves to emerge top student and contribute towards the schools' high academic performance yearly. CSE schools have slogans like "*Aim high and reach the stars*" and "*Be the best and beat the rest*" to create motivation among students (Malakloluunthu & Shamsudin, 2011, p.1489). Academic performance remains one of the most important niche areas in attaining CSE status.

At the same time, student performance in co-curricular activities is also enlisted as one of the criterion in achieving the status of cluster school. School management is required to provide space and opportunity for students to plan, manage and control events and activities either at the school, national or international levels (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011). Students participate, compete and excel in various types of co-curricular activities at both national and international levels. Student participation in various activities such as choral speaking and brass band competitions at national and international level are a few examples to showcase their co-curricular performance.

Student niche areas can also be showcased by mastery of languages such as fluency in a foreign language like Arabic (Malakloluunthu & Shamsudin, 2011). Ismail and Abdullah (2011), on the other hand, cite participation in rugby as one of the niche areas in co-curricular performance. Niche areas must be carefully selected to befit the profile of students' co-curricular abilities and potential. In addition, different schools may have potential in different areas. For some it may be sport, while for others it may involve participation in various societies, clubs or uniform bodies. School management must ensure that niche areas are based on the students' abilities and potential drawn from the schools' outstanding achievement i.e. record of student performance in competitions at national and international levels.

At the same time, CSE schools are factored by students' development and excellence in leadership and management activities. Leadership and management activities include independent participation and management of school-based activities by students. In other words, students are given the task of "plan[ning], manag[ing] and control[ling] the events and activities either at school, national and international level" (Ismail & Abdullah, 2011, p. 6). Ismail and Abdullah cite the example of students' independent management and organisation of a school summit with international participation. In other words, teachers need only provide guidance to students while the students organise the entire event. Such activities enable the students to develop, nurture and grow in confidence and leadership capacity. School management should indicate niche areas in leadership and management areas and provide students the viable opportunity to participate and develop such character-building skills.

However, it is important to note that successful implementation can only occur if there are clear SBM guidelines among the school, staff and community

(Pomuti, 2008). Pomuti mentioned that although governmental support was evident among several Namibian primary schools, reluctance in sharing resources and greater autonomy to schools was met with resilience. As such, school authorities faced difficulties in implementing the policy among the selected primary schools. The study concluded that teaching supervision in isolation could not be linked to CSE. However, efforts are required to provide clearer CSE guidelines on teaching and learning among students, teachers and community in the said schools (p. iii).

Thus, it is paramount that once programmes and activities that meet the criteria have been identified, the state Education Department and the Ministry of Education have to specify how they are going to monitor the progress and impact of the said activities in the schools. It is pertinent that school authorities deliberate the niche areas and provide the space and opportunity to develop such areas of excellence. School authorities have to ensure that programmes are developed and participation is sustained with the commitment of the school stakeholders (i.e. Headmaster, Head Teacher and teachers). Efforts need to be set in place by school authorities and shared with the stakeholders of the school such as staff, students, community and other relevant parties involved in the performance of the school. In other words, school authorities must ensure that there is transparency among stakeholders in niche areas targeted for the school.

ORIENTATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

One of the key stakeholders of SBM is the body of school staff. Collectively, school staff such as Principals or Head Teachers, Subject Head Teachers, teachers and non-teachers are responsible for the success or failure of SBM implementation. Successful implementation often requires optimum participation of school staff. Schools adopting SBM should emulate business entities in the way they are managed. Schools should embrace the four management functions namely, planning, organising, leading and coordinating (POLC). Depending on the managerial level, managerial staff focus on POLC with varying frequency (Mahoney *et al*., 1965).

In Malaysian school contexts, school Principals and Subject Head Teachers are the managerial employees, while teachers and non-teachers are the non-managerial employees. The school principals represent the top managers of the school while the Subject Head Teachers are the first-line managers. Mahoney *et al*.'s (1965) findings suggest that top managers (i.e. the principals) perform the planning and organising functions more often than the lower-level managers (i.e. the Subject Head Teachers). The findings also indicate that the low-level managers are employing leading functions more frequently than the high-level managers. In contrast, the controlling function is less frequently employed by the low-level managers than the high-level managers.

The simple organisational structure suggests that school Principals or Head Teachers, and Subject Head Teachers should possess some basic managerial skills, namely conceptual (i.e. ability to analyse and diagnose complex situations), interpersonal (i.e. ability to work well with others at individual and group levels), technical (i.e. knowledge and techniques to perform relevant tasks) and political (i.e. ability to build a power base and establish the right connections) skills (Robbins *et al.*, 2011). In the school context, as educators, managerial staff are experts in teaching and learning, and as teachers, they are managers of their colleagues. In other words, they possess the necessary technical skills to perform teaching-and-learning related tasks and some of the essential interpersonal skills such as active listening and effective feedback while dealing with others. However, being at the managerial level, they are also expected to possess a complete set of interpersonal skills, namely, empowerment skills, and the other two managerial skills (i.e. conceptual and political skills) to be effective.

For educators, two of the managerial skills (i.e. interpersonal and political skills) may have been acquired through experience on a trial and error basis, but they may not be effective to facilitate the implementation of SBM. For example, most educators have good interpersonal skills for dealing with learners, but not necessarily with adults. They may not be aware that their communication affects the effectiveness of their feedback and the outcome of their empowerment to teachers and non-teachers. Similarly, communication also influences the process of developing a power base and right connections with others. In essence, communication skills influence other related skills such as effective feedback, empowerment and networking skills. These skills are often associated with leadership skills.

Leadership is defined as the "ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organisation" (Ireland & Hitt, 2005, p. 63). In SBM context, school Principals and Subject Head Teachers have to develop leadership skills through which they "influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2010, p. 3). Among the desirable characteristics of leaders are being honest, forward thinking, inspiring and competent (Daft, 2005). Besides, managerial staff at schools needs to be transformational leaders practising four elements, namely, individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealised influence (or charisma) on their subordinates (Avolio *et al.*, 1991). The four elements would help them to maintain flexibility and synergy with others at the school in their effort to achieve excellence. These elements often help them to be effective mentors to other school staff, to stimulate school staff's thinking and be stimulated by them, to generate excitement and confidence, and to develop personal power and influence over school staff. In other words, managerial

staff can introduce and implement SBM initiatives effectively if they can successfully lead and mobilise others to do so.

Incorporating SBM represents managing change in a school from a bureaucratic administration to a democratic structure (Gamage *et al*., 1996). Such change often involves either Lewin's (1951) three-step change process involving unfreezing the status quo or changing to a new state and freezing the new change to make it permanent (Robbins *et al*., 2011). However, any change invites some resistance from sections of the followers. In the SBM context, resistance is likely to come from teachers and non-teachers. Management scholars suggest several techniques to minimise resistance such as education and communication, participation, facilitation and support, negotiation, manipulation and co-optation and coercion (Robbins *et al*., 2011). The first three techniques are often used with non-powerful groups, while the last three techniques are recommended when resistance seems to be coming from powerful groups. In the SBM context, Principals or Head Teachers need to implement one of the recommended techniques to gain support from teachers and non-teachers. However, to gain support, Principals or Head Teachers need to implement the concept gradually, and empower staff to make relevant decisions (Wohsletter, 1993). Teachers and non-teachers may not be aware of the value of SBM in achieving CSE status. Thus, school Principals or Head Teachers have to introduce the SBM on a gradual basis to create awareness among teachers before

implementing it. Such awareness helps to prepare teachers to understand the value of any new initiative. Once such awareness has been created, leaders usually find it easier to get followers (i.e. teachers and non-teachers) to be cooperative, dependable and honest. This eventually encourages teachers and non-teachers to be honest in providing and exchanging feedback pertinent to realising the goal of their schools, that is, achieving CSE status.

SUPPORT

Besides minimising resistance, incorporating SBM also requires support from other key stakeholders such as the governing bodies. Once the programmes have been selected and the orientation of the school staff to SBM has been conducted, schools need to ensure that they have the relevant resources, namely, manpower, time and money. These resources are often not readily accessible for most schools. Relevant and sufficient manpower, that is, experts, need to be acquired or custodians need to be trained to conduct the relevant programmes. Being competent is another desirable characteristic of group members (Daft, 2005). Ensuring staff are competent is often subject to time and money. For example, the most effective implementation of SBM have the teachers available outside of school hours, and the number of staff is adequate to sustain programmes (Giordano, 2008). Working outside of school hours usually requires teachers to allocate their time with expected monetary or non-monetary rewards. Meanwhile, ensuring adequate

number of staff may not be timely since the feeder of manpower is often the state education department. Without timely and sufficient manpower, the school may not be able to achieve CSE status in time. In fact, similar findings were revealed by Pomuti's (2008) study, that is, autonomy of school management and scarcity of resources impede the implementation of SBM in schools. Najjumba *et al*. (2013) makes similar mention of the need to strengthen school management practices and support to ensure the successful implementation of the said programme in Ugandan primary schools.

The main source of funds for schools often comes from the state and governing bodies such as Ministry of Education or local state authorities. Should schools intend to get other sources of funding, schools must provide staff administrative training and time to adjust to new roles and gain the necessary financial support (Wohsletter, 1993). Training in preparing proposals ranging from identifying problems and benefits of funding the school programmes to justifying the required funds is vital. Without such training, schools will not be able to elicit funds from other public or private agencies.

One way of maximising resources is to ensure that school management select niche areas relevant to student potential and ability based on student performance in competitions at national and international levels. Essentially, the success of SBM is a consolidation of many factors ranging from school management, allocation of resources, experienced and adequate manpower trained in specialised fields to oversee and manage co-curricular programmes and activities and most importantly, student potential and ability that fit the bill. In order to achieve CSE status, the researchers propose the conceptual framework shown in Fig.1. All the three aspects i.e. programmes for niche-areas, orientation of key stakeholders and support need to be identified.
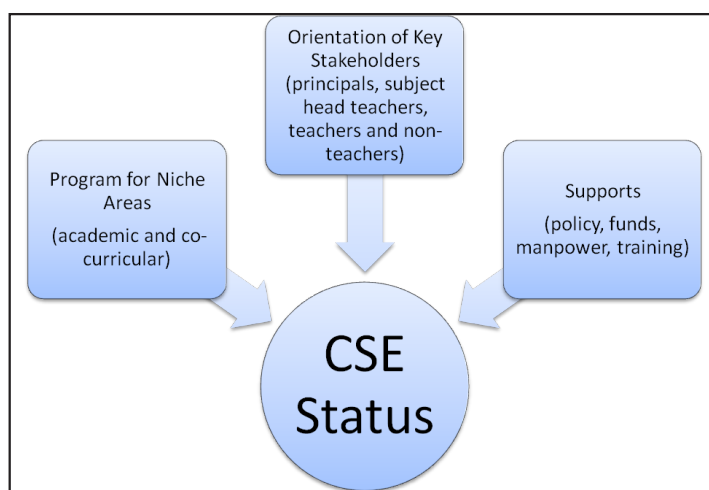

Fig.1: Conceptual Framework of SBM Implementation for CSE Status

CONCLUSION

In general, achieving CSE status through SBM requires prioritisation of many factors including an effective teaching-learning environment, school support and student receptivity to learning excellence (Yin & Ching, 2007). What can be summarised from the studies on SBM is the right combination of push and pull factors and the realistic mechanism to implement such a decision-making model. Different countries approach the said merit and decentralisation system with different emphases on niche areas depending on the resources and funding available in the said country. In this context, this paper elaborates the factors that encompass areas such as student achievement in academic or co-curricular activities or personality in character development. For CSE to be achieved, collaborative efforts are required between policy makers and a supportive technical mechanism to ensure the sustained implementation of the said merit system (Adediran *et al.*, 2012). Giordano (2008) makes mention that using school clusters mainly as administrator units does not allow schools to achieve their main objective nor does it improve education quality. Successful implementation of SBM and consequently CSE requires a number of committed stakeholders at different levels. Real change can be accomplished through grant programmes that allow cluster management committees to define their plans for education improvement.

REFERENCES

Adediran, S., Akinsolu, O., & Oladimeji, E. (2012). *Education sector support programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN): Support to universal basic education commission (UBEC) on school-based management (SBM) system development nationwide*. Report Number: ESSPIN 422, 1-40.

Avolio, B. J., Waldman, D. A., & Yammarion, F. J. (1991). The four I's of transformational leadership. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, *15*(4), 9-16.

Bandur, A. (2011). School-based management developments: Challenges and impacts, *Journal of Educational Administration*, *50*(6), 845-873.

BERNAMA (2011). *300 schools to be upgraded as excellent cluster schools by 2015*. [Online] Available: http://www.teo-education.com/teo/?cat=19 retrieved on 2013, Jun 3.

Daft, R. L. (2005). *The leadership experience*. Mason: South-Western.

De Grauwe, A. (2004). *School-based management (SBM): Does it improve quality?* Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005, The Quality Imperative. UNESCO, pp.1-14.

Gamage, D. T., Sipple, P., & Partridge, P. (1996). Research on school-based management in Victoria, *Journal of Educational Administration*, *34*(1), 24-40.

Gaziel, H. (1998). School based management as a factor in school effectiveness. *International Review of Education*, *44*(4), 319-333.

Giordano, Elizabeth A., (2008). *School clusters and teacher resource centres*. Paris: UNESCO: International Institute for Education Planning, p.143.

Hamzah, Hamidah. (2013). High performance schools the choice of many parents. *BERNAMA* [Online] Retrieved on Jun 3, 2013 from http://www.bernama.com/bernama.

Ireland, R. D., & Hitt, M. A. (2005). Achieving and maintaining strategic competitiveness in the 21st century: The Role of strategic leadership. *Academy of Management Executive*, *19*(4), 63-77.

Ismail, A., & Abdullah, A. G. (2011). Cluster schools for diverse students' needs in Malaysia: A system view. *International Journal of Education*, *3*(2), 1-20.

Jimenez, E., & Sawada. Y. (1999). Do Community-Managed Schools Work? An Evaluation of El Salvador's EDUCO Program." *World Bank Economic Review, 13*(3), 415–41.

King, E., & Ozler, B. (1998). *What decentralization got to do with learning? The case of Nicaragua's school autonomy reform.* Working paper No. 9, series on Impact Evaluation of Education Reforms, Development Economics Research Group, The World Bank.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social science.* New York: Harper & Row.

Lingard, B., Hayes, D., & Mills, M. (2002). Developments in school-based management: The specific case of Queensland, Australia, *Journal of Educational Administration*, *40*(1), 6-30.

Mahoney, T. A., Jerdee, T. H., & Carroll, S. J. (1965). The job(s) of management. *Industrial Realtions*, *4*(2), 103.

Malaklolunthu, & Shamsudin. (2011). Challenges in school-based management: Case of a "cluster school" in Malaysia. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* (WCES- 2011).

Ministry of Education. (2012). *Excellent Schools Producing Distinguished Generations* [Online] Retrieved on Jun 3, 2013 from http://www.moe.gov.my/v/sekolah-kluster

Ministry of Education. (2006a). *Education Development Master Plan (EDMP) 2006-2010.* Putrajaya: Education Ministry of Malaysia.

Ministry of Education. (2006b). *Cluster School.* Retrieved on October 25, 2009 from http://www.moe.gov.my/?act=search&id=0&keyword=sekolah+kluster

Murphy, J. (1997). Restructuring through school-based management. In T. Townsend (Ed) *Restructuring and quality: issues for tomorrow's schools.* (pp. 35-60). London: Routledge.

Najjumba, I. M., Habyarimana, J., & Bunjo, C. L. (2013). *Improving learning in Uganda Volume III, school based management: Policy and functionality*, Washington D. C. World Bank. doi: 10.1596/978-0-8213-9847-0. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0

Northouse, P. G. (2010). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (5th ed.).Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc.

Phillip, L. J. (1998). *School-based management, expectations and outcomes: Edmonton public schools 15 years down the road* [Online] Retrieved from http://clubweb.interbaun.com/~l-pphillips/thesisweb

Pomuti, H. M. (2008). *An Analysis of the relationship school-based management and improving Nambian.* (Doctoral thesis dissertation)In the Department of Education Management and Philosophy Studies, Faculty of education, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Robins, Stephen P., DeCenzo, D. A., & Couter, M. (2011). *Fundamentals of Management 7th ed.* Boston: Pearson Education.

Sawada, Y., & Ragatz, A. (2003). *Decentralization of education, teacher behavior, and outcomes: The case of El Salvador's EDUCO program* in EMILIANA VEGAS, (Ed.) in Incentives to Improve Teaching: Lessons from Latin America, (pp.255-306). The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

Williams, R .C., & Portin, B. (1997). *Challenges to leadership: The changing role of the principal*

in Washington state (Research Report). Olympia, Western Australia: Association of Washington School Principals.

Wohsletter, P. (1993). *School-based management. Education Consumer Guide.* Retrieved on November 22, 2012 from http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/baseman.html

Yin, C. C., & Ching, M. M. (2007). School-based management and paradigm shift in education: An empirical study. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 21*(6), 517-542.