

**MAXIMIZING ACADEMIC SUCCESS THROUGH ADVISING:  
IS IT MENTORING OR MONITORING?**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This brief paper has two goals. It traces the trends and changes in academic advising and various models that have evolved in the past fifty years, and it offers a comprehensive pilot program, “The Umbrella Model”, for student advising that attempts to address the students’ academic and non-academic needs. The model makes extensive use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to build advisor-advisee groups. The proposed model calls for a partnering between the faculty and the administration to reduce student drop-out and increase completion rates. The paper describes the seven areas covered in this “Umbrella Model” of advising.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Most of the professions associated with offering advice are relatively new. Only a hundred years ago, there were no youth counselors, psychotherapists, marriage counselors, or financial consultants. Young ones grew up to be adults, most got married. Some of these didn’t last long, but a majority of these marriages lasted a long time. People started businesses; some were successful and some failed. Institutions of learning were no different. People entered the schools, colleges, or universities - some succeeded, some didn’t. If a marriage failed, one did not blame the institution of marriage. If a business went under one did not blame the market place. Similarly, when a student failed one did not blame the university. Success and failure were considered parts of life.

Somewhere along the way our society has not only become less tolerant of failure but has also taken serious steps to reduce the numbers of failures. We have become a society obsessed with success, reaching for success by all means and at any cost. Failure is no longer tolerated in our culture.

The implication is that no one should fall behind; no one should fail. All shall be successful; all shall be winners. If this seems reminiscent of an absurdity such as “all the children in our city are above-average” it is because it is absurd. As long as there is competition, as long as there are comparisons, success for all, or that all shall be winners is logically unattainable. However, we continue to insist on what is unachievable.

We have been told that if we are unable to accomplish something on our own, we can seek help and counseling from certain specialists: Specialists that are trained to guide us through the right paths, procedures, and shortcuts to our goals. Hence enter the counselors, therapists, consultants, advisors.

During the Colonial times, the president of a college, and later the faculty, were responsible for advising students regarding their extracurricular activities, their moral life, and intellectual habits. They acted in loco parentis (Cook, 1999). One of the earliest student advising offices was established at John Hopkins University circa 1876 (White &

Khakpour, 2006). Developmental advising made its appearance in the 1970s. The concept of mentoring as we have come to recognize today has its roots in 1820s at Kenyon College, Ohio, where each student was assigned to a faculty member who serves as the student's adviser (Cook, 1999). Historically, the key responsibility of the advisors or matrons was to keep the students on the morally correct path. The ideas such as sticking to a program, completing it, and achieving academic excellence were not given much consideration on our early institutions of higher education where men entered to become gentleman and clergymen, and women to be become ladies, or to join the church as nuns.

As our nation's needs for other professionals grew, the universities undertook the training of teachers, lawyers, engineers, and medical professions. The universities saw a big jump in enrollments at the end of WWII when the returning servicemen were entitled to free university education. The second big surge occurred in the 1960s with the Civil Rights Movement and President Lyndon B. Johnson's education policies. Higher education was seen as a constitutional right. Since the 1950s and 1960s were decades of prosperity in the US, funding for public education was available. Consequently, high schools were rewarded for having their students accepted into colleges; universities were provided the funds based on the number of students they served and the volume of credit-hour they generated. Student enrollments at the American Universities surged during the late 1960s and early 1970s. So did the student drop-out rate. Many of the students were not academically prepared for college; however, more emphasis was placed on getting the students through college than on preparing them for college.

The first oil crisis of the early 1970s pulled the rug from under our economy and our public education. Accountability became the new mantra. It became necessary that high schools demonstrated that they were not only graduating healthy percentages of their students but were also preparing their graduates for the job markets and/or colleges.

The universities were held accountable for having their students complete their 4-year degree programs in close to four years. The universities were further pressured to manage and lower the student drop-out rates. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education of 1970 reported that advising played an important role in retention and completion at institutions of higher education. This brought advising and remedial instruction to American campuses.

### **Advising Models**

Since the early 1970s, billions of dollars have been spent on efforts to keep the students in colleges through numerous strategies and models. Sadly, the fact remains that nearly half of the students entering a university drop out within the first year. Only four out of ten college students complete their 4-year programs in six years (Driscoll, 2009).

These high drop-out rates and low completion rates have been a concern for university administrators and parents alike. In addition to finger-pointing by all concerned, there have been sincere efforts and attempts to develop strategies and models for retaining and helping students complete their degree programs. Several models for advising and mentoring have evolved in the past fifty years. The earliest model to emerge after the Carnegie Commission's ground-shaking declaration about advising and retention was the Prescriptive Model (Crookstone, 1972). In this model the advisors prescribe what courses the students are to take and in what sequence. Although this model takes away the power or control away from a student, the research seems to support that prescriptive

advising is often successful when the advisor (often a faculty member) make all decisions about “course selection, degree requirement, and registration” (Fillippino, Barnett, & Roach (2008), and the students foregoes all decision-making and responsibility (Crookstone, 1972).

Developmental Model, also developed by Crookston (1972), encourages a shared responsibility between the student and the advisor. The focus is not only to get the degree program completed but to help student develop realistic academic and professional goals, and prepare for life-after-college. The biggest advantage of a developmental model is that it provides the student an access to the experience, knowledge and expertise of the faculty advisor.

Integrated Model (Earls, 1987) proposes that one may actually combine the best of prescriptive and developmental models, i.e., based on the student’s goals and needs, the advisor may tailor-make a program that would help the student reach his or her academic and career objectives.

As the drop-out rates continue to go up, the universities are struggling to identify and help the at-risk students: students with learning disabilities that need special accommodations, and students that are not college-ready, and need to be brought up-to-speed. Such students may not only need academic advising but may also be facing psychological issues, and family and financial problems. Clearly, an academic advisor, or a faculty member alone is unable to attend to all of these issues. To address all of these concerns, a new approach, Intrusive Model emerged in the early 1990s (Heisserer, 2002; Upcraft & Kramer, 1995). In such a model, the institution steps in and sets up a coordinated network of offices that jointly addresses all the needs of the at-risk students.

More recently, Smothers (2012) has proposed an even more comprehensive model that aims to address a student’s needs in areas such as study skills, choosing a major, developing a study plan, extracurricular activities, self-assessment, career opportunities, and policies and procedure for registration, drop-add, use of tutoring services, and health and housing services. Some would argue that Intrusive Models and other recent efforts are an attempt at leveling the field. The need and emergence of Intrusive model and Smothers’ Visual Model of Academic Advising (2012) bring us to two important issues:

### **Lack of readiness on the students’ part**

Many of our students entering college are in fact not ready for college due to lack of learning skills, emotional disabilities, or socio-economic circumstances. Unless protected with an extensive advising and mentoring net a good portion of these students will drop-out, and all the good intentions, efforts, and financial resources allocated for helping these students will result in a total loss. We, as a nation, have taken it for granted that everyone should have access to education. Is it time to ask: How much education? High school? An Associate degree? A 4-year college education? Graduate school? Should everyone be allowed to enter a doctoral program, a medical school, a law school? Should there be a line? Where should such a line be drawn? And most importantly, what criterion might we use for drawing such a line?

Education that at one time was considered the great equalizer in our society has widened the gap between the haves and the have nots. The inequality in quality of education at public and private schools, inequality of education among various sections of our inner-cities, suburbs, and affluent subdivisions is glaringly apparent (Bloom, 1987). In the recent years, one has often heard that online education may level the field and change the

landscape of higher education (Lewin, 2012; Ward, 2012). On the other side, there is just as much concern and suspicion about the impact and usefulness of online offerings (Rooks, 2012; Youngberg, 2012).

### **Lack of readiness on the universities' part**

It is easy to put the blame of student failure on the students. It is easy to say that the high schools have failed to prepare the students for college. If what has not been accomplished in 12 years of school cannot be accomplished in four years of college. School systems, on the other hand, argue that the universities have done a less-than-satisfactory job in training the teachers that are teaching in our schools. The circular argument has resulted in a downward spiral where the students have been the victims.

Even if one were to accept the criticism that our elementary and secondary schools have only moved the students along the educational conveyer belt, the fact remains that these somewhat less-prepared students have been arriving at the universities' doorsteps for several decades. What has the universities' response been to help fix the problem? The universities have created "First Year Colleges", "The Freshman Seminars", Writing Labs", "Reading Labs", "Math Labs", and in some cases, one-credit hours courses such as "University Experience 101."

Despite these efforts, the drop-out rate among the freshman, to large extent, has remained unchanged. Furthermore, most of the drop-out takes place in the first year of college.

Currently, many of the universities, public and private, are undergoing metamorphosis. These institutions are shifting from institutions for dissemination of knowledge to organizations that have to generate a profit, or at least, break even. Consequently, budgets and bottom-lines have become top priorities. The focus has shifted from "the best possible quality of education" to "the least costly means to provide instructions."

Due to these pressures, the administrations are more preoccupied with funding, grants, endowments, and bringing in the maximum number of students (read as: increasing the market share) to the campus and less concerned about what happens in the classrooms.

Similarly, the faculty is less concerned about teaching and more about acquiring tenure that results from scholarship, research, publications, and attracting grants to their projects. Teaching evaluations play an insignificant role in securing tenure and promotion.

In times of economic depression such as the one of 2010s, on many campuses, "tenure" has lost its meaning. Tenured faculty are being terminated or recommended to take early retirements. With such a lack of commitment from the administration, the faculty members see little need for any loyalty to the institution or its student body. Generally, the faculty is no longer involved with students as one would have expected. When it comes to classroom teaching, holding office hours, maintaining meaningful contact with students, providing feedback, and grading students' work, the faculty members do the minimum that is required. On many campuses, a large portion of undergraduate teaching is carried out by graduate students, and the entire function of academic advising is carried out by the university advising office instead of the faculty.

The fact that universities have only begun to take into account the non-academic needs of the students seems to suggest that our institutions of higher education were not student-ready. The universities did not have adequate nets to catch the students that fell out of the system.

The notion that universities may not be “student-ready” is an uncomfortable one for many. However, if the administration’s and faculty’s foci have shifted away from providing quality instructions to running a business and retaining a job respectively, it is reasonable to say that the universities are not student centered. This may explain some of the students’ indifference to actual learning, and a greater concern for grades, and getting it done - quick and dirty.

As a college faculty member, this author has little control over what goes on in the area high schools, or developing a university’s focus, goals, and mission. The author, however, believes that a faculty member has an obligation to the students: to help the students acquire discipline specific knowledge and life-skills so that they can successfully function once they leave the campus. To fulfill this responsibility, the author developed and implemented an all encompassing advising model in a small department in a state-supported, regional university. This Umbrella Model involves some participation from the administration, but may actually be carried out by an individual faculty member.

### **The Umbrella Model**

The model evolved, purely out of necessity, on a campus that had done away with the model where the faculty advised the students. All advising was carried out by a team of advisors that reported to a Director of Advising. Every semester, prior to registration, all students were required to visit one of the advisors who help the students in making their class schedules. This was mandatory. The students were not required to consult with faculty from their respective areas in making course selection. The drop-out rate on this particular campus was close to 50 percent. The placement tests revealed that 48 percent of the entering freshmen in 2011 were not college ready.

Without threatening to step on any toes, the author offered a group of 20 students in the program to advice on making their schedule for the coming semester. This was done after a meeting with the Director of Advising. The assumption was that the author would help the students develop their schedules; the students would take these schedules to the University Advisors who will help the students to register. Hence, the mandatory advising condition was met.

The author asked the students to bring their most recent transcripts and a degree plan before coming to the advising session. After a careful study of the transcripts and the degree plans, the faculty person recommended a set of courses that the student should take in the coming semester. This guaranteed that the students would take the necessary course, and take these in the prescribed sequence.

Working with 20 students did not require posting additional office hours. The faculty member created a Facebook page where all 20 students could interact and participate. The students got other students involved through the use of other social media such as Twitter and LinkedIn. The hope was that these 20 students would develop a sense of being in a group and try to take classes with their fellow advisees. It was also hoped that these students would come to see their faculty advisor as their mentor and a contact person in the department. As it turned out, ten additional faculty members in a department joined in to participate in the pilot program. Thus, the department was able to service all of its 200 students.



The model offers advice to students in seven areas. These are:

**1. Discipline specific requirements of the major**

A program of study is developed by the department and made available to the advisees. This one page program lists all the courses that are required for the completion of a 4-year degree. The list includes the General Education courses, the departmental core for the major, the list of courses in various concentrations, and a list of available electives within the department.

**2. Semester-by-semester plan of study**

The department has developed a semester-by-semester plan of study for eight semesters. This lists all the courses that may be taken in each semester. The semester-by-semester plan guides the students to take the courses in a sequence that would be most beneficial to the students.

**3. Study skills**

The department has developed 9 self-study modules that cover topics such as note taking, preparing for tests, effective listening, library and research skill, time management, financial planning, and developing goals.

**4. Career/Internship opportunities**

The faculty explores internship and field experience opportunities for the students and encourages the students to take advantage from such opportunities and develop professional portfolios.

**5. Academic policies and procedures**

All the syllabi in the department include Universities regarding attendance, grading, plagiarism, and important dates for tests, and deadlines for dropping or adding courses. Every instructor in the department reviews these and other policies pertaining to their course during the first two class periods.

**6. Using campus services**

The students are encouraged to make use of both academic and non-academic services provided on campus. These include writing lab, computer lab, math lab, training sessions on using the library and reference resources, advising office, financial aid office, the health center, the career planning center, and work-study program's office.

**7. Engagement in extracurricular activities**

Students are encouraged to join various student activities and clubs. Several of the faculty members in the department have also initiated discipline-specific clubs. By inviting the students to join these clubs the faculty establish a one-on-one connection with the students.

All the above efforts are primarily aimed to accomplish two goals. To establish a mentor-mentee relationship between the faculty and students, and to steer, monitor and correct the students' academic progress. It is hoped that by creating the opportunities for interaction between the students and faculty, the students are more likely to seek advice and help from the faculty and remain on their path to program completion.

The program was introduced as a pilot program in one small department in the Fall of 2011. It will take several semesters before the impact and usefulness of the program can

be evaluated. However, previous research seems to suggest that a greater involvement from the faculty helps improve program completion rates and helps to reduce student drop-out rates.

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**PROFILE OF LEARNING ORGANIZATION BEST PRACTICES  
IN MALAYSIAN SCHOOLS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*In Malaysia, learning organization practice is still somehow a novelty, especially in the sphere of education. Therefore, this study seeks to build a profile of learning organization best practices for schools in Malaysia. Data collection involves a survey study on 321 teachers in High Performance Schools involving 161 teachers from Full-Boarding Schools and 160 teachers from National Secondary Schools. Data analyzed using SPSS Amos version 20.0 including the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) statistics. The fitness index values for NFI, RFI, IFI, TFI and CFI in Model Fit Summary exceed .90 and the RMSEA value is less than .06. The results indicated the compatibility of the study data to the profile. The profile consists of five dimensions which supported by twenty-two elements of best practices for learning organizations.*

**Keywords:** *Best practices, learning organization, Malaysian schools, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

For more than the past two decades, there has been a development in the field of management which employs the learning organization approach. Ideas on learning organizations that was first introduced by Senge (1990) has the capacity to become the idea of tomorrow for many organizations (Ortenblad, 2004). Recent studies done by numerous thinkers have demonstrated the drastic and rapid changes in the organizations' social and economic landscapes in this century (Kenny, 2006). Modern and global organizational environment through latest, more and more sophisticated breakthroughs of technological networking have prospered and in no time, have become very competitive. Such a trend necessitates organizations to rely on the mastery of knowledge in order for one to be competent to the fast-paced progress. Jashapara(2003) admits that the exponential technological transformation and the almost-instantaneous enhanced competition in this era of globalization, have all exerted some kind of pressure to many organizations to stay competitive.

This whirlwind of competition demands schools as educational institutions to carry out various strategies to face the new challenges that arise. School teachers and administrators need to perform a variety of transformations to be accustomed to the current needs of education in this globalized era. The dynamic progress of the knowledge itself has increased the needs for schools to satisfy the younger generations' thirst for knowledge. These rapid changes have set a great challenge to the policy makers and the top-management of schools to prepare the schools for the future. A study carried out by Stylianides and Pashiardis (2007) on future schools indicated that one of the characteristics of such schools is schools as learning organizations. The work by Bowen, Ware, Rose and Powers (2007) also proved that schools as learning organizations would make effective and efficient schools. Therefore, Davies and Ellison

(2001) suggested that comprehensive planning need to be done to ensure that organizational learning can be cultivated as school culture.

Organizational learning initiates innovation and transformation. Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton and Kliener (2000) named this type of school as the “Learning School”. The same concept has been adapted to the Singaporean schools known as the “Thinking School” which are regarded by the Singaporeans as the schools of today and for the future (Retna and Ng, 2006). The ethos of the school has inspired effective schools as the result of the teachers’ learning outcome. Lakomski (2001) believes that, continuous learning in organization is the best move for organization to progress in the future. Therefore, preparing schools to become learning organizations is actually a smart effort to sustain the schools’ competitive advantage.

Malaysian education system has also undergone several series of transformations. All efforts done by Malaysian Ministry of Education is to ensure that Malaysian schools achieved the standard of excellence both in the country and in the world. Smart Schools, Excellent Cluster Schools and the latest in line, High Performance Schools have been created with the aim of fulfilling the intention and the objective of the Malaysian education system to guarantee the high quality of our education. Nonetheless, how certain are we that the schools’ quality and excellence are able to be sustained in decades to come? The intention to improve the performance of these schools has been expressed by the Deputy Prime Minister in the 2010 Recognition Ceremony of High Performance Schools (Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd Yassin, 2010). He had also extended his confidence that this goal could be achieved by implementing the rigorous effort through the continuous enhancement of teachers’ quality, fostering the innovative elements and inculcating the effective school leadership culture. All these efforts have actually pointed towards building the schools as learning organizations.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The learning organization concept was first discussed more than two decades ago. Nonetheless, it still manages to arouse intense debates among researchers (Ortenblad, 2007). The study by Wonacott (2000) has offered proof of the complexity in defining this learning organization concept. Much of the ambiguity surrounding the definition has fuelled the concern whether or not the concept is able to be applied to the actual context. Grieves (2008) agreed that this concept is shadowed by an impractical theory. This is shared by Yeo (2005), who expressed that this concept has its own shortcoming, especially in terms of its practical implications. The vague understanding over this concept explained why there is such a dispute over the practice that should have been adopted by an organization to be qualified as learning organizations. This view is supported by Caldwell (2012) by stating that this concept fails to elaborate on issues pertinent to the practice in learning organizations. Questions over how to ensure that learning takes place in organizations involve routine practices in organization to stimulate and encourage the generation of new knowledge in the organizations (Farhad, Khairuddin & Roohangiz, 2011). Yet, studies related to the practice which encourage learning in organizations are still very few (Weldy, 2009). As learning stands out as a critical aspect for organizational sustainability, Lam (2004) asserted that clear understanding of the learning practice in the learning organizations is of utmost importance. Therefore, the development of the best practices profile in this study is anticipated to benchmark the most successful practice to spur the teachers’ learning. Furthermore, this profile should be able to provide sound practical guidance as to shape the schools into becoming good learning organizations.

## 1.2 Research Objective

This study aims to develop a profile of learning organization best practices for Malaysian schools.

## 1.3 Research Methodology

This is a survey study using the questionnaires as instrument of collecting data. The instrument contains five dimensions of practice, 22 elements and 160 learning organization practices. The dimension of practice is formed based on five models of learning organizations namely Five Core Disciplines of Learning organizations (Senge, 1990), The Learning organization Practice Profile (O'Brien, 1994), The dimension of Learning organizations (Silins, Zarins & Mulford, 2002), The School – Learning Success Profile organizations (Bowen, Ware, Rose, & Powers, 2007) and the Learning organizations Model (Bui & Baruch, 2010). In the meantime, the elements and items with regards to the learning practice are identified with the help of 15 local experts. The questionnaires were administered to 30 teachers. The coefficient of the Alpha Cronbach with the range between .768 and .940 obtained for this pilot study fulfilled the range of reliability of the instrument (Chua, 2006). Finally, the questionnaires were distributed to 321 teachers in 14 selected Highly Performance Schools all over Malaysia. Data were analyzed using the SPSS Amos Version 20.0 for Structural Equation Modelling analysis.

## 2. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study makes use of the SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) to make up a complete profile related to the best learning organization practices. The SEM is formed by two model components namely the measurement model and the structural model. The model is illustrated in Diagram 1.

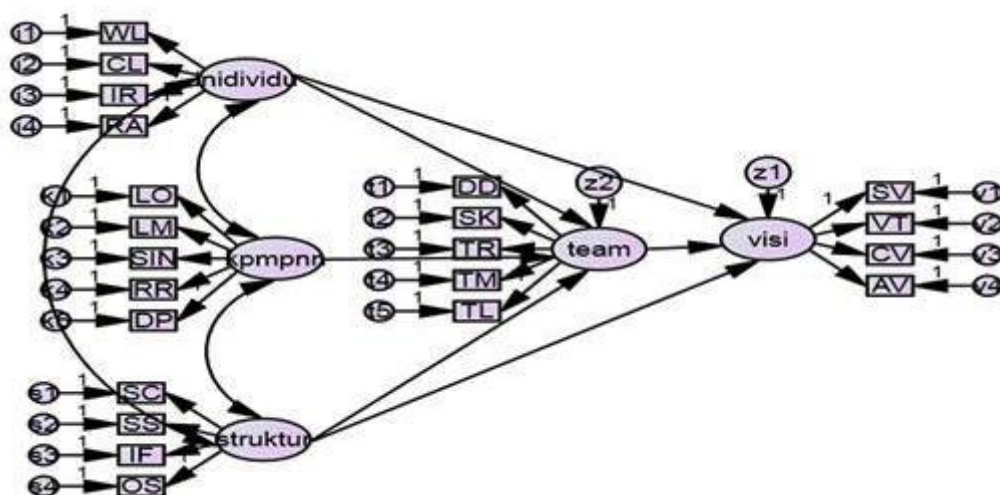


Diagram 1. The Structural Equation Model constructed using five dimensions of practices (vision, team, individual, leadership and structure) and 22 learning organization elements (SV, VT, CV, AV, WL, CL, IR, RA, LO, LM, SIN, RR, DP, SC, SS, IF, OS, DD, SK, TR, TM, TL).

The model has five latent variables namely five learning organization dimensions sketched in the form of a circle. All twenty-two elements which have research data are indicator variables sketched in the form of a square. Every indicator variable is connected with the variance error using an arrow. The dimensions of individual learning (individu), leadership (kmpnn) and the structure (struktur) of organizations are made to be exogenous variables. Meanwhile, the dimension of collective learning (team) as well as the dimension of the vision and mission (visi) of organizations serve as the endogenous variables. Finally, the Confirmation Factor Analysis was done to identify the reliability of measurement model that has been constructed. The analysis result is shown in separate tables. The analysis results of the Maximum Likelihood Estimates and the Standardized Regression Weights are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

The Maximum Likelihood Estimates and Standardized Regression Weights Results

Variable	Maximum Likelihood Estimates				Standardized Regression Weights
	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	
RA <--- individual	1.000				.854
IR <--- individual	0.827	.038	21.636	***	.894
CL <--- individual	1.027	.046	22.137	***	.905
WL <--- individual	1.258	.060	21.064	***	.881
DP <--- leadership	1.000				.910
RR <--- leadership	0.955	.038	25.327	***	.888
SIN <--- leadership	1.265	.045	28.346	***	.925
LM <--- leadership	1.648	.057	28.940	***	.931
LO <--- leadership	1.796	.069	25.846	***	.895
OS <--- structure	1.000				.846
IF <--- structure	0.948	.046	20.417	***	.878
SS <--- structure	0.659	.040	16.443	***	.769
SC <--- structure	1.125	.057	19.616	***	.858
SV <--- Vision	1.000				.851
VT <--- Vision	0.765	.047	16.288	***	.781
CV <--- Vision	0.787	.048	16.439	***	.786
AV <--- Vision	1.127	.063	17.986	***	.835
TL <--- Team	1.000				.626
TM <--- Team	1.545	.122	12.643	***	.868
TR <--- Team	1.400	.108	12.940	***	.899
SK <--- Team	1.722	.132	12.999	***	.905
DD <--- Team	1.262	.107	11.783	***	.787

Note. \*\*\* = significant at confidence level at  $p < .05$

The explanation for the Maximum Likelihood Estimates and Standardized Regression Weights results in Table 1 is based on the dimension as follows.

## 2.1 Dimension of Individual Learning

The result of the confirmation factor analysis which is the Maximum Likelihood Estimates in Table 1 shows that, the critical value (C.R.) for the regression among the

latent variables of individual learning (individu) with the four indicator variables (learning determination-WL, ongoing learning-CL, taking the initiative and risks- IR, doing reflection and applying knowledge-RA) is beyond the scope of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding highlights the fact that all four indicator variables serve as significant predictor variables for the latent variables of the Individual Learning Dimension at  $p < .05$ .

## **2.2 The Dimension of Organizational Leadership**

The result of the confirmation factor analysis which is the Maximum Likelihood Estimates in Table 1 shows that, the critical value (C.R.) for the regression among the latent variables of organizational leadership (kpmpnn) with five indicator variables (developing the potential-DP, giving appreciation and acknowledgement-RR, encouraging innovation-SIN, becoming the learning model-LM, giving the space and learning opportunities-LO) is beyond the scope of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding shows that all the indicator variables are also significant predictor variables for the latent variable of the Organizational Leadership Dimension at  $p < .05$ .

## **2.3 The Dimension of Organizational Climate and Structure**

The result of the confirmation factor analysis which is the Maximum Likelihood Estimates in Table 1 shows that, the critical value (C.R.) for the regression among the latent variables of organizational climate and structure (struktur) with all indicator variables (open system for feedback-OS, information flow-IF, the supporting structure-SS, encouraging climate-SC) is outside the scope of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding demonstrates that all the four indicator variables serve as significant predictor variables for the latent variable of the Organizational Climate and Structure at  $p < .05$ .

## **2.4 The Dimension of Organizational Vision and Mission**

The result of the confirmation factor analysis which is the Maximum Likelihood Estimates in Table 1 shows that, the critical value (C.R.) for the regression among the latent variables of the organizational vision and mission (visi) and all four indicator variables (shared vision and mission-SV, vision team-VT, clear vision-CV, achievable vision-AV) is beyond the scope of  $\pm 1.96$ . The finding shows that all four indicator variables serve as significant predictor variables for the latent variables of the Organizational Vision and Mission Dimension at  $p < .05$ .

## **2.5 The Dimension of Collective Learning Culture**

The result of the confirmation factor analysis which is the Maximum Likelihood Estimates in Table 1 shows that, the critical value (C.R.) for the regression among the latent variables of collective learning culture (team) with all five indicator variables (team-work culture-TL, monitoring team members-TM, doing reflection and acting as a team-TR, the sharing of knowledge-SK, holding dialogue and discussion-DD) is beyond the scope of  $\pm 1.96$ . This finding highlights that all the indicator variables are significant predictor variables for the latent variable of Dimension of Collective Learning Culture at  $p < .05$ .

Based on the result of the analysis, it is confirmed that the measurement model constructed by the latent variables and their indicator variables match with the research data. This result indicated that the latent variables for the measurement model in the

structural equation model are significantly represented by the indicator counterparts. The regression coefficient value (Standard Regression Weight) in Table 2 which is high (between .626 and .931) demonstrates that, all indicator variables have been able to represent their latent variables. Next, the results of the Squared Multiple Correlations analysis are highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2  
Squared Multiple Correlations Results

Variable	Estimate
team	.781
vision	.630
DD	.620
SK	.819
TR	.808
TM	.754
TL	.392
AV	.697
CV	.617
VT	.609
SV	.724
SC	.737
SS	.591
IF	.772
OS	.715
LO	.801
LM	.867
SIN	.855
RR	.789
DP	.828
WL	.777
CL	.820
IR	.800
RA	.729

The Squared Multiple Correlations result in Table 2 shows that .781 or 78.1% variance in “team” (The collective learning culture dimension) and .630 or 63.0 % variance in “vision” (The dimension of organizational vision and mission) can be predicted by the model. Moreover, the value of the prediction variance for 22 indicator variables in this model is between .392 or 39.2 % and .867 or 86.7 %. Therefore, the variance value that cannot be explained (variance error) in this model is between 13.3 % and 60.8 %. Finally, the result for the model compatibility analysis is demonstrated in Table 3.



Table 3  
The Model Fit Summary Result

Model	Baseline Comparisons					RMSEA
	NFI Delta1	RFI Rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI Rho2	CFI	
Regression Model	.925	.914	.951	.944	.951	.073

Table 3 shows the Model Fit Summary result. The values of the NFI compatibility index (Normed Fix Index), RFI (Relative Fix Index), IFI (Incremental Fix Index), TFI (Tucker-Lewis Fix Index) and CFI (Comparative Fix Index) in the Baseline Comparisons are more than .90. This shows that the regression model put forth is significantly compatible with the study data. Nonetheless, the value of the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) for the study model is greater than .06 (RMSEA=.073). This shows that in a significant manner, the model recommended does not match with the research data gathered from the respondents of the study.

Due to the fact that the results of the RMSEA value show that the regression model constructed significantly are incompatible with the study data, the SEM analysis results have given the modification indices result to enhance the model's compatibility with the research data. The modification indices value for the model is given in Table 4.

Table 4  
Modification Indices Value

Correlation	Modification Index	Equivalent
Changes		
t1 <--> structure	13.965	1.057
t1 <--> leadership	14.063	-1.006
<b>t1 &lt;--&gt; z2</b>	<b>17.849</b>	<b>-.748</b>
t3 <--> individual	10.747	-.849
s1 <--> individual	12.367	1.442
s2 <--> structure	13.210	.931
s2 <--> leadership	15.826	-.976
<b>s3 &lt;--&gt; s2</b>	<b>17.981</b>	<b>1.203</b>
s4 <--> leadership	10.784	.953
s4 <--> z1	15.605	-1.686
s4 <--> t1	13.797	1.365
<b>k1 &lt;--&gt; structure</b>	<b>31.763</b>	<b>2.421</b>
<b>k1 &lt;--&gt; leadership</b>	<b>24.196</b>	<b>-1.992</b>
k1 <--> t1	11.560	1.726
<b>k1 &lt;--&gt; s4</b>	<b>48.046</b>	<b>3.894</b>
k2 <--> k1	10.001	1.825
k3 <--> t1	10.199	-.979
k3 <--> t3	11.584	.784
k4 <--> structure	13.586	-.870
k4 <--> leadership	12.845	.798
k5 <--> k1	10.357	-1.275
<b>k5 &lt;--&gt; k4</b>	<b>43.980</b>	<b>1.444</b>
i2 <--> z2	11.013	-.449

Table 4 points to the modification indices value that is the equivalent change value for the original model that has been constructed. Based on the modification indices value, the regression model has been reconstructed by way of connecting several variables which have high modification index values (modification index exceeding 17.000) namely k5 and k4, s2 and s3, k1 and structure k1 and leadership, k1 and s4, as well as t1 and z2. Diagram 2 shows the modification model formed by connecting several variables as suggested in Table 4.



Table 5

The Results of the Maximum Likelihood Estimates and Standardized Regression Weights For the Structural modification Equation model

Variable	Maximum Likelihood Estimates			Standardized Regression Weights	
	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	
RA <--- individual	1.000				.855
IR <--- individual	0.825	.038	21.696	***	.893
CL <--- individual	1.025	.046	22.222	***	.905
WL <--- individual	1.256	.046	21.159	***	.882
DP <--- leadership	1.000				.896
RR <--- leadership	0.954	.032	30.180	***	.873
SIN <--- leadership	1.289	.048	27.111	***	.928
LM <--- leadership	1.646	.060	27.886	***	.938
LO <--- leadership	1.918	.099	19.331	***	.943
OS <--- structure	1.000				.842
IF <--- structure	0.934	.048	19.441	***	.862
SS <--- structure	0.639	.042	15.341	***	.742
SC <--- structure	1.137	.058	19.532	***	.863
SV <--- vision	1.000				.851
VT <--- vision	0.766	.047	16.307	***	.781
CV <--- vision	0.787	.048	16.435	***	.785
AV <--- vision	1.127	.063	17.986	***	.834
TL <--- team	1.000				.627
TM <--- team	1.554	.122	12.685	***	.874
TR <--- team	1.403	.108	12.949	***	.902
SK <--- team	1.731	.133	13.033	***	.911
DD <--- team	1.430	.125	11.480	***	.834

Note. \*\*\* = significant at confidence level  $p < .05$

Table 5 shows the results for the confirmation factor analysis of the measurement model namely Maximum Likelihood Estimates for the structural modification Equation model. The Critical Ratio value (C.R.) for the regressions among all latent variables with their indicator variables are outside the scope of  $\pm 1.96$  ( $p < .05$ ). This implies that all indicator variables serve as significant predictor variables for the latent variables in the modified structural equation model. Apart from that, the high standard regression coefficient values (Standardized Regression Weights) which is from .627 to .943 demonstrate that the indicator variables have significantly been able to represent their latent variables. The results of Squared Multiple Correlations analysis provided in the following Table 6.

Table 6  
 The Squared Multiple Correlations Results for the Structural Modification Equation Model

Variable	Estimate
team	.774
visi	.636
DD	.696
SK	.829
TR	.813
TM	.764
TL	.692
AV	.697
CV	.697
VT	.680
SV	.724
SC	.745
SS	.691
IF	.742
OS	.709
LO	.782
LM	.880
SIN	.862
RR	.763
DP	.803
WL	.777
CL	.819
IR	.898
RA	.731

For this modification model, the Squared Multiple Correlations results in Table 6 shows that, as much as .747 or 74.7% variance in 'team' (Collective learning dimension) and .636 or 63.6% variance in 'vision' (The dimension of the vision and mission of the organizations) can be predicted by the model. Other than that, the value of the prediction variance of 22 other indicator variables lies between .680 and .898 (68.0% to 89.8%). This analysis shows that the variance value that is unable to be predicted by the model is low, which is between 32.0% and 10.2% only. The analysis result of the Model Fit is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

The Model Fit Summary Results for the Structural Modification Equation Model

Model	Baseline Comparisons					RMSEA
	NFI Delta1	RFI Rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI Rho2	CFI	
Modification Model	.948	.938	.974	.968	.973	.055

The matching index value of NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI and CFI shown in Table 7 for this modification model placed between .938 to .974. This index value is higher as compared to the index value for the original model. This indicates that significantly, the modification model is more compatible with the study data as compared to its original counterpart. Other than that, the significant RMSEA value (RMSEA = .055) validates that this significant modification model matches with the research data. Next, the results for the Co-Variance and Correlation Table are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8

The Covariance and Correlation Table (r)

	Estimate (r)	S.E.	C.R.	P
k1 <--> s4	.374	.648	5.428	***
k5 <--> k4	.402	.287	5.386	***
s3 <--> s2	.290	.350	4.030	***
t1 <--> z2	-.391	.269	-4.266	***
k1 <--> structure	.010	.906	0.154	.877
k1 <--> kpmppn	-.123	.965	-1.766	.077

The results in Table 8 show the relationship between the variables proposed by the Modification Indices. The analysis results have verified that the relationship between variables k1 and s4 connected in the structural modification Equation model have a significant correlation (C.R. = 5.248,  $r = .374$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This points to the fact that the relationship between variable k1 (the element of leaders creating the space and opportunities for learning) with variable s4 (the element of having a system that is open to feedback) indeed, exist in the data and the relationship between those variables are positive.

These results also verify the relationship between k5 and k4 connected in the modification model have significant correlation (C.R. = 5.386,  $r = .402$ ,  $p < .05$ ). They also show that the relationship between variable k4 (the element of leaders expressing appreciation and acknowledgement) with variable k5 (element of leaders developing the potential of the school inhabitants) exist in the data and the relationship between both variables are positive.

The analysis results have also verified the relationship between both variables s3 with s2 linked together in the structural modification Equation model is correlated



significantly (C.R. = 4.030,  $r = .290$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This result shows that the relationship between variables s3 (element of information flow that is efficacious and effective) with variable s2 (element of supporting structure) does exist in the study data and the relationship between the two variables is found to be positive.

The analysis results also validate the fact that the relationship between both variables of t1 with z2 connected in the structural modification Equation model has a significant correlation (C.R. = -4.266,  $r = -.391$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This result shows that the relationship between the variable t1 (promoting dialogues and discussions) with variable z2 (the dimension of c collective learning culture) really exists in the study data. Notwithstanding, the relationship between both variables is seen to be negative.

Next, the analysis results also verify the relationship between variable k1 with leadership and k1 with the structure connected in the modification model correlates insignificantly. Therefore, a significant relationship between the variables in study data does not exist.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

This study has been able to construct the best practice profile of the learning organizations for Malaysian schools. The profile is developed from five dimensions of the learning organization practices. The study findings come across 22 elements of practices based on the five dimensions. The modification model proved that the profile matches with the study data. The five dimensions are namely a) Dimension of Vision and Mission, b) Dimension of Climate and Structure c) Dimension of Leadership, d) Dimension of Individual Learning, and e) Dimension of Team Learning

The dimension of the vision and mission for the schools is shaped by four elements which are the shared vision and mission, the formation of a strong vision team, clear vision statement, also vision formulation that is achievable. The element of shared vision contains practice related to the sharing of vision and mission among the school stakeholders, including parents, as well as the strategies to realise the shared vision. The element of the formulation of a strong vision team carries the practice of selecting the representatives in the vision team and establishing their roles in rendering success to the vision. Clear vision statement, as another element contains the practice related to the strategies to produce a vision that is stated clearly, easy to understand, tangible, easy to remember and has its achievement time frame. The next element of having an achievable vision contains the practice connected to the strategies of formulating realistic and easy-to-achieve visions.

The dimension of school climate and structure is made up of four elements namely the climate that spurs learning, the structure that promotes learning, effective and efficient information flow, also a system that it open to feedback. For the element of the climate that spurs learning, it suggests the practice of preparing environment conducive to learning for teachers and school staff. For the structure that promotes learning, it suggests preparing both physical and social structures that can lend support to learning. The successful information flow indicates the practice regarding an effective and efficient information delivery in school. In the meantime, the element of a system that is open to feedback lists down the practice of the openness of formal and informal systems at school in managing the ideas, opinions and feedback.

The dimension of organizational leadership is formed by five elements namely providing space and opportunities for learning, becoming the learning model, encouraging innovation, giving the appreciation and acknowledgement and also building the potential of the employees. The element of providing ample space and opportunities involves identifying the learning requirements, and subsequently creating the space and opportunities that are deemed appropriate to cater for the requirements. The leaders becoming the learning model, as another element, relates with the practice of framing the leaders as the role models for school-based learning. Encouraging innovation, as another element in the list, is related to the strategies of spurring innovation-oriented activities. The element of leaders appreciating and acknowledging the employees at school is connected to the practice of validating and honouring the concerted effort and contributions by the teachers either formally or informally. As another point, the element of leaders building the potential of the school members relates with the practice of the leaders in tapping the potential, and advancing the potential of the school individuals.

The dimension of the individual learning covers four elements namely the determination to learn, ongoing learning, taking initiatives and risks and also making reflection and applying knowledge. An element, which is the determination to learn, relates with the practice of teachers embarking into individual learning centralising on the intrinsic motivation and the concept “a teacher is a learner”. The element of ongoing learning relates with the ongoing effort of teachers to learn, enhance their existing knowledge and improve the teaching and learning processes with their students. Next, the element of taking initiatives and risks is pertinent to the teachers’ readiness to learn new approaches and techniques, applying them and also willing to take the risks in trying out of the effort. Lastly, the element of making reflection and sharing knowledge relates to the practice of performing self-reflection and applying the knowledge as to rectify any shortcomings or mistakes that have occurred and been committed.

The dimension of collective learning is moulded by five elements such as promoting dialogues and discussions, sharing knowledge, making reflection and acting as a team, observing the team members’ learning activities also practising teamwork culture. The element of promoting dialogues and discussions entails holding dialogue and discussion-oriented events professionally, either formal or informal, while the element of sharing the knowledge covers the activities of knowledge sharing among teachers in and out of school. Adding to it is the element of making reflection and acting as a team involve the practice of group reflection as a team, also making the decisions and enforcing actions through discussions. The element of observing the learning activities of the team members lies in sentiment-related practice. Team members support each other, trust each other, care for each other and collectively assist in the team members’ learning process. Finally, the element of excellent teamwork culture involves the readiness of the teachers to work in a team, acknowledge the strengths of every team member, realize the importance of cooperating in a team and enjoy the self-fulfilling in learning.

The model also points to a positive and significant relationship between several elements in the model. Leaders who provide the space and learning opportunities for teachers will be able to build an open system for feedback at school. Similarly, leaders who appreciate and acknowledge their employees will be able to develop the latter potential in a better way. Moreover, efficient information flow at school should build a structure which supports learning. The data also highlight that the element of organising

dialogues and discussions does not support the collective learning culture at school. The finding is probably derived from the fact that teachers have yet to implement the practice of having successful and ongoing dialogues and discussions. The implementation of the practice requires commitment from various parties involved in the professional learning agenda collectively and in a well-planned manner (Anderson & Kumari, 2009).

Based on the results of all SEM analyses, there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of vision and mission, the climate and structure of the organizations, organizational leadership, individual learning and the collective learning culture. This profile suggests all the best practices based on 22 elements to be implemented in Malaysian schools as a mean to signify the schools as learning organization.

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**MONITORING AND EVALUATION ROLE OF DISTRICT TEACHER  
EDUCATORS IN RAWALPINDI**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The present study was conducted to review the District Teacher Educators program of monitoring and to know the monitoring role of District Teacher Educators (DTEs) in terms of monitoring of primary schools in Punjab. To analyze the performance of DTEs in perspective of monitoring the Primary School Teachers (PSTs), one hundred (100) PSTs, one hundred (100) DTEs and 20 Cluster Heads were selected randomly from Rawalpindi district. A self developed questionnaire consisting of five point rating scale, with minor changes was used for the collection of data from the respondents. The data were collected through personal visits; hence response rate was 100 percent. Data collected were analyzed in the light of objectives of study. It was found that performance of DTEs is satisfactory in respect of monitoring of PSTs. Due to its effectiveness, it is recommended that the said program should be launched at secondary level in Punjab as well as in Pakistan.*

**Key words:** *primary education, primary school teachers, District Teacher Educators, monitoring and evaluation*

**Background**

Monitoring and evaluation are two main tools of management. These are essential components of any organization as these provide links between the planning and implementation. This is why no organization exists in the world without monitoring and evaluation system.

The main purpose of monitoring and evaluation in education is to collect information related to education to judge and guide administration for timely decision. Accurate and appropriate information are essential for good management decisions. Too little information or the wrong set of observations can result in incorrect conclusions. Too much information results in wasted time and money. The amount and kind of information must be personalized to the management objectives.

No doubt education is key factor for the economic, social, cultural and political development of the country. Those countries whose education system is sound and their literacy rate is high, are advanced in all respect (socially, politically and economically). Besides this, these nations are honoured in the nations of the world.

Unluckily, Pakistan is in the list of developing countries. Its education system is not sound. It requires sound system of education. To overcome the deficiencies in the system of education, education reforms were introduced in all four provinces Pakistan in 2003, as education is provincial matter in Pakistan, hence education reforms were made separately in provinces according to the requirement of those provinces separately.

Punjab is the largest province in Pakistan with 60 % population of the country. Due to its broader share, Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program' (PESRP) was introduced in 2003. Its main objectives were to enhance access to students; to improve the quality and governance of education. The education reforms focus in improving sector governance and monitoring. The program has stressed that the goal of quality education and governance cannot be achieved without improving accountability of teachers (Govt. of Pakistan, 2003).

To achieve these objectives, Directorate of Staff Development, (DSD) Punjab has developed a theoretical framework for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). It combines in-service training of teachers with follow-ups, in-class, teacher support, mentoring, monitoring, accountability, incentives, and teacher career growth. These measures were previously not included in the teacher development in Punjab (Government of Punjab, 2012).

Teacher is the main stakeholders in teaching learning process. He is the implementer of the all educational policies and programs. The success of the school depends upon the competency and commitment of the teachers. Some teachers work well and perform better but some do not work properly. They need professional knowledge as well as motivation. Besides this, the system of punishment and reward is considered best for smooth running of the schools and chasing the targets. Hence monitoring and evaluation is essential in schools also.

Due to importance of monitoring and evaluation of teachers it was decided to conduct the present research. It was expected that this research will provide new dimension for further researchers. It will also enable the higher authorities and policy makers to know the facts regarding the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation arranged by DTEs hence they will be able to make future decisions.

### **Rationale**

The purpose of this research was to know the DTEs' program for monitoring and evaluation of primary school teachers in Punjab and to evaluate the performance of DTEs' in respect of monitoring and evaluation program.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The review of related literature discusses the concepts of monitoring, evaluation, directorate of staff development and District Teacher Educators.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring is a planned, systematic process of observation that closely follows a course of activities, and compares what is happening with what is expected to happen (Rengasamy, 2010). It means that monitoring is keeping a track of implementation process.



## **Evaluation**

Evaluation is the process of converting monitoring data into information and then into knowledge. It is a value added process that provides managers with what they need to make sound decisions. It indicates that evaluation is finding the value of something.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are sister terms. These are mostly used together as a function of management. Both depend on each other. The main difference is that Monitoring is the systematic, regular collection and occasional analysis of information to identify and possibly measure changes over a period of time while Evaluation is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity and involves making a judgment about progress and impact (Rengasamy, 2010). It means that monitoring provides the raw data to answer questions. Evaluation puts that data in use and thus gives it value. Although there is difference between these two terms but when these are used integrated as a management tool, the line between the two almost disappears (Bartle, 2010).

Evaluation depends on monitoring to get data to give them value hence it is very important that data provided by monitoring system must be accurate, appropriate and latest. Otherwise all the process of evaluation becomes useless and management cannot take proper decisions. In third world countries, it is common practice that monitoring systems are weak, corruption, lack of commitment and competency are common in workers. Rough and outdated data are provided to management hence it is needed to assess the monitoring mechanism. According to Bartle (2010) a successful monitoring effort begins with clearly stating the purposes for which you are monitoring.

## **Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program (PESRP)**

In 2003, PESRP was introduced in the Province of Punjab to improve the quantity and quality of education, to increase retention rate and to minimize dropout rate.

The third pillar of PESRP was to improve the Public Education Sector Governance and Management in the province. The main objective of the third pillar is to set up a system of monitoring and evaluation to measure the quality of educational outcomes in each district and rank all 35 districts using an updated performance monitoring index (Govt. of Punjab, 2007).

## **The Directorate of Staff Development**

The Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) was established in 1959 as the Education Extension Center but in 1994 it was named as DSD. The DSD was established as the primary agency for coordinating activities that relate to teacher development in the public and private sectors. All the Elementary Colleges, PITE and BOC in Punjab were brought under the administrative control of DSD so as to better organize and coordinate professional development activities in the province, avoid any overlap/duplication, and ensure efficient utilization of resources.

The Directorate of Staff Development as an apex organization is committed to develop the pedagogical skills and knowledge through a continuous process of professional development of teachers in Punjab. The core objective is to enhance the

quality of learning at all levels of education by training and nurturing the teaching cadre both at DSD and simultaneously in the field (Government of Punjab, 2012).

### **Continuous Professional Development Framework (CPDF)**

In 2006, DSD started a program of CPD of primary school teachers on the assumption that quality of student learning outcomes is reliant upon quality of teachers and their ability to educate, inform and inspire their students. Quality of teacher is a powerful agent for student performance. An effective teacher can enable the students to obtain, understand, apply, assess and evaluate knowledge.

DSD has created support network to provide in-service training, follow-ups, pedagogical support and mentoring the primary school teachers. Accordingly, each district has been divided into clusters of schools, called Cluster Training and Support Centers (CTSCs) on the base of strength and location of PSTs in the district. DTEs were selected from teaching cadre and were trained to train PSTs in CTSCs (Government of Punjab, 2012).

### **District Training and Support Centers (DTSCs)**

In all 36 districts of the Punjab, DTSCs have been established. One hundred and forty (144) Teacher Educators were appointed. Four Teacher Educators (T.E) work in each DTSC. These four TEs are responsible for their own duties. The detail is as under.

1. TE (Coordination and implementation of CPD)
2. TE (Monitoring, quality assurance and assessment)
3. TE (Planning topical course/events and offering them in a sequential manner)
4. TE (Administration finance and logistics of district level support services envisaged in the CPD framework)

### **Teacher Educator (Quality Assurance M & E)**

One TE is appointed in each district to ensure that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) defined by DSD are being observed. It is expected from this TE to spend 80 % of his duty time in the field.

### **Responsibility of a District Teacher Educator (DTE)**

The responsibility of a District Teacher Educator (DTE) is to promote the quality of student learning by providing on-site and on-going professional support to his/her fellow primary school teachers. The task assigned to DTE can be divided into three major areas i.e. training, mentoring, monitoring and evaluation. The present study is concerned with the role of DTEs in respect of monitoring and evaluation of Primary School Teachers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

- a. To review the DTEs' program for monitoring and evaluation of primary school teachers in Punjab.
- b. To evaluate the performance of DTEs' in perspective of monitoring and evaluation program.

**Methods**

Following procedure was adopted to conduct the research:

**Population of the Study**

- All District Teacher Educators comprises upon the population.
- All (2962) the Primary School Teachers working in public primary schools of District Rawalpindi.
- All the cluster heads

**Sampling**

One hundred (100) DTEs, One hundred (100) PSTs and twenty (20) Cluster Heads were selected using different sampling techniques. Out of seven, 6 sub districts (Tehsils) were selected randomly. Equal sample were taken, from each selected Tehsil. The detail of the sampling is as below:

**Table 1: Detail of Sampling**

Sr. #	Tehsil (sub district)	Strength		Percentage
1	Rawalpindi City	Cluster Head	5	25%
		DTE	25	
		PST	25	
2	Kallar Syedan/Kahuta	Cluster Head	5	25%
		DTE	25	
		PST	25	
3	Muree/Kotli Sattain	Cluster Head	5	25%
		DTE	25	
		PST	25	
4	Gujar Khan	Cluster Head	5	25%
		DTE	25	
		PST	25	

**Tool**

Self developed Questionnaire consisting on five point rating scale was applied to collect the data from all the stakeholders with minor differences. Strongly Agree, Agree, Mandatory Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was assigned 5,4,3,2 and 1 score respectively.

**Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

The questionnaire was validated by panel of experts (two cluster head, three educationists) and reliability was checked by collecting the data from 20 (8 DTEs, 8 PSTs and 4 CH) respondents. Richardson formula was applied for the said purpose. The value of reliability coefficient was 0.72.

## **Conclusions and Discussion**

This research was conducted to analyze the monitoring role of DTE in respect of monitoring and evaluation of Primary School Teachers. It is found that the CPDF is well organized effort of the government of the Punjab DSD is playing its role excellently with respect to DTEs' performance. DTEs are playing their pivotal role to up bring the quality of primary school teachers in Punjab as it found in the present study. Monitoring and Evaluation Program of DTEs in primary schools is a good change in promoting education at primary level DTEs are performing well in perspective of monitoring and evaluation of the primary school teachers. All the aspects of their duties are found regular and effective. It indicates that DTEs were trained properly by the DSD. It also shows the high professionalism of DTEs. DTEs visit primary schools regularly at least once in a month. They ensure that teachers meet the expectations with regard to up-to-date and relevant knowledge and skills. During visit, DTEs evaluate the lesson planning, delivery of lesson to the class, students' participation, use of AV aids and students' learning. DTEs are helpful to district level and province level monitoring of primary schools to ensure the implementing of CPD programme in the districts and in the province.

## **Recommendations**

1. The monitoring and evaluation program of DTEs to primary school is very effective hence it should be continued.
2. Some grey areas were found where monitoring and evaluation program is weak. It is recommended to improve the program so that every primary school must be monitored by DTEs. For the said purpose, more DTEs may be appointed and more cluster schools may be established.
3. There is ambiguity in the service structure of DTEs. Hence, it is recommended to develop a clear service structure of DTEs so that DTEs can be promoted to the next scale on the base of performance.
4. As monitoring and evaluation program of DTEs in primary school is found effective hence it is recommended to launch such program at middle and secondary level.
5. This program is in practice in Punjab only, it is recommended to develop such programs of monitoring and evaluation in other areas/provinces.
6. For further researchers, it is suggested to replicate the research by adopting qualitative paradigm (direct observance, interview and documentary evidence) and quantitative paradigm (different sampling from backward districts, using some other statistical tools).

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**CONVEYER BELT MARKING: OPINIONS OF ZIMSEC MARKERS  
IN CHIKOMBA DISTRICT**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of the study was to establish markers perceptions of the newly introduced system of marking. Participant responses were sought through using open ended questionnaires. The study established that the CBM was considered advantageous in that marking because it could be made more reliable, efficient and that it encouraged good team spirit among makers. Nonetheless, some problems presented by CBM were opined by participants. For instance fast markers were held back by the slow ones, mastering of the whole marking scheme was not considered important yet in actual fact it was crucial that each maker mastered it and the whole exercise was hurried. It was also expressed that examiners were now getting lower remuneration compared to TMS. General suggestions were made by participants on how CBM could be improved. The researchers recommended that ample time be given to examiners for marking and that payment be according to the actual number of responses an examiner would have marked.*

**Key words:** Conveyor belt marking, Markers, Traditional marking system

**INTRODUCTION**

Currently there are two broad systems of marking examination being used in developing countries namely the Traditional Marking System and the Conveyor Belt marking System. It seems there are some drawbacks in using Traditional Marking System which is viewed as being weak in maintaining acceptance levels of marking reliability.

In the conventional system, a whole exam script was marked by only one examiner. Somehow, this led to hasty and sloppy marking and so students in some cases got results, they did not deserve. In the conveyor belt system of marking several markers successively mark a paper, each specializing in marking particular questions or sections.

In spite of all the rigor, there were concerns about the reliability of marks obtained and so the Zimbabwe schools Examinations Council introduced the conveyor Belt Marking

System of marking in 2010. Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) has gone for Conveyor belt marking (CBM) starting from 2010. To know the pros and cons of being a relatively recent move, a study was carried with 20 ZIMSEC markers in Chikomba district in Mashonaland East Province who had been involved in CBM from the time of its inception. It will fill the gap of researches and enable the policy makers about the future practices of this system in the rest of the country.

## **Literature Review**

### **Traditional Marking System**

Several envelopes containing scripts from centres or schools are given to one examiner to mark. Examiner allocation is pre-determined. One examiner marks all questions attempted by the candidate. Ten (10) percent of the marked scripts of each examiner is cross-marked by a team leader to check on each examiner's marking. This is done at several stages in the marking exercise to make sure that marking is done reliably and consistently. If deviations are more than + or -2 on the total score the marker is requested to re-mark scripts or responses to certain questions and additions are checked.

### **Belt Marking System**

Generally in belt marking system, more than one person marks a paper. Mostly team of markers sits round the table. Head marker, supervise the team while sitting with them. Each marker is assign separate question to mark. Every marker markers his own assigned question.

### **Conveyer Belt System (CBS)**

The exam marking team leader keeps all of the scripts and mark sheets issued out to each examiner. The essence of a question paper determines the composition of the total number of makers in each team to be formed. The maker marks responses by candidates to question numbers allocated to him/her. The main task of the checker is to ensure that the examiners have entered the correct marks in the respective columns she/he also checks the final addition is correct for each script, and that the roles of checker and maker be rotational, (AEAA Newsletter - August 2009 article).

### **Role of Assistant Examiner**

Assistant examiners must have to read and become familiar with the instructions for Examiners. Handouts are supplied by Zimbabwe schools examination Council before each examination session. Examiners attend a standardization meeting for paper based marking. The team leaders discuss and finalise the marking scheme with all examiners to ensure consistent and accurate marking. Assistant examiners mark a specified number of scripts or response to a given question/s and are expected to complete all administrative tasks such as report writing, recording of marks and shedding of scanner sheets. Final responsibility for accuracy of marks on the mark sheets rests with assistant examiner. Towards the end of the marking period, assistant examiners prepare a report for team leaders.

### **Summary of exam process**

There are several activities that take place in the examining process which make some people to think that exam process takes long. Some the activities are outlined below.

Pre-coordination – Chief Examiner meets team leaders and subject specialists to discuss the marking scheme in the light of having provisionally marked some papers.

Co-ordination –The Chief and the whole team of assistant examiners meet to discuss and finalise the mark scheme, mark some standard scripts and the function is to be fair to candidates.

Marking- During this activity the work of all examiners is carefully checked. Moderation is done at several stages to ensure markers have mastered the marking scheme and to check for drifts.

Checking and data input – marking is checked at the Exam Board, marks are keyed in and statisticians get to write.

Awarding - papers are scrutinized, archive scripts consulted, standards are discussed and grade boundaries set.

Analysis and data processing -the board has a huge quantity of data to check, process and print.

Expectations for examiners

According to Nzweze (2009) examiners must have a matured personality and be responsible. Some examiners are not responsible and have no mature personality and such factors can easily bring in exam malpractices

### **Findings of the previous studies**

A study by Bukenya(2006) to estimate the reliability of CBS marking of primary leaving Exams of 2003 was done using marked scripts for each of the four examination papers namely Science , English , Mathematics and Social studies. The study established that the reliability coefficients were found to be high (above 0.92) for both CBS and TMS. Nonetheless in CBS the reliability coefficients were higher than those of TMS and the differences were statistically significant .The Primary leaving Exam (PLE) of 2003was a well constructed test as it yielded a coefficient of more than 0.90 and the use of CBS improved the reliability coefficient of the PLE. This study also established that CBS is exhaustive and slows down the speed of marking and that it reduces some of the responsibility of the markers. A pilot study on the implementing of the CBS by Okelowange (2004), however found out CBS speeds marking and is less tiring to examiners than TMS.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

It seems, in some circles, conveyer belt marking system of national exams presented some problems. The conveyer belt system is considered exhaustive and reduces the sense of responsibility of the markers (Okelowange, 2004).The purpose of this study was to determine markers perceptions of the belt marking system which was introduced in Zimbabwe in 2010.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study was guided by the following questions:

- What are the advantages that markers associate with belt marking?
- What problem does belt marking present?
- What suggestions do markers have to make belt marking more useful or effective?

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It was hoped that the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council(ZIMSEC) could use the study as a platform to reflect on practices and procedures in belt marking and that some unveiling of belt marking -linked challenges could be a basis for addressing them through efforts of ZIMSEC. Researchers also hoped that insights gained through the study may stimulate further study.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Design**

The qualitative design was employed to conduct the study. Surveys are appropriate where perceptions and views of subjects of are sought (Babbie 1997).

### **Sample**

Twenty ‘O’ level assistant examiners in Chikomba District in Zimbabwe who had participated in belt marking at least twice, were chosen for participation through convenience sampling. One of the researchers of study was working in Chikomba district at the time the study was conducted. The participants were spread over ten different ‘O’ level subjects.

### **Instruments**

The researchers used open - ended questionnaires which were self administered to the markers. The questionnaire had three questions based on the research questions.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Data were presented qualitatively using thick descriptions. Some tables and figures were used to aid researchers to present questionnaire data. Data were organised according to research questions in the mind of the researchers.

### **Limitations**

Since the study just involved participants from Chikomba district, findings may not be generalised to other belt markers of examinations elsewhere. Notwithstanding, the picture maybe a replica of what obtains in the minds of markers involved in belt marking elsewhere in Zimbabwe.

**DATA PRESENTATION****Q. What do you think are the advantages of belt marking?**

All the twenty markers answered the question and their responses were as is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Markers views on advantages of belt marking**

Stated advantage	Number of Responses	%
Candidate friendly as marking is by more than one marker	15	75
Heightens marker efficiency	20	100
Ensures quality marking	16	80
Fast way of marking	10	50
Easier to internalise marking scheme	19	95
Reliable marks can be obtained	20	100
Encourages team work of a different nature	18	90
Easier to supervise, moderate marking	2	10

All the twenty participants were of the mind that belt marking heightens marker efficiency and reliable marks are obtainable. 18/20 participants were of the view that belt marking was advantageous since it encourages team work of its own nature. 19/20 markers were of the opinion that one of the advantages of belt marking was that internalization of the marking schemes was made easy on the part of the marker. 16/20 were of the thinking that belt marking increased the quality of marking. 15/20 felt that belt marking was candidate-friendly as responses to different questions by a student were marked by different markers. 10/20 markers opined that belt marking was a fast way of marking. Only two out of twenty markers were of the idea that belt marking made supervision and moderation easier

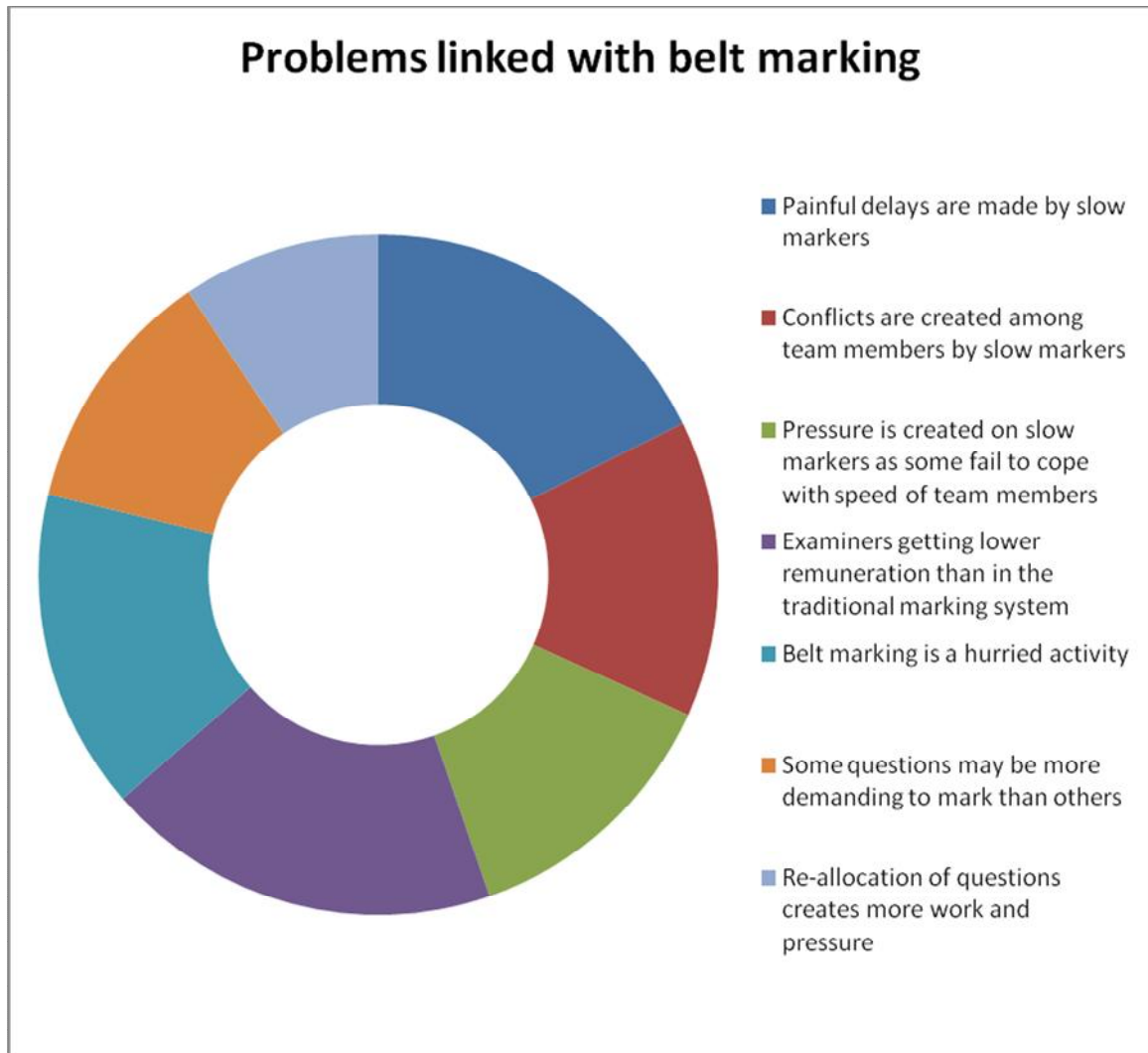
**Q.2 In your opinion what problems does belt marking present?**

All the twenty markers responded to the question. While sixteen of them stated some challenges that belt marking seemed to present, four stated that they had not experienced any problems with belt marking. Responses by the other sixteen are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Problems belt-marking seemed to present**

Stated problem	Number of responses	%
Painful delays are made by slow markers	15	75
Conflicts are created among team members by slow markers	12	60
Pressure is created on slow markers as some fail to cope with speed of team members	11	55
Examiners getting lower remuneration than in the traditional marking system	16	80
Belt marking is a hurried activity	13	65
Some questions may be more demanding to mark than others	10	50
Re-allocation of questions creates more work and pressure	8	40

**Fig.1**



16/20 were of the view that belt marking lowered individual markers' remuneration while 15/20 indicated that painful delays to team members were made by slow markers and this could result in some conflicts among members of a team as was expressed by 12 of the participants. Related to this problem, 11 markers were of the opinion that in belt marking, pressure was created on slow markers who found it hard to cope with the speed of other markers in the team. Thirteen participants viewed belt marking as a hurried activity. Ten of the research participants were of the view that some questions were more difficult to mark than others and this presented challenges to markers who were allotted the rather difficult questions to mark. Eight of the participants were of the thinking that re-allocation of scripts created additional work and pressure.



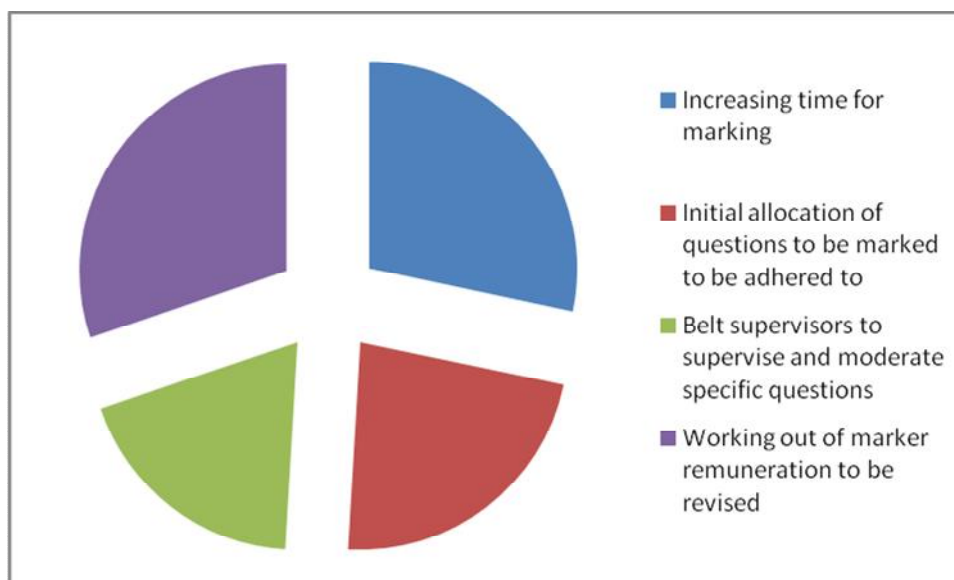
**Q.3 What do you suggest could be done to make belt marking of examinations more effective?**

Some suggestions were made by participants on what could be done to make belt marking more effective. The responses to the question are shown in Table three and Figure 2.

**Table 3: Suggestions on how belt marking could be made more effective**

Given Suggestion	Frequency
Increasing time for marking	15
Initial allocation of questions to be marked to be adhered to	12
Belt supervisors to supervise and moderate specific questions	10
Working out of marker remuneration to be revised	16

**Fig.2 Suggestions on how belt marking could be made more effective**



Fifteen markers suggested increasing time for belt marking, twelve suggested that initial allocation of questions to be marked by a marker should be adhered to. Ten made the suggestion that belt supervisors should supervise and moderate specific questions while sixteen made the suggestion that the working out of marker remuneration should be revised.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The participant views portrayed some positive perceptions on conveyor belt marking system which ZIMSEC adopted in 2010. Belt marking was perceived as presenting several merits. All the twenty participants opined the ability of belt marking to heighten marker efficiency and marking reliability. This opinion supports findings made by Okelowange (2004) which established that conveyor belt marking system reliability coefficients were higher than those in traditional marking system. Since opinions are attributable to the fact that more than one marker marks a script of a candidate and that the marking of one two questions only increases on marking efficiency. For these reasons 80% of the participants expressed the view that belt marking ensured quality marking. Since in belt marking, a marker focused on one or two aspects of a marking scheme, 95% of the markers gave the opinion that in belt marking it was quite easy to internalise the marking scheme. While in the traditional system of marking there is some form of team work, according to eighteen belt marking team work of a different nature. Maybe this is due to the way markers are supposed to do their work in belt marking. Firstly, they work as a team as they mark different responses in a given script and they team work in recording and checking of addition of marks, and completing tally sheets. Probably basing on the characteristics of belt marking, 15 participants were of the mind that belt marking was candidate friendly, much is done to avoid biasing a candidate in any way. Only two participants were of the opinion that in belt marking, it is easier to supervise and moderate marking. Some negative perceptions were given on belt marking although some four markers stated that they had faced no problems with it. 80% of the participants felt that they were receiving lower remuneration than before the time belt marking was introduced. This view could be attributed to the difficulty inherent in reaching the actual number of scripts one would have marked, since marking is done by question and not script. The other contributing factor could be linked to the issue that, unlike in the past whereby team supervisors had their own individual allocation of scripts, in belt marking the remuneration for supervisors is worked out of the total scripts given to a team. 65% of the markers felt that belt marking was a hurried activity, since the duration of marking had been shortened by ZIMSEC, maybe due in an effort to cut down on expenditure. One of the challenges given was that of slow markers, who tended to delay the team and created pressure on themselves and others. According to the words of one marker, "Some conflicts caused by slow markers arose among members of a team." In a way these views contradict Okelowange, (2004) who found out the belt marking speeded marking. According to 10/20 participants, fairness was not guaranteed since some markers were allotted more difficult questions to mark than others. Re-allocation of questions after marking had commenced created more work for markers.

When asked to make suggestions that could contribute to making belt more effective, participants suggested an increase time for marking, adherence to initial allocation of questions, supervision and moderation of specific questions by belt marking supervisors and employing a credible way of working out marker remuneration.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings suggested several merits perceived by markers of the conveyor belt marking system such as being instrumental in marking efficiently and reliably and thus advantaging candidates. Promoting team work was one of the key advantages given in the study. Some challenges were associated with belt marking by markers such as being

a hurried activity, getting of lower remuneration by markers and inconvenience caused by slow markers.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Basing on the findings of the study the researchers recommend the following:

- Ample time for belt marking should be given to markers so that markers do justice to their marking, even if this may entail more expenditure of money by the relevant examination board.
- ZIMEC should revised marker remuneration so that marker motivation may be maintained.
- E-marking in the marking of 'O' level examinations should be introduced to minimise problems of belt marking.
- New researcher should replicate the research using some other techniques of data collection and tool as well as in other districts of the country.

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## **A STUDY OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF PRIMARY TEACHERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study was undertaken to examine the factors affecting the performance of primary teachers in primary education. The population of the study was the Primary teachers of government primary schools and their students (schooling age of 5-12 years) belonging to Lakki Marwat District, N.W.F.P. Those teachers who joined the service in the year 2000 or earlier and the students of class-IV of selected schools were taken in the sample. The research was completed into two parts. Firstly, to find out quantitatively, the factors affecting the performance of primary teachers an opinionaire was developed on five point rating scale.*

*It was found that most of the teachers were facing the different problems like financial, medical, health care, status, students and their parents sides, political, postings, accommodation, teaching in non mother language, transportation, teacher training, training aids, study materials, frequently syllabus changes and no refresher courses and shortage of teachers/overload on teachers. It was also found that the factors mentioned above affected teachers performance and resultantly teachers' performance affected students' achievements in primary education.*

*It was recommended that proper and due attention may be given to primary teachers. They may be provided with handsome salaries and other related facilities. Appropriate social status and full support should be given to all teachers by the government as well as by the society. Proper accommodation, good school environment, relevant teaching/learning teaching aids and proper teachers' training may be ensured. Teachers should be free from politics and primary schools may be properly staffed to cope with the shortage and overload of teachers.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is popularly conceived as an instrument of social change and national development. The social and economic development of a country relates very much with the availability of literate and technically trained masses. Amjad and Ghafar (1996, p. 8) stated that "Education is considered as an instrument for human resource development which would ultimately contribute to economic, industrial and scientific development of nation". Education is the guarantee for producing good citizens for future. Mehboob (2003, p. 8) stated that "Every nation attempts to educate its future generation."

Teaching is a critical and significant base for any society. A nation can advance or declines on the basis of its educational development. Crucial to any education system are the teachers. Teachers comprise the most critical input. Their function of teaching is the crux of the learning cycle. According to Asian Development Bank, (1992, p.8);

“Teaching is a specialized profession that require (i) understanding factors affecting the development of students, (ii) determining the appropriate content structure and methodology of imparting the required skills and (iii) evaluating whether effective learning has taken place”.

The document further elaborated that developing the practical and skill functions of a teacher in a classroom setting requires an understanding of the philosophy of education, theories of learning, child psychology, teaching methodologies and evaluation techniques.

It is the teacher who wields tremendous impact on the classroom instructions. Quality teaching is directly related to what is going on in the teacher training institutions. There are a number of factors responsible for shaping the quality of teacher education in the country. These factors range from ideological and socioeconomic needs to the existing structure of education system as well as ill-defined theories and practices of teaching and learning. Furthermore the quality concern of teacher education relate to policy formulation and management of teacher education programmes, provision of adequate infrastructure to training institutions, pre service and continuous in-service education of teacher educators , regular enrichment of curriculum content, methods, evaluation techniques, teaching aids and other teacher related resources.

Education, especially Teacher Education plays a very important role in the development of society. In teacher education, primary teachers have a pivotal role in the promotion of values in the society. It is the primary teacher who makes pillars of the nation deeper and strong. Uzma (1998, p. 86) stated that “some one asked from a student about favourite profession. He answered that he wants to become a teacher. The reason behind this was that, “teachers produce good leaders, engineers, doctors, politicians, scientists, bankers, philosophers and so on”. On the other hand primary education plays a key and important role in the development of personality of human beings. The whole life of a person revolves around the primary education and childhood personality development. If a child is given proper attention and imparting good education, he will be a constructive person of the society. If he is not imparting quality education and not developing his personality, he will be a dilemma for the whole society in all fields of life. So keeping in view the importance of primary teachers and primary education, we can say that teachers as well as primary education should be given proper attention and respect by the government as well as by the society.

In majority, the mental level of the students is high, but their results are very poor due to poor performance of the teachers and working environment of the schools. Keeping in view the importance of teachers’ education and its effects on students, the researcher investigated into the factors, which affect the performance of primary teachers in imparting primary education.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objectives of the study were:

1. To identify the different factors affecting the performance of primary teachers in primary education.
2. To categorise the different factors separately.
3. To identify the impact of factors on of teachers’ performance

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

It is a descriptive research, so the research was based on survey and conducting achievement tests plus checking school marks/results.

**Population**

There are Government primary schools, Primary public schools, Primary Maktab schools, Primary Mosque schools and Primary community model schools in District Lakki Marwat. But the study was delimited to Government primary schools and its students (schooling age of a child during 5-12 years) including both teachers and students of both sexes belonging to urban and rural areas.

**Table-1 Total Number of Government Primary Schools/Teachers**

Sr. No.	Description	Numbers
1	Total No of Govt Primary Schools	744
2	Total No of Boys Primary Schools	479
3	Total No of Girls Primary Schools	265
4	Total Teachers of both sexes	1759

**Sample**

Due to the limitation of time and resources selected no of teachers and students were taken as sample shown in the give below tables.

**Table-2 Table of Gender wise of Population and samples of Teachers**

Sr. No.	Description	Population	Sample (15 %)	Responses Received
1	Male teachers	1000	150 Urban = 30 Rural = 120	137 Urban = 28 Rural = 109
2	Female teachers	400	60 Urban = 10 Rural = 50	48 Urban = 8 Rural = 40
	Total	1400	210	185

**Table-3 Students for measuring students' achievements**

Sr. No.	Description	Total Teachers	Students per teacher	Total Students
1	Teachers whom performance was affected greatly	26	12	26x12=312
2	Teachers whom performance was less or not affected	26	12	26x12=312

To control intervening variables, the teachers were taken of qualification of at least FA/FSc and of at least five years service experience. The students for testing and checking their previous marks were taken from the status of average family as well as physically/mentally fit of Class-IV Level. The students were tested in the subjects of Mathematics, Urdu and Social Studies of class-IV level.



## **Instruments**

Two Tools were developed for the study:-

- i. Opinionnaire of different factors (main 26 factors) which affect the performance of primary teachers in primary education.
- ii. Personal visits of selected schools by the researcher for conducting students' achievement tests and checking their previous schools' marks for finding the impact of factors on teachers' performance.

## **Terms Used.**

Primary Education :	Class (I-V) of age 5-9 years. (National Education Policy 1998 – 2010).
Primary Teacher :	Teacher who teaches to primary level students.
Performance :	The attribute of a teacher who has the capabilities, potentials of having a positive impact on students' learning/behaviour, attitude and achievements.
Students :	In this study, we mean students of primary level.
Students' Achievement :	The acquisition of knowledge, the ability to solve problem, attitude etc. It is used in the sense of score/marks obtained by the students. In this study, it was defined as the marks obtained by the students of class-IV in school exams Plus tests conducted by the researcher in the subjects of Mathematics, Urdu and Social Studies.

## **Validation of Tools**

Questionnaire and tests were discussed with the five experts of the related field to validate it with respect to content, language, format and objectives. Questionnaire and tests were improved in the light of experts' suggestions and recommendations. The draft questionnaire and tests were pilot tested by administering it to 50 teachers (male/female) and 15 primary schools (120) students at Primary level, who were not included in the sample.

## **Data Analysis and Interpretations**

The raw data were arranged according to the objectives of the study, and was put into tables. The data were analysed by quantitative procedures applying statistical tools. For analysis of the factors affecting the performance of primary teachers, percentage of the responses to each factor of the opinionnaire was calculated. Moreover, students' achievement tests were conducted. Firstly, those students were tested whom teachers' performance was greatly affected due to different factors included in the opinionnaire. Secondly, those students were tested whom teachers' performance was not or less affected due to different factors included in the opinionnaire. Calculated percentage of marks obtained by the students of both groups and then divided into different achievement grades respectively. Compare the ratio of grades of both groups of students and analysis was made. The following items in divisions of responses were used:-

SA	=	Strongly Agreed	A	=	Agreed
UNC	=	Uncertain	DA	=	Disagreed
SDA	=	Strongly Disagreed			



**PART-A (Opinionnaire) factors affecting the performance of primary teachers in primary education**

S. #	STATEMENT	SCALE	SA	A	UNC	DA	SDA
1.	Personal factors of a teacher affect teachers' performance in	Frequency	50	70	20	30	15
		%Age	27	38	11	16	08
2.	Society/community factors affect teachers' performance	Frequency	47	70	24	25	19
		%Age	26	38	13	14	11
3.	Status of a teacher in society factors affect teachers' performance	Frequency	45	68	22	35	15
		%Age	24	37	12	19	08
4.	Accommodation factors affect teachers' performance	Frequency	45	70	25	25	20
		%Age	24	38	14	14	11
5.	Medical/ Health factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	51	69	35	23	17
		%Age	28	37	19	12	9
6.	Students Factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	40	80	18	30	17
		%Age	22	43	10	16	9
7.	Student's Parents factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	50	65	20	38	13
		%Age	27	35	11	21	7
8.	Extra Tuition factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	21	29	30	50	55
		%Age	11	16	16	27	30
9.	Transportation/ Distance factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	54	61	21	29	20
		%Age	30	32	11	16	11
10.	Language factor affect my performance	Frequency	40	45	20	45	35
		%Age	22	24	11	24	19
11.	Locality factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	16	26	25	79	41
		%Age	8	14	14	43	22
12.	Posting factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	51	64	29	31	15
		%Age	27	35	16	16	8
13.	Study Material factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	56	65	23	22	20
		%Age	30	35	14	11	11
14.	Political factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	45	75	18	28	21
		%Age	24	41	10	15	11

S. #	STATEMENT	SCALE	SA	A	UNC	DA	SDA
15.	Sectarian factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	5	7	6	68	100
		%Age	3	4	3	37	54
16.	Relations among Teachers factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	17	18	23	62	65
		%Age	9	10	12	33	35
17.	Administrative factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	20	25	29	49	27
		%Age	11	14	15	27	32
18.	Teachers Union factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	19	26	25	54	56
		%Age	11	15	15	30	31
19.	Head of institutions factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	25	20	30	50	60
		%Age	14	11	16	27	32
20.	Financial factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	49	66	25	28	17
		%Age	26	36	14	15	10
21.	Examination and its related factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	20	25	34	41	68
		%Age	11	14	19	22	37
22.	Higher qualification improvement factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	19	26	25	50	55
		%Age	10	14	14	27	30
23.	Teacher Training factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	50	65	25	28	17
		%Age	27	35	14	15	9
24.	Frequently Syllabus Change and no refreshers factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	51	69	25	19	21
		%Age	27	38	14	11	11
25.	Classroom/School environment factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	54	66	29	26	20
		%Age	30	35	16	14	11
26.	Overload on teachers factors affect teachers performance	Frequency	60	75	10	21	19
		%Age	32	41	05	12	11

**PART – B**

**Comparative study of students achievements whom teachers performance was greatly affected Versus Students achievements whom teachers performance was not or less affected**

		<b>Teachers whom performance was affected greatly</b>		<b>Teachers whom performance was less or not affected</b>	
<b>Sr. #</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>% Age</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>% Age</b>
1	Poor	<b>68</b>	21.80	<b>24</b>	7.7
2	Average	<b>171</b>	54.80	<b>188</b>	60.25
3	Good	<b>39</b>	12.5	<b>37</b>	11.8
4	Very Good	<b>28</b>	8.9	<b>45</b>	14.4
5	Excellent	<b>04</b>	1.2	<b>13</b>	4.15
6	Outstanding	<b>02</b>	0.64	<b>5</b>	1.6

**Findings PART-A:**

Findings of the study from the analysis of data from Opinionnaire are as under:

**Personal Factors**

1. Twenty seven (27)% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% of the respondents agreed, 11% of the respondents were uncertain, 16% of the respondents disagreed and 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that personal factors affect teachers' performance.

**Society/community Factors**

2. Twenty six (26)% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% of the respondents agreed, 13% of the respondents were uncertain, 14% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that society/ community factors affect teachers performance

**Status in Society Factor**

3. Twenty four (24) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 37% of the respondents agreed, 12% of the respondents were uncertain, 19% of the respondents disagreed and 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that status factors affect teachers performance

**Accommodation Factors**

4. Twenty four (24) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents were uncertain, 14% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that accommodation factors affect teachers' performance.

**Health/Medical Factor**

5. Twenty eight (28) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 37% of the respondents agreed, 19% of the respondents were uncertain, 12% of the respondents disagreed and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that medical/ health factors affect teachers performance.

**Students irresponsibility Factor**

6. Twenty two (22) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 43% of the respondents agreed, 10% of the respondents were uncertain, 16% of the respondents disagreed and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that students' factors affect teachers performance

**Students' Parents Factor**

7. Twenty Seven (27) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 35% of the respondents agreed

11% of the respondents were uncertain, 21% of the respondents disagreed and 7% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that student's parent's factors affect teachers' performance.

**Extra Tuition Factor**

8. Eleven (11) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 16% of the respondents agreed, 16% of the respondents were uncertain, 27% of the respondents disagreed and 30% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that extra tuition factors affect teachers performance.

**Transportation/distance Factor**

9. Thirty (30) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% of the respondents agreed, 11% of the respondents were uncertain, 16% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that transportation/ distance factors affect teachers performance

**Language Factor**

10. Twenty two (22) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 24% of the respondents agreed, 11% of the respondents were uncertain, 24% of the respondents disagreed and 19% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that language factor affect teachers performance.

**Locality of teacher Factor**

11. Eight (8) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents uncertain, 43% of the respondents disagreed and 22% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that locality factors affect teachers performance.

**Posting Factors**

12. Twenty Seven (27) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 35% of the respondents agreed, 16% of the respondents were uncertain, 16% of the respondents disagreed and 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that posting factors affect teachers' performance.

**Study Material Factor**

13. Thirty (30) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 35% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents were uncertain, 11% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that study material factors affect teachers' performance.

**Politics Factor**

14. Twenty Four (24) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 41% of the respondents agreed, 10% of the respondents were uncertain, 15% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that political factors affect teachers' performance.

**Sectarian Factor**

15. Three (3) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 4% of the respondents agreed, 3% of the respondents were uncertain, 37% of the respondents disagreed and 54% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that sectarian factors affect teachers performance.

**Relations among teachers**

16. Nine (9) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 10% of the respondents agreed, 12% of the respondents uncertain, 33% of the respondents disagreed and 35% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that relations among teachers factors affect their performance.

**Administrative Factor**

17. Eleven (11) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% of the respondents agreed, 15% of the respondents uncertain, 27% of the respondents disagreed and 32% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that administrative factors affect teachers performance

**Teachers' Union factor**

18. Eleven (11) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 15% of the respondents agreed, 15% of the respondents uncertain, 30% of the respondents disagreed and 31% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that teachers union factors affect teachers performance

**Head of institutions Factor**

19. Fourteen (14) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 11% of the respondents agreed, 16% of the respondents were uncertain, 27% of the respondents disagreed and 32% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that head of institutions factors affect teachers performance

**Financial Factor**

20. Twenty six (26) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 36% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents were uncertain, 15% of the respondents disagreed and 10% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that financial factors affect teachers performance.

**Examination related Factors**

21. Eleven (11) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% of the respondents agreed, 19% of the respondents uncertain, 22% of the respondents disagreed and 37% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that examination factors affect teachers performance

**Higher Qualification Improvement Factor**

22. Ten (10) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents were uncertain, 27% of the respondents disagreed and 30% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that higher qualification improvement factors affect teachers' performance.

**Teachers' Training Factor**

23. Twenty Seven (27) of the respondents strongly agreed, 35% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents uncertain, 15% of the respondents disagreed and 9% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that teacher training factors affect teacher performance

**Frequently syllabus change Factor**

24. Twenty Seven (27) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 38% of the respondents agreed, 14% of the respondents were uncertain, 11% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that frequently syllabus change factors affect teachers' performance.

**Classroom/school environment Factor**

25. Thirty (30) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 35% of the respondents agreed, 16% of the respondents were uncertain, 14% of the respondents disagreed and 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that classroom/ school factors affect teachers' performance.

**Overload on teachers Factor**

26. Thirty two (32) % of the respondents strongly agreed, 34% of the respondents agreed, 11% of the respondents were uncertain, 11% of the respondents disagreed and 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that

overload factors affect teachers' performance. on teachers factors affecting teachers' performance relatively affect the students' achievements.

#### **PART – B**

Table Part –B shows that the ratio between the students achievements of the teachers whom performance was greatly affected and those whom performance was not or less affected due to different factors is:-

Poor	:	21.80 % and 7.7 % ,
Average	:	54.80 % and 60.25 % ,
Good	:	12.5 % and 11.8 % ,
Very Good	:	8.9 % and 14.4 % ,
Excellent	:	1.2 % and 4.15 % while
Outstanding	:	0.6 % and 1.6%.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

In the light of statistical analysis and findings of the research, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Majority of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the different factors like personal related factors, society/ community factors, accorded low social status in society, accommodation factors, medical/ health factors, students' irresponsibility factors, students' parents' factors, transportation/ distance factors, language factor, posting factor, study material factor, political factor, financial factors, teacher training factor, frequently syllabus change and no refresher courses factor, classroom/ school environment factor and overload on teachers' factor affect teachers' performance.
2. Majority of teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed to the factors like extra-tuition factors, locality factor, sectarian factor, relations among teachers factor, administrative factor, teacher union factor, head of institutions factor, examination related factor and higher qualification improvement factor affect teachers' performance.
3. Group of students whom teachers performance was greatly affected by different factors achieved comparatively less marks and less grades than the group of students whom teachers performance was not or less affected by different factors.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of findings and conclusions of the study, it is therefore appropriate to recommend the followings:

1. The Government should increase the pay and related facilities of primary school teachers, so that economic factors do not adversely affect the teaching learning process. Teachers should be given preference and due respect in all walks of life as in the developed countries. Medical/health facilities should be given on the priority. Separate hospitals should be constituted at district level as for defence personnel in the cantonments.
2. As far as possible, lady teachers should be posted near their hometown or villages in order to combat teachers' absenteeism. Extra incentives should be given to lady teachers to work in rural areas. Where qualified female teachers are not available, retired females and even those possessing only middle qualification may be appointed.
3. The holding power of schools may be increased through the introduction of better teaching methods and by offering curricula related to national, community and individual needs. If possible primary education may be imparted in mother language.



Curriculum should include plays, physical education, and development of moral, values of society and Islam.

4. Physical conditions of schools should be ameliorated for attracting the children as well as teachers. To attract the children and teachers to school, recreational facilities may be provided in schools. Play-game kits may be developed and distributed among schools. While providing better physical facilities, priority should be assigned to rural and backward areas.

5. High school headmasters/Headmistresses may be entrusted with supervisory duties and they should regularly provide instructional supervision to primary school teachers of their feeder schools. Primary School should be properly staffed. Wherever there is a shortage of teachers, retired teachers and old educated personnel may be employed on part time or daily wage basis. The primary school Headmasters may be authorized to make this arrangement and payment may be made on the basis of Headmaster's certification.

6. Free environment from politics may be provided to all teachers irrespective of their cast, party, religious or political groups.

7. Teacher training instructions should have built-in mechanism for a continuous self-assessment of instruction and research to make teacher education responsive to the changing needs, abilities and limitations of the children and demands of the community/society. To bridge the gulf between school and home, education orientated program for parents should be developed and introduced in the schools.

8. In short, there is a need for the government to revitalize and reinvigorate the teaching profession. Also government and the public should emulate the developed countries, who appreciate, recognize and reward teachers adequately. Also another research may be conducted to know the possible solutions to cater for teachers' problems and improve teachers' performance, so that high standard of education at childhood/primary level be achieved and better results of students be ensured.

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## **MURKY AREAS OF EVALUATION IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) SYSTEM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The objectives of the study were to investigate the murky areas of Open Distance Learning (ODL) system and to suggest measures for its improvement. Survey method was used to collect the data in this descriptive nature study. Data were collected from 400 M A (Education) and B. Ed level students enrolled in Allama Iqbal Open University in semester spring 2010 by using self-developed questionnaires and it was analyzed by using simple percentage and mean score. It was found that proper guidelines to the students for doing assignment work were not given by the university and tutors. Tutors just tick marks the assignments and not returned to the students after evaluation. The assignments were not updated after each semester. The question papers just check the memory of the students; behaviour and practical skills were not measured through the question papers. Examination centres were not at approachable places and required facilities were not provided there. Cheating, favouritism, impersonation and unfair means were encouraged in the examination centres. Training of supervisory staff to conduct the exams was lacking there. Answer scripts were not marked carefully. Favouritism misleads the quality input in the workshops. It was recommended that the students may be given instructions and guidelines for writing their course assignments. Question papers may be set by the relevant tutors, behavior and practical skills may be checked carefully through the papers. Unfair means may be controlled accordingly.*

**Key words:** Murky areas, Evaluation, Open Distance Learning (ODL) system.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is the basic need of every individual and every society. It is necessary for the survival of both individual and society. Aristotle defined education as “a process necessary for the creation of a sound mind in a sound body.” Unlike natural sciences, in social sciences it is difficult to give a single and special definition of any term. So the word ‘education’ has the same problem. One cannot define it in the same meanings everywhere in the world. It is differently defined in western and eastern countries. But no doubt that the word ‘education’ is derived from the Latin word ‘educate’ which means to bring forth. Education therefore, means both to bring forth and bring up. Microsoft Encarta Reference Library 2005 defined the term as “educating, knowledge, instruction, learning experience and system for educating people”.

When we talk about education, we know that there are three modes of education i.e.

a. Informal education. b. Formal education. c. Non-formal education and distance education.

**a. Informal education**

Informal education starts with the birth of every individual and ends with the expiry of every person. It is unique in its forms. Every person learns so many things in his daily life. Islam gave the concept of this type of education. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said, "Seek knowledge from cradle to grave." In Islam acquiring knowledge is a religious duty of a person. This mode of education gives satisfaction to the nature of human beings

**b. Formal education**

The second mode of education is formal education which is organized and systematic. It is organized by the Government of every country. Formal education means organization of education through institutional infrastructure like schools, colleges, universities etc. It involves sequential learning structure which is graded and standardized leading to certification to achieve predetermined objectives in terms of some desirable changes in learning. (UNESCO, 1986, p.1)

**c. Distance education and Non-formal**

Non-formal education (NFE) is third mode which is also known as a planned provision of education to the individuals. It based upon all the elements of teaching-learning process i.e. objectives, curriculum, teaching methodology, learners and evaluation. It differs from the formal education due to minimal input of face to face classes, regular and daily interaction of learners and teacher. In other words there is openness in NFE as compare to formal education. While distance education is an approach or method of NFE and this combination is known as DNFE. Therefore the use of the term 'ODL' in this paper is considered as a synonym of DNFE.

According to Harris (1977, p. 14) .....any planned and regular educational provision where there is distance education teacher (instructor or educator) on the one hand and the student (or learner or respective audience) on the other hand."

While discussing the nature of ODL system Dodds (1978, p. 246) states .....this method/system provides education/courses by correspondence, broadcasting and occasional face to face learning.

**Evaluation in distance education**

Education either it is formal or non-formal is very important for the individuals as well as societies. The success or failure of the individuals and nations especially in this age of science and technology depends upon their level of knowledge, skills, attitude and performance. These key characteristics of development and survival in the world achieved through education. In education, either it is formal or non-formal, all elements or important but the judgment or measurement about success and failure depends upon the system of evaluation. So, the success of every activity depends upon the transparent system of evaluation.

Evaluation is defined as a process of measuring the success or failure of any activity or programme in the light of planned objectives. Webster Dictionary Defines evaluation as;

(i) It is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to determine whether, and to what degree, objectives have been or being achieved.

(ii) It is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to make decisions.

It is the continuous inspection of all available information concerning the student, teacher, educational programme and the teaching-learning process in distance education to determine the extent to which an individual or programme possesses a particular characteristic or valid judgment about the students and the effectiveness of the programme.

Raja, S.H. quotes Ejaz-Ul-Haq in AIOU. (1999, p.174) that the evaluation is an essential part of each system. This is in fact a touch-stone with the help of which one can assess for what extent the individual can succeed in his life and leads to improvement of shortcoming. Education process is incomplete without evaluation. It tells us what the students know, which is the better way to make them know and what are the shortfalls in the way to make them know.

### **Process of evaluation in ODL system**

In formal education evaluation process is made through different activities, tests (daily, weekly, monthly basis) and also face to face contact, assessment, and examinations. But in distance education evaluation process is more important because there is a distance between teacher and learner and also lack of some activities of formal education system. So the process of evaluation in ODL system consists the following items such as;

#### **i. Self-assessment exercises**

Self-assessment exercises are basic source of evaluation in distance education. Rashid (2000, p. 168) states that the thing that sets a distance education unit apart from a standard text is the significant use of self-assessment exercises. By providing the student with plenty of opportunity to answer questions and solve problems, he will learn faster. Self-assessment exercises with answers given at different places in the unit provide a valuable feedback to the student on his progress. Such exercises also give a key means of summarizing and reviewing the main information to be learned.

Reading is a basic requirement for learning. But a person cannot learn all through reading. For example if a man wants to learn driving or cooking, he cannot learn just through reading. He has to practice the skill he wanted. The same thing is course material a learner not learns all through reading. He needs practice and practice is through self-assessment exercises. But to prepare self-assessment exercises is not an easy job. These are as difficult as useful. Skillful educationists prepare these exercises. These exercises can change the attitude of the learners towards learning. The learner can be active. Rashid (2000, pp. 185-186) describes the importance of these self-assessment exercises that exercises play a very important part for the effective running of distance education programme. In distance education, no less than in the classroom teaching, exercises are the most effective stimuli for the conversion of passive reception into active learning.

It all depends upon the staff of ODL system who prepares the self-assessment exercises and those who evaluate the material.

#### **ii. Assignments**

Students' assignments are main and important component in distance education. In this system learning is by doing and not by mere looking. This is the major difference in distance and formal system of education. In distance education, the course material is divided into two main categories.

- a. Full credit courses.
- b. Half credit courses.

Full credit courses have four assignments whereas half credit courses have two assignments. Students are required to complete all the assignments within a prescribed time period. Students who do not complete their assignments in time are not allowed to appear in the final examination. It is the compulsory component of ODL system. Rashid (2000, p. 140) states that these assignments have three-fold function;

- a. They enable a student to have his performance and progress assessed regularly by expert tutors.
- b. They enable a tutor to give instruction to his students through the comments and corrections made on the assignments.
- c. They act as a pacing device for the student during his period of study.

Students prepare assignments and send to the tutors for correction and guidance. Rashid (2000, p. 194) describes tutor's tasks in this regard as:

- i. To control and correct;
- ii. To explain and guide;
- iii. To encourage and support;
- iv. To evaluate.

Control, correction and evaluation are tasks that first of all demand subject knowledge. It should be ensured that all the tutors must have this knowledge. It should also be ensured that the tutors must be aware of how to explain, guide, encourage and support the students.

### **iii. Examinations**

Although self-assessment exercises and assignments are good source of learning and evaluation in distance education but examinations are the best source of evaluation. Rashid (2000, p. 218) states that examinations are also a source of evaluation of distance education material. The primary purpose of examinations is to produce a distribution of marks from which we can either select the best students required on a competitive basis or classify students on the basis of their performance in a variety of examinations.

In general we consider that examinations are those in which a student sits in a hall and he has to write for three hours. But this is a form of examinations. There are also some other ways of examinations such as oral examination, practical examination, projects, dissertations and interview etc. No doubt conduct of all types of examination is a difficult task because careful and proper planning and arrangement is necessary for examinations.

### **Tutors' role in Distance Education**

Tutor occupies an important role in distance open learning system. He is the person who gives guidance to the students who are at a distance. In the light of his guidance the students make corrections in their work and improve their assignment work. So the tutor in ODL system can play the best possible role in promotion of education by motivating, facilitating, guiding and supervising the learners who have missed the chances of regular studies and face to face sessions of formal education due to some reasons. In ODL



system tutor is just not a teacher but he/she is also a representative of the system. There is a very important role of tutor in teaching and evaluation of the learners in this system.

ODL is a good system if its shortcomings are overcome and its evaluation process is refined. In Pakistan, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is a mature, prominent and well reputed symbol of this system. Its contribution in promotion of education from secondary to higher level is an accepted and recognized fact in all over the world. Being a representative of DNFE, AIOU is exemplified while talking about the merits and demerits of the system. So, there are following common assumptions and observations or perceptions about the evaluation mechanism of ODL system.

### **Observations regarding Self-Assessment Questions**

The first thing is about self-assessment. In the course material, at the end of each unit self-assessment questions/fill in the blanks are given and the students are expected to solve these self-assessment questions but most of the students do not practice this activity. The question is why the students do not practice it? The answer is very simple, that there is no system to evaluate the self-assessment activity. When there is no evaluation, the students will not try to solve these activities. The second thing is assignments which play very important role in the ODL system. .

### **Observations regarding Student's Assignments**

- i. Most of the students do not write their assignments by themselves. They used to write their assignments by their relatives, friends and often by teachers.
- ii. Some students get the marks of assignments through their relation.
- iii. A number of writers/persons/institutions prepare assignments for different levels/programmes/courses especially for English. Their advertisements with their phone contact are present in every important place and also in the premises of AIOU. They sell prepared/written assignments and have open business of unfair means. But no proper check is there to overcome such practices.
- iv. University faculty do not prepare assignments regularly, there are some courses whose assignments are remained same during three semesters.

### **Observations regarding Tutors**

- i. Tutors appointment is purely on temporary basis. There are no certain criteria for the tutors. Most of the tutors have to oblige the university staff for getting tutorship.
- ii. Most of the tutors just fill in the evaluation forms attached with the assignments. They do not check it properly and never bother even to tick at any page of the assignment.
- iii. Some tutors only tick at the assignments. They do not know whether they put a tick on the right or on the wrong item.
- iv. Remarks/guidelines are not given to the students by the majority of the tutors.
- v. Some of the tutors do not return the evaluated assignments to the students.
- vi. Other tutors return the assignments but not in time. Hence the students are not benefited by their guidelines/instructions. Sometimes same practice is favoured by the university administration to minimize the expenditure of postal services.

### **Observations regarding Examinations**

- i. Paper setting is very important task in the examination which demands to follow a proper pattern but it is not followed while setting the papers.

- ii. Objectives are the best type of questions yet these are not included in all the courses.
- iii. Important questions are included in the question papers and complete course is not covered.
- iv. University sends papers on due dates to the banks but there is no fix time for the superintendents to collect the paper. So some of them collect the papers before time, which causes the leakage of paper in return.
- v. Some give papers to their friends and relatives and customers before time and oblige them.
- vi. The schools who work as centers always are the same.
- vii. Their staff is involved in cheating and is well known as “Mafia”.
- viii. The staff is known to every person, so some of the students deal with them and do not solve their paper themselves. Even some students solve their papers in hotels and some in their luxury cars.
- ix. The examination system is lenient. So some students use unfair means (booti) in the examination centers.
- x. Unfair mean cases are discharged by the authorities in results. The students are bold in cheating.
- xi. Centers are not properly managed; some students solve their papers in their favorite centers.

No doubt marking system is improving day by day but still there are some observations about the system.

#### **Doubts regarding marking/ centers marking**

- i. Marking centers are looked like subzi mandi.
- ii. Proper procedure is not adopted for the appointment of marking staff.
- iii. Staff/examiners do not check the papers thoroughly. They put a tick mark on the papers. Marks are given according to the size and weight of written pages.
- iv. Each and every paper is not checked by the head examiner.
- v. Special checking teams are not appointed to check the standard of marking.
- vi. Sometimes and some courses papers are issued on the basis of relationship.
- vii. Special centers/special papers are marked by special examiners.
- viii. Papers are not given fictitious numbers before marking, so students can easily follow/trace their answer scripts.

In the light of this discussion it can be concluded that ODL system is a significant mode of educating masses in this age of over populated world and especially when formal education due to different problems can not fulfill the service of masses’ education. It is also found that like formal mode of education, evaluation is also considered as an important component of ODL system. As it is a key to success or failure of any activity or programme, it should be given the same status in case of ODL system. Due to the significance of evaluation, its importance, role and contribution in quality education it was considered imperative to conduct a research study to find out murky areas in Open Distance Learning system.

#### **The study**

This paper investigates the murky areas of Open Distance Learning (ODL) system and suggests remedial measures for improvement of evaluation in ODL system.

### **Objectives of the study**

Following were the objectives of the study:

- a. To investigate the murky areas of Open Distance Learning system.
- b. To suggest measures for improvement in evaluation of Open Distance Learning system.

### **Procedure of the study**

The present study was descriptive by nature; therefore survey method was used to collect the data. Following procedure was adopted to conduct the study.

### **Population**

Eighteen thousands B. Ed. and M. A. Education level graduates enrolled in semester spring 2010 at Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad in Rawalpindi district were population of the study.

### **Sample**

Four hundred (two hundred male and two hundred female) students of graduate level (B. Ed., M. A. Education), enrolled in semester spring 2010 in AIOU in Rawalpindi district were selected as sample.

### **Instrument**

A Likert type five point rating scale, consisted 58 items was developed and used to collect the data after pilot testing and validation.

### **Data collection**

Data were collected with cent percent responses from 400 M A (Education) and B. Ed level sample students enrolled in Allama Iqbal Open University during semester spring 2010 by using self-developed questionnaires.

### **Data Analysis**

Collected data were tabulated and results were interpreted by using percentage and mean scores. Detailed interpretation can be viewed at the end of the paper (Annexure-A).

### **Conclusions**

The study found that the students of ODL system did not study the course books regularly. The students did not practice self-assessment activities. Instructions and guidelines to the students for doing assignment work were not given by the university. Assignments were not updated after each semester by the university. Assignments were not evaluated thoroughly by the tutors. Feed back was not given in assignments by the tutors. The assignments were not returned to the students by the tutors after evaluation. Proper guidelines to the students about writing the assignments were not given by the tutors. Tutors just ticks mark the assignments. Question papers just check the memory of the students. Behaviour and practical skill were not checked through the question papers. Examination centres were not at approachable places and required facilities were not provided in the examination centres. Cheating, unfair means, favouritism and impersonation were encouraged in the examination centres of the university. It shows that enticement was encouraged in the examination centres of the university. Supervisory staff was not given training of conducting exams. Answer scripts were not marked carefully. It confirms that favouritism misleads the quality input in the workshops and a good system is leading towards the failure due to lack of proper check and balance.

## **Recommendations**

Following recommendations were made accordingly.

The students may be given instructions and guidelines for writing their course assignments. The assignments may be updated by the university after each semester. Proper guidelines and training may be given to the tutors for evaluation of the assignments. Question papers may be set/made by the relevant tutors and behavior and practical skills may be checked through the papers. Examination centers may be allotted at appropriate places and required facilities may be provided in the examination centers. Cheating, unfair means, impersonations and favoritism may be checked and dealt with the laws accordingly. Favoritism may be checked in the examination and workshop centers by following the rules and regulations. Answer scripts may be checked carefully by the relevant, qualified and experienced examiners.

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**Annexure-A: Tables showing the analysis of data**

Table-1: Analysis of data regarding STUDY HABITS (Part 1, Item No.1-2)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
1	Students of DNFE study the course books regularly	SA	25	6	2.25
		A	50	13	
		UND	15	4	
		DA	250	63	
		SDA	60	15	
2	Students follow the study schedule given by the University.	SA	82	21	2.77
		A	87	22	
		UND	10	3	
		DA	98	25	
		SDA	123	31	

Table-2: Analysis of data regarding SELF-ASSESSMENT (Part 2, Item #.3 – 6)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
3	Students practise self-assessment activities.	SA	53	13	2.41
		A	60	15	
		UND	12	3	
		DA	150	38	
		SDA	125	31	
4	Self –assessment questions (SAQ) enhance students' learning.	SA	166	42	3.78
		A	110	28	
		UND	22	6	
		DA	75	19	
		SDA	27	7	
5	Self –assessment questions help students how to recall the main points.	SA	123	31	3.45
		A	102	26	
		UND	37	9	
		DA	110	28	
		SDA	28	7	
6	Self- assessment questions based on the main points of the course unit.	SA	89	22	3.18
		A	133	33	
		UND	10	3	
		DA	99	25	
		SDA	69	17	

Table-3: Analysis of data regarding ASSIGNMENTS (Part 3, Item #.7 -12)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
7	University gives instructions and guidelines to the students for doing assigned work.	SA	50	13	2.58
		A	66	17	
		UND	17	4	
		DA	200	50	
		SDA	67	17	
8	Students write their assignments by themselves.	SA	111	28	3.13
		A	79	20	
		UND	09	2	
		DA	155	39	
		SDA	46	12	
9	Assignments are updated /revised after each semester by the university.	SA	76	19	2.95
		A	80	20	
		UND	18	5	
		DA	201	50	
		SDA	25	6	
10	Assignments are evaluated thoroughly by the tutors.	SA	45	11	2.49
		A	51	13	
		UND	14	4	
		DA	235	59	
		SDA	55	14	
11	Feed back is given in assignments by the tutors.	SA	18	5	2.28
		A	33	8	
		UND	22	6	
		DA	299	75	
		SDA	28	7	
12	Evaluated assignments are returned on time to the students by the tutors.	SA	61	15	2.44
		A	57	14	
		UND	06	2	
		DA	150	38	
		SDA	126	32	

Table-4: Analysis of data regarding TUTORS (Part 4, Item #.13-18)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
13	Tutors are appointed on merit.	SA	100	25	3.16
		A	109	27	
		UND	31	8	
		DA	75	19	
		SDA	85	21	
14	Tutors are given training and instructions after appointment.	SA	115	29	3.23
		A	89	22	
		UND	34	9	
		DA	100	25	
		SDA	62	16	
15	Tutors intimate students well in time regarding their appointment.	SA	112	28	3.17
		A	100	25	
		UND	12	3	
		DA	96	24	
		SDA	80	20	
16	Tutors give guidelines to the students about writing the assignments.	SA	37	9	2.10
		A	24	6	
		UND	11	3	
		DA	199	50	
		SDA	129	32	
17	Tutors just tick mark the assignments.	SA	223	56	4.12
		A	101	25	
		UND	7	2	
		DA	40	10	
		SDA	29	7	
18	Tutors point out weaknesses of the students' efforts in the assignments.	SA	32	8	2.08
		A	26	7	
		UND	8	2	
		DA	211	53	
		SDA	123	31	



Table-5: Analysis of data regarding PAPER SETTING (Part 5, Item #.19-28)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
19	Question papers are set by the tutors of the relevant subjects.	SA	110	28	3.16
		A	89	22	
		UND	23	6	
		DA	112	28	
		SDA	66	17	
20	Objective type items are included in the question papers.	SA	98	25	3.21
		A	116	29	
		UND	12	3	
		DA	123	31	
		SDA	51	13	
21	Question papers carry clear instructions.	SA	142	36	3.69
		A	121	30	
		UND	23	6	
		DA	100	25	
		SDA	14	4	
22	Question papers are free of errors.	SA	134	34	3.67
		A	131	33	
		UND	17	4	
		DA	105	26	
		SDA	13	3	
23	Question papers just check the memory of the students.	SA	211	53	4.14
		A	117	29	
		UND	9	2	
		DA	43	11	
		SDA	20	5	
24	Behaviour is measured through question papers.	SA	43	11	2.20
		A	38	10	
		UND	22	6	
		DA	152	38	
		SDA	145	36	

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
25	Practical skill is checked through the question papers.	SA	34	9	2.08
		A	22	6	
		UND	12	3	
		DA	205	51	
		SDA	129	32	
26	Papers leakage is common practice in the AIOU examinations.	SA	80	20	2.37
		A	101	25	
		UND	35	9	
		DA	136	34	
		SDA	48	12	
27	Course is covered through examination question papers.	SA	111	28	2.83
		A	94	24	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	102	26	
		SDA	90	23	
28	Question papers are well balanced.	SA	98	25	2.91
		A	77	19	
		UND	21	5	
		DA	112	28	
		SDA	92	23	

Table-6: Analysis of data regarding EXAMINATION CENTRES (Part-6 Item # 29-35)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
29	Examination centres are at approachable places.	SA	87	22	3.02
		A	75	19	
		UND	5	2	
		DA	225	56	
		SDA	8	2	
30	Examination centres are established on the basis of fairness and honesty.	SA	68	17	2.87
		A	91	23	
		UND	4	1	
		DA	197	49	
		SDA	40	10	
31	Required facilities are provided in the examination centres.	SA	87	22	2.85
		A	60	15	
		UND	6	2	
		DA	203	51	
		SDA	44	11	
32	Students are bound to take papers in the allotted centres.	SA	121	30	3.35
		A	115	29	
		UND	5	1	
		DA	102	26	
		SDA	57	14	
33	Cheating is encouraged in the Examination centres of the university.	SA	219	55	4.35
		A	145	36	
		UND	2	1	
		DA	25	6	
		SDA	9	2	
34	Copying of other student is found common in the Examination centres of the University.	SA	211	53	4.07
		A	112	28	
		UND	10	3	
		DA	30	8	
		SDA	37	9	
35	Bribery is encouraged in the Examination centres of the university.	SA	189	47	4.23
		A	167	42	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	31	8	
		SDA	10	3	

Table-7: Analysis of data regarding SUPERVISORY STAFF (Part 7, Item # 36-42)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
36	Fair supervisory staff is encouraged in the examination.	SA	92	23	2.45
		A	37	9	
		UND	7	2	
		DA	190	48	
		SDA	74	19	
37	Favouritism is practised in the examination centres by the supervisory staff.	SA	198	50	4.27
		A	172	43	
		UND	2	1	
		DA	17	4	
		SDA	11	3	
38	Supervisory staff is courteous.	SA	111	28	3.03
		A	80	20	
		UND	9	3	
		DA	113	28	
		SDA	87	22	
39	Supervisory staff is given training of conducting exams.	SA	65	16	2.53
		A	39	10	
		UND	23	6	
		DA	192	48	
		SDA	81	20	
40	Impersonation is found there in the Examinations.	SA	181	45	3.86
		A	121	30	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	52	13	
		SDA	43	11	
41	Supervisory staff is honest.	SA	57	14	2.43
		A	66	17	
		UND	9	3	
		DA	131	32	
		SDA	137	34	
42	Unfair mean cases are made against the students by Supervisory staff.	SA	45	11	2.42
		A	57	14	
		UND	5	2	
		DA	209	52	
		SDA	84	21	

Table-8: Analysis of data regarding MARKING CENTRES (Part 8, Item # 43-48)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
43	Answer scripts are marked carefully.	SA	32	8	2.3
		A	61	15	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	203	51	
		SDA	101	25	
44	Marking staff is appointed on merit.	SA	98	25	3.17
		A	101	25	
		UND	11	3	
		DA	152	38	
		SDA	38	10	
45	Marking staff is qualified.	SA	87	22	3.41
		A	161	40	
		UND	6	2	
		DA	122	31	
		SDA	24	6	
46	Marking centres are examined by the concerned authorities of the university.	SA	50	13	2.44
		A	63	16	
		UND	31	8	
		DA	125	31	
		SDA	131	33	
47	Students are satisfied with their marks.	SA	163	41	3.95
		A	159	40	
		UND	4	1	
		DA	44	11	
		SDA	30	8	
48	Required facilities are provided in the Marking centres.	SA	178	45	3.81
		A	111	28	
		UND	13	3	
		DA	56	14	
		SDA	42	11	

Table-9: Analysis of data regarding RESULTS (Part 9, Item # 49-50)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
49	AIOU announce error free results.	SA	123	31	3.11
		A	78	20	
		UND	10	3	
		DA	99	25	
		SDA	90	23	
50	Results are declared in time by the university.	SA	125	31	2.1
		A	70	18	
		UND	8	2	
		DA	89	22	
		SDA	108	27	

Table-10: Analysis of data regarding WORKSHOPS (Part 10, Item # 51-58)

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
51	Workshops are useful for preparation of exams	SA	175	44	3.99
		A	151	38	
		UND	2	1	
		DA	42	11	
		SDA	30	8	
52	Workshops are beneficial for skill development	SA	161	40	3.95
		A	164	41	
		UND	5	1	
		DA	36	9	
		SDA	34	9	
53	Workshops are source of socialization	SA	201	50	4.14
		A	131	33	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	55	14	
		SDA	10	3	

Item No.	Statement	Level	Frequency	%	Mean Score
54	Workshops are wastage of time	SA	19	5	1.59
		A	24	6	
		UND	5	1	
		DA	180	45	
		SDA	72	18	
55	There should be a substitute of workshops	SA	93	23	3.11
		A	121	30	
		UND	4	1	
		DA	101	25	
		SDA	81	20	
56	Favouritism misleads the quality input in the workshops.	SA	81	20	3.33
		A	169	42	
		UND	3	1	
		DA	98	25	
		SDA	49	12	
57	Workshops are means of promoting undue favour in the class	SA	98	25	3.09
		A	111	28	
		UND	5	1	
		DA	103	26	
		SDA	83	21	
58	In ODL system workshops is a key component for learning	SA	210	53	4.19
		A	134	34	
		UND	5	1	
		DA	25	6	
		SDA	26	7	



**DECENTRALIZATION AND SHARED DECISION-MAKING IN SELECTED  
SCHOOL IN AL-BATINAH GOVERNORATE, OMAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

*School based management (SBM) in public school is a management tool to decentralize the authorities from center to the local school. The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze the implementation of school based management system and how the principal's play their role in decision making within this system In Al-Batinah Governorate, Oman. The research question was what are the school community views regarding the implementation of school based management?*

*This study employed the qualitative approach, using multiple- case study in which data were collected through interviews, observation and documents analysis. The participants in this study were principals, assistant principals, senior teachers, and teachers. Validity and reliability of the study were ascertained through triangulation, on-site engagement, member checks, peer examination and audit trail. Throughout the analysis of data, constant comparative technique was used to investigate within-case and cross case patterns.*

*Data revealed that participants expressed divergent views concerning the SBM system in Oman. They considered the SBM system is a complex and multifaceted concept comprising many elements. These elements can be interpreted differently, have different emphasis and serve different purpose. This research concluded in a model that may assist the decision makers in the Ministry of Education by providing a new perspective about the implementation of SBM system. The recommended model contributes a new perspective for the implementation of SBM system by suggesting some recommendations for at the Ministry of Education, General Directorate, and schools.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Public education worldwide has encountered different trends where the school management emphasis shifts along a continuum of centralization and decentralization. In this context, Gamage (2008) stated that one of the most significant reforms in the current restructuring of school systems has been the devolution of decision making authority to school level through a move towards school based management (SBM). Since the mid-1970s, the new concept of educational decentralization to Governoratorial levels with devolution of power and authority to school level and community participation in school governance has been emerging as a new culture in education systems (Gamage, 2008).

Developed countries have implemented this technique in managing school budgeting, curriculum, and personnel decisions. Bandur (2008) asserted that SBM has become the most prominent feature of the public school management system in most

countries around the world. Governments around the world differ in the application of SBM, while the programs lie along a continuum in terms of the degree to which decision-making is devolved to the local level; some devolve only a single area of autonomy, whereas others go further and devolve the power to hire and fire teachers and authority over substantial resources. In the meantime, decision making through SBM was a recurrent theme in the literature as a part of the renewed focus on school administration (Nielsen, 2007).

Undoubtedly, SBM is more successful when schools use their decision making authority to recruit and select staff who support and agree with the school's vision (Odden, & Busch, 1998). It is clear that SBM has created opportunities for school administration achieve autonomy, flexibility, participation, and accountability. According to the World Bank (2007) SBM reforms around the world are inevitably different from each other.

Adolphine (2008) indicated that the leaders who participated in community school control experiments lacked real understanding of what community control involves as an operational concept, insufficient knowledge about principal role, limited teamwork and lack of problem solving skills has been identified as SBM implementation problems. Furthermore, Duke (2005) asserted there is no consensus on how successful principals manage their schools, or on how principals facilitate teacher participation. Teachers also need to play an active role in developing and operating decisions in teams at school level. Previous studies on SBM implementation have largely focused on staffing and financial problems, and upon the school council as a decentralized institution. (Kim, 2005).

The rhetoric of the literature suggests that under SBM, the school community has the opportunity for many more decisions that affect them than they held previously. Research to date indicates that this has occurred to some extent in some schools, but points to the whole area requiring further examination (Cranston, 2000). Moreover, Barrera, (2009), Kim (2005), and Nielsen (2007) asserted that the discussion of SBM is necessary, because little is known about whether these particular policy options actually alter the nature of decision making practices at the school level. Moreover, because of the dearth of widespread evidence on the impact and effectiveness of SBM in practice, we still have a number of questions that must go unanswered until more evidence is available (World Bank, 2007).

Another element that will need more analysis as the study of SBM reforms evolves over time are political economy issues, such as the roles played by teachers' unions and political elites, and issues of governance (World Bank, 2007). Furthermore, the extent to which a shared vision is a key element of different types of SBM reforms is an important future research issue (World Bank, 2007). In addition, school community might encounter more work, less efficiency, uneven school performance, an increased need for staff development, confusion about new roles and responsibilities, and coordination difficulties (Adolphine, 2008).

In the Omani context, Ministry of Education has taken care to develop a new school administration structure and adopted various administrative projects such as the project of diploma in school administration and school performance evaluation project. These projects aimed at implementing greater decentralization of school administration, thus encouraging school principal autonomy for enhanced roles in school administration (Ministry of Education, 2004). Moreover, Ministry of Education launched the project of SBM with certain responsibilities devolved to pilot schools (two in each Governorate) (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Ministry of Education considered the implementation of SBM system in Oman as a starting point to improve the quality of national education, student achievement, and principals' role in decision making (Al-Ghafri, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2006). Initial examination of previous studies has indicated an existing lack of research in the implementation of SBM in Oman. However, some related studies show the need for conducting research in the implementation of the SBM system. Al-Shehi (2003) proposed some procedures, the most prominent of which are: amending the organizational regulations of general education in a way that enables principals to play a more substantial role in the process of educational decision making at the school level. Furthermore, Al-Ghafri (2008) indicated a medium application degree of school self administration system on all study domains.

The purpose of this study is to investigate in detail the school community concepts, beliefs, experiences, and suggestions that will help to improve the implementation of the system in order to develop their understanding regarding SBM system. Furthermore, it became necessary to investigate SBM implementation to find out whether devolution of power and authority to school level has resulted in school improvements and student achievement. Finally, examination of the implementation of SBM system will add to the existing body of knowledge on better practices that can be used to improve school performance in Oman.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims to explore qualitatively the following specific research question.

1. What are the school communities' view and understanding about the SBM system?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **School-Based Management (SBM): An Overview**

School based management system (SBM) is a broad term. However, the idea of SBM is known by many different names surfacing across the globe including decentralization management, site or school based management, and independent school (Moore, 2009). The aim of many of these initiatives is to promote innovation, allow schools to be more responsive to parents' wishes, provide students with expanded educational opportunities, and encourage more effective and efficient use of school resources (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 1999). Furthermore, SBM system is a popular strategy that came out of the school reform movement, defined as the devolution of decision-making authority to the school site (Oswald, 1995). Consequently, SBM is considered as a structure used to transfer relational power to schools, to be an ideal strategy for countering bureaucratic obstacles (Adolphine, 2008).

According to Hanson (1990), Mohrman and Wohlstetter (1994), and Czuba (1999), in SBM, central administration shifts decision making authority and responsibility to the school level with a view to improving educational practices. Several studies (e.g. Caldwell, 2005; Leithwood & Menzies, 1998; Lewis, 2006; Malen et al., 1990) viewed SBM conceptually as a formal alternation of governance structure, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision making authority as the primary means for stimulating and sustaining improvement.

SBM also refers to a reform movement that allows schools more autonomy in making decisions about managing their use of human, material, and financial resources (Patrinos & Codina, 2007). On the other hand, while the SBM is a system or structure, the principals' role represents an internal perception by the principals of having

increased authority in their positions. Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1992) referred to this meaning when they re-emphasized that the SBM system consists of endeavors as the following terms (a) to decentralize the organization, management, and governance of schooling, (b) to empower those closest to students in the classroom (that is, teachers, parents and principals), (c) create new roles and responsibilities for all the players in the system, and (d) transform the teaching-learning process in classrooms.

As the above definitions imply, SBM is a generic term for diverse activities. SBM programs exist in many varied forms, both in terms of who has the power to make decisions and in terms of the degree of decision making devolved to the school level. Whereas some programs transfer authority only to principals or teachers, others encourage or mandate parental and community participation, often as members of school committees (or school councils, school management committees). Finally, implementing the SBM system (SBM) should motivate principals to enhance their own practices, promote self-motivation, and strengthen relationships via decentralizing decision making to the school level.

### **Previous studies on SBM system**

SBM system as an educational reform model for schooling has been well documented in the literature over the past few decades. Despite that, Santibanez (2007) pointed out that only a handful of the studies reviewed use strong empirical methods to support their results. A small number of these more rigorous studies support the claims that SBM system improves access to schooling and slightly reduces dropout and repetition rates, and evidence on SBM system effects on student achievement is mixed. Bandur (2008) suggested that continuous developments and capacity building such as training on school leadership and management, workshops on the SBM system, and increased funding from governments are needed to affect further improvements in school effectiveness with the implementation of the SBM system. According to Briggs and Wohlstetter (2003) successful implementation of school based management requires structures that include teachers in decision making.

Previous studies shows that the critical need is to lead the whole school communities and that the inherent critical requirement is for participation and collaboration among members of the school community in decision making, planning and budgeting under the leadership skills and capacities of principals. Previous studies pointed out that under SBM, school communities (e.g., parents, teachers) have the opportunity, responsibility and accountability for many more decisions that affect them than they held previously (Cranston, 2001). Duke (2005) found that female principals employed a more democratic decision making approach than male principals who frequently used a more consultative decision making approach. According to Cranston (2001), principals were required to make increasingly complex decisions in collaboration with others in their school communities; decisions typically taken previously by those located away from the immediate school environment.

### **SBM Practice in the Sultanate of Oman**

In the Sultanate of Oman, SBM system was introduced as a pilot system in a formal sense in 2006. Ministry of Education has adopted the concept of School Based Management system (SBM) for many reasons, among which the most important are the following:

1. The need to develop education and update its competence in the light of the challenges of the era and its requirements, as well as the future perspectives.
2. The invitation of the forum of the future perspective of the Omani Economy (Oman, 2020) to prepare developed Omani human resources, having competence and skills which enable them to cope with technological development and to

manage the changes that happen in it with great competence as well as facing the local and international constantly changing conditions. (Ministry of Education, 2006).

Consequently, the Ministerial Decision No. (2/2006) was issued, which explicitly stated the following:

1. The aim of the SBM system is application of decentralization that would allow the school practices of certain powers and responsibilities of administrative and technical, as an autonomous unit, within the educational policy of the Ministry and the rules governing the work, in order to consolidate the role of the school and the teachers and their beneficiaries to undertake planning, implementation and follow-up programs proposed to develop the school performance and the achievement of total quality in educational work, as well as ease the burden on directorates of educational areas.
2. Each Educational Governorate identifies two experimental schools for SBM System, and the manager of the area chooses these two schools of general education schools that include grades 10 to 12 and applied them to the School Evaluation Performance System.
3. For principals of the Selected pilot schools practices the following authorities and functions:
  - (a) Administration and Financial Affairs.
  - (b) Student, examinations, the activities and administrative direction Affairs.
  - (c) Supervision Affairs.
  - (d) Public projects, Maintenance and Services Affairs. (MOE, 2006).

Since its inception in 2006, the SBM system was implemented in about a hundred schools out of 1050. The initial plan of this system was to be applied gradually (two schools in each Governorate annually) (Ministry of Education, 2009). The Ministry of Education within the implementation this new system is trying to diversify education and to improve it qualitatively in order to keep up with the fast developments taking place. It has to provide the qualified human resources needed for this development, especially in the educational field in general and for school administration specifically. However, the Ministry of Education still reserves the right to intervene to ensure the appropriate levels of outcomes for all students. In this regard Issan and Gomaa (2010) pointed out that the concepts and principles of SBM are strictly implemented and they concentrate on execution of rules and regulations approved by the Ministry of Education. As a result, school administrations as well as teachers have a limited role in decision making concerning curriculum, evaluation, and other aspects relating to post-Basic Education reform.

## **Methodology**

### **Introduction**

Scientists have divided research into two types, qualitative and quantitative (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). While qualitative methods allow the in-depth study of selected issues, cases, or events and can provide critical insights into beneficiaries' perspectives, quantitative methods are better suited to assess causality and reach generalizable conclusions (Abu-Duhou, 1999).

In this study researcher was guided by a qualitative research design, in order to investigate and explore how the Omani the implementation of the school based management system in the Sultanate of Oman.

Researcher was interested in using multiple case study design including a cross-site analysis to investigate the principals' role in decision making within the context of



school based management system in Omani schools. For the purposes of this study, the case study unit of analysis was principals, principals' assistant, senior teachers, and teachers in selected schools in Al-Batinah Governorate in Oman.

Researcher used purposeful sampling to identify the four Omani public schools (basic education & post basic education) as well as particular sites for the study. For this study, researcher selected the criterion of sampling strategy. The researcher selected Al-Batinah Governorate according to the following criteria (a) geographical location which makes traveling to and from the schools convenient, (b) accessibility to both school and Governorate because researcher used to work with Al-Batinah north Governorate for about fifteen years, and (c) willingness of school community involvement. Within the Governorate researcher selected the four schools (one school basic education (cycle 2), and three post basic education schools) for the research project based on the following criteria (a) Firstly, schools implementing the Basic Education System. These schools enjoy certain facilities and have sufficient administrative staff. (b) Second, the schools implementing school performance appraisal system and the teachers' performance evaluation. (c) Third, the school has experienced the implementation of school-based management system (SBM) for at least three years. (d) adequate training regarding school based management system (SBM) has been given to the school staff including the administrative staff, and (e) the final requirement is that the principal of each school had tenure of at least three years as the school principal.

Furthermore, this research gathered data from a variety of participants such as principals, assistant principals, senior teachers, and teachers in order to gain a greater understanding of the practices of the principals' role in decision making. Therefore, the focus of this research was primarily on four principals as unit of analysis, six assistant principals, six senior teachers based on their acceptance to being interviewed, and four teachers because of the time limitation. Thus, participants' selection in the study was from the basic education and post basic education schools, which essentially should have the following staff (a) the principal, (b) principal assistant, (c) senior teachers, and (d) teachers.

This cross-section of participants has provided a comprehensive representation of basic education schools based upon the principals' role in decision making within the implementation of school-based management system (SBM). The assistant principals chosen were selected based on the following criteria (a) at least four years experience, (b) involvement in the planning process of enhancement effort in the school, (c) knowledge of school improvement effort and goal realization, (d) and participated in developing the school performance objectives, as will senior teachers and teachers.

### **The Interview**

The semi-structured open-ended interview was utilized in this study. During the interview the researcher taped all of the interviews and took field notes during the process. Notes allowed the researcher to accomplish four things (a) formulated ideas and new questions, (b) helped in determining how the interviews were going, (c) helped during post interview analysis, and (d) provided a backup system if the tape recorder did not work. Notes also help identify key phrases and can help the researcher pace the interview (Patton, 2002). The researcher has taken the following notes: (a) described the participant, (b) added information regarding their tone and nonverbal gestures, (c) described the setting, (d) described what was going on during the data collection, (e) described other activity surrounding the data collection, and (f) described the participants' behavior. The notes was organized by using a computerized filing system. The researcher printed and filed a hard copy at the researcher's primary residence. The

researcher manually analyzed the data. To ensure data accuracy, the researcher asked for confirmation and feedback from each participant.

### **Observation**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used direct observation for its strengths. The researcher was watching, and making notes for future use. In an attempt to gather rich descriptive data, the researcher kept a daily journal that was used to describe observations made during each school visit to collect insightful data.

Throughout the day, the researcher was monitoring the morning assembly, walking around the school building, observing the principal-staff instructions, attending meetings, and observing the interactions between the principal and the school community in the school. The researcher engaged himself each day with senior teachers and teachers in informal conversations beside formal conversation with principals and their assistants.

### **Document Analysis**

Researcher tried to review any documentation, and prepared a summary of interviews, direct observations, and document reviews at the end of each visit. Also, the researcher completed an overall summary of all data collected via direct observation, document review, and interviews. This procedure allowed him to order his thoughts. Furthermore, adjustments were made based upon the reflection of the daily agenda and on the data collection procedures.

By using these procedures, the researcher was able to triangulate data from different sources and strengthen the research design. According to Yin (2003), the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence (triangulation) is the development of converging lines of inquiry. Thus, any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode. Additionally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) write, triangulation of data is crucially important in naturalistic studies. Triangulating data sources means comparing and crosschecking the consistency of information gathered at different times and by different means using qualitative methods. According to Patton (2002) one important way to strengthen a study design is through triangulation, or the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena or programs.

The interview, the field notes, and the documents allowed for data triangulation. This triangulation was strengthened the results of the data collected. All three of these provided sufficient data for the researcher to analyze and obtain an in-depth understanding of the topic.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The researcher in this study followed systematic steps in the analyses of various types of data gained from different instruments; the researcher was guided by the six steps involved in analyzing and interpreting qualitative data that Creswell (2008) mentioned. These steps are preparing and organizing the data, exploring and coding the database, describing findings and forming themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting the meaning of the findings, and validating the accuracy of the findings”.

Moreover, the researcher started transcribing the interviews once each interview was completed either by the researcher himself or by the people that the researcher was hiring due to time constraints. The researcher first transcribed the interviews in Arabic language, as it is the participants’ mother tongue. After that, all transcribed interviews were translated from Arabic into English.

Because the strategies and techniques have not been well defined, analyzing case study evidence is difficult. The researcher analyzed the data that were collected from



interviews, direct observation, and document reviews at the end of the each school visit. As the researcher progresses, the data were coded and categories developed. These categories emerged from themes, related topics, and patterns.

### FINDINGS

#### Schools' Description :

Table 1: exhibits the four schools demography

	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
Kind of School	Post basic edu.	Basic education, Cycle 2.	Post basic education.	Post basic education.
Student Number	517	777	950	639
Student age	between 16 to 18.	between 10 to 16	between 16 to 18.	between 16 to 18.
Gander	females	females	Males	Males
Grade	11-12.	grade 5-10.	11-12.	11-12.
Principal	1	1	1	1
Principal assistant	2	1	2	1
Senior teacher	8	7	8	7
Teacher	50	64	71	50

Table 1 indicates that Demographically the four schools are similar to some extent. The students population in four schools are vary, its range between 500-950. Moreover, the most of the student age are between 16-18 years old, while in school basic education, Cycle 2, they are in a wider age range, 10-16 years old. Another notable difference between schools is the grade. As illustrated in table 1 while all schools have grade 11-12, school basic education, Cycle 2 has grade 5-10. The gender composition in the four schools are fifty, two schools are females and two of them are males.

The position titles of school administrator and teachers in four schools may be the same but the responsibilities in terms of academic and administrative work may vary. All administrative staff and teachers are employed as permanent public school administrators and teachers by the Ministry of Education in Oman. Furthermore, the school building in the four schools differs to some extent.

#### Participants profile

Table 2: Involved participants' job, title and position work

schools participant	S-1	S-2	S-3	S-4	Total
Principal	1	1	1	1	4
Principal Assistant	2	1	2	1	6
Senior Teacher	1	2	1	2	6
Teacher	1	1	1	1	4
Total	5	5	5	5	20

Table 2 shows a total number of participants who have been involved in this study. The data gathered from a variety of participants such as principals, assistant principals, senior teachers, and teachers in order to gain a greater understanding of the practices of the principals' role in decision making. Therefore, the focus of this research

was primarily on four principals as unit of analysis, six assistant principals, six senior teachers based on their acceptance to being interviewed, and four teachers because of the time limitation. Thus, participants selection in the study were from the basic education and post basic education schools.

### **School Findings**

Regarding Research Question (What are the school community views and understanding regarding the implementation of SBM?), the data in this paper was based on the analysis of the interviews with school community members including the principal assistant (PA1), senior teachers (ST1), and teacher (T1). The four themes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews with the school community are as follows: increase autonomy of school within the policy of Ministry of Education, manage the school's resources independently, involvement in decision making process and importance of the implementation of SBM system.

#### **Increase autonomy of school within the policy of (MOE):**

Respondents interviewed had different concepts of what was meant by the SBM system, and indicated that the implementation of this system is a complex and comprising many elements. These elements can be interpreted differently as the participants' view. Participants indicated that SBM system can increase the authority at school level if the Ministry of Education transfer the decision making process to the school. The upcoming table illustrates this issue.

**Table 3 Increase autonomy of school within the policy of (MOE):**

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
PA1- ST1	ST2	ST3	PA4
<p><b>PA1:</b> SBM was considered as a kind of decentralization. Yes MOE has transferred authority to school, but with the understanding that the delegated authority can be withdrawn at any time.</p> <p><b>ST1:</b> I don't know exactly, but as I heard that, SBM is no more than the shifting of management responsibilities from the Ministry to schools in such a way that the central MOE remains firmly in control.</p>	<p><b>ST2:</b> SBM is transferring responsibility of DM authority, to school and they have to conform within a set of policies determined by MOE. As we have seen nothing has changed, the responsibility of these tasks still refer to MOE or GD.</p>	<p><b>ST3:</b> Actually, it not clear enough for me the conception of SBM. As I heard, decision making authority was transferred to school. At the same time, as more decisions making reverts to school, General Directorate officials who are most likely to lose the authority, resent the loss.</p>	<p><b>PA4:</b> SBM is giving school some discretion to plan and implement programs, within guidelines set by MOE. The reality is they devolved only authorities, which are trivial.</p> <p><b>ST4:</b> We were given the authority to manage school based on the guidelines of MOE, with continued intervention of the General Directorate. So we still within the general framework of educational policy.</p>
<p>Key finding: (SBM) encompasses a wide variety of strategies ranging from granting full autonomy to school over every educational, financial, and personnel matter, to more restrictive versions allowing limited autonomy over school operations.</p>			

**Manage the school's resources independently**

Data revealed that participants were expected that the Ministry of Education will give the school freedom and independence over the school's resources management. In addition, that participants believed that SBM system helped principal to manage the school independency, If implemented perfectly, with all authorities in decision making. The upcoming tables illustrates this point.

**Table 4: Manage the school's resources independently:**

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
PA1 – T1	PA2 – ST2	PA3	PA4 - ST4
<p><b>PA1:</b> the core idea behind SBM is that those who work in a school should have greater control of what goes on in the school. I believe that SBM refers to the management of resources at the school rather than GD or MOE.</p> <p><b>T1:</b> With SBM, I heard the school's administration shared with authority to set up the school budget.</p>	<p><b>PA2:</b> SBM is a modern way, to encourages school's community to manage the school independently.</p> <p><b>ST2:</b> SBM is shifting the real authority of decision making.</p>	<p><b>PA3:</b> It was supposed under SBM, schools become deregulated from the MOE control. I think, school being given greater responsibility for their own affairs, I mean MOE was supposed give schools independency in decision making process.</p>	<p><b>PA4:</b> SBM relies on the decision making authority given to principal. and in this case principal can practice his work independently.</p> <p><b>PA4:</b> I SBM system would provide opportunities for principal to prove himself, in terms of his strengths and weaknesses through this system.</p> <p><b>PA4:</b> The main idea behind SBM is to make school as independent unit of decision making. I think MOE aims to consider school as source of the decisions making.</p> <p><b>ST4:</b> SBM means that school is responsible for itself without returning to MOE, which means school principal could make decisions independently.</p>
<p><b>Key finding:</b> The understanding of SBM system differs specifically according to the school community views.</p>			

**Involvement in decision making**

Respondents stated that to implement a system like SBM requires giving administrative staff and teachers an opportunity to involve in decision making process through transferring of responsibilities to the school level rather than Ministry of Education or General Directorate. The upcoming excerpt, illustrate the issue:

**Table 5: Involvement in decision making:**

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
PA1	ST2	PA3 – T3	PA4 – ST4
<b>PA1:</b> If the MOE transfers the authority to the school, the school's teachers involvement in decision making would be increased within the Ministry policy.	<b>ST2:</b> SBM contributes positively in the process of decision making by giving absolute powers to the school's principal and school communities. <b>ST2:</b> I mean MOE supposedly gives full freedom to the school's management to make decisions within the Ministry of Education's principles and laws, without any intervention.	<b>PA3:</b> SBM mean that MOE encourage school administration to become own the ability to make decisions effectively. <b>T3:</b> the main target SBM is, that MOE wants to focuses on involving teachers in the decision making process.	<b>PA4</b> :SBM encourages teachers' involvement in decision making and school activities. <b>ST4:</b> SBM creasing teachers' participation in issues concerning the school administration.
Key finding: The implementation of the SBM system can lead to high participation in decision making process at school level.			

**Importance of the implementation of SBM system.**

Participants expressed the importance of school community in decision making within the implementation of SBM system. The upcoming table illustrates this point

**Table 6: Importance of the of SBM system:**

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
PA1 – ST1	PA2 – ST2	PA3 – ST3	PA4 – ST4
PA1: If SBM system effectively implemented. I am sure it is very useful, because it gives teacher a chance to take part in the issues that concerning their school. I mean if the MOE transfers the authority to the school that will help school to plan its programs depending upon its real needs. ST1: I don't think SBM is Important, because as I notice there had not been any changing in the terms of authority, responsibility, and roles of the schools' principals.	PA2: SBM is very important, because it gives the principal an effective role in decision making. ST2: Actually, it is not easy to measure success; SBM must be coupled with school level accountability for results.	PA3: I believe that, SBM system is very important; It provides principal full authority to make decisions. ST3: SBM has considered as an effective system, where it provides principal control over school activities, and allowed principal to be more transparency with school teachers.	PA4: I consider SBM system – of course with full authorities- as the basic principle of school administration improvement. At the same time, I am sure SBM system will help school to solve problems effectively and positively. ST4: I think SBM is important, because it leads to increasing financial allocation; school administration became fully responsible in decision making,
Key finding: The thought of the importance of SBM system was supported by the school community members. Where they believe that the SBM is useful and opened wide gate to participate in school decision making.			

**Discussion of findings**

This section provides an integrated summary of the findings of the study. The findings were presented in alignment to following research question:

- 1- What are the school community' views and roles regarding the process of SBM system?

The analysis was made as researcher pondered over questions such as: how similar or how different are the principals in their roles in decision making within the implementation o SBM system? Are there underlying reasons for them to behave as such? What does the literature say about all these? What general conclusion can be drawn from the study of these cases?

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of SBM system in selected schools in Al-Batinha Governorate. Responses to the interview questions concerning the implementation of SBM system revealed the following themes:

**Increase autonomy of school within the policy of (MOE).**

Data revealed that SBM encompasses a wide variety of strategies ranging from granting full autonomy to school over every educational, financial, and personnel matter,

to more restrictive versions allowing limited autonomy over school operations. Supporting this finding, Riesgraf (2002) revealed that SBM increased the decentralization of decision making for special education in some areas, while decision in other areas remained centralized.

Furthermore, this understanding is consistent with understandings of Santibanez (2007) who pointed out that through participative decision making and autonomy, schools under SBM are expected to be more efficient in using resources and are more responsive to local needs. According to Sumintono et al. (2012) analysis of the policy shows that its construction and content has some limitation of empowering school in terms of the context of decentralization to school level.

#### **Manage the school's resources independently.**

Data revealed that the understanding of SBM system differs specifically according to the school community views. Respondents indicated that the SBM system refers to empowering school community to manage their resources independently. They considered school as the primary educational unit for decision making within the implementation of SBM system. Murphy (1997) offers a similar view, arguing that SBM is a strategy to decentralize decision making to the school site. This finding is inconsistent with Heyward et al. (2011) who stated that the respondents perceived the school committee was not an independent body.

#### **Involvement in decision making.**

Based on the findings, The implementation of the SBM system can lead to high participation in decision making process at school level. Respondents perceived that the Ministry of Education wants to focus mainly on involving school community in the school decision making process rather than putting them entirely in control. These findings are parallel with Briggs and Wohlstetter (2003) who asserted that the successful implementation of SBM requires structures that include teachers in decision making. In addition Cranston (2001) indicated that under SBM, school communities have the opportunity, responsibility and accountability for many more decisions that affect them than they held previously.

#### **Importance of the of SBM system**

Finding showed that the thought of the importance of SBM system was supported by the school community members. Where they believe that the SBM system is useful and opened wide gate to participate in school decision making authority. These findings are consistent with Botha (2006) who has revealed that the leadership role of the school principal is widely regarded as the primary factor contributing to a successful relationship between SBM and school improvement. According to Bandur, (2008) In the final analysis, 99.2% of the respondents believed that SBM is the type of reform needed in enhancing student achievements, in particular and developing better quality schools in general.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This paper concluded in a model -as figure 1 below shows- that may assist the decision makers in the Ministry of Education by providing a new perspective about the implementation of SBM system. The recommended model contributes a new perspective for the implementation of SBM system by suggesting some recommendations for at the Ministry of Education, General Directorate, and schools, as following:



**Ministry of Education Role :**

1. Issuing a legislative framework .
2. Considering schools as an area for decentralization of decision making. Furthermore, empowering schools by giving opportunities to be involved in decision making through planning, supervision, and evaluation of educational programs.
3. Ministry of Education should make sure there is a firm commitment to SBM at the school levels from the outset.
4. Seek a qualified SBM consultants.
5. Instructions of the SBM system must be written in a simple way so that it can be understood by the school administration and school community. Explanation of the system can also be illustrated using a flow chart for easy reference.
6. This system should be revised from time to time because schools' demand are change.
7. It is recommended that financial allocation to schools should be increased to make their decisions independently in particular and implement SBM system in general. Therefore a school financing needs to be developed and evaluated in relation to the schools needs, in the manner of transparent, adequacy, efficiency, and equity.
8. Ministry of Education must provide schools with control over their budget.
9. Reward schools for performance.

**General Directorate Role:**

- 1- General Directorate must take on the role of trainer as well as motivator to ensure schools are able to comprehend and implement the system.
- 2- General Directorate officials must be supportive of SBM and ensure that communication channels will be kept open.
- 3- General Directorate must gather feedback from the schools and discuss it in the Ministry of Education meeting. because, the grievances and suggestions from the school level is important.
- 4- The principals should take a proactive role in identifying the shortcomings in communication and rectify them soonest possible.
- 5- Decisions made or reason for not accepting the schools' should be told to them by General Directorate to avoid feeling of frustration among the schools who wants their say in works related to them. In that way, implementation will become more effective because the schools feel that they were partly involved in making decisions and have higher sense of responsibility.
- 6- General Directorate should focus on developing and a plan for improving the implementation of SBM system.
- 7- General Directorate officials facilitates instead of controls schools' actions by defining the Ministry of Education policies and educational objectives.
- 8- General directorate officials also provide training, and create communication links between the Ministry of Education and schools.

**At schools level:**

- 1- To ensure SBM success, schools' principals and schools' community need to understand what SBM is and how it is implemented.
- 2- Each school's principal must understand his or her new roles, responsibilities, and accountability.



- 3- Establishing a school council which include representatives of school community ( principal, assistant principal, senior teachers and teachers), parents, and those with interests in education.
- 4- Establishing a school council must be depending on the school size, and the students numbers, and comprises of the principal and representatives of teachers, parents, local government, and local communities.
- 5- Schools must give the opportunity to select or to format a school council in a democratic manner.

**The recommended structure of the SBM system.**

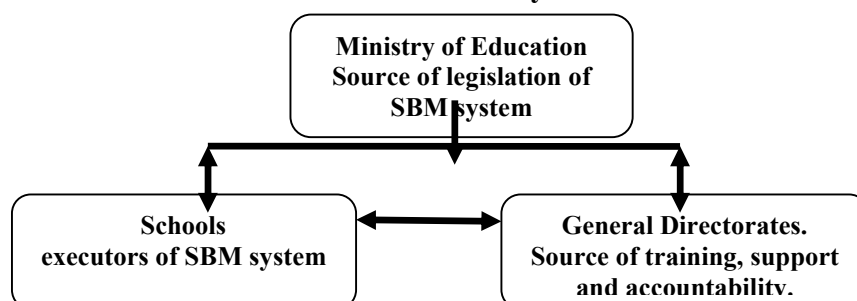


Figure 5.2. Recommended model of SBM system for school principal to practice their role in decision making

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