# Applying School-Based Management in UAE Governmental Schools

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# Abstract

This action research explores the ability of applying SBM in UAE governmental schools. The research also sought to identify the advantages and disadvantages of SBM when implemented in UAE context. A detailed study of the obtainable means of successful implementation, along with identifying the potential causes of failure to be avoided was offer throughout the literature review. The research collected data through questionnaires administered to parents, administrators, and teachers of model and governmental schools of Abu Dhabi main city. Results suggest acceptance from different parties involved in SBM implementation providing that (a) there would be several pre-implementation professional development courses for involved parents, administrators, and teachers participating in the new school governance system. In addition, (b) the implementation process to be segmented over several years under continuous supervision form the central office of the MOE/ ADEC in the preliminary phase of implementation.

# Dedication

To my learned and departed Mother and Father,

I owe it all to you.

# Acknowledgements

To my dear wife, Amani, for putting up with me all these months. Thanks for your love and understanding.

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## Executive Summary

"Anything that is wasted effort represents wasted time. The best management of our time thus becomes linked inseparably with the best utilization of our efforts". This statement by Ted W. Engstorm optimizes the significance of effective management in persuade of obtaining the desired outcomes in timely effective manner. Management systems in UAE are highly centralized through MOE, ADEC, and KHDA. The research offers a new approach in school governance to be implemented in UAE, which is SBM.

Literature on adequate manners of implementations has illustrated different forms of SBM. There are three forms of SBM that could be suitable for UAE, the principal's control, administrative (teachers) control, and parents-community members' control. Choice of appropriate form of SBM depends on the different conditions surrounding the school. Literature offers as well the different causes of failure when implementing SBM strategy. There are different factors that determine how successful the SBM implementation is, an active vision, meaningful decision-making authority, meaningful distribution of power, distributed leadership, cultivating resources, and collecting and communicating of information. The different causes of SBM failure could be summarized in the following points, resistance of administrators, teachers, parents, and central office personnel, the high workload of the involved personnel, stakeholders' role confusion, slower pace in decision-making than usual, the early public judgment, and the mistaken implementation intention of SBM as an end in itself, rather, SBM should be considered as a means of improving the overall performance of educational sector.

The findings of this research suggest that there is general acceptance from the different stakeholders on implementing SBM in UAE. Nonetheless, there should be intensive pre-implementation professional development offered for all stakeholders to avoid the potential causes of failure. Another suggestion is that the implementation should be segmented over several years and in multiple

phases. During the different phases, however, there should be continuous performance evaluation, policy modifications, and offered support from the central office to the concerned parties.

The research started with chapter one, which offers a general background of the research subject SBM, statement of the problem to be investigated, importance and contribution of the study, research design, sampling process, and analysis methodology. The second chapter represents an extensive literature review of the main concepts is. Definition of SBM, different forms of SBM, variety of leadership styles in relation to student achievement, and the different roles of stakeholders involved in the education process, characteristics of successful SBM, potential causes of failure, accountability, and school autonomy.

In the third chapter the details of the qualitative and quantitative methods used throughout the research are clarified, sampling process, and research design are presented. In the fourth chapter, the collected data and analysis through the parents, administrators, and teachers' questionnaires are presented, along with the interpretation of the analysis. In the final chapter, all findings and recommendations are discussed.

**Chapter 1**

**GENERAL BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

## 1.1  INTRODUCTION

For decades, it has always been the privilege of the Ministry of Education, MOE, in UAE to organize what occur in governmental schools. School boards currently have very limited say in the managerial decisions. School management boards are mainly represented by the principal, sometimes, accompanied by the vice principle. Other parties do not have a significant role in managing the school or suggesting any changes seeking improvement of the educational system. The principal plays the major role in governing the school.

> While bureaucratic and scientific management theories, top-down views of school leadership, dominated the education landscape during most of the 20th century, many now believe that the days of the principal as the lone leader of the school are over (Hart, 1995; Lambert, 2002).

Nonetheless, the principal's role is limited when it comes to major changes in school management. The general guidelines for governing a school have always been mandated by higher administration personnel represented in the Ministry of Education or Emirate level education council. The system is highly centralized and communication traffic mostly goes in the top-down direction.

One of the characteristics of the centralized education system, as in the case of UAE, is that it responds slowly to the changes needed to keep up with the societal needs. In the 21$^{st}$ century and with the current and needed shift in the Emirati society to change and be a more knowledge-based society, there is a definite need to have a more effective and further reciprocal system that would evolve and respond fast to the surrounding changes in society. Decentralization

of the educational system could be the needed transformation to enhance the Emirati educational system.

One model of educational decentralization is the School-Based Management (SBM), referred to as Site-Based Management sometimes, with the same abbreviation, SBM. The term School-based Management refers to "handing all the managerial tasks to the school-site management community". SBM is defined in many ways; nevertheless, still it refers to the same practice.

> Site-Based Management (SBM), also known as decentralization, is a process that gives decision-making power over educational programs to individual schools instead of district offices with the ultimate goal of improved student learning (Hansen 2005; Tanner and Stone 1998; Walker 2007). It is a concept that was introduced to education over two decades ago (Cromwell 2000).

School-Based Management is an approach that aims offer more power to the local school management teams whom are in direct contact with the field of education, teachers and their daily problems and issues, parents with their needs and expectations, and finally, in contact with students with their individual needs and interests.

> Educational writers also designate the school-based management concept by the terms decentralized management, shared decision making, school empowerment, shared governance, decentralized authority, school-site autonomy, school-based decision making, school-site management, responsible autonomy, the autonomous school concept, administrative decentralization, and school-based governance (Ceperley 1991; Cistone, Fernandez, and Tornillo 1989; Johnston and Germinario 1985; and Lewis 1989).

SBM, however, offers more freedom to the direct school board. Moreover, it broadens the management board to include all teachers, parents and in various cases, students.

> SBM is a reform movement that consists of allowing schools more autonomy in decisions about their management; that is, in the use of their human, material, and financial resources. Also referred to as school-based governance, school self-management, or school site management, this trend has become very popular over the past decade (Caldwell 2005).

Allowing school management team, principle, vice principle and all teachers, to be a part of decision-making might be healthy for the whole education system. UAE governmental schools have always been controlled by higher administration personnel through the MOE, the Education Zones or even the individual Emirate education councils, such as ADEC. Complete school management was never fully experienced in any of the schools; in contrary, it is experienced on a very limited scale such as a small budget to handle, or distributing of school duties.

The idea of having more than one leader is not novel; it rather goes back to decades. The most powerful members to be among the decision committee are teachers.

> Transformation of schools from traditionally non-democratic structures to modern democratic institutions presents a serious challenge to schools. It requires that teachers be empowered by increasing their decision-making powers at school level (Taylor, Thompson & Bogotch, 1995).

Empowering teachers would offer an opportunity to all the school community members to enhance their performance. Allowing teachers to be a part of decision-making would grant them a better feeling of satisfaction, which might reflect on their classroom performance. Better performance is expected if teachers attain satisfaction in their workplace through being less stressed and more motivated.

Teacher participation is a trend that is set to transform 'top-down' approaches, which reduced teachers to tools of implementing policies and decisions without making any meaningful contribution (Bezzina, 1997).

If SBM were to be applied, all school community members would get the opportunity to create, amend, and analyze the school educational policy. The current centralized system does not offer such an opportunity for school staff, it rather obliges members to follow and abide by the policy that is already in practice. Kumar & Scuderi (2000:1) pointed out that in many instances policymaking is considered as a privilege and jealously guarded by those in authority. Reimers (1997) argues that policies are conserved by a certain core of people and implemented in schools in a top-down manner. Frost, Durrant, Head & Holiday (2000) supported the same view where they indicated that recent top-down approaches have relegated teachers' roles in strategic planning and decision-making to the implementation of extremely driven initiatives.

The idea of School-based Management, SBM, however, is to maintain a new balance in decision making between the MOE / Education Councils and the local school management community.  "As noted earlier, states and districts adopting a decentralized style of governance expected that releasing schools from centralized control would enable them to make decisions that better serve the needs of their students" (Wohlstetter & Mohan, 1997)

Theoretically, the thought of implementing SBM should have an impact on students' achievement. Offering teachers to be a part of decision-making community should reflect on their classroom practices. Productivity level should go higher along with teachers' satisfaction of being an effective staff member. On the other hand, practically that is not yet proven "The empirical evidence supporting the claims of SBM to generate improvement has not been overwhelming" (Jenkins et al 1995). Measuring how successful implementing SBM is not quite easy for number of reasons.

While varied, the reasons for the lack of evidence include: a) difficulties in measuring change and outcomes associated with SBM; b) complexities in implementing a management model that requires significant efforts from teachers, principals, district personnel to alter work practices; and c) the challenge of working in an environment that is shaped by local, state and national politics. (Leithwood & Menzies 1998)

SBM is a new scheme to govern schools in the UAE; nevertheless, it is worth considering as it offers a different approach to governing each school unit as an independent unit, yet all units are connected through general guidelines through the central office. Furthermore, SBM represents a modified model of school governance that might aid in persuades to have healthier students' achievement.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Considering new forms of education management has become a recent need in the UAE. The current management system is not effective enough to engage all staff members involved in educational process, or to yield the required students' outcomes. Decentralization of the education system could be the modification required for the improvement need. The research explores the different approaches of decentralization, comments on the feedback of the stakeholders involved in the education process, principals, administrators, teachers, and parents.

The research problem is How would the education system in Abu Dhabi and UAE benefit if School-Based Management were applied? Furthermore, how could the SBM be governed and correctly implemented in UAE?

To investigate the above stated problem more effectively, the research was further broken down into a number of sublevel questions as follows:

1- What is the meaning of SBM? How can it be defined?

2- What are the presumed advantages and disadvantages of applying "School-based Management" in UAE schools?

3- What are the obtainable means to apply successful SBM? In addition, what are the potential causes of failure to be avoided?

4- How do the roles of different participants, principal, teachers, and parents, change when applying SBM in schools?

5- Does school management have a measurable role in students' outcomes?

This research will investigate and attempt to answer the above stated questions. In addition, the researcher will have a closer look at the roles of different stakeholders involved in the educational process, and try to determine reasons of failure to avoid along with means of success to adopt. This will lead to overall needs to assess of the educational sector for the proper implementation of the SBM in Abu Dhabi, and then to be extended to all UAE governmental schools.

## 1.3  Motivation of the Study

## 1.3.1  Importance of the study

As long as there is an educational system, there is always a need to improve that system along with its outcomes. Student achievement, among other factors, is one major component as well as a measure of how effective the system is.

> School improvement and school effectiveness have become a major concern of education authorities, policy makers, administrators, and teachers seeking to reform existing education systems. In many education systems, there has emerged recognition that school-based decision-

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making and management has potential to bring improvement in the quality of education. (Deller 1995)

An approach that is new to the country's system is worth considering and studying if it proves to be a success in other parts of the world. Recently in UAE, however, several educational systems have been introduced and are applied at present. Schools that apply these systems such as Schools of the Future, "Madares Al Ghad", abbreviated as MAG schools, and Public Private Partnership Schools, abbreviated as PPP schools, along with other school improvement programs have been introduced to the Emirati educational system and students are already showing better achievement than the public school system. SBM might be a new restructuring scheme for educational system in the region, yet it is adopted, and has shown success in other parts of the world. The concept of shared leadership offers more participation to staff members and allows healthy feedback from other stakeholders such as community members and parents that might be in favor of improving the educational system.

Education systems in Australia, New Zealand, Western Europe, and the United States have undergone restructuring to establish "self-managing", "self-governing" or "self-determining schools". In Western Australia, such restructuring has been undertaken using corporate managerialism (Hyslop, 1988).

The educational system in UAE is young and capable of adapting to new theories, especially the theories that have proved successful elsewhere. This investigation introduces a plan to implement SBM in local schools, which may lead to an improvement in the overall satisfaction of teachers, leading to better classroom practices. Moreover, the SBM concept could be considered as a means leads to better students' achievement and consequently, more parent satisfaction and involvement in students' learning process might be gained through the process of implementation.

Comparing the advantages versus the disadvantages of decentralization might offer a better examination of the problem. Advantages could be summed as having the management board on site; decisions that are more proper to the day to day needs, teachers' satisfaction, classroom practices improvement, and above all, students' outcomes could all be improved through SBM. On the other hand, disadvantages are inappropriate usage of the power given to principals, inappropriate allocation of budget money, slow responses to the stakeholders' demands, and slower pace of decision-making process.

### 1.3.2  Contribution of the study

The research provides valuable information for both practitioners in education as well as researchers through the following:

➢ The study Introduces SBM as a means to enhance the Emirati education system, along with appropriate ways of implementation, and different causes of failure to avoid while implementing.

➢ The study attempts to offer clear understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of SBM in the local Emirati context.

➢ The study Introduces the point of view of parents, teachers, and administrators about the education system, and their suggestions of possible ways of improvement through implementing SBM. In addition, how the roles of each stakeholder changes with SBM model.

➢ The study attempts to examine the relationship, if any, between administration style and students' attainment.

The research also provides a foundation for the researchers whom might be interested in conducting further investigation in the School-Based Management in UAE or in the region, or in Education Management in general.

### 1.3.3  Limitations of the study

McMillan & Schumacher (1993:23) state that knowledge acquired through research is limited by the nature of educational practice and research, methodological limitations and the complexity of educational practices.

The following limitations are likely to be encountered in research:

- ➢ The findings may be influenced by the researcher's subjectivity,

- ➢ Participants of the questionnaire sample may, for one reason or another, withhold information from the researcher,

- ➢ The researcher works with data collected through anonymous questionnaires, and consequently the researcher may suggest generalizations that are non-existent when commenting on the collected data, and

To avoid these shortcomings, the researcher

- ➢ Cited literature wherever possible to support the analysis of data collected,

- ➢ Assured the privacy and the anonymity of the questionnaires sent out through a cover-letter with every questionnaire so that participants would give their opinion freely,

- ➢ Avoided false links where none was presented through the collected data, and

- ➢ Set the largest part of the research time to analyze and study the feedback collected from the questionnaires.

## 1.4  Aim of the research

### 1.4.1  Research Aim

The research aim was to investigate the significance of SBM, and the effects it has when implemented on different components on the education process.

### 1.4.2  Research Objectives

Objectives of the research could be stated as follow:

➢ To differentiate between the current management system and the SBM system when implemented,

➢ To create and establish a complete policy for implementing and maintaining SBM in UAE schools,

➢ To explore the different opinions of stakeholders about both current and SBM education management systems,

➢ To establish the role of teachers and parents in the formulation of new policies and decision-making process, and

➢ To explore the relationship between students' achievement and the management style implemented.

## 1.5  Concept Analysis

### 1.5.1  School-Based Management

School-Based management is a means of decentralizing decision making from the hands of the MOE/ ADEC (Abu Dhabi Education Council) to the local school authority. Each school has a set of needs and aims to be achieved; granting more individuality to school boards would enable each school to act as a separate unit with aims and goals to achieve according to their individual conditions.

Serving the shared set of District/ Emirate objective all schools' local management teams should focus on reaching the general objectives. Nonetheless, each management board should find the best available way to do so. Allowing more autonomy to local school boards, including principals, teachers, parents, community members, and students, would create more enhanced ways in achieving the shared objectives of the system.

School-Based management is defined differently by various scholars, but usually includes these three components;

- First, there is a delegation of authority to individual schools to make decisions about the educational programs of the school. This can include personnel, finance and /or budget, and curriculum.
- Second, there is an adoption of a shared decision making model at the school level by a management team that should include the principal, teachers, parents, community members, and sometimes students.
- Third, there is facilitative leadership at the school level to ensure follow-through of decisions. (Mruphy, 1991, Hodder, 1994)

## 1.5.2  Leadership

Leadership in an organization is the key factor for success. The leader inspires all the working staff to follow and share the leader's vision of getting the organization's goal accomplished.

Leadership is defined in so many ways, yet the ultimate meaning of leadership remains broadly the same. "Leader – a person who rules or guides or inspires others" (wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

"No organization can rise above the quality of its leadership" (Cox, 1992). Leadership defines the quality of the educational organization, as well; it affects the overall achievement of students and teachers' performance. "Effective education leadership makes a difference in improving learning.

There's nothing new or especially controversial about that idea" (Leithwood et al, 2004)

## 1.6 Research Methodology and Design

### 1.6.1  Research method

Mouton (1996:35) defines research method as the total set of means that researchers employ in their goal of valid knowledge. On the other hand, Cohen & Manion (1994:34), asserted that research method refers to a range of approaches used in educational research to gather data that are to be used as a basis for interference and interpretation for explanation and prediction.

According to Henning (2004:36) "methodology" refers to the coherent group of methods that complement one another to deliver data and findings that reflect the research question and suit the research purpose.

**A quantitative approach**

The researcher used the quantitative approach in the research to analyze and comment on data. Data was collected through questionnaires administered on different groups concerned by the welfare of the education process. Principals, teachers of different subject matters, and parents were asked about their opinion regarding the current in opposition to the proposed management changes feedback.

### 1.6.1.1  Quantitative approach

Cresswell (1994) identifies the following underlying assumptions about the quantitative paradigm:

- The researcher is independent and removed from the phenomena being studied;

- The researcher maximizes the distance between himself and the phenomena being studied;

- The researcher's values are kept out of the study;

- The language used is impersonal and formal; and

- It used deductive reasoning instead of inductive reasoning to reach conclusion about the research problem.

A quantitative method was used to analyze data that were collected through different questionnaires administered for parents; teachers; and principals working for ADEC and located in Abu Dhabi main city.

## 1.6.1.2 Qualitative approach

Strauss & Corbin (1990:19) define qualitative research as any kind of research that produces findings that is not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

Ary et al (1990:445) assert that the qualitative method needs to understand human and social behavior from the "insider's" perspective, that is, as it is lived by participants in a particular social setting, for instance, school, community or group. According to Ary et al (1990) the ultimate goal of qualitative method is to "portray the complex pattern of what is being studied in sufficient detail so that the one who has not experienced it can understand it." (Page 445)

McMillan & Schumacker (1993:14) identify the following assumptions about the qualitative paradigm:

> ➢ Reality is constructed through an individual's definition of the situation,

> ➢ It seeks to understand social phenomena through participants' perspective,

> ➢ There is greater flexibility in methods and research process than in quantitative approaches.

## 1.6.2  Research design

### 1.6.2.1  Definition

Mouton (1996:107) asserts that a research design is a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. Huyasamen (1994:20) defines research design as the plan or blueprint, which specifies how research participants are going to be obtained, and what is going to be done to them with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. McMillan & Schumacher (1993:31) describe research design as an investigation, which is used to provide answers to research questions. The research design should give an overview of how the research is conducted, how data are collected. Moreover, the design should show how the data were analyzed and presented to the reader to be able to benefit from the research in the real field of education. "The research design enables the reader to follow and evaluate the researcher's line of reasoning." (Strauss and Myburgh 2000)

The design for the investigation is illustrated in the following section.

### 1.6.2.2  Literature review

An extensive exploration of literature review was done to obtain a sufficient background for the purpose of the study. Literature review covered different definitions of SBM, historical approach on advantages and disadvantages of implementing decentralization. Leadership styles are investigated extensively to offer a choice of different styles used in other education systems, and the best style to be applied along with SBM.

The relationship between leadership and student achievement is investigated as well to show the advantages – from students' perspective when applying a successful management style.

### 1.6.2.3    Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a group of individuals from a larger group that is known as a population (McMillan & Schumacher 1993). Different schools under ADEC administration were selected for the data collection.

Model Schools are those in which all of the students are UAE nationals and the medium of teaching is English language, there are 7 cycle 1, and 4 cycle 2 model schools in Abu Dhabi main city. In Governmental schools students are a mixture of all Arab nationalities including UAE students, and the medium of teaching is Arabic language. There are 22 kindergartens, 41 cycle 1 schools, 46 cycle 2 schools, and 31 cycle 3 schools in Abu Dhabi main city.

The parents' sample, on the other hand, represent a group of grade 3, 4 and 5 students' parents in one of the model schools in Abu Dhabi  main city, all parents are UAE nationals. Schools' principals and vice-principals are all UAE nationals.

### 1.6.2.4    Research population

The research population was made up of twenty-three schools (Model and Governmental) at the Abu Dhabi main city, Abu Dhabi Emirate.

### 1.6.2.5    Data collection and analysis

Data was collected through questionnaires administered randomly at schools in Abu Dhabi city. Data analysis began after all the questionnaires were collected from different categories.

Teachers and principals were randomly selected from the twenty-three schools; parents selected were of only UAE nationals because eventually they will have a higher impact in the decision making process.

## 1.7 Program of the study

The program of the study is as follows:

The first chapter offers a general background of the research subject SBM, statement of the problem to be investigated, research design, sampling process, and analysis methodology. The second chapter represents an extensive literature review of the main concepts is done. SBM, variety of leadership styles, and student achievement, and the different roles of stakeholders involved in the education process. In the third chapter the details of the qualitative and quantitative methods used throughout the research are clarified, sampling process, and research design are presented. In the fourth chapter, the collected data and analysis are presented, along with the interpretation of the analysis. In the final chapter, all findings and recommendations are discussed.

## 1.8 Summary

Chapter 1 offers a brief background of the research issue. School-Based Management in history; and whether to apply that concept in UAE schools is the main research problem. A brief summary of the data collection and analysis process was given along with basic definitions of SBM, leadership, and student achievement. Chapter 2 would cover in details a more extensive literature review on SBM, different leadership styles and the relationship between leadership and student achievement.

# CHAPTER 2

# SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT IN UAE SCHOOLS

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The term School-Based management is widely used, and mainly refers to handing all the management issues to the local school boards.

> Site-based management, which is often referred to as public school-based management, is a widespread restructuring of the organizational level of the public school that involves decentralizing decision making to individual public schools and sharing decision making with a variety of groups (teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, etc.) within each public school structure (Kemper & Teddlies, 2002).

Changing the system from the regular centralized system, in which the controlling authority comes from the Ministry Of Education or the local education councils ADEC/KHDA, Knowledge and Human Development Authority, into a decentralized system that depends on each school, as a separate unit of management, is not easy. The reform process should include many changes, restructuring the school's management system, inviting teachers to participate in decision making, allowing parents to be actively involved in decisions that concern the education of their children, furthermore, investing in staff's (teachers, administrators) professional development; are all area to be reformed along with the process.

The research at hand suggests considering SBM implementation in UAE public schooling system. Taking into consideration the current centralized system of management throughout the country, the suggested change to decentralized system should be segmented into multiple phases. An immediate change would not be in the very best of the system's favor; instead, the first phase could be to

hand in the day-to-day management into the local schools' board along with budgeting and staff's professional development needs. On the other hand, human resources, curricular issues, and general policies are to be guided through the central office. Creating a general framework for schools to follow would unify the ultimate goals of the country, meanwhile; allow more freedom to local school boards to manage the achievement process in the best available means that would allow better achievement.

## 2.2 Forms of SBM

According to Wohlstetter et al, (2002), SBM could be applied through different models; three of these models are represented in the following section. Choosing the form of SBM that would obtain the optimal outcome is to be decided on individual cases depending on the school conditions. There are number of factors to determine which type of SBM to be applied. In case parents and community members are willing to take part of the education process, community control would be better to end up with the expected achievement. On the other hand, schools that are located in urban areas where not many parents or community members are willing to be an effective part of the decision making process; the principal control or the teachers' control would represent a better choice.

## 2.2.1 Principal control

The first form of SBM represents the 'sole leader' model; in which the principal would be responsible for taking all the critical decisions about the school, additionally, for all the decisions to be taken by the principal who would be held accountable for the consequences of such decisions before the central office.

"One approach is principal control, where the school principal is empowered to make decisions and is held accountable for results." (Wohlstetter et al, 2002)

However, in the sole leader's model parents and teachers are not held accountable for the consequences of the decisions taken, furthermore, they may

not be consulted at all when preparing for major decisions. Their role in that model of SBM is merely advisory. "Parents and teachers may serve in an advisory capacity to the principal and a site council may or may not exist." (Wohlstetter et al, 2002)

Although the principal control model represents the dream of every principal of having a total control and authority over the school management, it would not be adopted by many principals in UAE governmental schools. Many of the principals lack managerial level experience; furthermore, they hardly acquire any managerial professional development training courses. Alternatively, the part of holding them accountable for any consequences of the decisions they choose to apply would intimidate them from taking any decision and make them think more than once about taking any crucial decision.

## 2.2.2 Administrative decentralization (Teachers' control)

The second model of SBM is the administrative decentralization, in which the control is completely shifted to teachers. Classroom teaching is the most significant phase of the educational process; consequently, teachers would know the most appropriate means to improve the end product of the schooling system, which is the student. "….administrative decentralization or teacher control, where power is shifted down the professional hierarchy to teachers." (Wohlstetter et al, 2002)

 In administrative decentralization model, however, a committee of elected teachers would meet regularly and discuss school management issues to end up with decisions to be applied to improve the school's system. Principal, parents, and other community members would be present in the council, but to serve as advisory committee only.

> A group of teachers usually is elected by the faculty to a site council that serves as the school's policymaking body. Parents and administrators also serve on the council. (Wohlstetter et al, 2002)

When considering the application of SBM in UAE, many teachers are experienced enough to take part of that type of commitment. Additionally, it is much healthier that the decision comes from a group of thinkers rather than one person as in the previous principal's model.

## 2.2.3 Community control

The last model of SBM is when parents and community members take control. Depending on the individual conditions of the area where the school is located, and if there are parents and community members who are interested enough in the education improvement; the community control might be implemented. In that case, all the power and accountability are shifted to the committees of parents and community members who in turn meet regularly to discuss and make decisions about the progress of the improving process. "…. Power and accountability shift to parents and community members under community control." (Wohlstetter et al, 2002).

Teachers and administrators would serve in advisory capacity only. Decisions are taken by the parents and community members, education professionals would merely comment and aid in advising and offer field experience for the committees to enhance their decisions and make those decisions more applicable.

It never was easy for teachers and administrators to hand in all the decisions related to education within their schools to parents and community members. Nevertheless, there is a rational behind the approach, which is parents, represent the group of people whom know the most about their children's benefit, and would be most appropriate group to take the right decisions concerning their children's education. On the other hand, community members represent the connection to the society, in a fast changing community, as with the case of UAE, there must be a permanent connection between the schools and the surrounding society. Schools must be able to serve and meet the ever changing demands of

the local market, and present the kind of graduate who can serve and benefit when join the workforce after graduation.

> The rationale behind this approach is that these groups are the chief consumers of education: parents care most about what happens to their children… (Wohlstetter et al, 2002).

## 2.3 Characteristics of successful SBM

As mentioned earlier, the governmental schools of UAE have been following a centralized system of management for decades. Principals experience limited authority over the different administrative affairs, while main decisions are negotiated and issued in the central management office represented in MOE, ADEC or KHDA. SBM would offer the working staff, principal, and teachers, along with parents, students, and community members more freedom to deal with issues that rise in each local campus with more efficiency. Slow reactions are always experienced by all members involved in the education process. Teachers would report to the principal problems they experience while performing their job, principals have to report whatever issues, or problems rise in campus to the central office waiting for a suitable decision to be taken. Parents, on the other hand, have no authority at all in suggesting changes of how their children should be educated. Some decisions need to be dealt with on the spot, so management that is more effective could be obtained through the successful implementation of SBM where the principal, teachers, parents, and students take part of the decision-making process.

Applying SBM in UAE public schools, however, should take place with limitations due to the expected shift from the completely centralized to the decentralized management system. A general frame work and national or Emirate main objectives should be generalized on schools to follow; furthermore, choice of curricula should be national/ Emirate wise. Schools would not be expected to

have the adequate capacity to perform those duties, although in a later stage schools should be able to perform all related duties.

According to Briggs & Wohlstetter, (2003) there are eight key elements to be considered while planning to apply a successful SBM program. The following section would discuss each of the eight key elements according to the local context of UAE public schooling system.

## 2.3.1 An Active Vision

One of the main key elements of having a SBM system that works successfully is for the school to have a vision. The vision should be closely related to the main objectives of the Emirate and national broad objectives, yet it has to meet with the students' needs, and abilities of the school. The vision should be "living" or it should suit the learning and teaching process in school. A vital part of adopting a living vision is that it could change at any time to suit the new conditions, if any, and evolve with the current modifications taking place within the school campus as well as outside it.

> Successful SBM schools have an active, living vision focused on teaching and learning that is coordinated with district and state standards for student performance (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

One of the important characteristics of the education system is to be reciprocal; the system should be a part of the surrounding community and reacts with the current changes happening outside the school's fence. Metaphorically, the fence should not exist.

## 2.3.2 Meaningful Decision-Making Authority

Authority in SBM should be experienced with a high level of freedom, controlling the budget is one essential means of achieving the level of success represented in school's vision and complying with the Emirate and national set of objectives. "This authority to allocate funds that support school decisions and initiatives is a

key element in instituting change." (Odden & Busch, 1998 cited in Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003) However, in the case of the public schooling system of UAE, human resources and curriculum are not an easy task to be done due to lack of specialized personnel in either area.

> Successful SBM schools have decision-making authority in the areas of budget, curriculum, and personnel, and they use that authority to create meaningful change in teaching and learning (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

One suggestion for the hiring process is to have a representative, or a committee, representing the school that is aware of the actual needs of the school among the main recruiting committee of the MOE or ADEC. The local school committee would direct the hiring process in favor of the school needs and facilitate the procedures to reach the assigned goals.

### 2.3.3 The Distribution of Power

Power in school is an area of conflict in most cases, to have a successful SBM program; however, the power should go beyond a single person such as the principal; or even a single council or committee of teachers or parents. Power should be evenly distributed throughout the school reaching all concerned parties, teachers, parents, and students.

> Successful SBM schools disperse power broadly throughout the school organization by creating networks of decision-making teams (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

There should be different committees specialized in professional development of teachers, emphasize the use of technology in classroom, develop productive rapport with parents, and spot to help students with learning difficulties. All teachers and volunteered parents should be able to have their voice heard in the school.

## 2.3.4 The Development and Use of Knowledge and Skills

Professional development programs should not be only designed for teachers, parents and community members who volunteer to participate in school management should attend specially designed programs for them to know how best to benefit the educational system.

> In successful SBM schools, the development of knowledge and skills is an ongoing process oriented toward building a school-wide capacity for change, creating a professional learning community, and developing a shared knowledge base (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

Aligning with the school's vision and mission; as well with the Emirate goals to be achieved, professional development should directly focus on raising students' level through ongoing changes in order to reach knowledge-based community. The process of improvement, nonetheless, should not reach a point at which it stops; the improving process should be ongoing at all times for further improvements.

## 2.3.5 Collecting and Communicating Information

Reaching the school's objectives that are clearly stated in the school's vision can only be achieved through gathering information about the teachers' and students' performance, and consequently, the collected data should be made available to all stakeholders as a ground to construct the suitable policies for future improvements.

> Successful SBM schools have multiple mechanisms for collecting information related to school priorities; and for communication information to all school stakeholders (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

Information could be collected through analyzing exams, different level classroom observation, teachers' reports, and suggestions from teachers on students' performance as collective observation or on individual student level.

## 2.3.6 Rewards for Progress

Implementing SBM is not an easy task for both teachers and administrators. Extra work is needed in classroom or in the administrative areas, teachers would need to write many reports and act as members in more than one board sometimes. Rewarding the successful personnel in monetary, or non-monetary, rewards would make up the extra workload done by school's personnel, the rewarding system should be offered to individuals or groups who can achieve the assigned goals of enhancing the school's performance.

> Successful SBM schools use both monetary and non-monetary rewards to acknowledge individual and group progress toward school goals (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

Undoubtedly, one main reward for the working staff is to have the assigned goals achieved, and experience the change in students' level and parents' satisfaction; yet the other monetary and non-monetary rewards offer additional feeling of satisfaction and motivate the workforce to offer supplementary needed efforts needed for further improvement.

## 2.3.7 Shared Leadership

Organizing the work would turn into further enhanced results. Leadership throughout the school should be shared between teachers and administrators; principal would act as a facilitator and enable the final decisions to be applied on ground from financial and administrative perspectives, while teachers along with lead-teachers would know better about the issues of teaching and learning process and ways for further classroom practices improvements.

> In successful SBM schools, school leadership is shared among administrators and teachers. Principals often take on the role of manager and facilitator of change, while teacher leaders often take on

responsibilities around issues of teaching and learning (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

Adopting the perception of shared leadership is never an easy task; it requires many committees to work and meet to discuss and then create a list of suggestions to be applied. The school principal, however, would act as a member of the group, and eventually approve the suggestions to be applied. The overall result is participation and involvement on all levels, and gained system improvement at the end of the process.

## 2.3.8 Cultivating Resources

UAE government has offered many resources to schools, such as monetary and non-monetary resources; yet, the schools can obtain extra resources through the local business communities. Having sponsored sports events, social events, open days, and other activities could represent an extra monetary and service resource, enriching the school's library through publishers is another non-monetary source for the school. Parents could be a great source of help when it comes to reaching the local business community with all the potential to improve the educational process and a vital connection with the local community surrounding the school.

> Successful SBM schools cultivate resources from outside the school through involvement in professional networks and through entrepreneurial activity in the local business community (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003).

## 2.4 Causes of SBM failure

## 2.4.1 Resistance

One major challenge that might face implementation of SBM is the resistance of change. Resistance occurs on all levels and, if extends to excessive limit, could consequence in SBM total failure. Resistance might be experienced on different levels; from teachers who are not willing to put more effort on their workload, to

parents who are not enthusiastic about interrupting their daily routine and be an active part of improvement process, additionally, administrative staff who are worried lose their power to other committees in school. (Gips and Wilkes, (1993) cited in) asserted, "Decentralizing schools to a site-based model will not happen without resistance" (p. 1).

On the other hand, Brown, 1990, cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001; concurred:

> The range of courses of opposition spans board members, central office personnel who may encounter loss of control of some functions, principals who do not welcome decentralization sometimes because of small school size, teacher associations who may lose control of some functions, staff unions who may be concerned with job security and due process, and individual parents who may not accept the change (p. 215).

To avoid, or at least reduce, the community, parents', teachers', and administrators' resistance, however, a preparation sessions or programs should be arranged in advance to arrange and clarify the differences between centralized and decentralized models, and to illustrate the various benefits of the decentralization process ahead.

### 2.4.1.1 School boards resistance

Analysts have suggested that school boards often find site-based decision-making committees to be a threat to their own power (Guthrie, 1986 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001). School boards practice power over the campus issues, whenever there is a suggestion of withdrawing that power and handing it to other parties, with the school board members acting as any other member of the committees, a hard resistance is expected.   Therefore, "doubt exists about whether school boards will be willing to delegate their decision-making ability to the degree site-based management requires." (Lindquist & Mauriel, 1989 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001). Lindquist and Mauriel (1989) did point out that literature

does exist which makes evident the resistance of site-based management by school boards.

### 2.4.1.2 Central office resistance

Power conflict reaches its highest level in central office; administrators of high power are not agreeable to drop all or part of their control over school administrators, consequently, they would tend to counter the decentralization process. "Because central office employees are well aware of this possibility, they tend to be the most active groups opposing the implementation of site-based management." (Brown, 1990 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001).

As mentioned earlier, all involved parties should be willing and prepared to share a division of their power for the greater benefit of the Emirati educational system. Results found by researchers, who have conducted a number of studies, have shown the desire of central office administrators to block site-based decision-making (Brown, 1990; Smith, 1993 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001).

### 2.4.2 The workload

All stakeholders are already loaded with work, teaching, and extended school timings. Implementing SBM would require even more efforts to make it happen and get the education system to benefit from it. New committees are to be formed, and more meetings and discussions are to be expected from the stakeholders. "… all stakeholders must contend with a heavier workload and the frustrations that accompany a slower group process (Liontos, 1994 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001).

Liontos (1994), noted that increased time demands placed on stakeholders might be the greatest barrier to the implementation and maintenance of site-based decision-making. The implementation of site-based management requires that teachers extend themselves beyond their traditionally isolated environment to

engage other teachers, negotiate, resolve differences, and make informed decisions (Weiss, Cambone, & Wyeth, 1992 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001).

### 2.4.3 Stakeholders' role confusion

Implementing SBM is not an easy task to be performed; stakeholders need to have guidelines about what is expected from them to perform, especially during the initial stage of implementation. "…. confusion may be created about the roles and responsibilities of teachers, administrators, parents, and students (White, 1989 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001). Principals, for instance, should be able to decide when to consult a committee regarding any issue, and when to take the decision on their own; which applies for all stakeholders, they all need clear guidelines, stating what is expected from them to perform their tasks in ways that benefit the education system.

Volunteered parents, however, would represent a challenge to the SBM plan; it is not so effortless to find parents who are ready for a commitment of being a committee member for at least one year long. Finding the parents who would like to be elected is a challenge, and convincing other parents to vote for the most suitable parents to be elected is another challenge as well. (David 1994, cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001) reported that during the initial stages of school reform in Kentucky to site-based management, schools found it difficult to find parents who were willing to run for election to the site-based committee due to parental apathy that had persisted for so long. She stated that a commitment on the part of the teachers, staff, and administrators to recruit parents was essential to successful restructuring in Kentucky.

Wohlstetter et al (1997) asserted:

> Successful SBM required changing roles of the central office personnel as well. Where SBM worked and schools were using their power to improve teaching and learning, central offices had become more service oriented and less mandated minded. (Page 8)

To implement SBM successfully, the involved parties need to accept the redistribution of power associated with the new governance plan. A general framework along with the broad objectives that serve on national or Emirate level would be planned in central office, yet rest of the management tasks would be relocated in favor of on-campus management teams. Subsequently, central office would better serve the on-campus governance team rather than mandate them.

### 2.4.4 Slower pace

Naturally, stakeholders would be involved in series of meetings and discussions to be able to generate the correct decisions in favor of the education process improvement. Concerned parties, stakeholders, public, policy makers, should be prepared to be faced with a slower pace than usual especially in the early stages of implementation. "Site-based management can also bring about frustration due to slower paced procedures than traditional models of school governance (Myers & Stonehill, 1993 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001). Myers and Stonehill (1993 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001), also pointed out that "those site-based committee members must be able to work together to plan; hence this takes time away from other aspects of their jobs.

Another issue to be considered when implementing SBM, is the training needed by committee members. Principals and teachers need to be knowledgeable about the different aspect that would face them as budgeting, running effective meetings, and time management. Being a member of a committee or different committees makes it hard for teachers to perform their newly assigned tasks and carry out with their jobs, they must be well trained to manage their time and perform well in all tasks.


### 2.4.5 The public judgment

A general trend in UAE, as in many other parts of the world, public tend to judge the newly established programs, there should be more criteria to focus on when judging a program than the test scores. Public should be aware that the desired

results need time to be established and results to be gained. "Another challenge faced by site-based management is the public. Concern exists that the public will make premature judgments regarding the goals set by the committee. Many stakeholders outside the school judge the success of reform by test scores. (Rodriguez & Slate 2001)

There is more than one desired outcome to be achieved through the implementation of SBM; raising the students' achievement, involving parents and community members, create the right committees, and meet the assigned goals. All stakeholders should have clear guidelines about their role and ways to best achieve the desired outcome. The process, however, should not be evaluated in mid-stream, and enough time should be given to the different stakeholders to perform their tasks. David (Dec. 1995/Jan. 1996 cited in state 2) stated that when more than one desired outcome exists and the processes to meet those outcomes are not clear, it is difficult to assess progress in mid-stream. Therefore, developing new ways of measuring progress during the implementation of site-based management is critically important (Bryk, Deabster, Easton, Lupescu, & Thum, 1994 cited in Rodriguez & Slate 2001).


### 2.4.6 Implementation intention

One last major challenge that would lead to failure of the implemented SBM program is the implementation intention; SBM should be implemented as a means of improving the students' achievement through modifying the school's governance strategies, and not as an end in itself.

> SBM is not an end in itself; not a short-term solution; not decentralization. Rather, SBM is a means of altering the capacity of the school and community to make improvements; it is something that will require training, support and other aspects of capacity-building over a period of time; and it is local improvement in the context of natural goals and accountability." (Fullan & Watson, 1999) ref 08-99.pdf

In addition, SBM governance model should be linked to teaching and learning process in classrooms; there is no point of adopting a different management style and apply it with all the duties related to it and not have an eco for that strategy in classrooms, which in turn should be seen as an improved students' achievement.

> SBM has failed to live up to its promise because as a general strategy, SBM fails to specify and otherwise is unlikely 'to trigger changes in the chain of variables linking [SBM] to student learning' (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998:340 cited in Fullan & Watson, 1999)

The ultimate goal of implementing SBM is to enhance the performance of the whole education system. Raising the students' achievement, developing classroom practices, and inviting feedback from parents are all major component of the perfection plan. For the school to have complete governance from within is only a means to improve the above listed components, and should not be considered as an end in itself.

## 2.5 Leadership

### 2.5.1 Ideal leadership style in governmental schools

When ADEC was first established, the administration style was meant to be distributed leadership. Higher administration, area managers, cluster managers, principals and vice principals should all share in decision-making process.

Committees of different levels should meet on regular basis to discuss issues that are of concern for the education process. Communication Traffic should go both ways, up and down, principals would report issues rising from the field to the cluster managers, and all the way up to the area managers, and later to be discussed and decided about as a policy agenda for the whole system.

The ideal leader within the ADEC system should be able to perform the following tasks, in order to be an effective leadership member.

### 2.5.1.1 Create and sustain a competitive school

Direct leadership in contact with the field, principal and cluster manager, should maintain a school system that is competitive and set pattern for other staff members to do the same. The system should be flexible to absorb any reaction for a policy to be implemented, either within the school staff or from the stakeholders' side.

### 2.5.1.2 Empower others to make significant decisions

A leader should set example for the others to take risk and be able to make a decision. Decisions of different levels are to be taken in everyday work life. Head of departments and teachers are expected to take effective decisions even within their classrooms. Those decisions affect their work and students in a way that is expected to be positive. The leader should inspire those staff members to be effective decision makers at all times.

### 2.5.1.3 Provide instructional guidance

Leaders should be able to offer instructional guidance. The most effective way to offer learning is by demonstrating that value. The principal should pay visits to classrooms, and when required, some teaching classes to be taught by the principal.

Job description of the principal goes beyond taking management decisions; the role extends to help teachers enhance their performance, head of department to carry out their duties in a more valuable way, furthermore, helping students discover their points of strengths and weaknesses are all tasks to be demonstrated by the leader of the institution.

### 2.5.1.4 Develop and implement strategic school improvement plans

School improvement never gets to an end. To maintain an effective schooling system, a process of continuous improvement should be on at all times. The education system should be reciprocal, in other words, the system should

respond to the changes taking place in the surrounding community. The system can never reach a state of satisfaction, but rather seek improvement on all levels.

Higher administration must be aware of the changes in labor market, track the latest technologies available in the field, track and apply the findings of the field research done in the UAE, and even encourage and value those researches.

One point that is taken against the education system of the public schools is that they do not release information about the system easily, or may be never. Field research ought to be allowed and encouraged to find the problems with the system and offer recommendations to restore it on track of the original plan.

### 2.5.2 The existent leadership style in governmental schools

Whilst the leadership style within ADEC system is supposed to be distributed leadership, the actual style is authoritarian, or autocratic, leadership. Decisions come from the higher administration, and the direct leadership in schools has no authority to oppose those decisions. Furthermore, feedback from leaders who are in direct contact with the field is not sought for when planning for changes or decisions.

Distributed leadership is a perception that there is no sole leader for the organization. The decision is generated from more than one person that is to be the principal, vice principal, administrators, as well as head teachers. Applying that concept to the whole system in ADEC, however, would produce a rather large circle of involved personnel who are concerned in decision-making process.

The aspect of distributed leadership that has garnered most attention is the recognition that school leadership involves multiple leaders, both administrators and teacher leaders (Spillane, 2001).

The concept of distributed leadership refers to a model that distributes leadership responsibilities and activities widely across multiple roles and

participants (Hart, 1995; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Gronn, 2000; Spillane et al., 2001; Wallace, 2002).

For every style of leadership, there is a set of assumptions.  According to Lambert (2003), shared leadership is based on the following assumptions:

• *Everyone has the right, responsibility, and ability to be a leader. (Lambert, 2003, pp. 38-39)*

Each one of the involved staff members mentioned above has the right to be a leader. If every staff member takes the responsibility and acts as a leader, plans would run smoothly, and goals would be easily achievable.

• *How leadership is defined influences how people will participate* (Lambert, 2003, *pp. 38-39)*

What style of leadership is really in action within the system? Does the staff member get to participate in decision-making process? So many questions are asked, and the answer defines the leadership style within the organization.

Within ADEC systems, nevertheless, the style is defined as distributed leadership. Yet, are principals or teachers consulted for decisions related to their work? The answer to that question is no. The style is really defined through practices within the organization, and in ADEC case, it is, regretfully, autocratic style. Decisions come from higher administration and it is obligatory to be implemented, moreover, field feedback is not taken into consideration for future improvement, or decision-making means.

• *Educators yearn to be more fully who they are—purposeful, professional human beings.* (Lambert, 2003, *pp. 38-39)*

Educators, at all levels, have desires and needs. To work in the education field is not just to follow orders and deliver information to students, but rather,

ascertain a purpose of what the person does. Educators need to feel as purposeful, moreover, professional in their work field. Having a role in the organization's leadership furnishes a sense of belonging and professionalism and motivates educators to offer more in their work life.

• *Leadership is an essential aspect of an educator's professional life.* (Lambert, 2003, *pp. 38-39)*

There is more in the educator's life than teaching; leadership adds the essence of professionalism to the educator's life. Principals, teachers, and administrators are all involved with the new generations' upbringing, it makes a difference in their performance if they carry out their jobs in a pleasant way and feel belonging in their organization.

Being responsible for the learning of colleagues is at the center of shared leadership (Lambert, 2003). Further, asserts Lambert, by understanding that learning and leading are firmly linked within the school community, principals can take the first step in building shared instructional leadership capacity within their organizations.

## 2.6 Effects of SBM on the roles of stakeholders

## 2.6.1 Teachers' participation in SBM

Of all the categories included in the reform process during the change from regular centralized system into a decentralized one, teachers are the main category. Educators are the most effective party to identify and meet their students' needs.

> This restructuring, as argued by those supporting the reform, cannot effectively improve the students' academic performance unless those directly involved with the students' outcomes (the teachers) have decision making authority (Leithwood, & Menzies, 1998).

A trend that has been followed up through the research over the last two decades is that teachers were always out of the decision circle when it comes to taking a decision concerning schools, management system, assessment means, or even their own professional development.

Smyth & Shacklock (1998) assert that teachers worldwide have been marginalized when it comes to being consulted about changes to education. Teachers represent the primary means in which education occurs. Students' achievement is closely related to the teacher's classroom performance; consequently, classroom performance is associated with the teacher's mood. It is a prerequisite that the teacher's mood is good enough to improve his/her own performance inside the classroom, which reflects on students' performance.

Principals have always had the final word in important decisions concerning the school. While principals are caught up in running the school day-to-day operation, and having a busy schedule, it is not always easy to make decisions that are in the best interest for teachers. Teachers would be the most appropriate section to consult regarding their related issues.

> School committees were mainly dominated by principals who had the final say in their proceedings and teachers were mere spectators (Baloyi, 2002).

Creating a policy of a school or a system, or even when reforming an education policy, would require the participation of teachers. Teachers are the nearest to students and the ones practicing the policy on field. Sadly, policies are instructed and applied on teachers as a final stem of implementation in the field.

Kumar & Scuderi (2000) point out that in many instances policymaking is often considered a privilege and jealously guarded by those in authority. Remires (1997) argues that policies are conceived by a certain core of people and implemented in schools in a top-down manner.

The very same view is supported by Frost, Durrant, Head & Holiday (2000) who indicate that recent top-down approaches have relegated teachers' roles in strategic planning and decision making to the implementation of externally driven initiatives.

"It is against this backdrop that greater collegiality and more active involvement of a wide range of individuals are called for to improve schools." (Frost et al, 2000). According to Lilyquist (1998) research information suggests that there should be intense involvement of teachers in decision making process.

> In education, policies are made by school governing bodies, administrators, and politicians but teachers are rarely part of the process and their voices are missing (Smyth & Shacklock, 1998).

Teachers' satisfaction could be reached and enhanced through making the teachers an essential part of decision-making. In return, teachers' classroom practices would definitely improve and students' achievement would be maximized.

## 2.6.2 Head teachers and Students' Achievement

There is an indirect relationship between head teachers and students' achievement. The kind of work and management style practiced by head teacher affects the classroom performance of teachers. In addition, head teachers practices could be one effective means of raising students' achievement and augment their performance.

A number of modifications in head teachers' management style are needed to achieve healthier performance, which would include, but not limited to the following:

### 2.6.2.1 Reflective practice

The role of head teacher should not be a supervisory role only, but rather be a reflective participation. If one of the staff members has a weakness point in one of the classroom practices, the head teacher's role would be to show evidence of weakness and at the same time demonstrate the way to recuperate when repairing the weaknesses.

### 2.6.2.2 School development planning and setting priorities

Head teacher's work is mostly to make choices and take decisions. Choices about priorities of the department that contribute as a part of the development of the whole school must be made carefully and should aim one target, which is reaching the assigned goals for the department, as a part of the main school goal. Each department should, as a partial unit; act in coordination with other units for the same aim, head of department is the person responsible for organizing the work that way.

### 2.6.2.3 Participatory management

Being a head teacher is actually to act as a colleague teacher to department members, and be a helpful head of department by bringing everybody on-board when it comes to management.

If all teachers of one department agree on one decision, they would gladly work to achieve the assigned objective. On the other hand, if decisions are forced on teachers in a top-down management style, a great deal of resistance would be expected.

### 2.6.2.4 Financial management

Each department has an assigned budget for its needs, it is crucial for the head teacher to set financial priorities of the department and start with the most crucial alternative for the department.

Resources may run-out and extra priorities may emerge, the head teacher should be handy and able to extract some more finance to keep the department running in top performance.

## 2.6.2.5 Personnel management

Personnel could be treated as one other source in the hand of the head teacher. Breaking up the teachers' time into the best-used time is another imperative task; teachers' time should be split between classroom, professional development, participative management, along with the administrative tasks as well.

Personnel management refers to managing all issues related to the work force. Matching teachers to the suitable age group is a key task the head teachers need to master, professional development would emphasis on that, yet the preliminary choice should be a correct one.

Fullan & Watson (1999) advocate the importance of head-teachers' role among staff "the training and support of head-teachers is a crucial component of decentralized strategies everywhere". Thus, Anderson and Nderitu's following finding is especially revealing:

> The most significant impact of SIP (School Improvement Plans) on head-teachers has less to do with management training, than with the creation through SIP of a powerful infrastructure of teacher development and school improvement. The new infrastructure enables head-teachers to put into practice many of the ideas and methods introduced to them through management training. Ready access to ongoing management training follow-up assistance and collegial networking is a necessary component of any system- wide program of teacher development and school improvement (Anderson & Nderitu, 1999, cited in Fullan & Watson, 1999).

## 2.6.3 Parents and Community Members involvement and Students' Achievement

Similarly, the participation of parents and community members is of great effect on students' achievement. When parents practice the education of their children first hand, a great deal of difference would be noticed in the students' mood and overall satisfaction on the educational process, resulting in a higher achievement.

For the parents and community members to be involved more in the education process, a specialized person should act as a link between in and out school operations. Teachers, head teachers, and principals have enough to do; they can show up only in the final phase of the process and meet community members to discuss a previously prepared agenda.

> The key strategy for developing effective parent and community participation was to employ a Community Development Officer (CDO) to work with PTAs, community leaders, school personnel, and municipal agencies (Fullan & Watson, 1999).

Instead of adding extra load on teachers and administrators by getting them to initiate work with parents and build up relations with community members and committees, a specialized and trained person would do that job in much enhanced way, and time effectively too.

> There is a continuing need for persons with expertise in the areas of parent/community involvement to assist with initial mobilization activities and with institutionalization and further development where project inputs have already taken hold. The SIP parent/community involvement strategy includes training for education personnel on how to work effectively with parents and communities, as well as intervention with parents at the school and Teacher Advisory Centers, including parent education (Fullan & Watson, 1999).

## 2.7 Autonomy

According to Gaziel (1998), a school is said to have autonomy if its teachers and other stakeholders are given a high level of responsibility and authority for making decisions related to the school's decision-making; such as school policy and allocation of resources. Blom (1999) states that autonomy in our schools is not given to teachers as a basic right but as a privilege that is dependent on certain terms and conditions.

If teachers and school staff are granted more authority to make decisions related to their work, or even participate in making higher-level decisions that concern the whole school, that would increase the feeling of satisfaction and help in keeping the staff psychological state in high level, which would result in more enhanced performance.

SBM is a system that enhances the participation of all concerned parties to manage and keep the school's performance at its best conditions. All stakeholders must be part of the decision-making process, resulting in presenting different opinions; consequently, the most appropriate decision is to be applied.

This trend, which is deeply rooted in SBM, is, therefore, a real movement in present day education (Gaziel, 1998). The participation of teachers in site-based decision-making increases their sense of autonomy, status, self-efficacy, and professional growth (Wall & Rinehart, 1998).

Autonomy, according to Gaziel (1998) has the following outcomes:

➢ It improves teachers' sense of commitment to their schools;
➢ It encourages teachers to help and support each other in solving school-related problems; and
➢ It makes schools to perform better than non-autonomous schools.

Unquestionably, allowing more autonomy to the staff, especially teachers, would offer more sense of belonging and commitment to the school. Furthermore, it

would enhance teacher-teacher relations of help and support each other, in addition, augments the classroom performance, which would result in higher students' achievement.

## 2.8 Accountability

SBM allows more power to stakeholders. Despite the fact that more power is given, an appropriate use of that power should be executed. Moreover, the use of power should be monitored by all the stakeholders at all times.

> Accountability in its most basic form places limits on the use of power and authority. It keeps people in power from abusing it and prevents diversion of an institution's resource to inappropriate purposes (Houser, 1996).

Macpherson (1996) identifies five forms of accountability, which stakeholders in SBM should take into consideration:

➢ *Moral accountability,*

Educators should be accountable for the trust they have been given when place in such position.

➢ *Professional accountability,*

Educators – especially teachers - should set examples to themselves in the first place, and then to their colleagues of how professional they are.

➢ *Contractual accountability,*

In terms of contracts, educators should prove to the ones who hired them that they have made the right choice by contracting with them. The value-added in terms of professional development and performance related students' achievement of each educator, teacher, principal, and social worker, should be revealed by the end of the contract period.

➢ *Political accountability,*

They must show accountability to political decision makers. When a decentralized school reveals a proven track of success, political decision makers would be encouraged to enlarge the amount of schools practicing SBM to a larger scale; in addition, certain high standards would be set for the new members of the decentralized system to follow in an enhanced management manner that is already proven.

➢ *Public accountability,*

Educators must be accountable to the interests of public. Practicing SBM does not mean having decisions that serve the interests of educators only, but rather means taking decisions that serve the best interest of public in a way that facilitate reaching broader public aims.

**Summary**

The second chapter represented an extensive literature review of the main concepts. The different forms of SBM, variety of leadership styles, and student achievement, the different roles of stakeholders involved in the education process, autonomy, and accountability were all discussed in relation to the education system in UAE.

# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter School-Based Management, SBM, along with all the related factors were looked into through extensive literature review. The present chapter represents a detailed presentation of the research methodology and design of the study as intended by the researcher.

## 3.2 RESEARCH METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

Mouton (1996) defines research method as the total set of means that researchers employ in their goal of valid knowledge. Cohen & Manion (1994), on the other hand, assert that research method refers to a range of approaches used in educational research to gather data that are to be used as a basis of interference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction.

According to Henning (2004), "methodology" refers to the coherent group of methods that complement one another to deliver data and findings that reflect the research question and suit the research purpose.

A mixed technique, which uses two or more methods of data collection, was adopted for this study. Research evidence suggests that the mixed methods approach generates insightful results and is used "…to expand the scope or breadth of research to offset the weaknesses of either (qualitative or quantitative) approach alone" (Driscoll et al, 2007).

The approach includes quantitative measures that depend on measurements and amounts gathered from the people and events (Murray-Thomas, 2003). They also allow for a snapshot of individuals" responses and attitudes. Therefore, quantitative data was collected through administering

questionnaires to administrators, teachers, and parents. The rationale behind the two questionnaires was to obtain and scrutinize data from the most direct parties of the teaching-learning process; namely principals and teachers. However, Cohen (2000) confesses quantitative data "…possesses a measure of standard error which is inbuilt and which has to be acknowledged"; in other words, it is impossible to get to absolute perfection by using quantitative research.

Therefore, this study sought more help by recurring to the qualitative method that relies on a description of characteristics of people not on numbers and amounts (Murray- Thomas, 2003). Hence, a set of open-ended questions was provided throughout the three questionnaires, allowing respondents to make comments as they wish. Hence, a mixed methods approach was adopted.

### 3.2.1 Quantitative approach

Cresswell (1994) identifies the following assumptions about the quantitative approach:

- The researcher is independent and removed from the phenomena being studied;
- The researcher maximizes the distance between himself and the phenomena being studied;
- The researcher's values are kept out of study;
- The language used is impersonal and formal; and
- It uses deductive instead of inductive reasoning to reach conclusions about the research problem.

## 3.2.2 Qualitative approach

The qualitative approach was chosen to combine the quantitative approach seeking further reliable results of the research. Strauss & Corbin (1990:19) define qualitative research as any kind of research that produces findings that are not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

Ary et al (1990:445) assert that the qualitative method needs to understand human and social behavior from the "insider's" perspective, that is, as it is lived by participants in a particular social setting, for instance, school, community or group. According to Ary et al (1990) the ultimate goal of qualitative method is to "portray the complex pattern of what is being studied in sufficient detail so that the one who has not experienced it can understand it." (Page 445)

McMillan & Schumacker (1993:14) identify the following assumptions about the qualitative paradigm:

> ➢ Reality is constructed through an individual's definition of the situation,

> ➢ It seeks to understand social phenomena through participants' perspective,

> ➢ There is greater flexibility in methods and research process than in quantitative approaches,

> ➢ The researcher is highly involved with the phenomenon being studied, and

> ➢ Believes that human actions are influenced by situations in which they occur.

## 3.3 Research design

The research design was defined in part 1.3.13.1 as Mouton (1996) asserts that a research design is a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. Huysamen (1994) defines research design as the plan or the blueprint that specifies how research participants are going to be obtained, and what is going to be done to them with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem.

Design of the research is presented for the reader to be able to link the research phases reaching a conclusion. "The research design enables the reader to follow and evaluate the researcher's line of reasoning." (Strauss and Myburgh, 2000)

### 3.3.1 Design process

According to Henning (2004), during the process stage the researcher:

➢ Explains why he/she investigates in certain methods and gives the reasons why research were sampled in a particular way;
➢ Mentions the methodology of the design;
➢ Mentions how the data will be analyzed, he/she therefore argues the reasons for analyzing data according to a certain paradigm;
➢ Defines the data management procedures that will be applied in the study; and
➢ States what he/she will do with the set of analyzed data and mention the literature, if any, which will be used in the final interpretation and discussion of the data.

### 3.3.4 Data collection approach

### 3.3.4.1 Case study

As mentioned earlier in paragraph 1.3.14.3, the approach of this investigation is in the form of a case study. A case study, as defined by McMillan &

Schumacher (1993), is "an inquiry in which the main focus is on one phenomenon regardless of the number of sites involved in the investigation." Merriam (1998) points out that "A case study has an end-product that has a rich description of the phenomenon under study".

Data presented in the research were collected through questionnaires to a selected group of participants. The quantitative approach was used to analyze the collected data. Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires are looked into in the following part.

### 3.3.4.1.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions, arranged in a purposeful manner to obtain data from the participants. "A form containing a set of questions; submitted to people to gain statistical information" wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn

Questionnaires may be defined in other ways, "A structured technique for collecting data consisting of a series of questions. Questionnaires can be self-completion or administered by an interviewer, they can be completed orally or in writing." www.researchjapan.jp/glossary.html. "Written documents that contain a series of questions that are answered by respondents". Typically, some form of objective response is required, such as "true-false" or numerical scales (for example, "1 to 5" rankings".planning.nmsu.edu/taskforce/glossary.html

Questionnaires are one of the most popular means used to gather information for the purpose of academic research or any other form of data gathering. The following part focuses on the various advantages vs. the disadvantages of using questionnaires for collecting data.

### 3.3.4.1.1.1 Advantages of questionnaires

Simply asking participants to fill their personal data, believes, or financial related information is not so easy to obtain response. Questionnaires, on the other hand, have various advantages that make it easy for the researcher to gather the required data from the participants.

Bachrack and Scoble, 1967; Benson, 1946; Hochstim and Athanasopoulos, 1970; Moser and Kalton, 1971; Seitz, 1944) have all agreed on the following advantages of using questionnaires for research purposes:

> ➤ Questionnaires are easy to analyze;
> ➤ Most statistical analysis software can easily analyze them;
> ➤ They are cost effective when compared to face-to-face interviews;
> ➤ Cost effectiveness is directly related to travel time.
> ➤ Cost effectiveness is especially true for studies involving large number of participants and large geographic areas. (Clausen and Ford, 1947; Goode and Hatt, 1962; Ruckmick, 1930).

Berdie, Anderson, and Niebuhr, (1986) asserted, "Questionnaires are familiar to most people". Everyone has filled a questionnaire of some type throughout his or her life.  On the other hand, Cahalan, (1951); Jahoda, et al., (1962) agree that questionnaires are a good research instrument.   "When respondents receive a questionnaire in the mail, they are free to complete it on their own time-table."

### 3.3.4.1.1.2 Disadvantages of the questionnaires

Although questionnaires are a very effective tool for gathering research data, there are some disadvantages of the questionnaires, such as:

> ➤ "The lack of the interviewer limits researcher's ability to probe responses." (Walonic, 1993)

➢ Structured questionnaires often lose the "flavor of the response", because respondents often want to qualify their answers (Walonick, 1993).

➢ A common criticism of mail surveys is that they often have low response rates (Benson, 1946; Phillips, 1941; Robinson, 1952).

➢ When returned questionnaires arrive in the mail, it's natural to assume that the respondent is the same person you sent the questionnaire to. A number of researchers have reported that this may not actually be the case (Clausen and Ford, 1947).

To overcome the above listed disadvantages, the researcher did the following precautions:

➢ "By allowing frequent space for comments, the researcher can partially overcome this disadvantage of lack of interviewer." (Walonic, 1993)

➢ The researcher followed up the respondents to make sure they complete the questionnaire and to raise the response rate.

➢ Respondents completed the surveys during the working hours to make sure that they complete it themselves.

### 3.3.4.2 Sampling
### 3.3.4.2.1 Definition

McMillan and Schumacker (1993) define the sampling process as "Sampling is the process of selecting a group of individuals form a larger group that is known as a population."

### 3.3.4.2.2Types of sampling

There are two general types of sampling, probability sampling, and non-probability sampling, discussed thoroughly in the next section. For the

purpose of the study, the later method was used to enhance the results of the investigation.

### 3.3.4.2.2.1 Probability sampling

According to Clark et al (1998), probability sampling is "a sampling technique that gives equal chance to members of a population to be selected". McMillan & Schumacher (1993), on the other hand, describe probability sampling in another way "In probability sampling samples are drawn from a large population in such a way that the probability of selecting each of the population is known." Random selection represents the probability sampling process, in which the sample is chosen on equal opportunity basis.

To obtain further reliable results, the researcher used the non-probability sampling technique, which is represented in the following section.

### 3.3.4.2.2.2 Non-probability (purposive) sampling

Non-probability or purposive sampling technique is used to obtain results that are more reliable. Information-rich participants in the questionnaire offered more professional and closer to the education field feedback for the researcher to build results and recommendations on. Clark et al (1998) refers to the non-probability technique as "…. Non-probability sampling is everything that probability sampling is not"

### 3.3.4.2.3 Research population

Ary et al (1990) define population as "those people about whom one wants to learn something". For the purpose of this investigation, the research population was chosen according to the non-probability sampling. The population was made up of administrators and teachers in both model and governmental schools located in Abu Dhabi main city, Abu Dhabi. Parents,

however, were for a group of students in one boys' elementary model school in Abu Dhabi main city.

### 3.3.4.2.4 Choice of research subjects

Cresswell (1994) confirmed, "The idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select participants without attempting to select them randomly." Participants of the investigation were chosen according to the purposeful sampling technique (see paragraph 3.3.4.2.2.2) seeking more professional opinion and feedback that would positively aid the investigation.

The chosen sample of experienced teachers represented information-rich participants. According to Patton (1990, cited in Glense 1999, and Merriam 1998) are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance.

### 3.3.4.2.5 Research conditions

Permission of administering the research questionnaire was acquired from the principal of the targeted school. The research related questionnaire was administered in normal working days; participants completed the questionnaires during their free time and returned them when done.

Research data were gathered in one-month time. Questionnaires for administrators and teachers were forwarded to central office in ADEZ, which in turn forwarded them to the respective schools. Parents' questionnaire, however, was administered and collected in one-week time.

### 3.3.4.2.6 Research language

Considering the Multilanguage education medium in Abu Dhabi schools, the questionnaire was administered in both Arabic and English languages. Participants had to choose the language they are comfortable to use when completing the questionnaire.

Babbie & Mouton (2001) confirm that "in a multilingual society it is important that respondents answer questions in a language they feel comfortable"

## 3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Glesne (1999) confirms, "Research code of ethics is concerned with researchers' desire and attempt to respect the right of others." To maintain the codes of ethics – see the questionnaire cover page, appendix 1, the researcher:

- ✓ Planned and conducted the research in such a way that results obtained did not offer misleading information (Ary, 1990)
- ✓ Assured respondents' confidentiality and protection of their privacy through anonyms offered questionnaires and veil  the school identity (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993)
- ✓ Informed them orally and in writing about their freedom to withdraw from the questionnaire/ investigation at any point without penalty (Glesne, 1999)
- ✓ Participants were informed about the research objectives and the method of recording their responses (Huyasamen, 1994)

## 3.5 SUMMARY

The third chapter illustrated in details the research plan followed throughout the research, research design, and methodology, sampling process, the data analysis approach, advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire as the main instrument used to gather data.

## Chapter` 4

## DATA ANALYSIS

## 4.1 Parents' Questionnaire Analysis

A questionnaire of nine items was administered to parents of grade three, four and five students in one of the model schools managed by ADEC. All parents are UAE nationals, and the questionnaire was anonymous. The questionnaire was administered in both Arabic and English languages.

The response of the parents was amazing. Out of one hundred and fifty questionnaires, ninety were collected back.

The following section represents each individual question's feedback, followed by analysis of the same question.

**4.1. Q P1** Are all your children enrolled in Government schools. Alternatively, you have / had others enrolled in private schools?
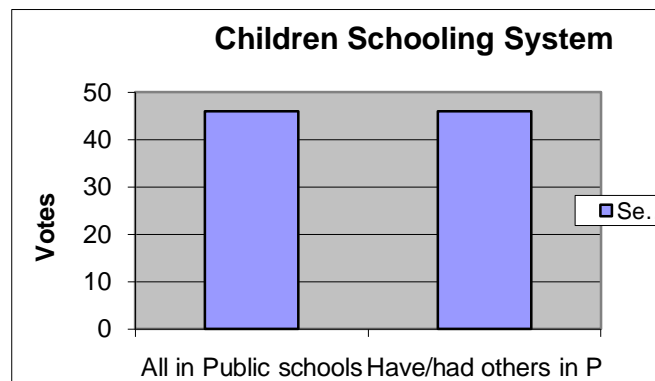


Figure P1: Children schooling system

Responds to the question were of 50/50 percentage. Half the parents stated that they have their children enrolled in government schools, while the other half stated that they currently have/had others enrolled in private schools.

Response in that result gives the questionnaire more creditability. The involved parents have current and previous experience in both systems of government and private schooling in UAE.

Although the government of UAE provides free of charge schooling systems to the nationals of the country, a high percentage of the parents choose to enroll their children in private schools for different reasons – to be discussed later in other questions.

**4.1. Q P2** When asking parents whether they are satisfied with the current administration performance or not, furthermore, to furnish reasons clarifying why they are not satisfied.
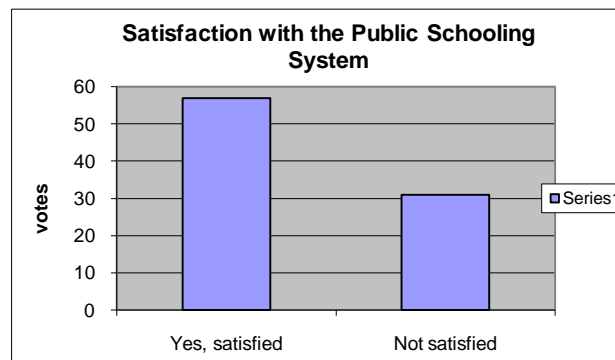


Figure P2: Satisfaction with public schooling system.

65% of the parents stated that they are satisfied with the current administration performance of the public schools' system. On the other hand, 35% are not satisfied of the performance of the same administration.

A space was given for comments, in which, a wide range of observations were offered. Of the 35%, "not satisfied" parents a generous feedback for reasons of lack of satisfaction were listed.

The most repeated reason was "teachers are not qualified enough". The unsatisfied parents are aware of the fact that when teachers are recruited by the MOE/ADEC the set of standards to be met by teachers are not high enough to

make a good teacher. The second most repeated reason was "curricula are not good enough". When parents try to follow the education process of their child, they are faced by the fact that curricula do not match throughout the grade level. Science curriculum, for instance is of a very high level topic wise for the students, while there are no books provided for the students and every teacher prepares his/her own material, it is even harder for parents to follow up with their children's education. On the other hand, English language curriculum is far too easy for the grade level, and does not serve the study of the other subjects – science and mathematics.

Many other reasons were stated, some of those reasons are – among others,

- ➢ General educational atmosphere needs improving,
- ➢ No school-home connection,
- ➢ Arabic curriculum is not good enough,
- ➢ No books for some subjects,
- ➢ Feedback strategy is not effective,
- ➢ School-community connection is absent,
- ➢ Homework policies need to be improved,
- ➢ Physical education strategies need to be revised.

**4.1. Q P3** Parents were asked, "How do you evaluate the level of your present participation in decision-making process", the feedback was as follow
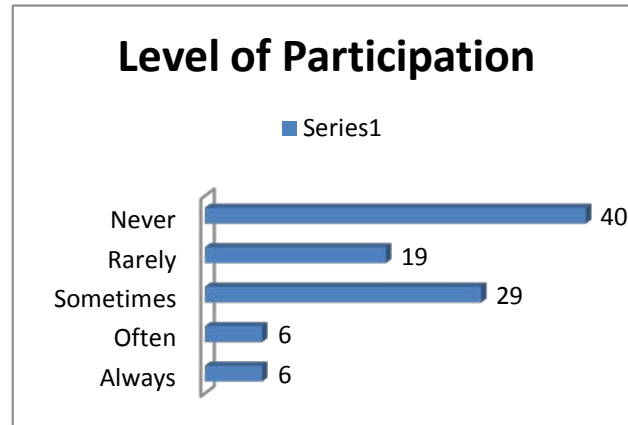


Figure P3: Level of parents' participation

Clear enough, the highest percentage, 40%, of parents never participated in making a decision about their children education. Others, 29% stated that sometimes they offered feedback to the decision makers represented in school administrators. The following group of parents, 19%, has rarely offered feedback. At the end, and interestingly enough, with the same percentage of 6% of the parents offered feedback all the time to school administrators, while the other group often did feedback.

One interesting observation is that nonetheless 50% of the parents stated that they are not satisfied with the level of their children education (question 1), only as low as 6% of them offered constant constructive feedback. On the other hand, the majority 40% never participated in the improvement efforts made by the education system.

One reason could be standing behind the lack of participation of parents in improvement efforts is that the system did not stimulate assistance to improve, in which the system has reached a static situation and not moving forward. Other reasons could be a pessimistic experience the parent had before when trying to participate or offer a hand in improving the system.

Another interesting observation is that 35% of the parents offered feedback on the improvement of the education process. The question here is that "does the system accept and apply suggestions from other parties than the ones in higher administration?" according to the questionnaire's feedback, the system is rigid and does not accept improving criticism.

**4.1. Q P4** One of the most vital questions and one valuable, yet missing concern which is to invite parents to play a more vital role in the decision-making process.

The response was extraordinarily positive, as shown in the figure.
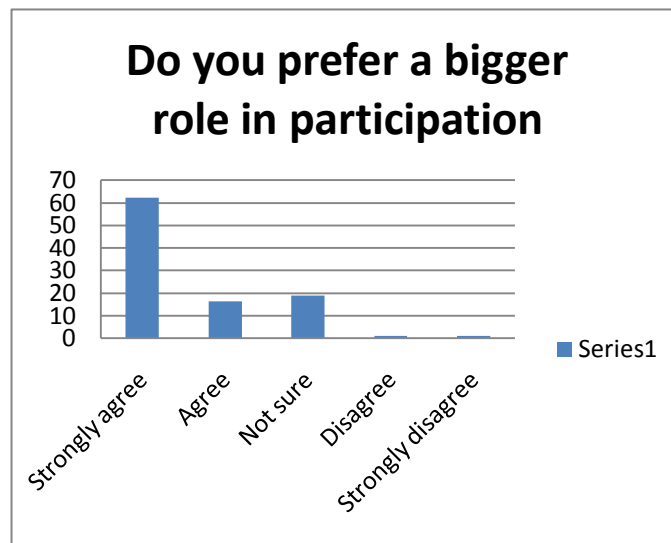


Figure P4: Do you prefer a bigger role of participation?

Interestingly enough, the highest percentage of parents, 62.4% "strongly agree" on offering more helping hand and advice in the process of educating their children, in addition, 16.5% would "agree" to do the same. On the other hand, 18.8% of the parents were not sure whether to play a more effective role in helping the school administration.

One interesting finding is that 1.1% of the parents disagreed to help. Furthermore, another 1.1% strongly disagreed to do the same. Whilst the reason

behind the disagreement could be that parents have decided to leave the improvement decisions in the hands of experts. The remarkably low disagreement percentage show that parents really care about the education process of the children.

The fact that 78.9% of the parents agree on different levels to offer help and advice to the school administration is rather fascinating and acquires closer analysis. In the second question, 65% of the parents stated that they are satisfied with the level of education in public schools. On the other hand, the other 35% were not satisfied for a number of reasons. Out of those satisfied and non-satisfied parents, those representing the very high percentages are ready to help improve the system.

Another interesting remark is that 65% are satisfied, yet most of them are willing to help. The last remark simply means that even the satisfied parents are not copious satisfied, which makes them ready to help make the system work even better.

In contrast, a remarkably low percentage refused to help the system. The negative attitude could be driven by uncertainty of the ability of giving the right feedback for improvement, or the overrated trust in school administration.

**4.1. Q P5** When asking parents "do you agree that the school would completely decentralize from the educational zone or the ministry?"

The reply was as follows
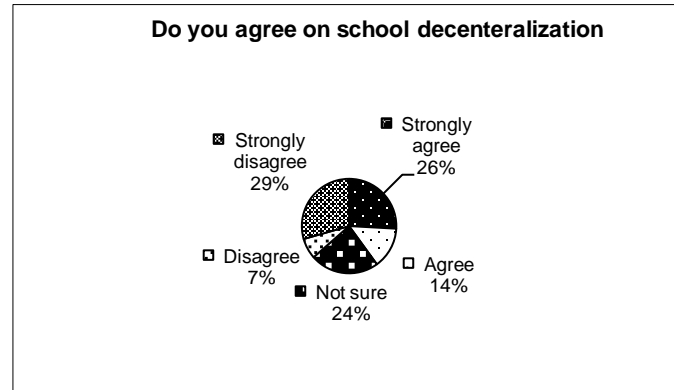


Figure P5: Do you agree on school decentralization?

The highest percentage of parents "strongly disagreed" on decentralization, 29%, in addition, 7% "disagreed". The high percentage of parents who are not in favor of decentralization reflects the missing trust of parents with the school administration.

Built on a previous unlikable experience of parents with the school administration, or on a wider scale, the education system followed by the consecutive administrations; parents would not allow local authority to handle decision-making process. On the other hand, 26% "strongly agreed", while another 14% "agreed" on allowing the local administration to handle all decision-making.

Examining the responses closely, 40% of the parents agreed on different levels for the local administration to handle complete decision-making, while 36% disagreed on different levels to do the same. On the other hand, 24% are "not sure". Clear enough; parents are definitely confused and not sure whether the local school administration would perform to the expected level or not. The previous experiences of parents have to do a lot with that decision.

**4.1. Q P6** If you were more involved in decision-making, how would you rate the importance in improving the following areas?

a- Teaching loads

b- students' activities

c- HW policy

d- Punishment policies

e- Teachers' feedback policies

f- Improving the school / community link

g- Building facilities

h- Physical education / sports facilities / policies
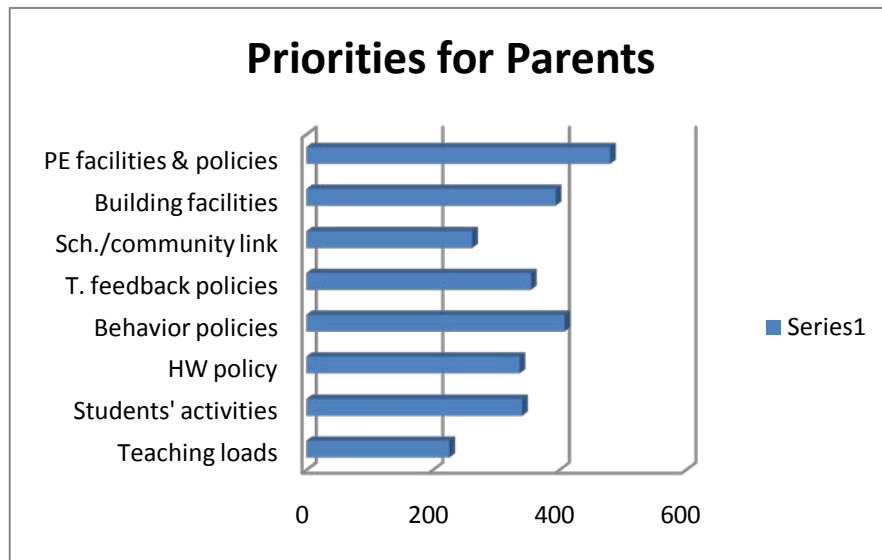


Figure P6: Priorities for parents

Parents were asked to rank their priorities through the reform process once they gain access to decision-making committees. The feedback give the highest priority to the teaching loads, probably for the feeling that teachers needs to teach more classes and serve more students than they currently do. The next important factor that parents chose was the school-community link, as important as it sounds, schools must act as a living part of the community, there should be a reciprocal relation between school and community. Homework policies come next as the next important factor. Currently, there is no policy that organizes HW,

Each teacher acts on his own regarding assigning a definite load for students to do at home.

**4.1. Q P7** What changes would you make/ suggest for extra-curricular activities?

Parents were offer a space to express what changes they have in mind regarding extracurricular activities when they get the chance to act as active members of the decision-making committee. The highest interest reported was concerning teaching methodologies, followed by creating social activities. Parents show interest in improving teaching methodologies used currently in classrooms, as they obtain feedback from their children of the learning process progresses. The social relationship between school and the surrounding community is rather weak, and needs to be improved as reported by parents; there should be extracurricular activities that link students to their society. Other parents have expressed their intention to improve the Arabic language through clubs and other fun activities, drama club, and fine arts club as well. The general atmosphere of the feedback focused on improving the students' motivation through the extracurricular activities, as they represent effective means to better communicatie with students.

**4.1. Q P8** When asking the parents about whether they think the administration performance would enhance if the complete decision-making is performed completely from inside the school.

The response was as follow
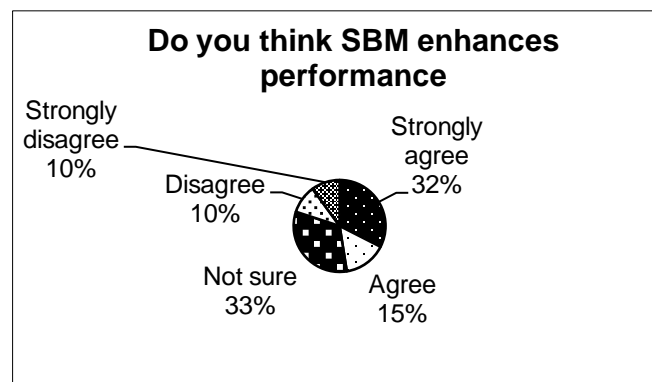


Figure P8: Do you think SBM enhances performance?

Remarkably, 32% of the parents "Strongly agree", in addition 15% "Agree" that the administration performance would enhance if management is decentralized. On the other hand, 10% "Strongly disagree", while another 10% "Disagree". While an astonishingly high percentage, 33% were "Not sure" about it.

Educational system has always been centralized and controlled through a central management represented in MOE/ADEC. The same problems have always been there and parents have always suffered from the autocratic style of management, where there is nothing to be done at school site without the approval of higher central administration.

To decentralize the system would offer a chance to develop the performance represented in students' outcomes. 47% of the parents, the highest percentage, agreed on deferent levels to grant the complete management to school site, hoping for a better strategies and practices in favor of education outcomes.

The next highest percentage, 33% represents the sample of parents whom are "Not sure" about that. What drives parents to be not sure or even to disagree to handing all decision-making to school administration is that they are not confident whether the school administration would be qualified enough to run every aspect of education atmosphere or not. Furthermore, some parents are convinced that this is the maximum output of education they can obtain, so why ask for more and take a chance by making that change.

**4.1. Q P9** In that question, parents were asked if they are ready to allocate some of their own time every week/month to discuss and take decisions about the education progress of their children"

The response was as follows
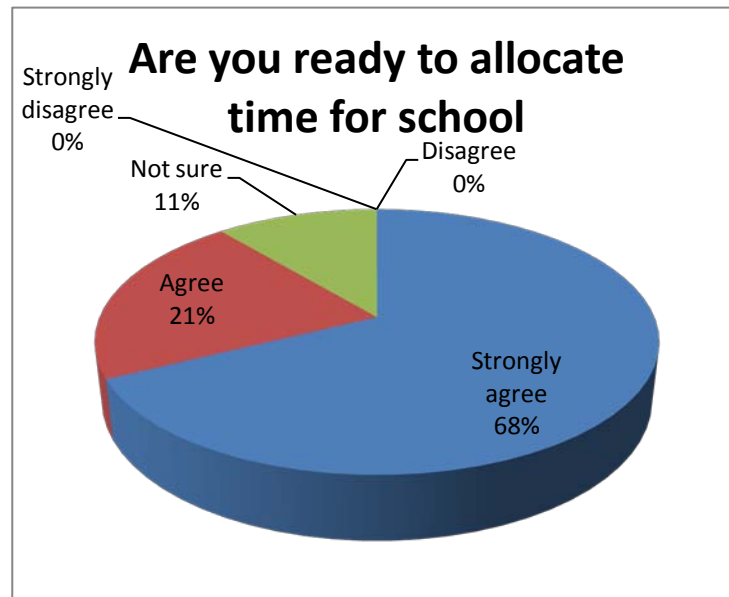


Figure P9: Are you ready to allocate time for school meetings?

Amazingly, 68% of the parents "Strongly agree" on allocating a fixed time for school meetings, in addition, 21% "Agree" to dedicate some of their time to participate in decision-making of their children. On the other hand, 11% were "Not sure", and only 0.012% only "Disagree". The "Strongly disagree" percentage was 0%.

It can be clearly seen that parents have concerns about the education process of their children, and they are ready to give some of their own time to further improve the process and be a part of the decision-making committee. With 88% agreed to participate in the education discussion. The other 11% did not refuse to participate, they were only not sure whether their participation would be fruitful to the process or not.

With total 0.012% disagreement of the parents answering the questionnaire, it is clear that they all are in the mood of enhancing the education in any required means. They only need to be called upon to be a part of the process and feedback to the decision makers, or in other words to be heard.

## 4.2 Administrators' Questionnaire analysis

A questionnaire of 17 items was administered to school governing bodies, represented in principals, vice principals, and the principal's executive secretaries. The questionnaire was administered into schools managed by ADEC, boys' and girls' schools, of different cycles (first, second, and third cycles). The questionnaire was anonymous and administered in both Arabic and English languages.

The following section represents each individual question's feedback, followed by analysis of the same question.

Before the analysis of the individual questions, one important note is that out of the returned answered questionnaires, 54% belong to females, while 46% belong to male administration members.
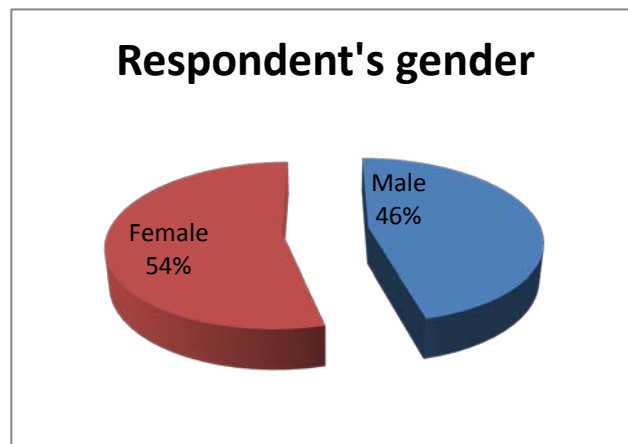


Figure A1: Gender of the questionnaire respondent.

**4.2. Q A1** "Are you the

a- Principal

b- Vice principal

c- Executive secretary"

When asking the respondents to the questionnaire about his/her designation at the school administration, the reply was as follows:
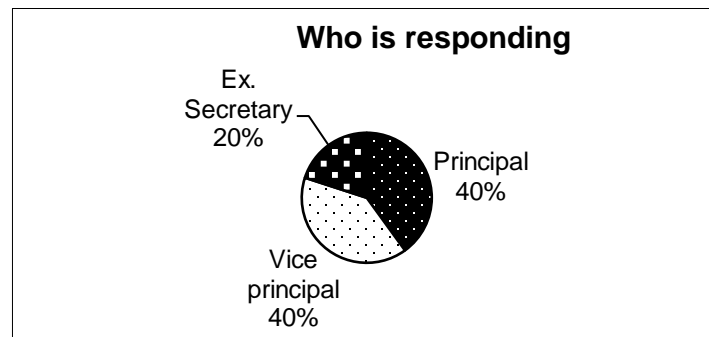


Figure A2: Who is responding to the questionnaire?

The highest two equal percentages was for "Principals" and "Vice principals" of 40% for each category. The other 20% was for the "Executive secretary" who, sometimes takes some of the decisions if the other members of higher administration are not available.

Luckily, the higher percentage of the returned questionnaires, 80%, was from the principals and vice principals, which gives credibility to the response as most of the feedback is from the target school higher administration.

**4.2. Q A2** "For how long have you been in that position?

a-  Less than five years,

b-  Five to ten years,

c-  More than ten years"
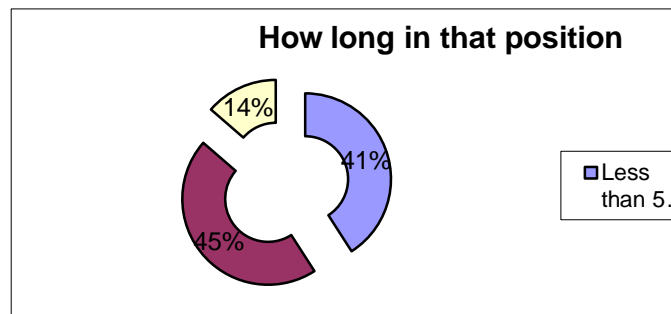


Figure A2: How long have you been in that position?

The most experienced administrators or the "More than ten years of service" in the same position are the lowest percentage – 14%. On the other hand, the highest percentages – 45% - are the administrators with "five to ten years" of experience. The novice administrators of "less than five years" are of the percentage 41%.

Clear enough, the ADEC system did not become in action until recent years. One of the policy sections in school management is that all principals along with the vice-principals must be UAE nationals, of whom, some reveal a very limited school management experience.

**4.2. Q A3** The style of management makes a difference in education as well as work atmosphere. Raising the issue of management style was of concern when thinking about applying SBM in UAE public schools.

"Having a managerial role in your school, do you share the decision with any of your employees?"

### Do you share decisions

No
5%

Yes
95%
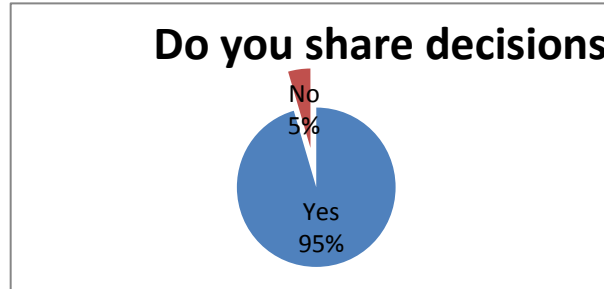
Figure A4: Do you share decisions?

Obviously, 95% of the principals stated that "Yes, I share decision" with the staff. In contrast, only 5% stated that they do not share their staff when preparing for a decision.

The extraordinarily high percent of principals whom replied that they do allow their staff to be a part of decision-making process indicates that the management style is not autocratic, but rather participatory style.

**4.2. Q A4** "Do you think better decisions can be achieved through shared decision making from your staff?"

### Can you make a better decision through staff participation?

No
5%

Yes
95%

Figure A5: Can you make a better decision through staff participation?

Following the question number three, the same response was stated when asking about the importance of staff opinion. The same percentage, 95%, confirmed that better decisions could be achieved through staff participation, while the same percentage of 5% confirmed otherwise.

Taking into account that the management style is mostly a shared decision making one; most administrators would invite their staff to be a part of the decision-making process. The remaining 5% do not believe in having other to participate in making a decision, and rather take it on their own acting as sole leaders of the organization.

**4.2. Q A5** Following both questions 3 and 4 about the style the manager would follow, is to ask further about the actual way of philosophy of that manager. Question 5 offers further details about the management style.

"Do you consider your style of administration tough minded/autocratic style?"
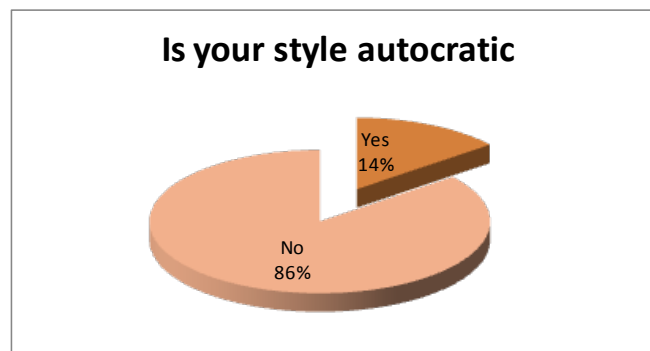


Figure A6: Is your management style autocratic?

Following the remarkable high percentage of the shared decision-making style, question 3, in addition the staff participation, question 4; comes the feedback of question 5 with an astonishingly high percent of "The style is not autocratic" of an 86%. On the other hand, 14% have admitted that they do have an autocratic style and hence they act as sole leader of the organization.

**4.2. Q A6** "Do you think your school has the required capacity to perform complete management away from the MOE / ADEZ?"

**Does the school have the required capacity?**

No 52%
Yes 48%
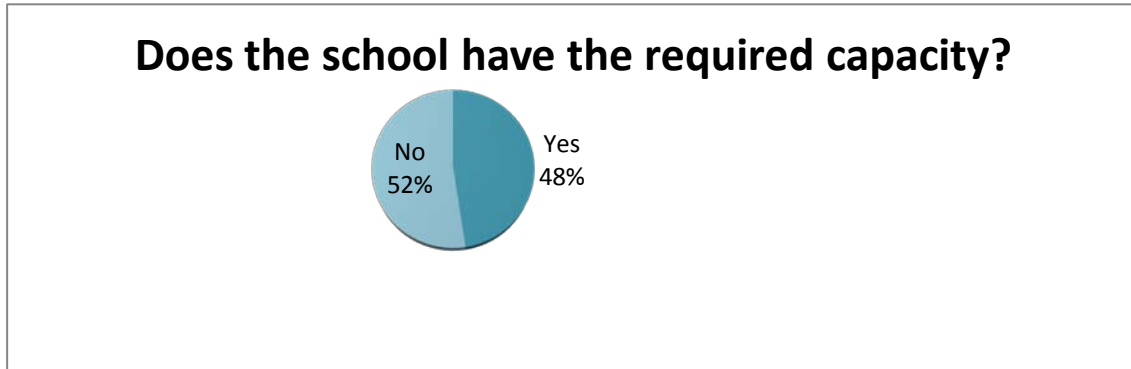
Figure A7: Does your school have the required capacity for SBM?

Administrators, represented in principals, vice principals, and executive secretaries, would know the best about the abilities of their staff, furthermore, their feedback is valuable when it comes to modifying their staff needs to suit the new suggested plan of school governance.

A question about the school capacity to perform all the tasks required for a successful administration, 52% of administrators believe they do not have that required capacity, in other words, they would not prefer to self-manage the school and would rather stay under MOE/ ADEC umbrella.

On the other hand, 48% of administrators have stated that they do have the required capacity to perform the complete management away from the central office management umbrella.

**4.2. Q A7** A following up question to the previous question 6, with more details about specific administration tasks was as follows:

"Do you currently have a qualified staff to perform the following administrative tasks? How would you rate their abilities?

## 4.2. Q A7 1 Human resources
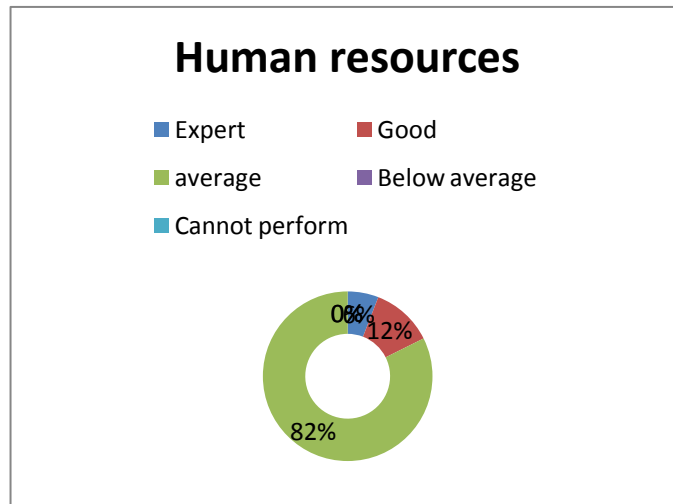


Figure A8 1: Schools' ability in human resources.

Only 6% of administrators think that their school has the required workforce to perform the human resources process on "Expert level", another 12% stated "Good level" is present in their schools. On the other hand, 82% of the administrators stated, the workforce they have can perform "Average level" in the human resources area. There were no responses for both "Below average" and "Cannot perform" choices.

## 4.2. Q A7 2 Financial administration
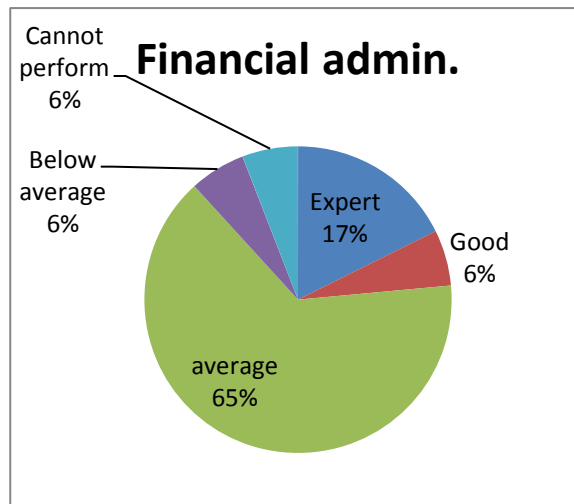


Figure A8 2: Schools' ability in financial administration.

Administrators seem to have better financial administration abilities than they do in human resources (see part 1 of question 7 above). 17% of administrators stated "Expert level" ability of financial management in general can be performed in their schools, 6% stated "Good level" is obtainable. On the other hand, the majority of administrators stated "Average level" with a percentage of 65% of the total sample.

Indications could be drawn from the earlier respond of the question, which is the school has the required workforce to perform the assigned tasks, yet there should be a foundation of improvement in the level of the workforce. Lastly and with the lowest percentages, both "Below the required level" and "Cannot perform" scored 6% of the total sample.

There is only one interpretation to be made about the responses illustrated above, which is that the workforce's performance abilities need to be further enhanced through training and tailored professional development programs.

## 4.2. Q A7 3 Future budgeting
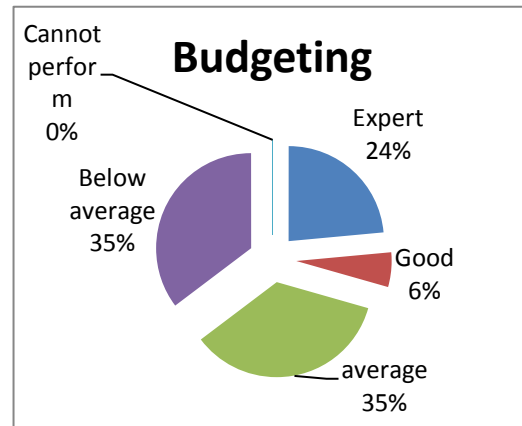


Figure A8 3: Schools' ability in future budgeting.

When breaking down the previous question (question 7 part 2), more clear ideas are obtained from administrators. Future budget represents the school needs for a certain phase, usually one academic year, including all the monetary issues of all kinds involved. A good percentage, 24% of administrators stated "Expert level" budgeting could be performed, that is perhaps because of the long years of experience and the repeated needs with minor changes from a year to the next year. 6% stated "Good level" of preparing the annual budget, on the other hand, with two equal percentages, 35%, "Average" and "Below average" were stated, and lastly, 0% for "Cannot perform".

## 4.2. Q A7 4 Accounting
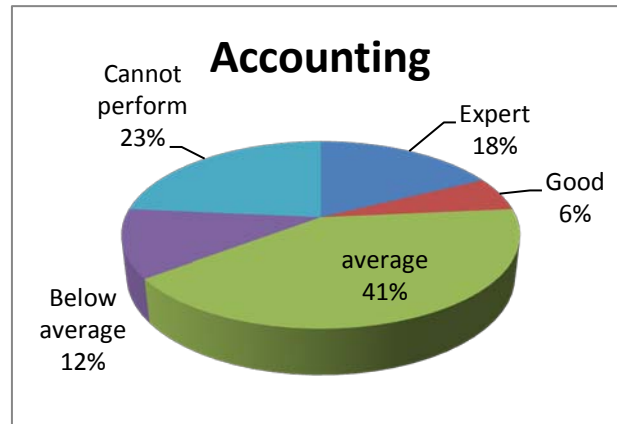


Figure A8 4: Schools' ability in accounting.

That question represents a further breaking down of the question 7 part 2 about the financial administration. Reflecting on the fact that each school, or small group of schools, have one full time accountant on campus, 18% of schools' administrators stated "Expert level" of accounting performance, furthermore, 6% stated "Good level", while 41% stated "Average level" of performance in accounting side.

On contrary, 12% stated "Below average", in addition, 23% stated "Cannot perform" in accounting side of financial administration. A closer look at the feedback shows that accountants are not skilled enough to perform the complete accounting duties, and they are no more than representative for the central accounting office. Further professional development is necessary for accountants on site to be able to perform to complete scale of their potential. Teachers do not study accounting, nor they work in that field in schools, a specialized accountant should be present at all times to execute that task.

## 4.2. Q A7 5 Performance assessment
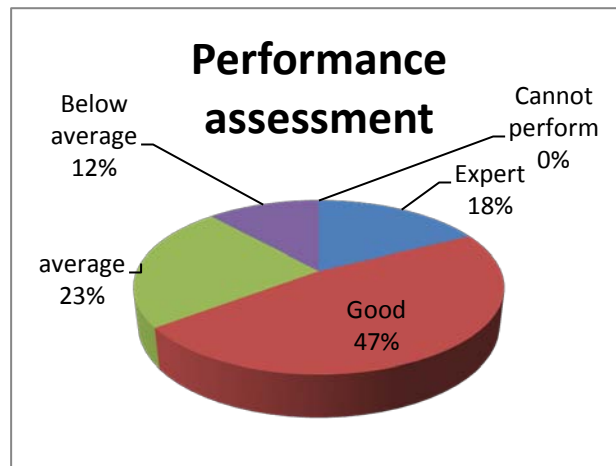


Figure A8 5: Schools' ability in performance assessment.

One of the most crucial future tasks of the site management is to assess the performance of all the involved parties. Assessment extends beyond classroom observation, and test scores to include principals, teachers', accounting department, students' relations' officers' performance assessment.

Surprisingly, administrators' feedback was so encouraging in that section, 18% stated "Expert level", 47% stated, "Good level" and 23% stated "Average level" of the ability to assess the performance. Administrators are used to the assessment routines on annual basis, yet the new management style would require more involvement from their side in almost every aspect of the school day operations.

Conversely, only 12% stated "Below average level", while 0% stated "Cannot perform" which is a further encouraging feedback of the ability to assess the total progress in school's operations.

## 4.2. Q A7 6 Examination ability
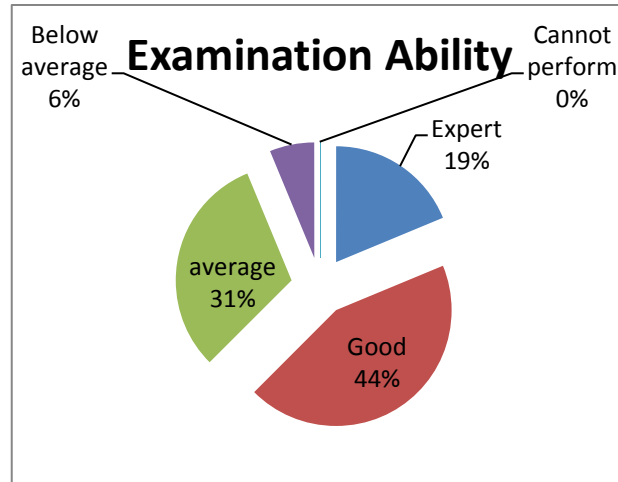


Figure A8 6: Schools' ability in examination ability.

The ability of school administration to assess students' performance is one of the main measures in educational process. However, only 19% of administrators have stated "Expert level" of examination ability; in addition, 44% stated "Good level" of the same. On the other hand, 31% stated "Average", while only 6% stated "below average" and 0% "cannot perform" the task of assessing students' performance.

The fact that school administrations, represented in teachers, puts together exams and quizzes to assess student performance not up to the required level. In other words, teachers tend to use direct questions to measure certain abilities of students, but not a range of abilities that students can stand out. Having a range of questions that assess multiple cognitive abilities; however, allows the system to allocate the gifted and talented students, and gives a better chance for the system to have better chances to improve and represent the brilliant students.

Administrators stated that they do have the ability to perform the task of assessing students' performance, yet the current examination practices need to

be improved, and to a certain extent broaden, to include practices that allow allocating gifted and talented students.

## 4.2. Q A7 7 Professional development
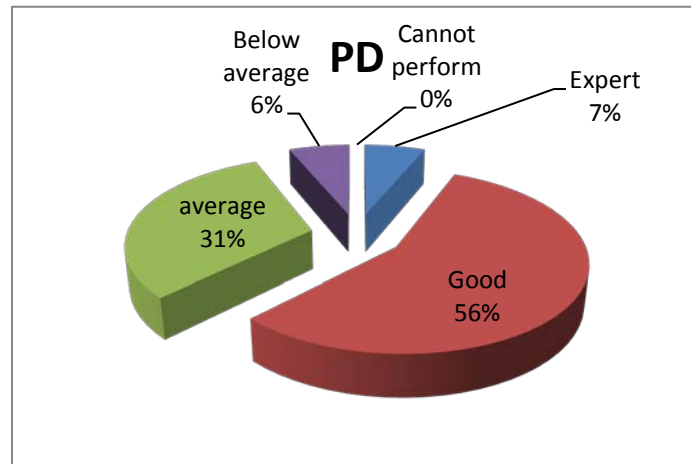


Figure A8 7: Schools' ability in professional development.

Administrators are very confident about the professional development needed for their staff. 7% stated "Expert level" while another 56% stated "Good level" ability to perform the professional development needs from within their schools. On the other hand, 31% stated "Average", in addition, 6% stated "Below average" level is what they can offer with their current capacity. Finally, 0% stated, "Cannot perform" the task.

In the field of PD, administrators would depend on the experience of individuals within the organization, which in turn would yield limited diversity of the kind of PD offered. Administrators usually focus on teachers' professional development, with less attention on improving administrative practices. In order to raise the educational standards, represented in individual schools, PD should extend to embrace all aspect of running a school, teachers practices, school-community relations, social wellness of students, time management skills for administrative staff, and all other aspects of governing an education unit.

**4.2. Q A8** A critical question for administrators, especially principals, which is:

Do you accept to have the full management of the school you run, and in turn, be accountable to the full responsibility of your decisions?

a- Yes, I accept.

b- No, I do not accept



Figure A9: Do you accept full responsibility?

Interestingly enough, 86% of administrators stated, "Yes, I accept" the full responsibility of the management and decisions taken, furthermore, they are willing to be held accountable for all the consequences of their decisions. On the other hand, only 14% refused to take that responsibility.

The feedback represents an encouraging start for the decentralization procedure; most of the administrators are willing to be accountable for their decisions. Linking the feedback to what were stated in question seven, with all the details about the management tasks, a general idea of the acceptance of the proposal of decentralizing the system into separate units is not out of the ordinary any more.

**4.2. Q A9** What kind of current policies/ practices would you like to change when you receive the complete responsibility? (You can choose any number of choices)

      a-  Policies concerning teachers' recruitment,

      b-  Policies concerning professional development,

      c-  Policies concerning parents' involvement,

      d-  Policies concerning teachers' evaluation,

      e-  Policies concerning incentives pay,

      f-  Policies concerning students' evaluation,

      g-  Other policies ………………………………..
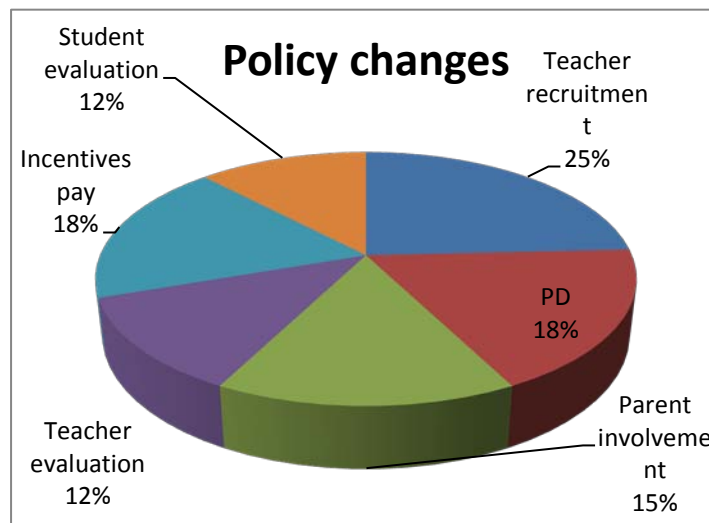


Figure A10: Suggested policy changes.

Interestingly enough, the highest percentage of administrators, 25% have chosen the "Teacher recruitment" policies to change, the next highest percentage, 18% is shared between "PD" and "Incentive pay". Parents' involvement comes next with 15%, and at last, with equal percentages come both evaluation processes of "Teacher" and "Student".

The feedback shows an actual picture for the needs of the educational field in Abu Dhabi Emirate, the highest percentage is for teachers' recruitment policies, which if modified for better would definitely enhance all other categories such as

PD and students' evaluation along with teachers' evaluation means. Administrators believe that if teachers were recruited through more effective criteria, and to be accompanied with certain qualifications they would perform in a better way and offer enhanced results accordingly.

**4.2. Q A10** Are there any changes that you would like to make to your school building?

   a- Yes, there are changes.
   b- No, there are no changes.
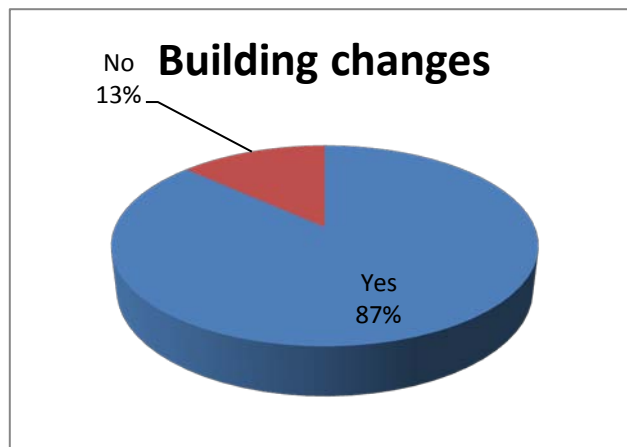


Figure A11: Any building changes needed.

Very high percentage of administrators, 87%, believes that they need to make many modifications to their school building. On contrary, only 13% believe that the building is fine as it currently is.

Administrators are aware of the needs of their staff and students, they must be able to locate the needed changes and work on them for improvement. Many of the laboratories, libraries and computer laboratories are in severe need of improvement and the resources need to be updated.

## 4.2. Q A11

If you have the choice, would you replace/change/fire any of the staff members you currently have?

    a- Yes, how many? _____

    b- No
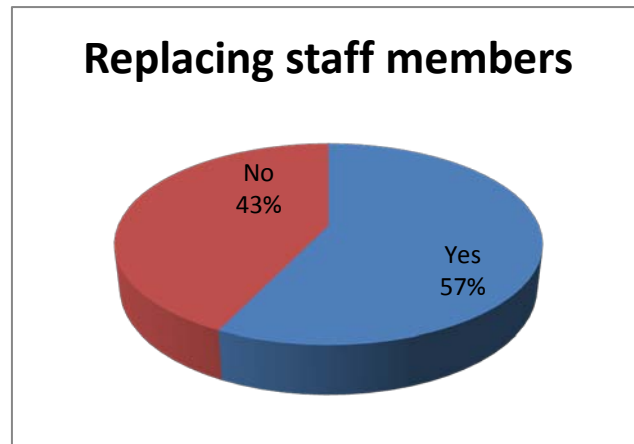


Figure A12: Do you need to replace any staff member?

A critical question for administrators, since they are in control of the complete administration, besides the responsibility of their staff performance. When administrators are asked about their staff to be kept the same or replaced, changed, or fired; the higher percentage of administrators, 57% stated "Yes" they would, on the other hand, 43% of them stated "No" they do not need to do that.

Looking back at question A9 About the policy changes, and that the highest percentage choose to modify the teachers' recruitment policy, furthermore, in question A7-7 about the PD of teachers; the feedback of the current question represents the next part of the improvement process. A percentage of the teachers, as stated by the 57% of administrators, are not qualified enough to rely on during the improvement phase of the educational system. In addition, many teachers lack the experience and the knowledge of modern teaching and learning theories that have proven effectiveness in the field.

**4.2. Q A12** Are you satisfied with the current teaching load?

a- Yes, satisfied.

b- No, not satisfied.

If not satisfied, would you increase / decrease the load
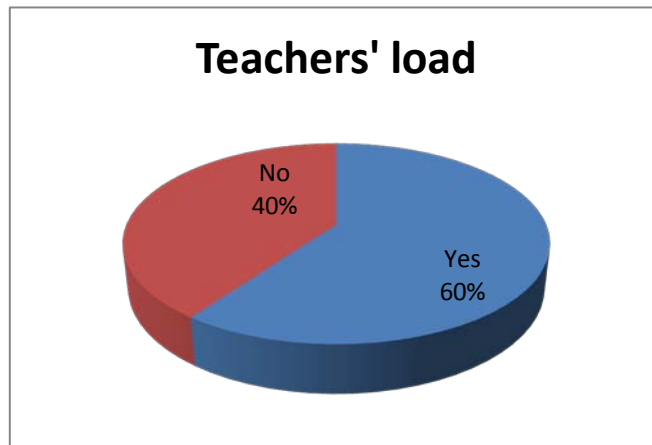


Figure A13: Are you satisfied with the current teaching load?

The number of teaching periods per week, which is around 15 to 18 periods, is already set by the central office at the MOE; principals have limited authority over the teacher's load except in some incidents where the number of teachers and students do not match. The higher percentage of administrators, 60% stated "Satisfied" with the current teaching load, the other 40% are not quit satisfied with the same.

Teaching loads within the public schools are far below their matching loads in the private sector, which mean that more teachers are needed to do the work in public schools, and more administrative work to serve that high number of teachers compared to the number of students.

**4.2. Q A13** Are you satisfied with the extra-curricular activity level in your school?

    a- Yes.

    b- No.
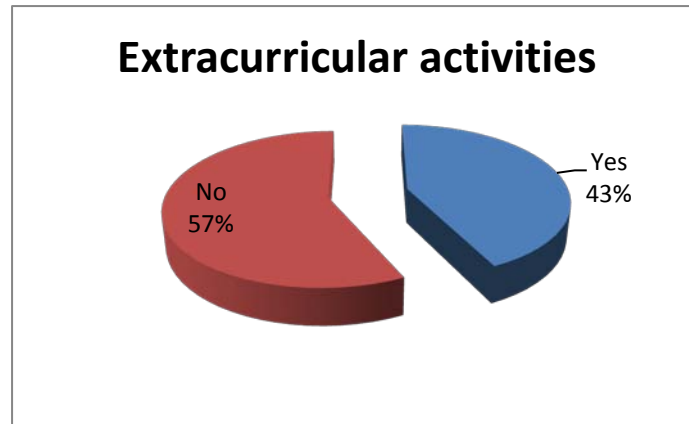


Figure A14: Are you satisfied with the current extra-curricular activities?

Extracurricular activities transforms school into a better place for students, promotes the need to belong of students to their educational provider, and could be used to offer a range of talent spotting tools through students' activities. The higher percentage of administrators, 57%, is not satisfied with the current plans and programs of extracurricular activities, while 43% of administrators are quite satisfied.

Abu Dhabi public schools offer a limited range of extracurricular activities to their students, in most cases, football training and computer club. There is no policy for extracurricular activities and mostly it is up to the teacher to decide to start a club and make all the needed steps to follow up the progress. In addition, there is no incentive pay for the teacher upon performing extra effort in extracurricular activities.

**4.2. Q A14** Would you like more parent involvement in decision-making process?

a- Yes

b- No,

Reason your choice,_____
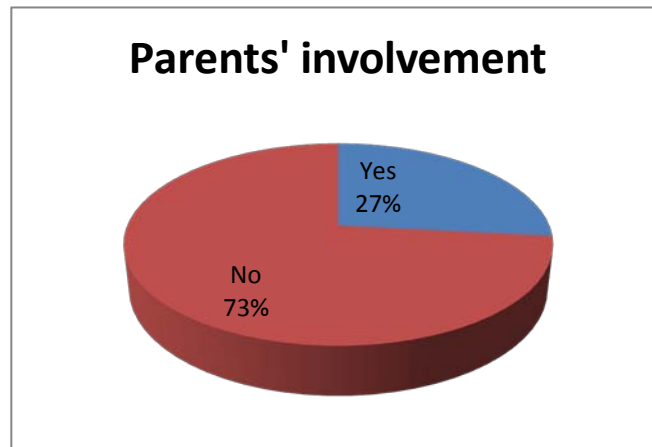


Figure A15: Would you like more parents' involvement?

Parents' feedback and involvement could be considered as a valuable source of guiding as well as a measure of how effective the educational process proceeds. As mentioned earlier in the parents' questionnaire, question P3, the highest percentage of parents do not offer feedback to school administrators, but are willing to do that, question P4. Furthermore, parents are willing to allocate a fixed time every week/ month to meet with other parents and administrators and discuss issues related to their children's education, question P10.

Looking at the feedback from administrators, the higher percentage of administrators, 73%, are not in favor of acquiring more involvement from the parents' side, while only 27% welcome the parents' involvement.

**4.2. Q A15** Would you like to make any changes in the current policies; or you would better have them as they are?

    a- Yes, I would make changes.

    b- No, policies are fine now.
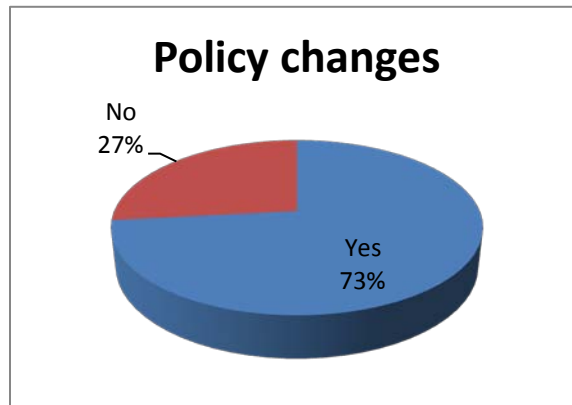


Figure A16: Do you have any suggestions for policy changes?

Another version of the earlier question number ……., which confirms the intention of administrators to make changes in the current policies. Again, the higher percentage of administrators, 73%, are in favor of changing the current policies, while the lower percentage, 27%, would like to keep the policies as they are currently.

**4.2. Q A16** Do you think that the school environment, in terms of management that is more effective, enhanced teachers and students' performance, more effective resource allocation, would improve if SBM were applied?

    a- Yes, I do believe so.

    b- No, I do not believe so.
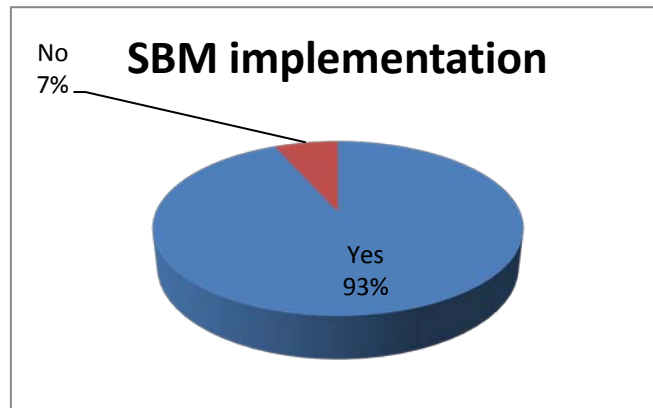
Figure A17: Do you believe that SBM would enhance the educational system?

Administrators believe that there is a relationship between implementing SBM and effective management, enhanced teacher and student performance, and more effective resource allocation. The feedback offers a massive agreement of administrators, 93%, of the presence of SBM and general atmosphere improvement. On the other hand, only 7% of the administrators do not believe there is a relationship.

**4.2. Q A17** Do you agree to be evaluated by your school staff on yearly basis?

- a- Yes, I agree.
- b- No, I do not agree.
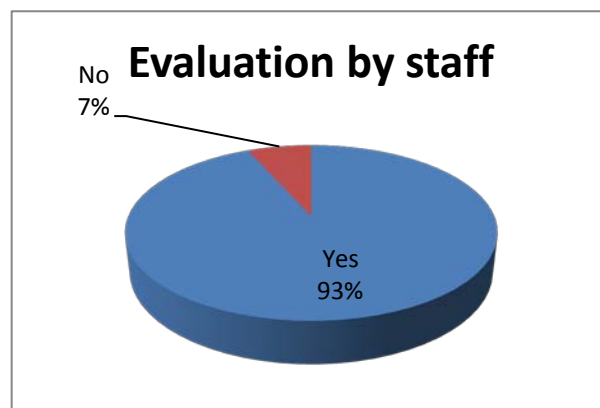


Figure A17: Teachers evaluate principal

Amazingly, a significant high percentage of administrators are willing to be evaluated by their staff. 93% of the principals affirm "Yes" to be evaluated on a yearly basis; only 7% affirm "No" for the same evaluation.

The current evaluation process takes only one direction, top-down, in which the principal evaluates the teaching staff on yearly basis and submits intervallic reports about the situation with the evaluation progress to the central office with recommendations about the working staff. The principal and vice-principal are evaluated by the central administration through the achievement of their students' result of each term or school year. However, there are some cases where there are conflicts between teachers and school administrations that might result in lower achievement of teachers, and consequently students. If teachers were given the chance to evaluate the school governing body; that might result in enhancing the total performance of the organization, and motivates principals to try to achieve higher limits with their performance.

## 4.3 Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

A questionnaire of 11 items was circulated for teachers in public schools managed by ADEC, boys' and girls' schools, of different cycles (first, second, and third cycles).  The questionnaire was anonymous and administered in both Arabic and English languages. Out of 250 questionnaires that were sent out to schools, 186 questionnaires were collected back.

The following section represents each individual question's feedback, followed by analysis of the same question.

**4.3. Q T1** The first question was to determine the level of expertise shown by public school teachers in terms of years of experience, for the same or different employer.

"How long have you been a teacher?

   a- less than 5 years
   b- 5 – 10 years
   c- More than 10 years"
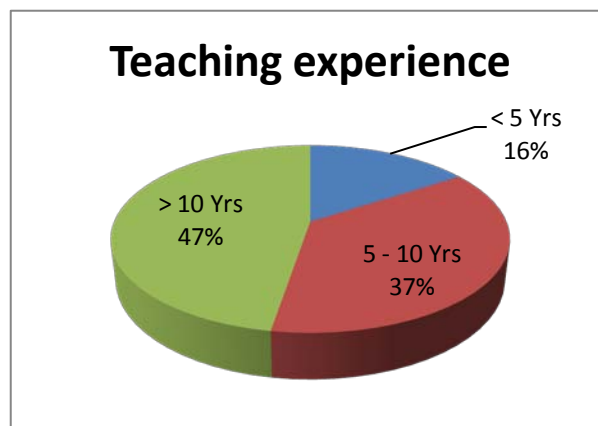


Figure T1: How long have you been teaching?

Clearly, the teaching staff working for ADEC is mostly experienced. The highest percentage,47%, stated "More than 10 years" of teaching experience, the next percentage, 37%, stated "5- 10 years" of teaching experience. On the other

hand, the freshest teaching staff is the lowest percentage, 16%, with less than five years of teaching experience.

Having trained staff working in the field offers extra reliability to the school's administration, and facilitates the school's operations, from teaching to dealing with the students' problems. While the experienced teachers offer field experience and guidance for the newly graduated staff, the fresh staff offers the latest knowledge on the new education theories and techniques to implement in the field, together the experienced and fresh staff should make the perfect combination that would be expected to offer the superlative teaching yield in favor of students.
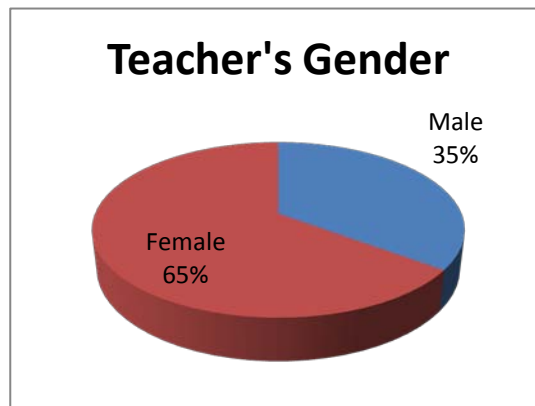
**4.3. Q T2** Are you a:

  a- Male

  b- Female



Figure T2: Gender of the respondent.

Most of Abu Dhabi's working force in the education field are females, 65%, the rest are males with a percentage of 35%. Schools in Abu Dhabi Emirate, as in the rest of United Arab Emirates, are segregated into boys and girls schools, in which male teachers work only in boys' schools, while female teachers work only in girls' schools. ADEC; along with ADEZ have made a decision few years back to "feminize" the primary education, where the primary students are taught

exclusively by female teachers. The decision to feminize the primary education resulted in increasing the female teachers and limiting the male teachers in Abu Dhabi schools.

**4.3. Q T3** What is the highest education level you have acquired?

a- high school

b- High diploma
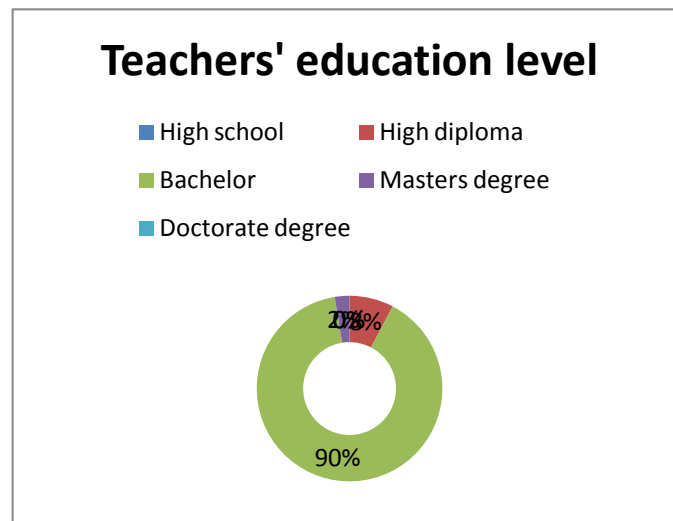
c- Bachelor degree

d- Masters degree

e- Doctorate degree



Figure T3: Teachers' education level.

When ADEZ first established, it was normal to find teachers with only teaching diploma, and in cases high school, certificate working in public schools, until recent years those teachers were still practicing education. The standards were raised to have a minimum of Bachelor degree certificate accompanied with a minimum of two years of teaching experience to be able to join the staff as a teacher. Teachers who were appointed with only high school certificate are no longer working in the force as they all reached the retirement age.

The highest percentage of the current teaching staff, 90%, holds bachelor degree, some teachers whom highest degree of education is the teaching high diploma are still working, and nonetheless, they only represent 8% of the staff. The lowest percentage is for Masters degree holders, only 2%. There are no current teachers with doctorate level degree working for ADEC.

**4.3. Q T4** How many principals did you have in your career life?

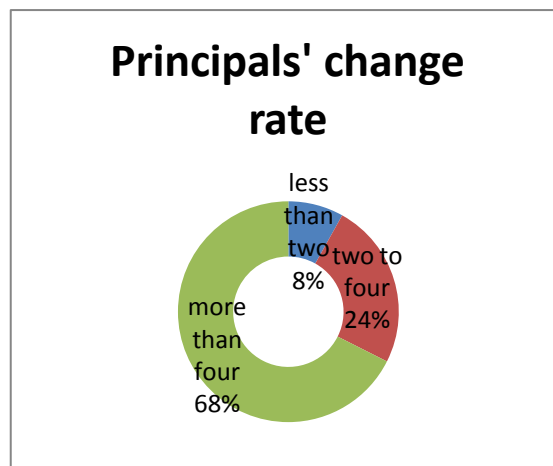a- less than 2

b- 2 – 4

c- More than 4



Figure T4: How many principals have you worked for?

As seen in the figure above, the rate in which principals are changed is rather high. Most of the teachers, 68%, experienced "more than four" principals during their career life with ADEZ, which is a shocking high percentage. Follows, 24% of the teachers have experienced "two to four" principals, the lowest percentage, 8% of the teachers have worked with less than two principals throughout their educational career.

It should be clear for the central office personnel administrators that long-term plans should be built on the presence of the same employee for at least the period of the plan. Teachers have to change their style of performance to suit the new principal's approach of working towards the goal, which leaves less focus on

the classroom performance, and grants a feeling of insecurity for teachers until they cope with the new manager they have.

**4.3. Q T5** As a teacher, do you agree that the administration decisions are related to students' performance?
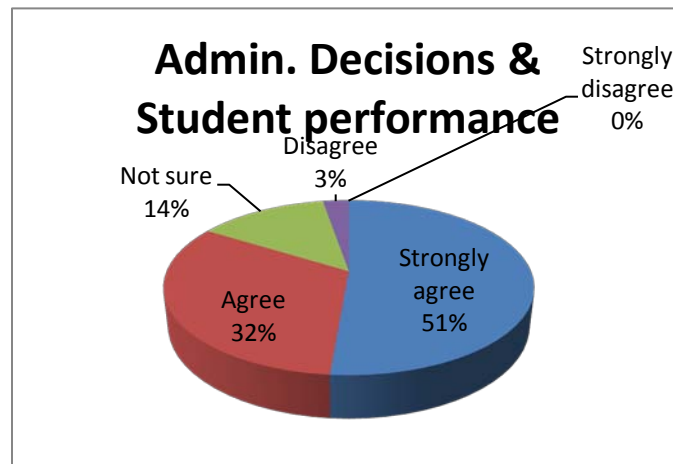


Figure T5: Are administration decisions and students' performance related?

Teachers represent the essential connection between administration and students, when teachers were asked if they believe that there is a relation between administration decisions and students' achievement the highest percentage, 51%, stated, "Strongly agree", in addition 32% "Agree" that there is a relation. On the other hand, 14% were "Not sure" while 3% disagreed on the presence of any relation between students' achievement and administration decisions.

The feedback to the question offers a factual observation that is lived by teachers in which they experience the changes in their classrooms for the reason that of the various decisions taken by administration. The fact that 83% of teachers agreed on different levels on the presence of relation suggest the vitality of the type of administration practiced within the school and the level of performance shown by students.

**4.3. Q T6** How far would you agree that it is more efficient to have the complete decision making process from within the school?
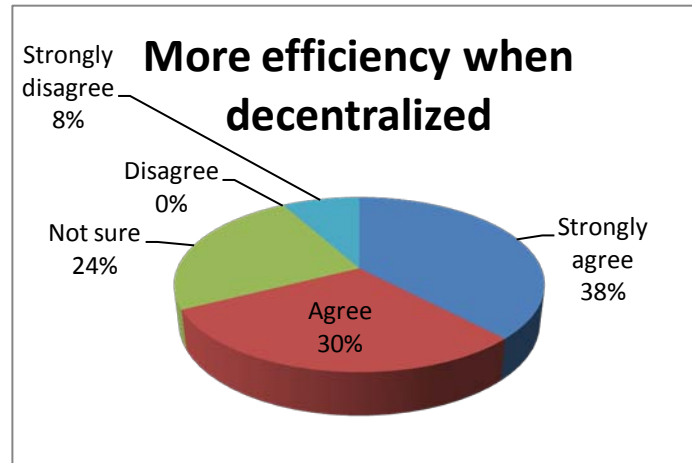


Figure T6: Do you agree on decentralization?

Teachers currently experience the centralized management with MOE/ ADEC, they were invited to feedback about the efficiency of SBM if it were applied in public schools. The highest percentage of teachers, 38%, "Strongly agree" while another 30% "Agree" that more efficiency to be expected with ABM. On the other hand, 24% affirmed "Not sure", and only 8% affirmed "Strongly disagree" and 0% "Disagree" that SBM would lead to more efficiency in the educational system.

**4.3. Q T7** How would you describe your school capacity in handling the following areas with complete administration?
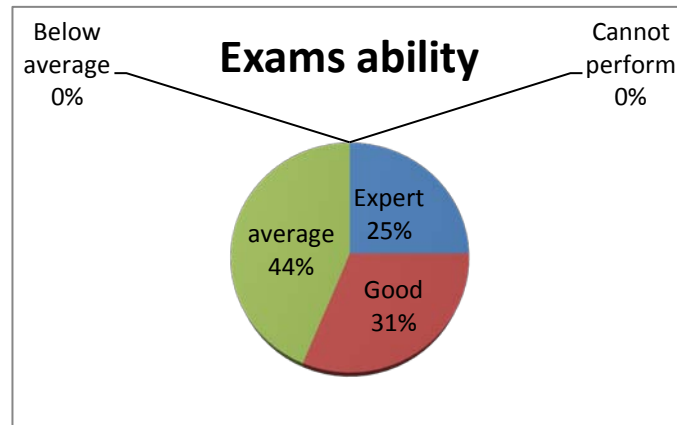
**4.3. Q T7 1** Exams



Figure T71: The schools' exams ability.

Teachers are very optimistic about their institution's ability in performing exams on their own. The feedback shows that 25% stated, "Expert level" in exam preparation, 31% stated "Good level", and 44% stated "Average level" in exam preparation. The interesting fact is that for both "Below average" and "Cannot perform" the feedback was 0%.

Teachers, especially the experienced ones, are so confident about preparing well-structured exams that would reflect the actual level of students, 56% of teachers stated that they, represented by their schools, could prepare high-level exams.
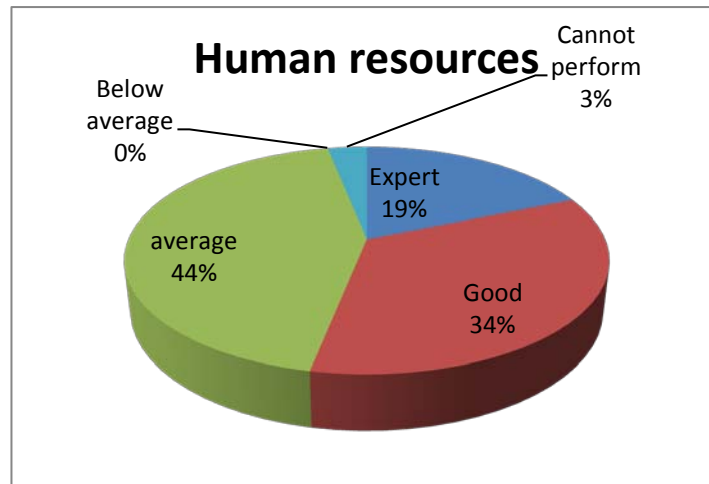
**4.3. Q T7 2** Human resources



Figure T72: The schools' human resources ability.

Teachers are sure that if the human resources were performed from within the school results would be much better. 19% of the sample's feedback believe that school administrations are able to make recruitments that serve the educational goals on "Expert level", in addition, 34% stated "Good level", and 44% stated "Average level" would be expected. On the other hand, only 3% think that local school boards "Cannot perform" that task.
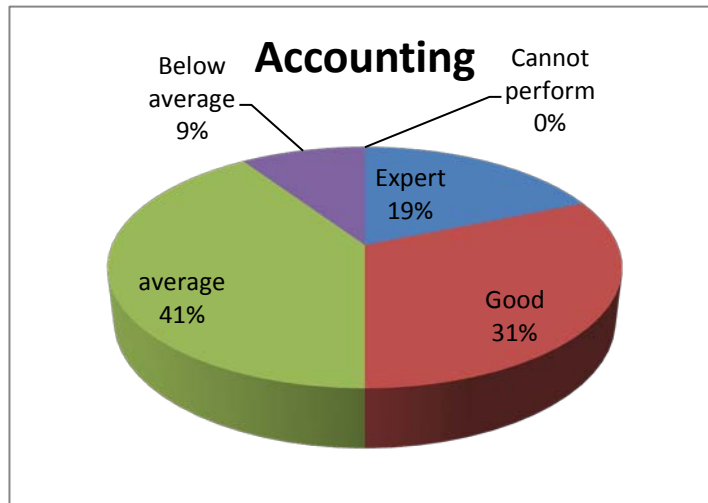
## 4.3. Q T7 3 Accounting



Figure T73: The schools' accounting ability.

Teachers are to some extent confident about the ability of their respective institutions to perform the accounting tasks. 50% of the sample stated that schools can perform the accounting tasks, 19% affirm "Expert level", while 31% affirm "Good level" of accounting ability. 41% of the sample stated that the ability of their institutions is "Average", and finally, only 9% affirm "Below average level" in the accounting tasks.
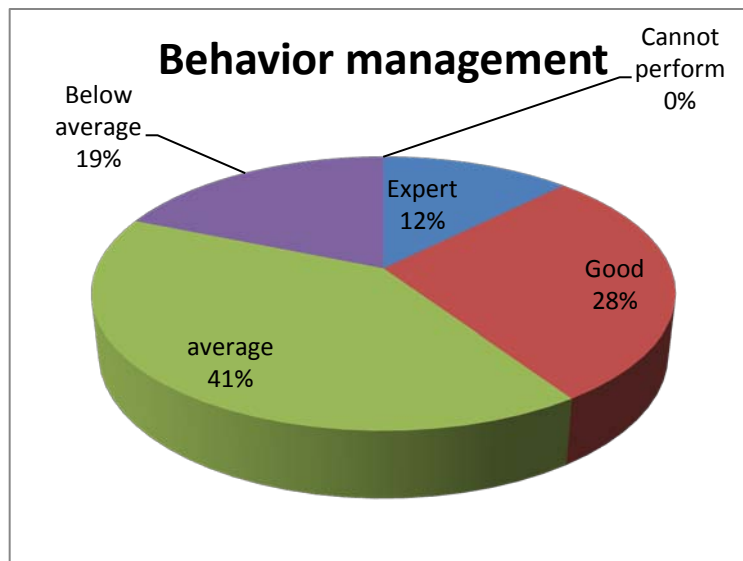
## 4.3. Q T7 4 Behavior management



Figure T74: The schools' behavioral management ability.

Teachers are confident about their institutions' ability and consequently their ability of handling the behavior issues that may rise in schools. 12% affirm "Expert level" in handling behavior problems, in addition 28% stated "Good level" for the same. On the other hand, 41% affirm "Average" and "Below average" with 19% only.

## 4.3. Q T7 5 Performance evaluation



Figure T75: The schools' performance evaluation ability.

One key indicator for the progress rate of any educational institute is the performance evaluation for teachers and students as well. Teachers agree that their institutions are able to evaluate the performance at "Expert level" with 19%, 42% affirm "Good level" and 36% of "Average level" in performance evaluation. Only 3% of the teachers believe that their institutions cannot evaluate the performance, or they can perform only "Below average".

**4.3. Q T8** Would you accept more parents' involvement in decision-making process?
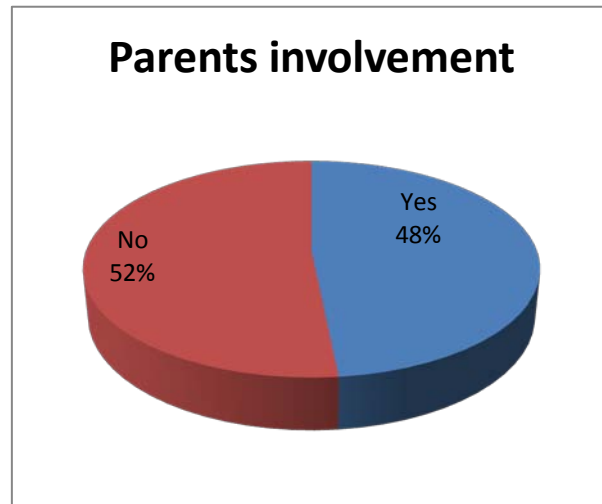
    a- yes

    b- no



Figure T8: Do you accept more parents' involvement?

The higher percentage of teachers refuses more involvement of parents in the educational progression, 52% of teachers affirm "No" for more involvement, on contrary, 48% of the teachers affirm "Yes" for more involvement.

One reason could be standing behind the refusal of most of the teachers for more parents' involvement, which is the further confidence of teachers about their ability to take the right decisions concerning education than parents would do.

**4.3. Q T9** Would you follow/ allow/ obey the changes/ modifications that result from the school management – parents committee, even if you do not see the point/ not totally convinced that there is benefit behind it?

    a- Yes, I would follow those decisions anyway.

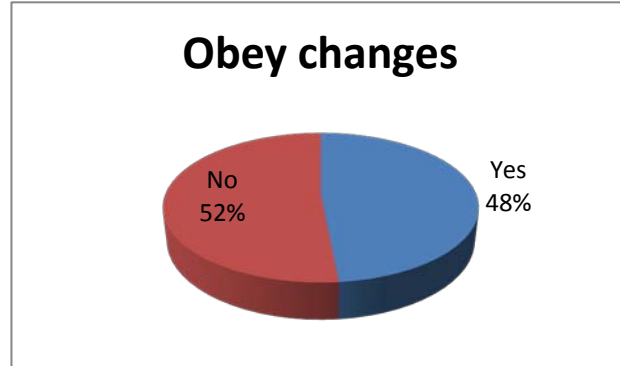    b- No, I would not follow if I were not convinced.

**Obey changes**

Figure T9: Would you obey all required changes?

Administration decisions may sometimes need to be revised, critiqued, and reevaluated. If the complete administration is handed to the local school board, some of the decisions taken may not be in the very best favor of the education process, for some of the teachers have enough experience to judge those decisions. When asked, the higher percentage of teachers refused to obey the changes or modifications even if they do not make logic for them, 52% affirm "No" for such decisions. On the other hand, 48% of the teachers affirm "Yes" for any decision that comes from the administration, even if it does not meet the logic of them.

**4.3. Q T10** Would you agree on evaluating the school management by the end of every year?

    a- Yes, I would like that.

    b- No, I would not like that.
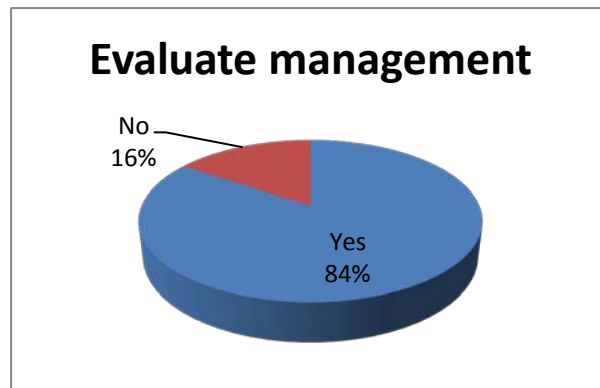


Figure T10: Do you agree on evaluating school management yearly?

Not only the teachers and students are to be evaluated at the end of each school year, management also needs to be evaluated, stated teachers. A considerable high percentage of the teachers, 84%, agreed on evaluating management at the end of each year. On the other hand, only 16% refused to evaluate the management performance.

**4.3. Q T11** Finally, do you think that SBM would benefit the whole education system in UAE/ Abu Dhabi, represented in students, teachers, parents, and administrators?

   a- Yes
   b- No
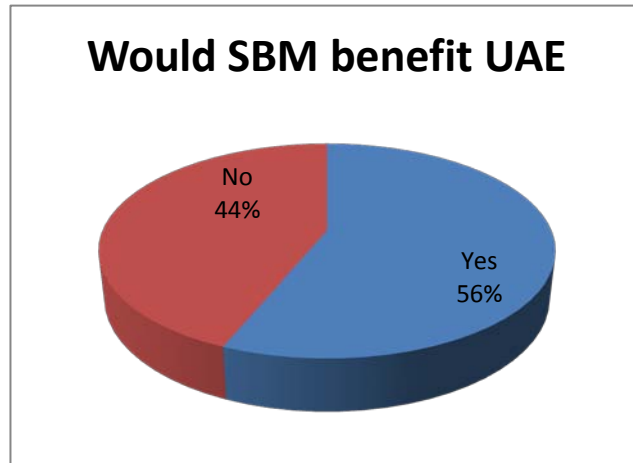


Figure T11: Do you think SBM would benefit the UAE?

The last question offers a conclusion for teachers feedback, after the previous question about the details of SBM, of whether they think that applying SBM would benefit the education system in UAE or not. 56% of the teachers agree on the benefit of SBM to UAE educational system, while 44% of the sample does not think that it is for the very best interest of the educational system of UAE.

## Chapter 5

## SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4 the collected data were analyzed, presented and research findings given. The current chapter is the final section of the research where the summary is presented, recommendations are given, and the conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the research.

## 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

For the rationale of this investigation, the researcher was set to answer the research question that was mentioned in the first chapter, section 1.2 Statement of the problem. The purpose of the research was to investigate the different theories of decentralization and the possible means of implementation, as well; the successful implementation phase needs analysis.

The research problem was "How would the education system in Abu Dhabi and UAE benefit if School-Based Management were applied? Furthermore, how could the SBM governed and correctly implemented in UAE? "

To investigate the above stated problem more effectively, the research question was further broken down into a number of sublevel questions as follow

6- What is the meaning of SBM? How can it be defined?
7- What are the advantages and disadvantages of applying "School-based Management" in UAE schools?
8- What are the obtainable means to apply successful SBM? In addition, what are the causes of failure to be avoided?
9- How do the roles of different participants, principal, teachers, and parents, change when applying SBM in schools?

10-Does school management have a considerable role in students' outcomes?

Chapter 1 offered general background of the research settings and all the related information about the public schooling system and the rationale behind the study. An introduction of the research methodology along with the population was offered. Definitions of the various terms and abbreviations used throughout the research were illustrated as well.

Chapter 2 introduced an extensive literature review related to the school-based management. Various other aspects were looked into, such as the role of different parties in SBM, principals, parents, teachers, students, and administration staff; other aspects included leadership, student achievement, planning for successful implementation.

Chapter 3 illustrated in details the research methodology used where both the qualitative and quantitative methods were used to give more creditability for the research findings. The questionnaire method was selected to gather data, spaces for extra comments were included to reduce the disadvantages of questionnaire and to make up the lack of interviewer or the researcher; and to allow respondent to feedback more freely to the questions.

The collected data were analyzed and research findings were given in chapter 4. A detailed analysis was offered for each single question offering rich and thick description for the data collected. The analysis and discussion of the data have yielded the following findings:

➢ Some parents are not quite satisfied with the current practices of the public schooling system for variety of reasons, such as, but not limited to, the general educational atmosphere quality, missing school home connection that is represented in two traffic communication, absence of books, effectiveness of the feedback process, and students' achievement.

➢ Most of the parents do not participate in decision-making process, 40% never participated, 29% sometimes, and 19% rarely offered participation.

➢ The current system does not seek out for the help of parents or community members. Most of the parents, 78.9%, agree on different levels to offer help and advice to educators when needed. (Question P3)

➢ A very high percentage of parents (78.9%) are ready to play an active role in the decision-making process. (Question P4)

➢ The higher percentage of parents (35%) is not ready for decentralization process. (Question P5)

➢ The higher percentage of parents (47%) agrees that SBM would enhance the performance of the school as a whole. (Question P9)

➢ An exceptionally high percent of parents (89%) is ready to allocate time to meet and discuss matters of education improvement in regular basis. (Question P10)

The above findings are a valuable source for obtaining healthy findings that would aid in improving the system. The above set of findings concerning parents mainly could be summarized as parents are ready to be a part of the reform process in education, parents are even ready to allocate time to meet and discuss important issues, and nonetheless, the current system does not reach out for parents' help. Parents believe that SBM would enhance students' achievement, yet they are not ready for decentralization process. The reason behind this could be the missing trust between parents and education administration. Parents are willing to be part of the decision-making committee, yet many of them never participated in such committees.

➢ The higher percentage of administrators (62%) believes that they are not qualified enough for SBM to be applied in their schools. (Question A6)

➢ The higher percentage of administrators (86%) is willing to be held accountable for the consequences of their decisions in SBM. (Question A8)

➢ Very low percentage (14%) of administrators, principals and vice-principals, has long experience that would enable them to act as an active participant in education reform process. (Question A2)

Although administrators do not have enough experience to represent an effective party of SBM, they are willing to participate and be held accountable for the decisions they make. However, to make up the shortage in administrators' experience, special professional development programs should be designed for them to train them on the modern trends in school governance.

➢ The higher percentage of administrators (93%) and teachers (56%) agree that SBM would benefit the education system if implemented correctly. (Question A16, T11)

➢ Very high percentage of administrators (95%) shares their decisions with their staff, and believes in the shared leadership style. (Question A3, A4, and A5)

➢ The higher percentage of administrators (57%) needs to replace some of their staff members. (Question A11)

➢ 93% of the Administrators agree on being evaluated by their staff on yearly basis, in addition, 84% of teachers agree on evaluating their administrators. (Question A17, T10)

A significant agreement between teachers and administrators on evaluating the administration by staff would definitely introduce a means of improvement for the administration performance. In addition, administrators stated they share their decisions with their staff, which is a

good indicator for the future success of SBM when implemented. Administrators, on the other hand, are in favor of changing the teachers' recruitment policies, as they are ready to replace more than one member of their staff teachers.

- ➢ Most administrators (25%) are in favor of changing policies concerning teachers' recruitment process. (Question A9)

- ➢ The higher percentage of administrators (57%) is not satisfied with the current extracurricular activities offered. (Question A13)

- ➢ Most administrators (73%) and teachers (52%) do not desire more parents' involvement in the educational process. (Question A14, T8)

- ➢ Most of the teachers served with more than four principals during their career life. (Question T4)

- ➢ The higher percentage of teachers (51%) agrees on the strong relationship between administration decisions and students' achievement. (Question T5).

## 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature study of SBM and the investigation of Abu Dhabi public schools warrant the following recommendations:

- ➢ Parents are willing to participate in the education reform process, providing that they are encouraged to do so. Administrators and teachers both do not believe in the value of parents' participation, they need to be aware of the several advantages of having parents as an active part of the reform process.
- ➢ Administrators believe that SBM would enhance performance in public schools; on the other hand they are not quite ready for the implementation process. Administrators need to be prepared through

tailored professional development means to make up the missing factor of experience.

➢ Education system should reach out for parents help and encourage their input in efforts of education reform. Parents are ready to allocate time to meet, discuss, and make decisions concerning the reform of the education process.

➢ Administration's performance should be evaluated be teachers for the sake of improvement; the evaluation process should be allowed to traffic both ways up and down especially if both administrators and teachers agree on that.

➢ For long-term plans, administrators should be prepared to serve in the same position for longer periods. Most of the teachers served with more than four principals throughout their career life, stability, and building relationship between principal and teachers aids in improving the educational outcomes.

➢ Policies concerning teachers' recruitment need to be improved to suit the required outcomes of improved education process. Administrators are in favor of modifying those policies through the implementation of SBM.

➢ Administrators share their decisions with their staff, which represents a healthy step in preparation for the SBM to be implemented. The missing factor, nevertheless, is to have parents as a part of decision-making process which should be emphasized on through professional development means.

➢ There is a relationship between administration decisions and students achievement through teachers performance and satisfaction conditions. Decisions should be thoroughly studied and carefully implemented in order to maximize teachers' satisfaction, and consequently improve their classroom performance.

➢ There is more in education than classroom learning. Extracurricular activities offer students a more socializing opportunity within the educational system. The current extracurricular activities are not quite diverse to accommodate all students' interests, there should be a policy concerned with the improvement of extracurricular activities.

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of the research article was to investigate the readiness of public schooling system in Abu Dhabi Emirate and in UAE to adopt SBM, furthermore, to investigate the various benefits of implementing SBM in the public schools of UAE. This was done through posing the research questions, and based on analyzing the raw data in chapter 4. The research concluded that SBM model could be implemented in public schools with thorough preparation process that includes professional development for administrators, teachers, and parents. This research finding is supported by the findings discussed in paragraph 5.2 above.

The conclusion warrants suggestions for the following topics for further investigations:

### 5.4.1 SBM pre-implementation professional development

The different professional development means for administrators, teachers, and parents to be investigated.

### 5.4.2 Importance of evaluation of administration by teachers

Improving the administration's performance through evaluation done by teachers, down-top evaluation, need to be investigated.

### 5.4.3 Extracurricular activities in relation to students' performance

The relationship between extracurricular activities in schools and the students' performance need to be further investigated.

## 5.4.4 Teachers' recruitment policies in relation to improving educational outcomes

Policies of recruiting new teachers in relation with the improvement of educational outcomes need to be further investigated.

## List of Illustrations

**Appendices**

**Appendix 1**

**Questionnaire cover letter**

*School-Based Management – SBM*

*Research Questionnaire*

Respected Sir/ Madam,

For long time, the complete administration and management were in the hand of MOE, ADEZ and ADEC.

*What if* the management is completely decentralized to be the task of each school? Are schools able to handle the complete management roles, in addition to taking the full responsibility for that?

Do you expect improvement in students' results and teachers' performance? Many question are to be investigated and issues to be thoroughly studied. That questionnaire is a one-step of that research.

Whether you are a principal, vice principal, teacher, parent or a community member, your opinion makes a difference. So, please help us try to build better/ improved educational system.

Notes:

1- Thank you for devoting part of your time to complete the questionnaire.
2- The questionnaire in hand is for research purpose only
3- The questionnaire is anonymous – you don't have to mention your name.
4- All information is kept confidential.
5- If you need any further clarification, do not hesitate to contact the researcher Mohamed Fathi Hussein at

050 610 8278

Mohamed_f_hussein@hotmail.com

Regards,

Mohamed Hussein

**Appendix 2**

**Parents' questionnaire**

*School-Based Management - SBM*

*Questionnaire for Parents*

2- Are all you children in Public schools or you have/ had others in Private schools?

      a- All in public schools
      b- I had others in private schools

3- Are you satisfied with the current management performance of the school?

      a- Yes
      b- No
Reason your choice _____

_____

4- How would you rate your participation in decision making in the school?

| Strongly involved | | only sometimes | | not involved at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5- Would you agree have more involvement in decision-making process?

| Strongly agree | | not sure | | strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6- Would you agree that the school management handles the complete management concerning the education process?

Strongly agree                          not sure                          strongly disagree

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

7- If you were more involved in decision making, how would you rate the importance in improving the following areas
   a- Teaching loads

   b- students' activities                          ___

   c- HW policy                                     ___

   d- Punishment policies                           ___

   e- Teachers' feedback policies                   ___

   f- Improving the school / community link         ___

   g- Building facilities                           ___

   h- Physical education / sports facilities / policies      ___

8- What would be the first priority for you to try to change/ improve?
   _____
   _____

9- Do you believe the management would perform more effectively if handled from the school itself?

Strongly agree                          not sure                          strongly disagree

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

10- Are you ready to devote a part of your time every week/ month to discuss and finalize issues concerning your son/ daughter education?

Strongly agree                              not sure                              strongly disagree

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Appendix 3**

**Principals' questionnaire**

**School-Based Management Questionnaire**

**School Senior Management**

1- Are you a

 a- Principal
 b- Vice principal
 c- Executive secretary

2- How long have you been a in that position?

a- Less than 5 years
b- 5-10 years
c- More than 10 years

3- Having a managerial role in your school, do you share the decision with any of your staff employee?
a- yes
b- no

4- Do you think better decisions can be achieved through shared decision making from your staff?
 a- yes
 b- no

 Why

 _____

 _____

5- Do you  consider your style of administration tough minded style
a- yes
b- no

6- Do you think your school has the required capacity to perform complete management away from the MOE / ADEZ?
a- Yes
b- No


7- Do you have a team that is qualified enough to handle the


a- Recruitment process

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|


b- Financial issues

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|


c- Budgeting

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|


d- Accounting issues

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|


e- Performance evaluation

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|


f- Setting exams

Expert level                              Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

g-  Professional development

Expert level                        Good                              Very poor

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |

8-  Do you accept to have the full management of the school you run, and in turn, be accountable to the full responsibility of your decisions?

   a-  Yes, I accept.
   b-  No, I do not accept.

9-  What kind of current policies/practices would you like to change when you receive the complete responsibility? (you can choose any number of choices)

   a-  Policies concerning teachers' recruitment.
   b-  Policies concerning Professional Development.
   c-  Policies concerning parents' involvement
   d-  Policies concerning teachers' evaluation.
   e-  Policies concerning incentives pay.
   f-  Policies concerning students' evaluation
   g-  Other policies……………………………..

10- Are there any changes that you would like to make to your school building?

      a-  Yes, there are changes.
      b-  No, there are no changes.

11- If you have the choice, would you replace/change/fire any of the staff members you currently have?

   a-  Yes, how many? _____
   b-  No

12- Are you satisfied with the current teaching load?

   a-  Yes, satisfied.
   b-  No, not satisfied.

If not satisfied, would you

   Increase     /   decrease the load

13- Are you satisfied with the extra-curricular activity level in your school?

   a- Yes.
   b- No.

14- Would you like more parent involvement in decision-making process?

   a- Yes
   b- No,
Reason your choice,_____

_____

15- Would you like to make any changes in the current policies, or you had better have them as they are?
   a- Yes, I would make changes.
   b- No, policies are fine now.

16- Do you think that the school environment (more effective management, better teacher and student achievement, more effective resource allocation) would improve if SBM were applied?

   a- Yes, I do believe so.
   b- No, I do not believe so.

17- Do you agree to be evaluated by your school staff on yearly basis?

   a- Yes, I agree.
   b- No, I do not agree.

**Appendix 4**

**Teachers' questionnaire**

***School-Based Management - SBM***

***Questionnaire for Teachers***

1- How long have you been a teacher


   f-  less than 5 years
   g-  5 – 10 years
   h-  More than 10 years


2- Are you a:
   a-  Male
   b-  Female


3- What is the highest education level you have acquired?
   a-  High school
   b-  High diploma
   c-  Bachelor degree
   d-  Masters' degree
   e-  Doctorate degree
4- How many principals did you have in your career life?


   d-  less than 2
   e-  2 – 4
   f-  More than 4


5- As a teacher, do you agree that the administration decisions are related to students' performance?

| Strongly agree | | not sure | | strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6- How far would you agree that it is more efficient to have the complete decision making process from within the school?

| Strongly agree | | not sure | | strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7- How would you describe your school capacity in handling the following areas with complete administration

Exams

| Expert level | | Good | | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Human Resources

| Expert level | | Good | | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Accounting

| Expert level | | Good | | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Behavior management

| Expert level | | Good | | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Performance evaluation

| Expert level | | Good | | Very poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8- Would you accept more parents' involvement in decision making process?


  c- yes
  d- no


If No, justify your answer_____

_____


9- Would you follow/ allow/ obey the changes/ modifications that result from the school management – parents committee, even if you do not see the point/ not totally convinced that there is benefit behind it?


  c- Yes, I would follow those decisions anyway.
  d- No, I would not follow if I were not convinced.


10- Would you like to evaluate the school management by the end of every year?


  c- Yes, I would like that.
  d- No, I would not like that.


11- Finally, do you think that SBM would benefit the whole education system in UAE/ Abu Dhabi, represented in students, teachers, parents and administrators?


c- Yes
d- No

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