

DELEGATION AND COORDINATION: TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Dr. Purna Prabhakar Nandamuri

Assistant Professor, ITM Business School,
Hunter Road, Warangal-506001,
Andhra Pradesh, India.

Dr.K.V.Rao

Professor, Department of Commerce and Business
Administration,
Acharya Nagarjuna University, Andhra Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT

There is an increasing awareness around the world for incorporating professional management into traditional public services. Similar trend has been encompassing the school education sector in the form of school based management. It would be appropriate to analyze the prevailing practices of school management in the context of similar reforms being initiated in India. This paper is an integral part of the doctoral dissertation in management area – ‘A study of Management Practices of Secondary Schools’. The objective of this paper is to explore the status of delegation and coordination aspects of school management. A sample of 188 secondary schools was selected through stratified sampling technique. The primary data was collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules. Chi-Square Test and simple percentages were used to analyze the data with the help of SPSS-17. The findings reveal that more delegation to be facilitated by the educational administrators. Despite the dearth of coordination committees, the nature of coordination between the school head and staff and among the staff members is good. The study suggests the policy makers to facilitate faster reforms and enhance accountability.

Keywords: School Based Management, Professional Management, Delegation, Coordination.

Introduction

Of-late, professional management has been extended to more traditional areas of service management to achieve better results. School Based Management (SBM) is one such experiment in the area of education sector which is challenging the conventional education governance structures aiming at increasing autonomy and empowering localized decision making. Advocates of this innovative system argue that the devolution of decision-making authority to schools can facilitate and enhance participation – a core strategy in the Dakar Framework for Action (2000). Moving decisions away from remote planners and closer to those working at the schools who know much about the learners and their educational needs, as well as about local values and realities, is seen as a route to a more responsive system.

The existing unified administrative structures and practices have to be resilient to the changing times and demands. The schools must be well organized within to understand and adapt to the local needs and serve the community. Effective organization of the system is very critical to the success of the educational reform. Delegation and smooth coordination are the essential features of better organization.

Statement of the Problem:

The education sector in India has not yet fully internalized the developments in the field of management. The ‘Challenges of Education’, the ‘National Policy on Education - 1986’, the ‘Program of Action – 1992’ and many subsequent documents and reports brought this mutual exclusivity into focus and emphasized the need for professionalization of educational management. These reports realized that success in implementation of the National Policy on Education would be a function of its management process. According to Jean Drèze and Gazdar (1997), ‘the most striking weakness of the schooling system in rural Uttar Pradesh is not so much the deficiency of physical infrastructure but the poor utilization of the existing facilities. A study conducted by the Centre for Civil Society, New Delhi, in 2005 (Singh, 2006), stressed that the major problem lay not in the level of financial allocations, but rather in the organizational inefficiencies. The National Knowledge Commission of India (2009) has proposed to encourage decentralization, local autonomy in management of schools. Karpade, Ashok and Meghanathan (2004) found that successful schools adopted systematic and participative management system in running day-to-day activities of schools. The study also

revealed that people in managerial positions were delegated autonomy but also made them responsible for successful completion of the tasks.

As India is progressing in achieving the goals of accessibility and enrolment in school education, this is the time to shift concentration towards the management issues for making the system result oriented. Better models of management can be derived for Indian school system, for a faster turnaround, by analyzing the school based management practices followed around the world.

Objective of the Study:

The principal objective of the study is to explore the status of delegation and coordination practices in managing the secondary schools.

Methodology:

Stratified sampling has been utilized to draw the sample from the finite universe of 557 secondary schools operating under four major types of management in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh in India. The sample has been made largely representative by selecting 188 secondary schools accounting for around 34% of the population and representing 49 out of a total of 50 mandal administrative units. The primary data is collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules from the Headmasters / Principals of the select secondary schools. The data is analyzed through Chi-Square Test with the help of SPSS version 17, to establish the consistency of the responses.

Results And Analysis:

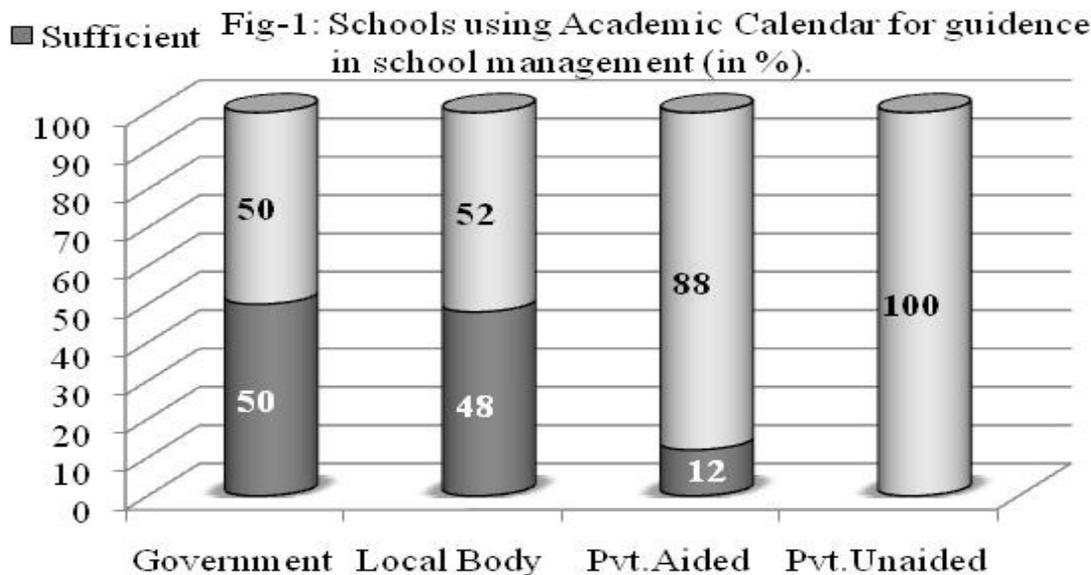
1. Delegation of Authority:

Over the past two decades, a large number of countries have been engaged in the decentralization and delegation of decision-making authority to school level. A study by Hanushek (2002) showed that a one standard deviation

increase in student achievement would yield a one percent increase in the rate of per capita economic growth and, in 30 years, would generate a \$1.4 trillion change in Gross Domestic Product. The complexity of the tasks warrants the need to delegate some tasks and duties to subordinates. A tactful head of a given educational institution realizes the need to delegate in order not to bite more than what he/she can chew, for the institution to function effectively. Delegation of authority is very important in school management and should be well understood by school heads as well as by the teachers. In the Indian context, the school administrators have no training in educational management and most of their appointments were based mainly on teaching experience and not on managerial experience. There is a great need to educate and create in them awareness of the need to delegate some tasks to their subordinates for the effective running of the school. Pushpanadham (2006) observes that decentralization is possible only when delegation of powers takes place at least to some extent. Amrik Singh (2001) opines that the delegation of powers in Indian schools is studied in terms of delegation at organization level and at school level.

Discussion:

The point of delegation of authority is not a component of the School Academic Calendar, circulated by the educational authorities, which is serving as a guide for running the school; since there is no specific operating manual provided for school management. It speaks about only the responsibilities of different positions and doesn't specify anything regarding authority and relationships. In absence of a separate operating manual, the school academic calendar is accepted to be the only authentic document for day-to-day management. Around 50% of the public sector schools depend on the supplied calendar for guidance (refer Figure-1). Only 12% of the Private Aided category is basing on the academic calendar and



the remaining 88% are framing their own guidelines of rules, regulations and norms regarding delegation of authority for effective school management. All the private unaided managements are designing a more comprehensive manual on school management than the calendar circulated. Regarding the sufficiency of the academic calendar in establishing authority relationships, majority of the respondents felt insufficient and that there is an urgent need to improve on it.

Regarding delegation at organization level, about 75% of Government and Local Body schools and all the Private Aided schools agreed that some powers have been delegated to the school heads through Go.no.40 of 2002 by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh. These powers, as specified in the Government Order, comprise of salary disbursement, issue of increments and sanction of leaves. However, the school heads have to exercise these powers jointly with the Mandal Education Officer concerned. The school heads of private unaided category are experiencing

delegation of powers in academic areas while the other issues have been taken care by the managements concerned.

The data pertaining to the opinions of the respondents regarding the delegation of authority is analyzed with the help of Chi Square Test (Tables 1&2) to establish consistency. Around 50% of the respondents in Government schools opined that the authority was 'not at all' delegated while 51% of the Local Body schools responded on the same scale and another 43% of them ranked as 'a little'. Among the aided schools, 46% rated as 'to some extent' followed by another 39% who said 'to some extent'. The unaided schools are showing some difference as 64% were saying 'to some extent' and another 27% have felt 'a little'. The Chi Square value (100.114) is very highly significant at 0.001 level.

Regarding the willingness to delegate authority to their subordinates, there were mixed responses from the heads of schools. Many of the heads of the public sector school

Table-1: Status of delegation of authority (cross tabulation)

| Category of schools | Status of delegation of authority at schools as opined by Headmasters | | | | | Total |
|---------------------|---|------------|----------|----------------|-------------------|--------|
| | | Not at all | A little | To some extent | To a great extent | |
| Government | Count | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| | % within category | 50.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 3.3% | 1.4% | 2.0% | .0% | 2.1% |
| | % of Total | 1.1% | .5% | .5% | .0% | 2.1% |
| Local body | Count | 58 | 48 | 7 | 0 | 113 |
| | % within category | 51.3% | 42.5% | 6.2% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 96.7% | 67.6% | 14.3% | .0% | 60.1% |
| | % of Total | 30.9% | 25.5% | 3.7% | .0% | 60.1% |
| Private aided | Count | 0 | 10 | 12 | 4 | 26 |
| | % within category | .0% | 38.5% | 46.2% | 15.4% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | .0% | 14.1% | 24.5% | 50.0% | 13.8% |
| | % of Total | .0% | 5.3% | 6.4% | 2.1% | 13.8% |
| Private unaided | Count | 0 | 12 | 29 | 4 | 45 |
| | % within category | .0% | 26.7% | 64.4% | 8.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | .0% | 16.9% | 59.2% | 50.0% | 23.9% |
| | % of Total | .0% | 6.4% | 15.4% | 2.1% | 23.9% |
| Total | Count | 60 | 71 | 49 | 8 | 188 |
| | % within row | 31.9% | 37.8% | 26.1% | 4.3% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 31.9% | 37.8% | 26.1% | 4.3% | 100.0% |

Table-2: Chi-Square Test results.

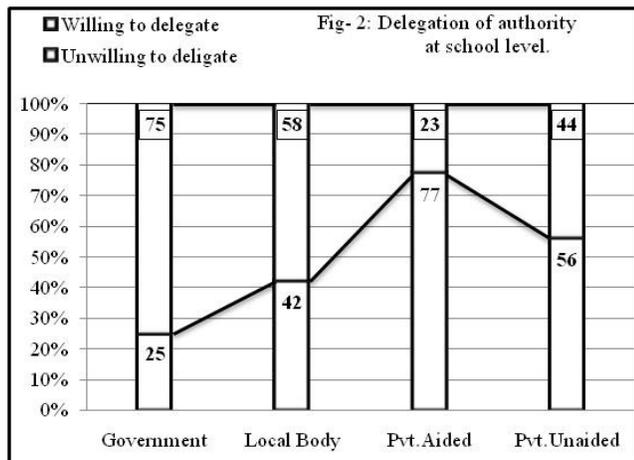
| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 100.114*** | 9 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 188 | | |

* 0.05 Significant;

** 0.01 Highly Significant;

*** 0.001 Very Highly Significant.

are reluctant to delegate authority at school level while some from private sector were positive, as is evident in Fig-2.

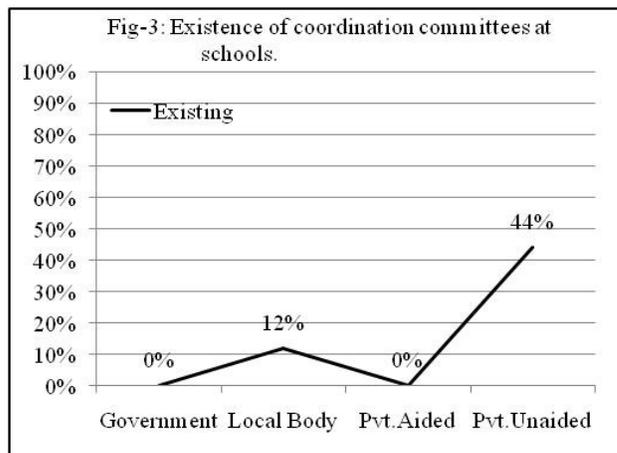


2. Coordination:

In the context of a school, the coordination effort is needed internally as well as externally i.e. among parents, communities and bureaucratic hierarchies. The state accountability systems placing pressure on school heads and staff to improve student performance. But, there is no time or opportunity for the school heads to courageously lead the school to improvement. One answer to this problem is to decentralize decision making authority and give principals more control over what goes on in their schools, enabling them to make decisions tailor-made to the unique needs of their students (Goertz and Stiefel, 1998). According to Bimber (1994) and Hansen and Roza (2005), lack of authority over the critical matters inherently limits the decisions school leaders could make. Many researchers have found that without control over resources, the likelihood that decentralized decision making will lead to improved student performance is inherently limited (Stiefel et al, 2003). In this context, the study attempted to find out the nature of coordination at various levels of the school management. The survey results are discussed here under.

Discussion:

Regarding the establishment of coordination committee at school level (Figure-3), the situation is very discouraging since a vast majority- around 90% of the public sector and aided schools and around 60% of the unaided schools do not have any coordination committee at school level. The coordination committees existing in a small chunk of local body and private unaided schools were constituted by the school heads concerned, with their personal initiative. No coordination committees are established at the district or block levels. The coordination committees at private schools are accommodating head master, senior teachers and members of the sponsoring body, at their schools.



At the organizational level, there must be somebody looking after the coordination of various functions. But there was hardly any coordination committee at organizational level to facilitate smooth coordination. All the school managements report smooth coordination with the regional and district educational administration. A majority of the school heads are enjoying good coordination with their staff members.

The data collected regarding the coordination between the school head and the staff are subjected to the Chi Square Test to investigate the relationships (refer Tables-3&4). Among the Local Body schools, 55% felt ‘somewhat satisfactory.’ The coordination between the Headmaster and staff is ‘very much satisfactory’ in 64% while in 33% of the schools it is ‘satisfactory.’ The same in aided schools is ‘satisfactory’ in 54% schools and ‘very much satisfactory’ in 23% of the schools. Thus, the majority opinion in Local Body schools is ‘somewhat satisfactory’; in Private Aided, it is ‘satisfactory’; and in Unaided schools, the majority opinion is ‘very much satisfactory.’ The Chi Square value (129.183) is very highly significant at 0.001 level.

The coordination levels among the staff members also are smooth in majority of the schools as more than 75% of all schools rated the relationship as ‘good.’ The community and school coordination is very smooth in a vast majority of the schools as all the Government and Unaided schools; around 90% of the Local Body; and 75% of the Aided schools are rating the relationship with the local community as ‘good.’

Conclusion:

The analysis of Chi Square Results implies that the issues of delegation and coordination attracted mixed responses from the select schools. Even though, delegation was done to some extent, it is not complete, as felt by around half of the respondents. Surprisingly, the respondents who were demanding more delegation to the school level are not willing to delegate authority further to their subordinate levels. This is a peculiar situation. Regarding the aspect of coordination, even though, coordination committees were not functioning in majority of the schools, the nature of coordination between the school head and staff and among

Table-3: Nature of coordination between HM and Staff (cross tabulation).

| Category of schools | Nature of coordination between HM and Staff | | | | | Total | |
|---------------------|---|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| | | Very much satisfactory | Satisfactory | Somewhat satisfactory | Not satisfactory | | Neither satisfying nor dissatisfying |
| Government | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | % within row | .0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 25.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | .0% | 2.0% | 1.5% | 4.8% | 7.7% | 2.1% |
| | % of Total | .0% | .5% | .5% | .5% | .5% | 2.1% |
| Local Body | Count | 0 | 21 | 62 | 18 | 12 | 113 |
| | % within row | .0% | 18.6% | 54.9% | 15.9% | 10.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | .0% | 41.2% | 91.2% | 85.7% | 92.3% | 60.1% |
| | % of Total | .0% | 11.2% | 33.0% | 9.6% | 6.4% | 60.1% |
| Pvt. Aided | Count | 6 | 14 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 26 |
| | % within row | 23.1% | 53.8% | 15.4% | 7.7% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 17.1% | 27.5% | 5.9% | 9.5% | .0% | 13.8% |
| | % of Total | 3.2% | 7.4% | 2.1% | 1.1% | .0% | 13.8% |
| Pvt. Unaided | Count | 29 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 45 |
| | % within row | 64.4% | 33.3% | 2.2% | .0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 82.9% | 29.4% | 1.5% | .0% | .0% | 23.9% |
| | % of Total | 15.4% | 8.0% | .5% | .0% | .0% | 23.9% |
| Total | Count | 35 | 51 | 68 | 21 | 13 | 188 |
| | % within row | 18.6% | 27.1% | 36.2% | 11.2% | 6.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within column | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 18.6% | 27.1% | 36.2% | 11.2% | 6.9% | 100.0% |

Table-4: Chi-Square Test results (SPSS Output).

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig.(2-sided) |
|--------------------|------------|----|----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 129.183*** | 12 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 188 | | |

* 0.05 Significant;

** 0.01 Highly Significant;

*** 0.001 Very Highly Significant

the staff members was reported to be good. Hence the educational administration should facilitate delegation to further possible levels to achieve better coordination and accountability of the system.

References:

- [1] Amrik Singh (2001). "Wages of Maladministration." The Hindu Daily - Openion.2001 May 24. New Delhi edition.
- [2] Bimber B (1994). "The Decentralization Mirage: Comparing Decision Making Arrangements in Four High Schools." The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica.
- [3] Dakar Framework for Action (2000). "Education For All." Proceedings of World Education Forum 2000, Dakar, Senegal. 26-28 April.
- [4] Drèze Jean and Gazdar H (1997). "Uttar Pradesh: The Burden of Inertia." In Indian Development: Selected Regional Perspectives. Jean Drèze and Amarthya Sen (ed.s), Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp76-77.
- [5] Goertz ME, Stiefel L (1998). "School-level Resource Allocation in Urban Public Schools." Journal of Education Finance, Vol. 23(4), pp. 435-46.
- [6] Hansen J, Roza M (2005). "Decentralized Decision-making for Schools: New Promise for an Old Idea?" The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica. CA.
- [7] Hanushek E (2002). "The Long Run Importance of School Quality." National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 9071. Cambridge.
- [8] IIEP (2000). "Decentralization of Education: Why, When,What and How?" In Fundamentals of Educational Planning. Edited by Mc Ginn and Welsh T. IIEP; UNESCO, Paris.
- [9] Karpade MS, Ashok K, Srivastava, and Meghanathan R (2004). "An Eextensive Study of Successful School Management in India: Case Studies of Navodaya Vidyalayas." National Council of Education Research and Training, New Delhi.
- [10] National Knowledge Commission (2009). "Report to the Nation: 2006-09." Govt of India. New Delhi, pp.14.
- [11] Pushpanadham (2006). "Educational Leadership for School Based Management." ABAC Journal, Vol. 26(1), pp. 41-8.
- [12] Raju, K D (2006). "Indian Education Sector-Growth and Opportunities." PHDCCI working paper NO. III, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
- [13] Singh Abhijeet (2006). "Public Sector Education in India: Challenges Ahead." University of Delhi, New Delhi.
- [14] Stiefel L, Schwartz AE., Portas C, Kim DY (2003). "School Budgeting and School Performance: The Impact of New York City's Performance Driven Budgeting Initiative." Journal of Education Finance, Vol.28 (3), pp. 403-24.
