INVESTIGATING METHODS OF CENTRALIZATION OF SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT IN ILAM CITY'S SCHOOLS DURING ACADEMIC YEAR (2011-12)

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the present study is investigating methods of centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools. In order to conduct the study, alternative questionnaire including 34 items based on Likert scale has been applied. Statistical population of the study includes all managers of educational levels in Ilam City to 180 persons, which 130 persons were selected as sample based on Cochran Formula. Reliability of the questionnaire would be also determined using Cronbach Alpha of 93.5. Applied methodology in this study is descriptive method in kind of survey study. For purpose of data analysis, SPSS software, non-parametric X2 test, Friedman, Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney tests have been applied. Obtained results from the study indicate that managers of Ilam schools are highly familiar with the concept of school-based management. Decrease in centralization and delegation of authority by the Ministry of Education in high level can cause centralization of school-based management. Contribution of agents (employees, parents and students) in affairs of school in high rate can cause centralization of school-based management. Transferring educational planning to schools in high rate can affect centralization of school-based management. In view of managers of Ilam schools, transferring financial affairs can averagely affect centralization of school-based management. Transferring policy making and running affairs to schools in high rate can affect centralization of school-based management.

Keywords: school-based management, centralization, delegation of authority, educational planning, financial affairs, staff affairs, contribution of agents

INTRODUCTION

In teaching systems around the world, more than several decades have passed from presentation of the term "school-based management". Moving towards school-based management has been one of the clearest evolutions in educational systems over the decades. The evolution has been conducted with the objective of improving quality of education and improvement of school performance. School-based management can be considered as a factor for increasing effectiveness and efficiency of education in schools. Some scholars have summarized success factors for an association in school-based management system in supporting senior directors, sufficient resources, clear commitment, existence of responsibilities, and consensus of skills and ability of participants, exact plan, responsibility and accountability (Jafari Moghaddam, 2002).

One of the main objectives of considering school-based management in educational system is reduction of centralization or decentralization. Many definitions have been presented for school-based management, which some of them would be referred as follows.

School-based management is a kind of alternative management structures and decentralization, which considers schools as main unit of modifications and emphasizes redistribution of decision making responsibility as an instrument for providing constant modifications (Abu Zoha & trans: Gh. Gerayi Nejad, 2006).

Murphy, Hollinger and Housman (1992) believe that school-based management (SBM) is an attempt for decentralization of the organization; management of school; transferring authority to (teachers, parents and managers); definition of new functions and responsibilities for all brokers of educational level and also deformation of learning-teaching process, in which responsibilities and authorities would be divided among all people associated with this scope including central office of education, ministries of education, local districts and offices of school authorities (teachers, managers, school council, etc.) (Quoted from Abu Zoha, 2006, p.26)

School-based management is a method to create responsibility in schools in regard with the thing that happens for children in units under their authority. The concept indicates that when the school becomes responsible for providing educational plans to meet children's needs, familiarity of school personnel with students and their needs ca cause codification of stable and well plans (Condalli, quoted from Abu Zoha, 2006, p.25).

In school-based model, schools can be considered as units for decision making, group work, common atmosphere between students and personnel, flexible use of time, improvement of personality in the school through providing conditions for mutual trust, high expectations and sense of equality in order to apply educational schedules based on perception of students about the thing they learn and learning causality of their knowledge and emphasizing creation of deep thinking in all students (Michaels, quoted from Abu Zoha, 2006, p.26).

Members of Deal Weal Consortium have defined school-based management as contributed decision making as follows: "pervasive or optional decision making process, in which all group members participate equally and can be conducted in level of district, school and team".

Carol Medley and Stuart Wood have defined school-based management as decentralization of authorities. They believe that although such decentralization can be defined as moving from district to school itself, many variables play also role in school-based management (quoted from Abu Zoha, 2006, p.36).

Using the term "school-based management" in educational system is almost a new phenomenon and has not

lifetime more than 2 decades (Evans Gold. trans: A Rahnama, 2003, p.36).

Herman (1990) considers school-based management as a structure, which encompasses some representatives from personnel, citizens and sometimes students in frame of a local committee. It would legally gain authority, so that it can make decisions in relevant fields of each item or all of them:

1- Education
2- Budget
3- Personnel
4- And any other issue that has been delegated to schools (Alagheband A, 2005)

Wagstoff (1993) believes that main element of school-based management is decision making process which is process of delegating authority to individuals that have role in school (Hallajian, 2003, p.55).

Accordingly, the main aim of the present study is investigating methods of centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools during academic year 2011-12.

RESEARCH LITERATURE

Hosseini Zadeh and Rafiei Bakhsh (2001) have conducted a study under the title of identification of perspective of managers of Tehran's elementary schools about implanting school-based policy. They have found that 90% of managers believe that

school-based management plan enables school to make decision according to climate and environmental conditions (Hosseini Zadeh & Rafibakhsh, 2001).

Razagh Marandi (2001) has also conducted a study in order to investigate attitude of managers and teachers in Qom's Public Schools for Boys in regard with limit of decision making authority in school-based management and determining effective decision making fields in education based on Glickman Classification. The study has been conducted using guidance of Dr. M. Behrangi and assistance of Dr. E. Naderi using questionnaire and as a result, some findings have been obtained as follows: school managers disagreed with transferring school budget, employing personnel, schedule and assessment of students and agreed with some fields such as private teaching, educational plans, professional staff training and staff valuation. Ideas of teachers were also similar to ideas of managers and they were just successful in regard with decision making on assessment of students (Razagh Marandi, 2000).

Hallajian (2001) has presented a conceptual framework for school-based management, which has been implemented in selected provinces experimentally. Then, the model has been completed using obtained results and then final model of school-based

management has been codified (Hallajian, 2003).

Shahni (2001) has found in a study that managers consider school-based management as a factor for decentralization, delegation of authorities, cooperation and flexibility. Although managers are oriented towards school-based management, in their view they are not ready in terms of management and regulations and also structural and financial facilities (Shahani, 2001).

Jafari Moghaddam and Fani (2002) have conducted a study under the title of "designing school-based management system in Iran", which has been aimed in recognizing and designing subsystems of school-based management system in Iran. Obtained results from the study indicated that school-based management system has 3 main systems including decision making, supervision and performance assessment and rewarding. Each system has also other subsystems (Jafari Moghaddam S, 2002).

Dory and Levin (1994) have found in a study on relationship between school-based management and learning process of students that school-based management can improve learning process of students in several dimensions and enhances also efficiency of using resources and personnel (Mehralizadeh, Sepasi, & Atashfeshan, 2005).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1- To what extent managers of Ilam City are familiar with concept of school-based management?

2- To what extent decrease in centralization and increase in authority delegation by the Ministry of Education can cause school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

3- To what extent participation of agents (staff, parents and students) can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

4- To what extent transferring educational planning can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

5- To what extent transferring financial affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

6- To what extent transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

7- To what extent transferring staff affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

METHODOLOGY

One of the most important factors for success of each study is selecting suitable methodology and being aware of it. As the present study has investigated methods for centralization of school-based management in view of managers of Ilam Schools, the study is an applied research in terms of objective.

The desired study is in kind of descriptive-survey studies in terms of data collection. Descriptive study includes a series of methods that are aimed in describing studies conditions or phenomena (Sarmad, Bazargan and Hejazi, 2010, p.81).

Statistical population in this study includes all managers of Ilam's Schools during academic year 2011-12. In order to select studied sample, Stratified Sampling Method has been applied. In order to observe ratio of statistical population's characteristics, number of sample of every class has been selected based on number of the class.

Data analysis method

After data collection using alternative questionnaire, the data have been analyzed using SPSS software and statistical methods. At the first, frequency distribution tables and bar charts have been applied in order to describe demographic variables of respondents such as gender, educational degree, service record and so on. Then,

answers were described and in inferential analysis section, nonparametric, Chi-Square, Friedman Test, Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney tests have been applied. Obtained results were then interpreted in p-value of 0.05 and 0.01 and confidence level of 0.95 and 0.99.

INFERENTIAL RESULTS

RQ 1;

To what extent managers of Ilam City are familiar with concept of school-based management?

In order to investigate amount of familiarity of managers with concept of school-based management, Chi Square test (X^2) has been applied and obtained results from the test have been presented in table 1.

According to table 1, calculated X^2 (41.262) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to familiarity rate of managers with school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high and very high classes (about 74%), it could be found that familiarity rate of managers of studied

population with school-based management is from high to very high level.

RQ 2;

To what extent decrease in centralization and increase in authority delegation by the Ministry of Education can cause school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

In order to investigate effect of reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education for centralization of school-based management, Chi Square test (X^2) has been applied and obtained results from the test have been presented in table 2.

According to table 2, calculated X^2 (42.246) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education for centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 78%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education can cause centralization of

school-based management from average to high level.

RQ 3;

To what extent participation of agents (staff, parents and students) can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

In order to investigate effect of contribution of agents (staff, parents and students) in school affairs on centralization of school-based management, X2 test has been applied and obtained results have been presented in table 3.

According to table 3, calculated X^2 (40.954) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of contribution of agents in school affairs on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 77%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, cooperation of agents in school affairs can cause centralization of school-based management from average to high level.

RQ 4;

To what extent transferring educational planning can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

In order to investigate effect of educational planning for schools on centralization of school-based management, X2 test has been applied and obtained results have been presented in table 4.

According to table 4, calculated X^2 (40.400) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of educational planning for schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 78%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring educational planning to schools can cause centralization of school-based management from average to high level.

RQ 5;

To what extent transferring financial affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

In order to investigate effect of transferring financial affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management, X2 test has been applied and obtained results have been presented in table 5.

According to table 5, calculated X^2 (32.523) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring financial affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 43%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring financial affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in average to high level.

RQ 6;

To what extent transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

In order to investigate effect of transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management, X2 test has been applied and obtained results have been presented in table 6.

According to table 6, calculated X^2 (55.231) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high class (about 51%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in high level.

RQ 7;

To what extent transferring staff affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

In order to investigate effect of transferring staff affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management, X2 test has been applied and obtained results have been presented in table 7.

According to table 7, calculated X^2 (54.492) is more than critical X^2 (11.345)

in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring staff affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high class (about 51%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring staff affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in high level.

Table 1: observed and expected frequencies and Chi Square Test related to familiarity of managers with school-based management

familiarity rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	4	3.08	32.5	-28.5	41.262	3	p<0.01
average	29	22.31	32.5	-3.5			
high	47	36.15	32.5	14.5			
very high	50	38.46	32.5	17.5			
total	130	100.00					

Table 2: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education for centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	15	11.54	32.5	-17.5	42.246	3	p<0.01
average	52	40.00	32.5	19.5			
high	50	38.46	32.5	17.5			
very high	13	10.00	32.5	-19.5			
total	130	100					

Table 3: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to effect of contribution of agents (staff, parents and students) in school affairs on centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	8	6.15	32.5	-24.5	40.954	3	p<0.01
average	48	36.92	32.5	15.5			
high	52	40.00	32.5	19.5			
very high	22	16.92	32.5	-10.5			
total	130	100.00					

Table 4: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to effect of educational planning for schools on centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	16	12.31	32.5	-16.5	40.400	3	p<0.01
average	53	40.77	32.5	20.5			
high	48	36.92	32.5	15.5			
very high	13	10.00	32.5	-19.5			
total	130	100.00					

Table 5: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to effect of transferring financial affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	15	11.54	32.5	-17.5	32.523	3	p<0.01
average	56	43.08	32.5	23.5			

high	39	30.00	32.5	6.5			
very high	20	15.38	32.5	-12.5			
total	130	100.00					

Table 6: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to effect of transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	8	6.15	32.5	-24.5	55.231	3	p<0.01
average	32	24.62	32.5	-0.5			
high	66	50.77	32.5	33.5			
very high	20	18.46	32.5	-8.5			
total	130	100.00					

Table 7: observed and expected frequencies and chi square test related to effect of transferring staff affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management

effectiveness rate	observed frequency	percent	expected frequency	residual	X^2	df	Sig
low	8	6.15	32.5	-24.5	54.492	3	p<0.01
average	30	23.08	32.5	-2.5			
high	66	50.77	32.5	33.5			
very high	24	20.00	32.5	-6.5			
total	130	100.00					

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Question 1: To what extent managers of Ilam City are familiar with concept of school-based management?

Obtained resulted from table 1 indicate that calculated X^2 (41.262) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to familiarity rate of managers with school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high and very high classes (about 74%), it could be found that familiarity rate of managers of studied population with school-based management is from high to very high level.

Obtained results indicate level of familiarity of managers with concepts and elements of school-based management. Such awareness can help centralization of school-based management, if there is serious intention for centralization of school-based management and use of cooperation of all factors in all fields.

Question 2: To what extent decrease in centralization and increase in authority delegation by the Ministry of Education can cause school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

In order to investigate effect of reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education for centralization of school-based management, Chi Square test (X^2) has been applied.

Obtained results from table 2 indicate that calculated X^2 (42.246) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education for centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 78%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, reducing centralization and delegation of authority by Ministry of Education can cause centralization of school-based management from average to high level.

Obtained results have been in consistence with study of Shahani (2001) based on the subject that school managers believe that school-based management includes decentralization, flexibility and delegation of authorities.

According to obtained results and through comparing them with previous studies on effect of decreasing centralization and delegation of authority in centralization of school-based management, required conditions should be provided to transfer affairs to schools and to permit change in plans based on cultural, social and economic conditions of the desired region.

Question 3: To what extent participation of agents (staff, parents and students) can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

Obtained results from table 3 indicate that calculated X^2 (40.954) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of contribution of agents in school affairs on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 77%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, cooperation of agents in school affairs can cause centralization of school-based management from average to high level.

Obtained results indicate that participation of parents, staff and students is one of the main methods for centralization of school-based management. Hence, using capacity of available councils based on executive bill of schools and attendance of student-based councils, parent-teacher meetings

and teacher-school meetings in affairs of school and using their participation can be effective in this regard.

Question 4: To what extent transferring educational planning can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

Obtained results from table 4 indicate that calculated X^2 (40.400) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of educational planning for schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 78%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring educational planning to schools can cause centralization of school-based management from average to high level.

As transferring educational planning to schools can be effective in centralization of school-based management, using power of teachers' council and also transferring some educational planning affairs to schools such as holding extracurricular courses and holding extra classes and

budgeting lessons can be effective in this regard.

Question 5: To what extent transferring financial affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam City's schools?

Obtained results from table 5 indicate that calculated X^2 (32.523) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring financial affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to average and high classes (about 43%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring financial affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in average to high level.

Obtained results have been in consistence with results of study of Razagh Marandi (2001) under the title of "investigating attitude of managers and teachers of governmental high schools in Qom about limit of authority of decision making in school-based management" based on

disagreement of managers with transferring budget and financial affairs to schools.

In regard with obtained results in question 5, it seems that required conditions is not provided for gaining income by schools and transferring all financial affairs to schools in order to provide school-based management. Hence, all financial affairs should not be completely transferred to schools in this case.

Question 6: To what extent transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

Obtained results from table 6 indicate that calculated X^2 (55.231) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high class (about 51%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring determination of policies and run of affairs

to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in high level.

Obtained results have been in consistence with study of Shafi Zadeh (2002) under the title of "investigating attitudes of managers of schools in zone 6 of Tehran in regard with school-based management" based on the subject that school managers agree with transferring official and executive activities to schools.

According to obtained results based on effect of transferring determination of policies and run of affairs to schools in centralization of school-based management, delegation of power and reduction of centralization in this regard can be effective for purpose of discriminating the subject.

Question 7: To what extent transferring staff affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in Ilam's schools?

Obtained results from table 7 indicate that calculated X^2 (54.492) is more than critical X^2 (11.345) in table with p-value of 0.01 and df of 3. Hence, it could be found that there is a significant difference between observed and expected frequencies (p<0.01). It means that there is significant difference among observed frequencies related to effect of transferring staff affairs to schools on centralization of school-based management. Accordingly and due to observed frequencies for every class and

relevant percents, as the maximum frequency is related to high class (about 51%), it could be found that in view of studied managers, transferring staff affairs to schools can cause centralization of school-based management in high level. Obtained results have been in consistence with results of Razagh Marandi (2001) under the title of "investigating attitude of managers and teachers of governmentl high schools for boys in regard with school-based management" based on agreement with transferring relevant affairs of professional growth of employees and evaluation of personnel o schools.

According to these results and also due to effect of transferring staff affairs to schools for providing school-based management, some affairs should be transferred to school managers such as holding in-service courses for staff, choosing teachers, determining criteria for employee performance evaluation, etc.

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