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**Community Participation in Education: Does
Decentralisation Matter?
An Indonesian Case Study of Parental
Participation in School Management**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
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Abstract

A prominent idea in the decentralisation and development literature is that decentralisation leads to deeper and stronger community participation. This thesis seeks to examine this argument by investigating the practice of community participation in the Indonesian decentralisation context, focusing on parental participation through access to and control over school financial resources. Drawing on a case study in Depok city, the practice of parental involvement has been explored by identifying the characteristics and the extent of parents' participation in school management. School Committees (SCs), as a mechanism of community involvement provided by the decentralised education policy, were also examined in this research to develop an understanding of parental representation in school management.

The study found that the characteristics and the extent of parents' participation in school management have changed and decreased significantly as a result of a new Free School Programme (FSP) introduced by the government in 2009 which freed parents from school operational cost. Prior to FSP, parents actively participated in terms of supplying resources and involvement in school meetings, had some access to financial information, and had limited engagement with school budgeting through representation in SCs. However, the new absence of financial contribution by parents has affected parental participation by transforming it into a weaker form of participation where parents act as mere beneficiaries.

The study also revealed that in the Indonesian context, the SCs, as institutional channels for community involvement in education provided by the education decentralisation policy, are not effective in terms of representing and engaging parents in school management. Based on the evidence above, this thesis concluded that in the context of the Indonesian education system, decentralisation has not necessarily enhanced community participation. In this respect, decentralisation is not the only possible answer for achieving a meaningful and empowering parental participation in education. Furthermore, other contextual factors surrounding participation also have to be taken into account. While FSP brings the benefit of allowing students to access education freely, the absence of parental financial contribution has been proved to impact parental participation in a way that is contradictory to one of the purposes of decentralisation policy, which is to engage the community in educational management.

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Abbreviations and Glossaries

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APBD	<i>Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Daerah</i> (Local Income and Expenditure Budget Plan)
APBN	<i>Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Nasional</i> (National Income and Expenditure Budget Plan)
APBS	<i>Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Sekolah</i> (School Income and Expenditure Budget Plan)
BAPPENAS	<i>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional</i> (National Development Planning Agency)
BAWASDA	<i>Badan Pengawas Daerah</i> (Local Monitoring Body)
BOS	<i>Bantuan Operasional Sekolah</i> (School Operational Assistance)
BP3	<i>Badan Pembantu Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan</i> (Educational Assistance Body)
CIDA	Canada International Development Agency
DPR	<i>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat</i> (People's Representative Assembly)
DSP	Dana Sumbangan Pendidikan (Education Operational Fund)
EC(S)	Education Council(s)
EO/ES	Education Office/Education Service
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Free School Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KKN	<i>Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme</i> (Corruption, Collusion, Nepotism)
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MPR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> (People's Consultative Assembly)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAR	Participatory Action Research
POMG	<i>Persatuan Orang Tua Murid dan Guru</i> (Parents and Teachers Association)
RAPBS	<i>Rancangan Anggaran Pendapatan Belanja Sekolah</i> (School Budget of Revenue and Expenditure Plan)
RSBI	<i>Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional</i> (International Standard School Piloting)
SBI	<i>Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional</i> (International Standard School)
SBM	School-based Management
SC(S)	School Committee(s)
SOP	<i>Sumbangan Operasional Sekolah</i> (School Operational Fund)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UPT	<i>Unit Pelaksana Teknis</i> (Technical Operational Unit)
WB	World Bank

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about community participation in education within the context of decentralisation in Indonesia. The study's sites are two public schools in the city of Depok, West Java, Indonesia. The focus of the investigation is on the characteristics and the extent of parents' participation in school management focusing on access to and control over financial resources. The study also highlights the role of the school committee (SC) as a vehicle for community participation, as mandated by the education decentralisation policy. This study sought to explore how parents have participated in the SC mechanism provided by decentralisation policy, and whether or not decentralisation has enhanced their participation.

This research is important because generally decentralisation has been positioned as a mechanism for wider and deeper community participation. In Indonesia, education decentralisation has been implemented since 2002. However, only limited research has been done in the area of community participation within the education decentralisation context. Hence, this study intends to contribute to a further understanding of this phenomenon.

The first section of this chapter presents the background of the study, the Indonesian decentralisation reforms, and relevant theories of community participation. It is followed by a discussion of the significance of this study and a rationale for the research questions and the study approach. Finally, this chapter concludes with an outline of the organisation of this thesis.

1.1. Background

Since 1999, a decentralisation reform policy has been promoted by the government of Indonesia as follow-up to an economic crisis. When an economic crisis hit Indonesia in 1997, the centralised government was blamed as the source of the problem. From the political perspective, the advocates of decentralisation policy saw the new political ideology of democracy provided advantages in bringing power and responsibility closer to the people (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006). Meanwhile, the central government had an

urgent need to reduce expenditures. Additionally, the pressure from international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also played an important role. However, the strongest argument for decentralisation was a fear of the disintegration of the country, due to regional dissatisfaction with the central government causing sections of the country to strive for independence (Hofman & Kaiser, 2002). Consequently, decentralisation was viewed as the strategy of choice for rebuilding the country after the crisis, as well as an answer to the country's other problems.

In an ongoing process, the new decentralisation policy was put into practice with Law 22/1999 on regional government, which was revised and replaced by Law 32/2004, and Law 25/1999 on fiscal relations. The latter stipulated that the delegation of financial responsibility for a variety of services in the public service sector be moved to the district level, including education, health, culture, public works, and the environment. This decentralisation reform transformed the country from one of the most centralised systems in the world to one of the most decentralised ones (Hofman & Kaiser, p. 2). Within the framework of decentralisation, responsibilities for many essential services devolved to local government, including social welfare, health, education, and public administration.

Education was one of the sectors affected by decentralisation reform. According to Supriyadi (2003, as cited in Sumintono, 2006, p.33), in the education sector the changes were greater than those in any other period since Indonesia's independence. Education was no longer fully controlled by the central government, as one of the significant changes was that local communities were granted a degree of authority in education (Amirrachman, 2004). In order to ensure transparency and accountability, the communities were mandated to establish an Education Council (EC) at the district level and School Committee (SC) at the school level. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) of the Republic of Indonesia's Decree Number 044/U/2002 was stipulated as the legal basis for 'societal participation' in education through these two governing bodies, the EC and SC. Although community participation had been welcomed in the previous era, it was only in terms of free labour and a supply of funds. Under decentralisation, communities were given more authority through these two bodies. Hence, the concept of participation has been growing as an integral part in this reform.

Indonesia's decentralisation reform was in accordance with the global movement toward democratic decentralisation that has swept the world since the 1980s. Democratic decentralisation may be promoted for a number of reasons: administrative, fiscal, political or others. However, one of the reasons often given is that of bringing government closer to the people and enhancing their participation and interaction with local government officers in the affairs of the locality (Gaventa & Valderama, 1999, p. 6). In fact, the concept of participation has become mainstream in contemporary development discourse. It has been growing in popularity since the 1970s when new concern for meeting basic needs and reaching the poor arose. Freire's notion of 'conscientization' gained huge attention and exercised significant influence in this area. According to Freire (1970, p. 14), 'liberation' or 'empowerment' could be achieved by understanding oppressive circumstances and dealing critically with them. However, as time went on the concept of 'popular participation' emerged as a reaction to those who wished to link participation with politics (Rahman, 1995). Popular participation put more emphasis on the benefits of participation and brought less attention to the notions of 'power' or 'empowerment'.

The notion of community participation is a part of the wider debate about popular participation in Third World development (Midgley, 1986, p. 13). Like the proponents of popular participation, the advocates of community participation also highlighted the fact that through community participation the benefits of development are likely to be equitably distributed. This emphasis on the benefits of participation brings about discourse on participation as a 'means' versus as an 'end' (Michener, 1998; White, 1996). Where participation is basically interpreted as a 'means', it is essentially described as an 'input' into a development programme; it is interpreted as an 'end' if it refers to a process with meaningful participation as an outcome (Oakley & Marsden, 1984).

Popular participation has once again come to the fore in the emerging decentralisation discourse, and the concept has a significant presence in the decentralisation literature. Two approaches, the pragmatic and the political, are distinguished mainly by viewing popular participation as either a 'means' or as an 'end'. The pragmatic school concentrates on how decentralisation can contribute to local and regional development, particularly through improving the provision and maintenance of public services,

whereas the political approach is more concerned about the political aspects of decentralisation, such as empowerment of the people.

The advocates of decentralisation view decentralisation and participation as linked, and “their combination as the key to improving government performance and strengthening citizen participation; hence, deepening democracy” (Goldfrank, 2002, p. 53). Decentralisation and participation are seen as separate but complementary concepts; the former is often viewed as a necessary step to achieve the latter. Nonetheless, some scholars view this idea with caution, as participation does not necessarily benefit the poor or bring about empowerment to the people (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000; Crook, 2003; Herzer & Pirez, 1991; Schönwälder, 1997).

Within the framework of education decentralisation reform in Indonesia, this study offers insights on the characteristics of community participation in education, how communities participate through the mechanisms provided by education decentralisation reform, and whether education decentralisation has enhanced community participation.

1.2. Significance and Rationale of the Study

This study provides an understanding of community participation as it emerges in the context of Indonesian education decentralisation. In particular, it assesses the immediate impact of the new policy of the Free School Programme (FSP), introduced by the government in 2009, on community participation in education. This theme is considered a new one in the Indonesian context, with coverage that has been absent or only marginal in the existing literature. Thus, this study is valuable in terms of the information gathered, as well as the new realities presented concerning the field at the time of the study regarding changes in community participation as a consequence of the new FSP. These findings can be used by the Indonesian government to reflect on the recent implementation of FSP and to evaluate its effects on community participation. The findings of this study are also addressed to education stakeholders, providing input on how to engage communities in school management and how to improve the quality of their involvement.

My interest in doing a study on community participation in education derived from my personal preferences as a government official of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia. When education decentralisation started to be promulgated by the government, the concept of community participation rose to the surface as its companion. Participation is mentioned in the national policy itself, and has been discussed in many academic forums.

Criticisms appeared concerning the effects of education decentralisation on community participation. The role of community in this new context is considered to be a significant component in the mechanism of education decentralisation. One of the biggest criticisms concerns the establishment of SCs, which are viewed by many as only an extension of the old body, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), and still playing the same role without a clear re-alignment of tasks and responsibilities. The SC has been suspected of being reduced to serving only as a tool for generating money from parents, without necessarily intending to provide any larger or broader space for community participation (CFBE, 2004). In this regard, as a student of Development Studies, I am interested in studying the concept of community participation in the development literature and relating it to the context of education decentralisation in Indonesia.

1.3. Research Aims, Objectives, and Questions

The aim of this study is to examine the practice of community participation in the education decentralisation context. The specific objective is to observe the characteristics and the extent of parents' participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources as this occurs in the context of education decentralisation. The general question of this study is: *"Has decentralisation enhanced community participation?"*

To answer this general question, the following specific research questions have been set:

1. What are the characteristics of parents' participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources, and to what extent have they participated, in the context of education decentralisation?

2. To what extent have the School Committees, as the mechanism for community participation mandated by the education decentralisation policy, represented parents at school?

To address the research question on participation as a social phenomenon with all the complexity involved in its application, I selected a qualitative case study approach, which according to Stark and Torrance (2005), emphasises in-depth inquiry rather than mere quantification. Thus, a case study of parents' participation in access to and control over school resources was conducted in two public schools in Depok city, Indonesia. The case study provides information on how the practice of community participation is carried out at the school level, emphasising the role of school committees as the parents' representative in school management. The community participation experiences in these two schools are reported in Chapter 6.

In-depth semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, and document analysis are the main techniques used in this study. These are supplemented by a simple questionnaire for acquiring baseline data. The combination of these data collection methods produced qualitative insights on the practices of parents' participation at schools. The research participants in this study included parents, teachers, headmasters, and members of SCs. Furthermore, key informants such as an official from the Depok educational office, a chairman of the Depok Education Council, and an educational NGO practitioner were interviewed to develop a general understanding of community participation in education in the broader context of Depok city.

Parents were asked about their involvement in school management, particularly their access to and control over school resources. Their involvement was categorised into four basic areas: financial contribution, attendance at the school meeting, access to information, and involvement in school budgeting. As we will see, I discovered in the course of my research that FSP has had a significant impact on parental contribution and participation as a whole.

1.4. Thesis Outline

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework for the research topic. It offers an overview of the concept of participation, highlighting the distinction between participation as a means and as an end, and the discourse around genuine versus pseudo participation. The concept of popular participation is addressed, with emphasis on the benefits of participation rather than the notion of empowerment. Then, the link between decentralisation and participation is discussed, with the literature suggesting that decentralisation has opened a wider space for participation. The chapter ends with an explanation of community participation in education.

Chapter 3 describes Indonesian history and its cycle of centralisation and decentralisation. It includes the most recent shift from centralisation to decentralisation with its impact on the education sector. It also explores community participation as the new emphasis in education decentralisation reform, highlighting the establishment of two bodies, the Education Council (EC) and the School Committee (SC), as channels for community participation in education.

Chapter 4 focuses on research methodology, including research inquiry, qualitative case study as the study's approach, methods used, research procedures, and data analysis. This chapter also highlights the relevant ethical issues and some limitations of the study.

Chapter 5 provides basic information about Depok city, the study's site. It also describes the FSP policy, a new factor discovered during fieldwork that has proved to exercise notable influence on the research topic. The implementation of this new policy in Depok is discussed in this chapter, with emphasis on the changing role of community in financing education.

Chapter 6 reports on the results of this case study concerning parental participation in school management, particularly in access to and control over resources, in the education decentralisation context. The focus of this chapter is to document the practice of parental participation in school management and to explore the role of SCs as the parents' representative. This chapter illustrates some of the changes in the characteristics and the levels of parental participation that have occurred as a result of FSP. It also describes parents' perception of the role of the SCs as their representatives.

Chapter 7 presents a final discussion of the research and the conclusions drawn from the results. It outlines the findings of this study as they relate to the research questions and the theoretical framework behind participation and decentralisation. First, this chapter presents an overview of the whole thesis. This is followed by a discussion of the extent of parent participation as it relates to the first research question. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the second research question on parents' representation through the SCs. The next section then discusses the central research question on whether or not decentralisation has enhanced community participation which is intended to contribute to the larger academic knowledge on participation and decentralisation. General conclusions on the whole thesis are also developed, and finally, this chapter closes with recommendations for future policy and further research.

CHAPTER 2: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE DECENTRALISATION CONTEXT

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a basic understanding of the concept of participation as the key theme in this study, and highlights some of the relevant discourses. Furthermore, the link between participation and decentralisation is explored, given that decentralisation is the context for participation as assessed in this study.

Firstly, various definitions of participation will be discussed with special emphasis on the notion of power. The context surrounding participation will be given special consideration, as different settings bring different meanings to the act of participation. The following section will present a debate on the contrast between genuine participation versus pseudo participation, and the idea of participation as a means to an end, versus participation as an end in and of itself. Subsequently, the chapter will provide a conceptual framework for analysing the extent of participation, followed by a section identifying the link between participation and decentralisation and exploring whether decentralisation has provided a legal framework and institutional channel for participation. And finally, the emerging notion of community participation in the context of educational decentralisation is explained.

2.2. The Concept of Participation

The concept of participation has become main stream in the contemporary development discourse. It has a significant place in the rhetoric of development coming from NGOs, development institutions, and the governments of developing countries (Michener, 1998); practically all respectable development projects include the participation of people in their approach (White et al., 1994 as cited in Michener, 1998, p. 2105). In academic studies, the concept has been employed widely and to some extent come to serve as a panacea in resolving the complex collection of development problems.

Most of the literature presented in this review recognises a wide range of definitions for participation. These perspectives emerged from various contexts, such as participation in development projects or in rural development programmes (promoted by multilateral aid agencies such as the World Bank and The United Nations Development Program [UNDP]), participation in the context of organisations, and participation in development. Since different contexts bring about different meanings of the term, there is a need for a critical view of a concise definition with regard to its implementation. This study applies decentralisation as a specific context for community participation in primary education in Indonesia.

2.2.1. *Participation and ‘power’*

The various multiple meanings of participation have been recognised by many scholars as one of the obstacles to gaining a comprehensive understanding of the term. Hence, many efforts have been made to develop a better understanding of the concept. Its origin can be traced back to the 1970s when it first became popular due to concern for the rights of poor and marginalised people. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, is recognised as a pioneer in constructing this concept and his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), gained a great deal of attention and exercised significant influence on many areas of thought. He introduced the notion of ‘conscientization’ whereby adults, via education, could begin to understand their own oppressive circumstances. As Freire argued:

Every human being, no matter how ignorant or submerged in the culture of silence he or she may be, is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others. Provided with the proper tools for such an encounter, the individual can gradually perceive personal and social reality as well as the contradiction in it, become conscious of his or her own perspective of that reality, and deal critically with it. (1970, p. 14)

Furthermore, Freire pointed out that dehumanisation by the oppressor leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. At this point, the concepts of liberation and empowerment emerge as a consequence of their condition, and as Freire noted, “This is the great humanistic historical task of the oppressed, to liberate themselves and the oppressor as well” (1970, p. 12).

Freire's work has been considered as one of the basic foundational theories of participation and empowerment. Nevertheless, Rahman (1995), a theorist in participation, reacted to Freire's view by claiming that Freire's concept of conscientization presents a radical stance, as well as a Marxist vision of the self-emancipation of the oppressed class. In reaction to this vision, 'popular participation' is increasingly being adopted as a more secure way of achieving community involvement (Rahman, 1995, p. 25). Consequently, the notion of popular participation has gained attention as a reaction to those who have wished to link development with liberation. It is considered to be a more flexible approach to participation, one that puts more emphasis on the benefits of participation for development practices, while placing less attention on the implication of participation for people's political empowerment or liberation.

However, even within this more flexible approach to participation, there are still differing views on the importance of power as it relates to defining participation. On the one hand, some continue to highlight the notion of power in their definitions. For example, The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) defines participation as an organised effort to increase control over resources and movement by those hitherto excluded from possessing such control (UNRISD, 1984 as cited in Rahnema, (1992, p. 120). For many Participatory Action Research (PAR) theorists, such as Fals-Borda (1988), Rahman (1995), and Chambers (1992), the aim of such participation is to achieve power, "a special kind of power – people's power – which belongs to the oppressed and exploited classes and groups and their organizations" (Fals-Borda, as cited in (Rahnema, 1992, p. 120). Even though they promote popular participation, it is clear their interpretations of participation still have the notion of power or control as the ultimate goal of participation. This is also noted by Nelson and Wright, who commented that "shifting power is inevitable as a consequence of participation" (1995, p. 1).

On the other hand, others within the popular participation faction define participation merely as the involvement of people, or as making a contribution. According to Cohen and Uphoff (1977), participation is the people's involvement in decision-making processes as a part of implementing programmes; their sharing in the benefits derived

from development programmes; and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes (Oakley, 1991, p. 6). Similarly, the meaning of participation is described by Lele (1975, as cited in Oakley & Marsden, (1984, p. 19) as acting “to sensitise people, and thus, to increase the receptivity and ability of rural people to respond to development programmes, as well as to encourage local initiatives.”

Compared to popular participation, community participation is basically a more specific conception of community-level involvement. It has been widely promoted by the UN since the 1970s. While the former is concerned with broad issues of social development and the creation of opportunities for the involvement of people in the political, economic and social life of a nation, the latter connotes the direct involvement of ordinary people in local affairs (Midgley, 1986, p. 23). However, both concepts are interlinked and represent similar ideals and process. It can be said that community participation is community level action in popular participation.¹

Like popular participation, the benefit of community participation to the empowerment of people is also in doubt. Botes and Van Rensburg (2000, p. 45) argued that in some instances, community participation is an attempt to sell preconceived proposals rather than a genuine effort to empower communities. For the state, community participation appears to be a means of maintaining power relations in society and ensuring the silence of the poor; it certainly pays less attention to benefiting the poor. Similarly, formal channels of community participation do not necessarily benefit local communities (Rahman, 1993, p. 226). Particularly when community organisations are not democratically elected, the involvement of local leaders may not represent and reflect the views and perspective of the broader community (Botes & Van Rensburg, p. 46). One of the biggest challenges in promoting community participation is to ensure that marginalised people, who may have neither the capacity nor the desire to participate, are involved in the process (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000; White, 1996). As Midgley (1986, p. 31) noted, raising the level of social and political consciousness of local people is a major priority.

So far then, the term ‘popular participation’ can be applied along a continuum from the very weakest point, where it functions primarily as a means to an end – that is, “a tool to

¹ This study applies the term ‘community participation’ as a part of bigger ‘popular participation’ which may or may not involve ‘power’ or ‘empowerment’.

increase the effectiveness and efficiency of development projects, public work programmes, and the like” (Schönwälder, 1997 p. 756) – to its strongest application, which is defined not pragmatically as a means, but rather as an end in itself, interpreted politically as an instrument for achieving empowerment of the people. Thus, a broad distinction can be drawn between participation as a contribution on the one hand, and participation as empowerment, on the other (Oakley, 1991). Debates surrounding these two distinct perspectives will be explored in the next section. Ultimately, the implications of these two different types of popular participation, as they are practiced, also impact the literature on decentralisation and this will also be covered later, in the section on decentralisation.

Given the variety of different perspectives on its meaning, several debates have emerged in the research as well as in actual practices related to participation. Some of these are summarised below in order to acquire a better understanding of the dynamics and difficulties involved in implementing participation.

2.2.2. Participation as a Means and/or as an End

A broad distinction captured by the vast literature and practices of participation is that between participation as a means, and as an end. Where participation is interpreted basically as a means, it is essentially described as a state or an input into a development programme; where it is interpreted as an end in itself, it is referred to as a process with the outcome of meaningful participation (Oakley & Marsden, 1984).

In assessing relationships among stakeholders in an education project in Burkina Faso, Michener (1998, p. 2106) recognised two type of participation; *planner-centred participation* (development professional) and *people-centred participation* (beneficiaries). In the planner-centred type, participation is merely a means, a strategy for administrative and financial efficiency. However, in the people-centred type, participation is both a means to meet local needs and an end in itself, namely empowering the poor.

Nelson and Wright (1995) highlighted the need to understand the distinction between these two kinds of participation in terms of the power relationship among stakeholders

in participation. Both types of participation imply the possibility of different kinds of power relationships; the extent of empowerment and involvement on the part of the local population is more limited in the first approach (participation as a means) than it is in the second (participation as a means and an end).

2.2.3. Genuine Participation versus Pseudo Participation

Another discourse related to participation is the distinction between genuine and pseudo participation. Focusing on specifying classifications and degrees of participation is one way researchers have addressed the issue of multiple definitions of and perspectives on the term (Deshler & Sock, 1985; White, 1996). Other scholars (Gow & Vansant, 1983; Morrissey, 2000; Rahman, 1995) have emphasised more the quality and effectiveness of participation.

Deshler and Sock's (1985) classification of types and degrees of participation is very useful in understanding its multiple meanings (see Table 1). This categorisation underlines the importance of the relative levels of power held by outsiders and beneficiaries as a key characteristic in defining participation. Commenting on Deshler and Sock's scheme, Michener (1998, p. 2106) pointed out:

Their scheme for analyzing different levels of participation is based on a scale which measures the extent of control or power, ranging from pseudo participation, (or the manipulation of beneficiaries by development professionals to meet the needs of elites) to genuine participation in which participants are empowered by having control over program policy and management.

It is apparent from the classification system described by Deshler and Sock that participation can range from the very weakest level – which is pseudo participation – to the highest degree, namely genuine participation. These two stages and the ones that lie between also represent the various levels of power involved in relationships between stakeholders.

Table 1. Levels of Participation

I.	Genuine Participation	A. Empowerment	i. Citizen control
		B. Cooperation	i. Delegated power ii. Partnership
II.	Pseudo Participation	A. Assistencialism	i. Placation ii. Consultation
		B. Domestication	i. Informing ii. Therapy iii. Manipulation

Source: (Deshler & Sock, 1985)

A more comprehensive classification system is described by White (1996), as illustrated in Table 2. According to White (1996, p. 7), participation can take on multiple forms and serve many different interests; hence, it is vital to distinguish these interests clearly. White's classification reflects the diversity of form, function, and interests within participation. There are four forms of participation listed in column one, ranging from the weakest to the strongest: *nominal*, *instrumental*, *representative* and *transformative*. The second column shows the interest of the development planner, the third shows the perspective of the participants themselves in viewing their participation, and the last column characterises the overall function of each type of participation.

Table 2. A Categorisation of Types of Interest Found in Participation

Form	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency	Cost	Means
Representative	Sustainability	Leverage	Voice
Transformative	Empowerment	Empowerment	Means/End

Source: White, 1996

Similar to Deshler and Sock's, White's classification also highlights the power relations among stakeholders which occur in the form of conflict of interest. As White said,

“Sharing through participation does not necessarily mean sharing in power.” (p. 7)
Accordingly, White states that politics always exist in the practice of participation:

There are two main ways in which the politics of participation are admitted in developing planning. The first is the question of who participates. This recognises that ‘the people’ are not homogenous, and that special mechanisms are needed to bring in relatively disadvantaged groups. The second regards the level of participation. This points out the involvement of the local people in implementation is not enough. For a fully participatory project, they should also take part in management and decision making. (1996, p. 7)

In considering the interests that lie behind participation, it is important to note whose interests are served by the act of participation. Who receives the benefits from participation (Michener, 1998; White, 1996)? White argued that participation is not always in the interest of the poor (1996, p. 12). There might be the possibility of co-optation in participation, as well as the misuse of participation (Chambers, 1997; Michener, 1998; Rahnema, 1992).

In this study, Deshler and Sock’s (1985) levels of participation are used as the framework for analysing the levels of parents’ participation in education. This framework, in turn, highlights the dynamics involved, providing a view of participation as an ongoing process that may change over time and involve a diversity of interests, some of which can conflict with each other.

Smith’s (1998) term ‘passive participation’ is similar in meaning to Deshler & Sock’s pseudo participation. Some forms of passive participation are summarised in Smith’s study. They are often criticised as giving participants no additional power and have attracted hostile reactions for being tokenist, inauthentic, incorporative, or even repressive (Smith, 1995 as cited in (Smith, 1998, p. 197). This kind of participation treats people as objects; it may mean indoctrination, forced labour, or utilisation of the poor. “Participation in government schemes often means no more than using the service on offer, or providing inputs to resource it” (Smith, 1998, p. 197).

Some detrimental forms of passive participation are recognised in Smith’s study (1998, pp. 198-199). Firstly, there are *technocratic* and *paternalistic* activities that treat people as objects or as unpaid hands in self-help schemes which have not been designed by

those affected. Secondly, *consultation*, is recognised as the weakest type of participation in decision making, and is often said to be a means of indoctrinating the public in the values and priorities of the planners to ensure they obtain public endorsement of their decisions. Consultation maybe used to endow planners with legitimacy, as people are given the right to comment or advise, but not the power to decide.

Thirdly, weak participation can be a *useful ideological device* for throwing responsibility for community development onto the shoulders of those least able to bear it. Craig and Mayo (1995, p. 4) argued that “participation becomes part of justification for rolling back the state, reducing spending on social welfare, and shifting the burden from the public sector to the communities, including those in the greatest need themselves”. Moreover, “community participation has also been taken up as a slogan by widely differing types of organizations in terms of promoting community empowerment” (Craig & Mayo, 1995, pp. 4-5).

Fourthly, participation in the form of *voluntary work* where forced labour is allowed has led to the intimidation of vulnerable and marginal people. Fifthly, there is a type of participation which means no more than *improving access to public services* so that a greater proportion of intended beneficiaries actually receive the benefits aimed toward them. Participation in the sense of decision making is not involved. Finally, participation occurs in the form of community financing by paying for services at the point of consumption, especially in health care. Experience shows that fees discourage utilisation by the poor, especially if set at a high level to cover the full cost of services rendered. Such participation may also have to be accompanied by real participation involving control and accountability if it is to have the desired effects. However, modest fees can provide a community with a significant role in the operation and assessment of the service (World Bank, 1993, as cited in Smith,(p. 199).

Smith also believed that “in developing countries benefits may be derived from even the weakest form of participation” (p. 197). These benefits can be in the form of utilisation, contributions, enlistment, cooperation, or consultation. He argued that the mobilisation of community resources can be a step toward the empowerment of communities. Community resourcing can also lead to genuine participation such as involvement in the management of facilities (p. 200). From this point of view, Smith seems to confront a

major argument that over-emphasised empowerment or the notion of power in the practice of participation, such as studies by White, and Deshler and Sock, to the point of neglecting the potential benefits of participation that can occur even in its very weakest form. His view is a bit similar to popular participation theory which puts more emphasis on the benefits of participation.

To sum up, there are varied definitions of participation depending on its implementation and context, with the notion of power as the key element for distinguishing similarities and differences in these many interpretations. Some approaches in participation aim to maximise the benefits of development projects by using local resources and initiatives, and they put less emphasis on the notion of power. Such approaches are mainly used by international projects driven by agencies such as the World Bank and the UNDP. Meanwhile, other approaches to defining participation highlight the empowerment or liberation of people who have been previously marginalised, especially regarding control and access over resources and decision making.

Thus, for the purpose of this study, the concept of participation is presented as a continuum from the very weakest variation, such as participation as the act of contributing, to the strongest variation, namely participation as empowerment. The study seeks to know at what point on the continuum community participation in education is situated in the context of decentralised education in Indonesia. It also looks at the context of decentralisation in Indonesia as a circumstance that surrounds the practice of community participation in education. To this end, the next section explores the link between participation and decentralisation.

2.3. Participation and Decentralisation

Decentralisation is a major reform that is already taking place in almost all developing countries. All but 12 of the 75 developing countries with more than 5 million inhabitants have implemented some form of decentralisation (Gaventa & Valderama, 1999). When analysing participation, one of the major themes related to government schemes or programmes is the extent and impact of decentralisation.

Within the scope of this study, the concept of decentralisation will draw specifically on its evolution over time and its association with the government-citizen relationship wherein the concept of participation is embedded. Rondinelli (1980, pp. 137-138) defines decentralisation as the transfer of authority, responsibility and resources – through deconcentration, delegation or devolution – from the top of the administrative hierarchy down to lower levels. Deconcentration is the transfer of responsibilities to lower levels within central government ministry, and delegation means a change of mandate and authority to other government units, while devolution is understood as the shifting of decision-making power down to lower levels of a hierarchy and out to independent public organisations.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the decentralisation movement across the world focused on deconcentrating hierarchical government structures and bureaucracies. Beginning in the mid-1980s, a second wave of decentralisation included political power sharing, democratisation, and market liberalisation in its implementation of decentralisation (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007, p. 2). It has been argued that the current focus has been expanded to look beyond the redistribution of state power to a broader objective involving the government-citizenship relationship (Brinkerhoff, Brinkerhoff, & McNulty, 2007). This kind of decentralisation refers to what is usually called democratic decentralisation, a form which emerged as a consequence of the democratisation that swept so many countries toward the end of that decade (Blair, 2000). This new version of decentralisation combined devolutionary decentralisation with democracy at the local level (Blair, 2000): “During the 1990s decentralisation was seen as a way of opening governance to wider public participation through organizations of civil society” (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007, p. 3).

What distinguishes democratic decentralisation from earlier forms is its level of citizen participation and its responsiveness to citizens’ needs and preferences – both important components of state-society restructuring in the enactment of democratic governance throughout a society (Brinkerhoff, et al., 2007). It was also noted by Blair (2000) that the major difference between this new form of decentralisation and earlier forms is the inclusion of new themes, namely participation and accountability: “The central idea of participation is to give citizens a meaningful role in local government decisions that

affect them, while accountability means that people will be able to hold local government responsible for how it is affecting them” (Blair, 2000, p. 22).

In this new decentralisation, the link between it and participation is obvious, as suggested by Pimbert, who said “the democratic potential of decentralizations is usually greatest when it is linked with the institutionalisation of local level popular participation and community mobilisation” (2001, p. 81). Furthermore, Goldfrank (2002) argued that decentralisation and participation are separate but complementary concepts; the former is often viewed as a necessary step to achieve the latter. In this way, decentralisation has served as an institutional foundation on which the people’s participation in local government can prosper, a condition highly associated with democratisation. It is also supported by Gaventa and Valderama, as they argued, “One of the most popular state reforms that has opened spaces for a wider and deeper participation of citizens at the local level has been the decentralisation process” (1999, p. 5).

It is clear, then, from these writings that decentralisation is indeed often admitted as a prerequisite for local participatory democracy to flourish. It is argued that through decentralisation, the local government has the potential to evolve democratically because the decentralisation process allows for more responsiveness, representation, and local participation.

Parallel to this democratic decentralisation movement, legal structures and institutional channels for citizen participation have been developed. Accordingly, the concept of popular participation has a significant influence on the decentralisation literature. Drawing on the two paradigms of popular participation described above (as a means, and as an end in itself) it can be observed that both these views have impacted the two approaches to decentralisation: *the pragmatic approach* and the *political approach* (Schönwälder, 1997).

The pragmatic decentralisation school’s primary concern is the way in which decentralisation can contribute to local and regional development, and more specifically, how decentralisation can improve the provision and maintenance of public services and infrastructure in developing countries (Rondinelli, McCullough, & Johnson, 2007). Schönwälder wrote, “Essentially, decentralisation is viewed here as a policy tool that can be used by the state, often aided in these efforts by international

organisations” (Schönwälder, 1997 p. 757). Here, popular participation functions as a means, rather than as an end in itself. In this context, the role of popular participation is emphasised in order for decentralisation programmes to be successful in delivering public services.

This contrasts with the political approach to decentralisation where participation is an end in itself. This approach demonstrates more concern for the political aspects of decentralisation and views it as a vehicle for political reform (Schönwälder, 1997 p. 759). Thus, the empowerment of marginalised people is the ultimate goal of this type of decentralised reform.

Some advocates of decentralisation see it as linked with participation in a crucial combination which serves as the key to improving government performance, strengthening citizen participation, and in this way, deepening democracy (Goldfrank, 2002, p. 53). Yet other scholars sound a note of caution regarding this idea (Crook, 2003; Herzer & Pirez, 1991; Schönwälder, 1997). For example, Schonwalder suggested that political decentralisation often runs into bureaucratic obstacles and that locally based popular movements are frequently co-opted by other local actors for their own goals. Similarly, Crook, drawing on his study of decentralisation and poverty reduction in sub-Saharan African countries, argued that decentralisation is unlikely to lead to more pro-poor outcomes unless serious efforts are made to strengthen and broaden accountability mechanisms at both local and national levels.

Additionally, Herzer and Pirez noted that “participatory experiences only happen in exceptional circumstances and are often ‘transitory’” (1991, p. 95) . They concluded that two conditions must be met for such programmes to be sustained: (1) the placing of a party or an individual with political will in local office, and (2) the existence of popular local organisations. As also suggested by a study involving six countries (Bolivia, Honduras, India, Mali, the Philippines, and Ukraine), local democratic governance initiatives have encouraged participation and increased representation, but they have also yielded small improvements in the way of empowerment, and even less progress in making the distribution of benefits more equitable (Blair, 2000, p. 25).

The limits of participation in the context of decentralisation were also acknowledged by Brinkerhoff, et al. who pointed out, “Of course, community participation and partnership are not panaceas for poor local government performance or democratic deficits” (2007, p. 191). Moreover, from the viewpoint of the developing countries that have experienced it, the process of decentralisation is often partially implemented (Brinkerhoff, et al., 2007, p. 193). There is frequently a wide gap between the legal mandate of decentralisation and the way in which that mandate is translated into practice (Crook, 2003).

It can be concluded that a significant link exists between participation and decentralisation, as decentralisation lays down an institutional foundation for the act of participation. However, some scholars still accept this link with caution because of the challenges of implementing it that have been documented over time. Participation is unlikely to be the sole answer to the problems of governance in developing countries, but participation in the context of decentralisation is necessary and important in the creation of a space in which a local community can determine their interests and gain access and control over their resources. It is argued that decentralisation ensures citizens will have a greater voice and more room for expressing their interests. However, the impact of decentralisation on community participation and empowerment needs to be identified more carefully as the consequences can be varied, depending on the specific circumstances and contexts.

Under the overarching theme of public involvement with education, this study attempts to understand the extent of community participation, particularly parents’ participation, in an education decentralisation context. The study also clarifies to what extent the school committee, as the product of education decentralisation, represents the parents at a school. Hence, it is worthwhile to develop an understanding of the scheme of community participation in education, and this is described in the following section.

2.4. Community Participation in Education

Community participation in education has an extensive history around the globe, beginning long before the twentieth century, with educational services provided mainly by churches (or other religious organisations) and voluntary agencies (Bray, 2003).

Following World War II, the function of government was expanded and came to play a dominant role in providing education. The expanded role of government in education was supported by various international resolutions, including the 1948 United Declaration of Human Rights, the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

However, in the last quarter of the twentieth century advocacy for community participation again came to the fore, as the financial and other limitations of governmental capacity gained wider recognition (Bray, 2003, p. 32). Some countries attempted to extend the concept of community-linked schools, where self-financing capability is dependent upon close links with communities (Hall, 1986, p. 76). The Delhi Declaration (UNESCO, 1994), which emanated from an Education for All summit, stated once again the importance of community participation in education. It is written into the Declaration's preamble, clause 2.8 (UNESCO, 1994 cited in (Bray, 2003, p. 32):

“Education is, and must be, a societal responsibility, encompassing governments, families, communities and non-governmental organisation alike; it requires the commitment and participation of all, in a grand alliance that transcends diverse opinions and political positions.”

The term ‘community involvement’ covers a wide range of activities, from simple ‘informing’ all the way to ‘empowering’ and ‘emboldening’ (Mfum-Mensah, 2004, p. 142). Farrel (1998, as cited in Mfum-Mensah, (2004, pp. 144-145) distinguishes three types of participation in educational programmes. The first type is the spontaneous grassroots community endeavour, where the community owns the school and works through a school committee, along with students who participate in school governance. The second is community participation, where the government and an outside agency are ‘invited’ by the community to participate in local educational development. The programme develops from the centre rather than from the community itself. The third level contains the programmes that enlist outside support. It attempts to establish local school committees who can identify school improvement needs. It appears that community participation in the education decentralisation context in Indonesia belongs to the second level, and this will become apparent with the explanation of the role of school committees outlined in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1.

The extent and impact of decentralisation have been a major theme in the analysis of community participation in education. Decentralisation has been a considerably effective mechanism for advocating improvements in the provision of education in less developed countries. In many settings, decentralisation has been desirable in order to find structures with which governments could share control with communities and other actors in a more balanced way (Bray, 2001). Also worth noting is the fact that educational decentralisation naturally brings about a change in the role of the state in education systems. Through this process, the central role of the state at times has been seriously questioned, with mounting evidence from affected countries pointing to major shifts in the position of the state within educational governance. The consequent implications for the community lie at the school level, namely school governance and school financing (Bray, 2001).

One product of educational decentralisation is School-Based Management (SBM), which requires the authority over educational governance to be devolved down to the school level. SBM advocates recommend that curriculum, personnel, and budget decisions all be controlled at the school level (Sackney & Dibsiki, 1994). Through SBM, decision-making authority has been extended down the professional hierarchy to stakeholders who have not traditionally be involved – the teachers and parents. Once empowered, these groups – the ones closest to the students – can make better decisions and school performance has the potential to improve (Wohlstetter, Smyer, & Mohrman, 1994, p. 296). Through this process, parents and local communities become active stakeholders in educational governance at the school level. The community is expected to be involved in the decision-making process and to be aware of any school issues that arise, such as budget allocations.

Under SBM, the school is the primary unit of educational decision-making; decisions concerning expenditure, curricula, and personnel are made by principals and staff with the participation of parents, students, and members of the community. Most SBM schemes require the establishment of school advisory councils for obtaining systematic input on school decisions from teachers, parents, and community members (Bauch & Goldring, 1998; Sackney & Dibsiki, 1994). These councils are usually vested with varying amounts of authority in the areas of budget, personnel, and curriculum (Clune

& White, 1988) and their formation is arguably the most important feature of SBM, whereby parental involvement is institutionalised. Thus, for the purposes of this study, parental participation will be measured in terms of parents' access to and control over financial resources (e.g., the school budget) with emphasis on the role of school committees as the parents' representative at school.

Bauch and Goldring (1998), in their article on parents and teachers in school governance, define participation as the involvement of parents to the degree of providing input or being consulted about school affairs or the children's progress, but without the opportunity to exercise influence. On the other hand, empowerment refers to parents' ability to exercise influence within a school, typically through decision-making forums, which is usually accompanied by legitimated sources of power and authority (Goldring & Shapira, 1993). It is the notion of power that distinguishes between these two concepts, participation and empowerment. Their definition is slightly different according to Deshler & Sock's (1985) levels of participation where participation and empowerment are considered as a continuum rather than two separate concepts. Therefore, to explain parents' access to and control over school financial resources, this study utilises the concept of participation as a continuum, with empowerment as the final point at one end.

This study does not intend to evaluate the productivity of SBM in the schools or to assess the effectiveness of various styles of school governance, as these research challenges belong to the field of education. Rather, it strives to establish an understanding of community participation in education as part of the socio-political development of the community, and to assess this as it is represented by parental involvement at the school level.

2.5. Conclusion

It is crucial to embrace the complexities imbedded in the concept of participation as a theoretical framework for this study. Overall, there are two different approaches to conceptualising participation: the view of participation which emphasises the notion of power, and the perspective described as popular participation. The first approach was initially inspired by the notion of 'conscientization', which came from Paulo Freire. He

believed the concept of participation is driven by the liberation movement where power is ultimately considered to be an integral part of participation. This approach was considered a 'radical stance' by Rahman (1995), a popular participation theorist.

In comparison, the popular participation paradigm puts emphasis on the benefits of participation related to development, and not necessarily linked with liberation or empowerment. However, within the popular participation faction, theorists do not always reject the notion of power, as empowerment is considered to be an end goal of participation. This discourse is also known as the debate over participation as a means to an end versus participation as an end in itself.

To understand the notion of participation as a means versus an end, some theorists have made efforts to classify and categorise participation. Deshler and Sock (1985) specified degrees of participation from 'pseudo' to 'genuine'; additionally, White's framework distinguished the form of participation from its function, highlighting the notion of 'interest'. Smith's study on the form of passive participation is also important as he noted that in developing countries, even the weakest forms of participation result in some benefits.

There is also significance in the link between decentralisation and participation; indeed, the literature illustrates that decentralisation has provided some space for a greater participation. However, participation is not necessarily a panacea for all the problems of developing countries. As discussed above, the notion of community participation has come to the fore in educational decentralisation as a consequence of the diminishing role of the state. Through School-Based Management, an education decentralisation scheme, schools are given more autonomy. The scheme requires the involvement of members of the community as main stakeholders in education, and parental involvement in school life is seen as a necessity. Generally, educational decentralisation policy has mandated the establishment of school councils as a vehicle for this community participation.

Within the context of educational decentralisation in Indonesia, this study intends to investigate the characteristics and levels of parents' participation in gaining access to and control over the financial resources of the local school. By exploring parents'

perceptions of their involvement at the school management level, and their perceptions of the roles of school committees in the representation of the community at schools, this research is expected to reveal the levels of parents' participation along a continuum, from the very weakest act of participation to the highest level, the state of empowerment. Deshler & Sock's (1985) typology of participation is applied as a framework for analysing the data; consequently, this study will discuss whether parents' participation is as of yet only a means to a greater end, or already at the stage of empowerment. Furthermore, the link between decentralisation and participation is utilised to focus and refine this assessment of the practice of community participation in Indonesia within the context of education decentralisation.

CHAPTER 3: INDONESIAN DECENTRALISATION REFORM: THE CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

3.1. Introduction

Following discussion of the key concepts of participation and decentralisation as outlined in Chapter 2, this chapter will explore in detail the Indonesian experience of decentralisation as a context for this study. Beginning with a short history on the nation's back-and-forth shift between centralisation and decentralisation, the chapter then provides a description of the impact of Indonesian decentralisation reform on the education sector, a sector that has been significantly influenced by decentralisation policy. Finally, community participation in education as an integral part of education decentralisation will be described comprehensively, with specific focus on the establishment of Education Councils (ECs) and School Committees (SCs), two bodies created through government regulation with the purpose of providing vehicles for community participation in education.

3.2. A Brief History of Indonesian Centralisation and Decentralisation

The question of whether Indonesia should take the form of a centralised or decentralised system of government and public administration has been the subject of long debate in Indonesian history. The changing pattern of relationships between central and local governments is one of the unique characteristics of the Indonesian political system throughout its history. Thus, to understand the current movement in Indonesian decentralisation, the broader context of the Indonesian historical and political setting should be taken into account.

Recent legislation on centre-regional relations is in fact part of a series of reforms that have taken place since Dutch colonial times. However, this series is made up of an unstable pattern of switching between centralisation and decentralisation, rather than a steady and maturing evolution in political development. Decentralisation was implemented by the Dutch colonial government in 1903, 1905, and 1922, in the form of incorporation, to manage centre-region relations throughout Indonesia (Sulistiyanto & Erb, 2005). The decentralisation Law of 1903 established a legal basis for autonomous

local (urban) government and municipalities were formed based on this legislation. In 1922, the Dutch colonial government passed another decentralisation law that merged the intermediate administrative units into larger provinces. However, this was only a limited type of decentralisation with the Governor-General in Batavia still in full control of the Indonesian government and administrative institutions at both national and regional levels.

Later on, Japan took over Indonesia in 1942 and governed it in a very centralistic way in order to carry out its goals of exploiting the country's natural resources and mobilising support against allies in World War II. Under Japan, every household, neighbourhood association, hamlet, and village was pulled into one single administrative pyramid dominated by the Japanese army (Jaya & Dick, 2001, p. 221)

After being defeated in the 1945 War, Japan left Indonesia and the central Republican government was quickly established in Jakarta in late August 1945 (Ricklefs, 1993). In the meantime, the Dutch sought to restore their authority by pushing ahead with decentralisation in areas under its control. During the revolutionary movement between 1945 and 1949, there was ongoing debate over which model of local government was most suitable for Indonesia. A unitary system and a federal system were both discussed as major alternatives.

Based on the argument that Indonesia is a diverse society in terms of geographic regions (it is, after all, located on an archipelago) as well as people and culture, a unitary system was preferred by leaders such as Sukarno (the first president of the republic) and Hatta (the first vice-president), and by the military leaders, in order to reinforce and maintain the country's unity. Meanwhile, there was a great deal of support for establishing a federal system of government from those who lived in the former Dutch-created United States of Indonesia. As a result, "The republic's first local government law (No. 22/1948) maintained a fairly centralised approach" (Jaya & Dick, 2001, p. 221).

In December 1949, the Republic government under Sukarno was forced to accept the compromise of a federation on the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch. The Republic of the United States of Indonesia combined the Republic with the Dutch-sponsored states and territories. This arrangement was insisted upon by the Dutch as the only way

to protect diverse regional interests, but in the eyes of republicans these states were Dutch puppets and hence the federation had no legitimacy (Jaya & Dick, 2001, pp. 221-222).

During the 1950s, Indonesia faced a contradiction between the need to satisfy the regions and the desire to establish a stable and strong central government. For the first time since its independence, Indonesia experimented with decentralisation in the form of what is known as 'parliamentary democracy'. During the parliamentary democracy period of the 1950s, Indonesia experienced political instability characterised by the repeated collapse of the parliamentary government in Jakarta. In response to rising political pressure, the central government enacted Law 1/1957 which allowed much greater local autonomy. This law gave more freedom to the regions for running their own affairs, including electing their own regional leadership and managing their own money. Pratikno (2005, p. 3) remarked that "It was in this period that decentralisation was rejuvenated". The basis of a decentralised administrative structure with an elected local head and a powerful local legislative body was devised during this time, but not implemented.

Ultimately, the intense ideological conflicts among major political parties, combined with regional rebellions, made it impossible for Jakarta to implement Law 1/1957 (Pratikno, 2005, p. 5). Within this political setting, Sukarno declared a state of emergency in 1959, an option stipulated in the Presidential Decree, ending the parliamentary period in Indonesia. Indonesia then returned to a centralist political system, with the so-called Guided Democracy serving throughout the remaining years of Sukarno's government (1959-1968) (Pratikno, 2005, p. 23). Guided Democracy was an approach used by Sukarno as a governing principle, involving heavy use of presidential powers and a strong move toward centralisation (Amirrachman, 2004, p. 35).

The collapse of Sukarno's Old Order paved the way for Suharto to rule the country under the New Order regime (1966-1998). Soeharto, Indonesia's second president, imposed *Pancasila* Democracy, which was also characterised by intensified presidential power and significant centralisation (Amirrachman, 2004). Using economic and political stability as evidence for legitimizing centralisation, Suharto restricted regional

autonomy. The basic argument was that political stability was the essential precondition of economic growth, so the government must act to enhance political stability – a position made famous by the slogan “Development yes, politics no!” (Bourchier, 2001, pp. 116-117). Even so, the most salient factor of this period was the Suharto government’s considerable effort, expended over several decades, to fashion a centralised system that promoted consolidation of its political power (Silver, 2003, p. 424).

Following the economic crisis that hit Indonesia in the mid-1990s, Suharto’s regime lost its political credibility, resulting in large demonstrations that forced him to step down. The new Habibie government held the power transferred to it by Suharto in 1998. In this critical moment, there was a demand from the reform movement for democratisation of the political structure and this was manifested in freedom of the press, the lifting of restrictions on parties, and reduced military involvement in politics.

Parallel with this democratic movement, there was a strong call by local leaders for more regional control over political and economic affairs. For four decades under Sukarno (1959-1966) and Suharto (1966-1998), the regions had neither influence over national policies nor the power to control their own affairs. Seeing regionalism as a major threat to a unified state of Indonesia, both regimes had maintained a centralisation policy in governing the nation (Aspinal & Fealy, 2003) .

After 30 years under the highly centralised government of Suharto’s authoritarian regime, in 1999 Indonesia transformed its political landscape into one characterised by decentralisation. The lifting of authoritarian constraints allowed regions to openly raise their demand for broader regional autonomy. The fear that Indonesia could fall apart encouraged the People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat/MPR) to issue its Decision No. XV/MPR/1998 on the implementation of the fullest regional autonomy, fairer revenue sharing, and fiscal balance (Mokhsen, 2006). Habibie’s government implemented this by introducing legislation for decentralisation which devolved a wide range of powers to the third tier – the district (municipality) level – of the five tiered government hierarchy (see Figure 1).

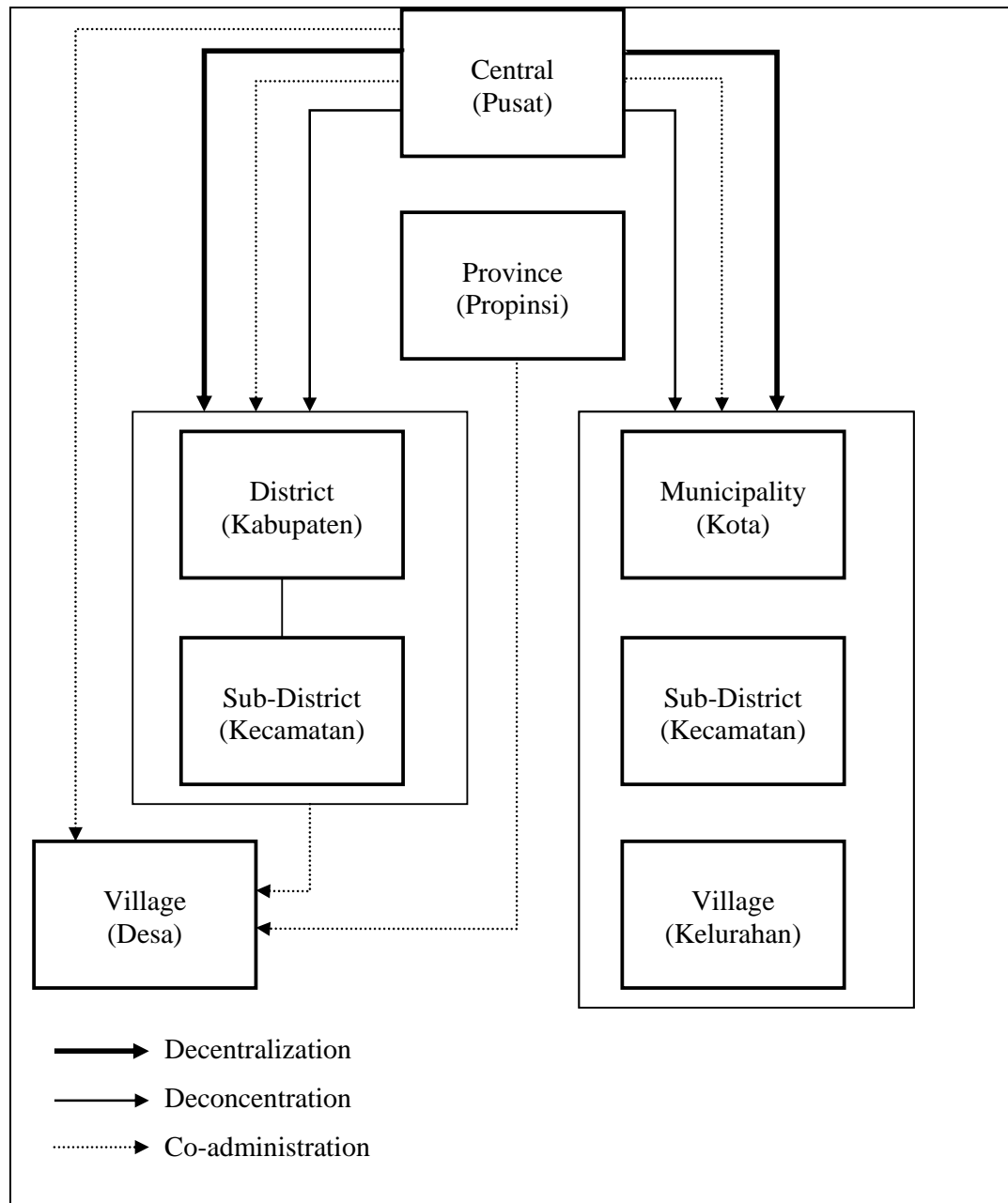


Figure 1. Framework of Government According to Law No. 22, 1999

Source: Usman, 2001

Habibie's government introduced a radical policy with the promulgation of Law 22/1999 on regional autonomy and Law 25/1999 on fiscal relation. This policy has been characterised as a 'Big Bang', where much of the apparatus of government was transferred to the districts or municipalities, the regional share in government spending

jumped dramatically, and a complete new intergovernmental fiscal system was introduced (Hofman & Kaiser, 2002, p. 1).

Notably, the reform was also pushed strongly by leading international agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF in the direction of privatisation, deregulation, and devolution in order to reduce the central government's expenditures (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006, p. 514). The advocates of these reforms expected to see the combined results of quality improvement on the one hand, and cost reduction for public service delivery on the other.

Law 22/1999 required the central government to transfer its authority to district/municipality governments in all fields except foreign policy, defence and security, monetary, the legal system, and religious affairs. Article 7 of this Law stipulated that all functions except those reserved for the central government were to be decentralised to the districts and municipalities, and according to Article 11, the authority of the districts is to be residual. The districts are expected to perform the functions of all other government responsibilities including public works, health, education and culture, agriculture, communication, industry and trade, investment, environment, security, cooperatives, and the labour force, all of which had previously been under the domain of central government ministries (Mokhsen, 2006; Silver, 2003). Regarding this huge transfer of responsibility and authority from central to local government, it is likely that the decentralisation reform which occurred in Indonesia took the form of devolution, described by Rondinelli in his categorisation of such as the most complete form of decentralisation².

Since then, district governments have undertaken full responsibility for these important functions. Now, the district/municipality head, as the leader of autonomous local government, is directly responsible to the local assembly, whereas before, all of the regions' heads were responsible to the central government. Thus the law has resulted in a radical transformation of the local political structure. Under the Law No. 22/1999, *bupati* (head of district) and *walikota* (head of municipality) are now elected and

² See Rondinelli, D. A. (1980). Government decentralization in comparative perspective: Theory and practice in developing countries. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 47, 133-145.

accountable to local councils (Mokhsen, 2006), which are themselves elected once every 4 years in the general election.

Meanwhile, the provinces have retained deconcentrated central tasks, and are the central government's representatives in the regions. It is stated in Article 9 that provinces are granted the authority to administer cross-district matters along with any issue that appears to be beyond the capacity of a particular district to handle. Since implementation of the new decentralisation law began, there has been uncertainty about the position of provinces in relation to the districts (Usman, 2001). As a consequence of the increased autonomy for districts and municipalities that was mandated by this law, communication tends to occur directly between these entities and the central government, bypassing the provinces (Turner, Podger, Sumardjono, & Tirthayasa, 2003).

There was strong argument that provinces had greater capacity to handle expanded responsibilities than did districts and municipalities. However, it was politically undesirable to build strong, self-governing provinces as these may have become the vehicle for movement toward regional disintegration, especially in areas like Aceh and Irian where the independence movement was already a challenge to central government. Thus, Law 22/1999 granted autonomy to the district/municipality level, which consequently abolished the hierarchical relationship between provinces and cities (Usman, 2001).

This process of decentralisation was actually insufficiently implemented in Indonesia because it was prepared in haste in order to counter growing regional discontent. The government took a shortcut, quickly drafting the decentralisation laws without adequate preparation through such measures as judicial reviews, research reports, feedback from politicians, mapping exercises, impact assessments, consultations with the regions, and public disseminations of information (Alm, Aten, & Bahl, 2001; Hofman & Kaiser, 2002; Turner, et al., 2003). As a consequence, many of the stipulations involved are ambiguous and the concept of autonomy laid down in the law is unclear (Mokhsen, 2006).

Furthermore, the law required more than 200 supporting regulations that would take years to complete. Unfortunately, most regions were impatient to see the law implemented for fear that delay would allow central officials to shift the direction of regional autonomy back to a more centralised arrangement (Mokhsen, 2006). To minimise the threat to national integration from separatist activities, the government immediately implemented the regional autonomy reform. In January 2001, despite the fact that most supporting regulations had yet to be prepared, the government made the law effective.

Thus, insufficient preparation, a lack of clarity in the law, and inadequate supporting regulation are the characteristics of the decentralisation process in Indonesia. An Asian Development Bank (ADB) report points out that many stakeholders in the regions were left unsure and confused about the new policies (Turner, et al., 2003, p. 29). For example, no one knew what to do with more than 2 million central government civil servants who had previously worked for the regional offices of central departments in the provinces and districts (Mokhsen, 2006).

Some concerns appeared regarding the challenges of implementing decentralisation policies. The laws aroused controversy and criticism regarding the quality of governance and national cohesion (Aspinal & Fealy, 2003). In terms of governance, there were issues such as the incapacity of local government, growing inequality between rich and poor regions, and worsening corruption and money politics. Corruption was a big concern during the time that the New Order governed the country. Yet, practice of the so-called KKN (the Indonesian acronym for corruption, collusion and nepotism) is also one of the problems today that may stifle the promise that regional autonomy offers (Hadiz, 2005; Hidayat, 2005). It is argued that decentralisation has helped to spread KKN from the centre to the local levels of government with great intensity and rapidity (Hidayat, 2005, p. 54); such concerns are stronger in regions with abundant natural resources (Hadiz, 2005, p. 45).

In terms of national unity, decentralisation is viewed by its opponents as a source of national disintegration, capable of encouraging dangerous new forms of local identity politics that would weaken the bonds of Indonesian national unity (Aspinal & Fealy, 2003). Soon after the collapse of the New Order regime, Indonesia did, in fact, face the

threat of national disintegration. Long repressed ethnic, religious, and regional tensions erupted violently in some parts of the archipelago, such as in Maluku and central Kalimantan. In particular, the desire of some local peoples to control local government and secure resources for their own communities has challenged decentralisation as much as other opposing factions. This has resulted in demands for the creation of new *kabupaten* or *kota* (the Indonesian words for district and municipality) based on ethnic composition, culture, or history of the region.

To sum up, the history of Indonesia's political system shows that shifting between centralisation and decentralisation has been characteristic of the country's political system. However, earlier efforts at decentralisation had been implemented only on a limited basis during the Dutch colonial government and a short period of Sukarno's Parliamentary Democracy, and centralisation was still the dominant mode of the Indonesian political system as a whole. The new decentralisation policy promulgated in 1999, is thus seen as a drastic policy, as it devolved so great an amount of authority to the local governments by establishing Law 22/1999 and Law 25/1999. However, the policy is characterised by lack of clarity and insufficient preparation and as such, resulted in uncertainty in its implementation. To illustrate the main phases of decentralisation and centralisation between 1903 and the recent reform in 1999, Table 3, below, offers a graphic representation of this period.

Table 3. Decentralisation and Centralisation Measures in Indonesian Political History, 1900-2000

Period/Law	Political	Administrative	Fiscal	Indicator
Dutch Colonial (1900-1942) Law 1903 Law 1922	Delegation of power to local government Delegation of power to provincial government	Delegation of authority to local government Delegation of authority to the 'native' in Java	Delegation of powers to levy taxes	Decentralisation
Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)	Centralisation of formal power	Shifting of responsibility to central government	Fiscal Centralisation	Centralisation

<p>Revolution (1945-1949)</p> <p>1945 Constitution</p> <p>Law 22/1948</p> <p>Dutch policy (1948-1949)</p>	<p>Unitary republic</p> <p>Delegation of democratic principle</p> <p>Federal States</p>	<p>Delegation of authority</p> <p>Administrative decentralisation</p>	<p>Fiscal devolution</p> <p>Fiscal decentralisation</p>	<p>Centralisation</p> <p>Decentralisation</p>
<p>Old Order (1949-1965)</p> <p>Unitary</p> <p>Law 1957</p> <p>Presidential Edict 1959</p>	<p>Unitary State</p> <p>Division of powers</p> <p>Guided Democracy</p>	<p>Administrative centralisation</p> <p>Administrative devolution</p> <p>Administrative centralisation</p>	<p>Fiscal centralisation</p> <p>Fiscal centralisation</p> <p>Fiscal centralisation</p>	<p>Centralisation</p>
<p>New Order (1965-1998)</p> <p>Law 18/1965</p> <p>Law 5/1974</p>	<p>Devolution of power</p> <p>Centralisation of power under army and civil bureaucracy</p>	<p>Administrative centralisation</p> <p>Administrative centralisation</p>	<p>Fiscal centralisation</p> <p>Fiscal centralisation</p>	<p>Centralisation</p>
<p>Reform Order (1999-present)</p> <p>Law 22/1999</p> <p>Law 25/1999</p>	<p>Devolution of power; democratisation; strengthening of local legislation</p>	<p>Redistribution of authority and responsibility</p>	<p>Expenditure devolution; revenue centralisation</p>	<p>Decentralisation</p>

Source: Jaya & Dick 200

3.3. Education Decentralisation and Community Participation in Indonesia

Education is one of the sectors heavily affected by decentralisation; the administration of education in Indonesia has changed dramatically since the policy was put into practice in 2001. Managerial and financial responsibilities for all levels of public education have been decentralised from the central government to the local governments at the district level. There are now 440 districts within the 33 provinces of Indonesia, representing the third layer of the five-tier government hierarchy. Law 22/1999 on regional government affected education in that the implementation of education policies was devolved to the districts. Meanwhile, Law 25/1999 on fiscal relations delegated financial responsibilities to the district level, including the financing of education.

One of the characteristics of education decentralisation is a new emphasis on the role of community in education. This shift is made clear by the new education law, Law 20/2003 regarding the National Education System, which includes a chapter (Chapter XV) specifically dedicated to discussing community participation in education, wherein it is stated that “Communities participate in education in terms of resources, implementation, and beneficiaries” (Chapter XV, article 54 (2)) (UU 20/2003 [Law20/2003], 2003, p.22, translated).

The role of community in education is emphasised through SBM. Under decentralization, SBM is the key education policy adopted by the Indonesian government for improving the quality of schools (World Bank, August 2004). SBM emphasises the relationships among stakeholders and recommends making decisions based on negotiation, standard measures, publicly available comparative information, and accountability in achieving school development goals. The purpose of the SBM programme is to engage the community in enhancing the quality of education on many levels, including planning, controlling, and evaluating, by serving on an education council or the school committee (article 56 (1) Law20/2003, 2003, pp.23, translated). The article is adopted from the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia’s Decree number 044/U/2002 regarding the establishment of “new governing bodies” at both district and school levels, namely, *education councils (ECs)* and *school committees (SCs)*. The Decree explicitly states that the policy of decentralisation requires the establishment of these two bodies.

On the one hand, the law states that ECs and SCs are channels for societal participation, which is to serve as an instrument to improve quality, equity, and efficiency in education. The emphasis here is on participation as a way to improve the quality and efficiency of education; it appears this emphasis is also in accordance with the IMF's direction on developing more efficient public service delivery. On the other hand, the community's participation itself is also meant to be enhanced through this new process, as the Law's description of their role is specifically inclusive of "planning, controlling, and evaluating", suggesting a greater empowerment. The notion of participation here leans more toward a higher level that involves the exercise of power, as opposed to a merely passive role as beneficiary, in which participation is defined as a 'means'³.

However, research by Sumintono (2006) on SBM Policy in Lombok District claimed that the MoNE Decree does not offer clear statements about the transfer of power for community involvement at both the school and the district level. Neither in the decree's content nor in its appendices is there mention of devolved authority. Hence, he argued, the policy has failed to strengthen school autonomy.

Sumintono also argued that from a policy perspective, the government has used the idea of societal participation as an instrument to transfer the burdens involved in taking responsibility for education from the government to the community. Meanwhile, the empowerment itself is not explicitly included in the policy's wording. His study confirmed that parents' involvement in local school life was manifested mainly only in terms of supplying and maintaining facilities (p. 178). Sumintono's research took place before the government initiated FSP, at the time when parents still shared a major financial responsibility for their children's education, which had been criticised as a high-cost education. As we will see, my study – conducted *after* FSP was implemented – will reveal a different reality regarding community financing in education.

Meanwhile, another Indonesian study by Ammirachman (2004) focused on education marketisation as an implication of education decentralisation. He suggested that education marketisation resulted in competition between schools and manipulated parental choices, ultimately serving the needs of richer, more influential, middle-class

³ See the discourse on participation as a 'means' and an 'end' in chapter 2 section 2.2.2.

parents while offering more limited choices to poorer, less influential, working-class parents. There has been no recent research on this issue since the government implemented FSP and freed parents from paying for the schools' operational costs, hence whether this disparity still exists or not is not yet clear.

The policy document on education decentralisation has shown the main reason for its implementation is to engage the community in educational management, with excellence in education as the main goal. The community engagement stipulated by the policy document not only applies to resources, implementation, and beneficiaries, but also to planning, controlling, and evaluating the educational process. Yet, the requisite transfer of power for such activities is not mentioned clearly in the policy. In fact, the two studies by Sumintono and Amirrachman suggest that in actual practice, decentralisation does not necessarily result in more community involvement in education.

3.3.1. School Committee and Education Council as Community Representations in Education after Decentralisation

ECs and SCs have been chosen as institutional vehicles for community involvement and will be described here to provide context for understanding the characteristics of community engagement in education. ECs represent communities at the district level, and SCs at the school level. These two bodies are considered to be the key platforms for decentralising education in Indonesia.

The establishment of ECs and SCs was stipulated in MoNE Decree No. 44/U/2002. The Decree defines the EC as “a body which provides a place for societal participation in order to improve quality, equity and efficiency of educational management in a district” (MoNE, 2002a), and the SC as “a body which provides a place for societal participation in order to improve quality, equity and efficiency of educational management in each educational institution which are involved in pre-school education, schooling system, or out-of-school education” (MoNE, 2002, Appendix II, section 1).

The Decree's definitions emphasise the aspects of educational management in which the community is to participate. It also mentions that ECs and SCs are autonomous bodies

that have no hierarchical relationship with other government bodies (MoNE, 2002a). Interestingly, the centralised government under Suharto created a similar vehicle for community participation at the school level using a different name. At first it was called a Parent-Teacher Association (*Persatuan Orang Tua Murid dan Guru* or POMG), but later, MoNE Decree No. 17/O/197 abolished the POMG and replaced it with the Educational Assistance Body (*Badan Pembantu Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan* or BP3) (Sumintono, 2006, p. 30).

However, community participation as described in the regulations written for BP3 (Ministerial Decree No. 0293/U/1993) was limited to the role of beneficiary or supplier of educational resources. According to the decree, the BP3's responsibilities centred on establishing relationships and cooperation, representing parents in school activities, and collecting subscriptions from parents (Cohen, 2001, p. 30). It seems that community participation remained limited in the areas of supplying resources and managing relationships between schools and communities, and furthermore, communities were not necessarily given any managerial roles. Thus, the community was still perceived as a supporting stakeholder, not a stakeholder involved in school management. Cohen's study showed that in most cases, the role of BP3 became one of establishing the fees parents were to pay for their children to participate in school (Cohen, 2001, p. 64).

Meanwhile, the decree on the establishment of ECs and SCs emphasised that these are autonomous bodies responsible for acting on the aspirations of the community while practicing transparency, accountability, and democracy at the schools. At school level, the policy was meant to communicate that the era of BP3, with its focus on collecting money from parents, was over. In its place, the role of the SC has been extended to include the advisory, supporting, controlling, and mediating functions which enable it to perform in school governance as mandated by the SBM policy. Compared to previous regulations establishing BP3, Ministerial Decree No. 44/U/2002 expanded the roles of SCs, creating more space for community participation in education, especially in educational management. Figure 2, below, illustrates the position of SCs and ECs in decentralised education governance.

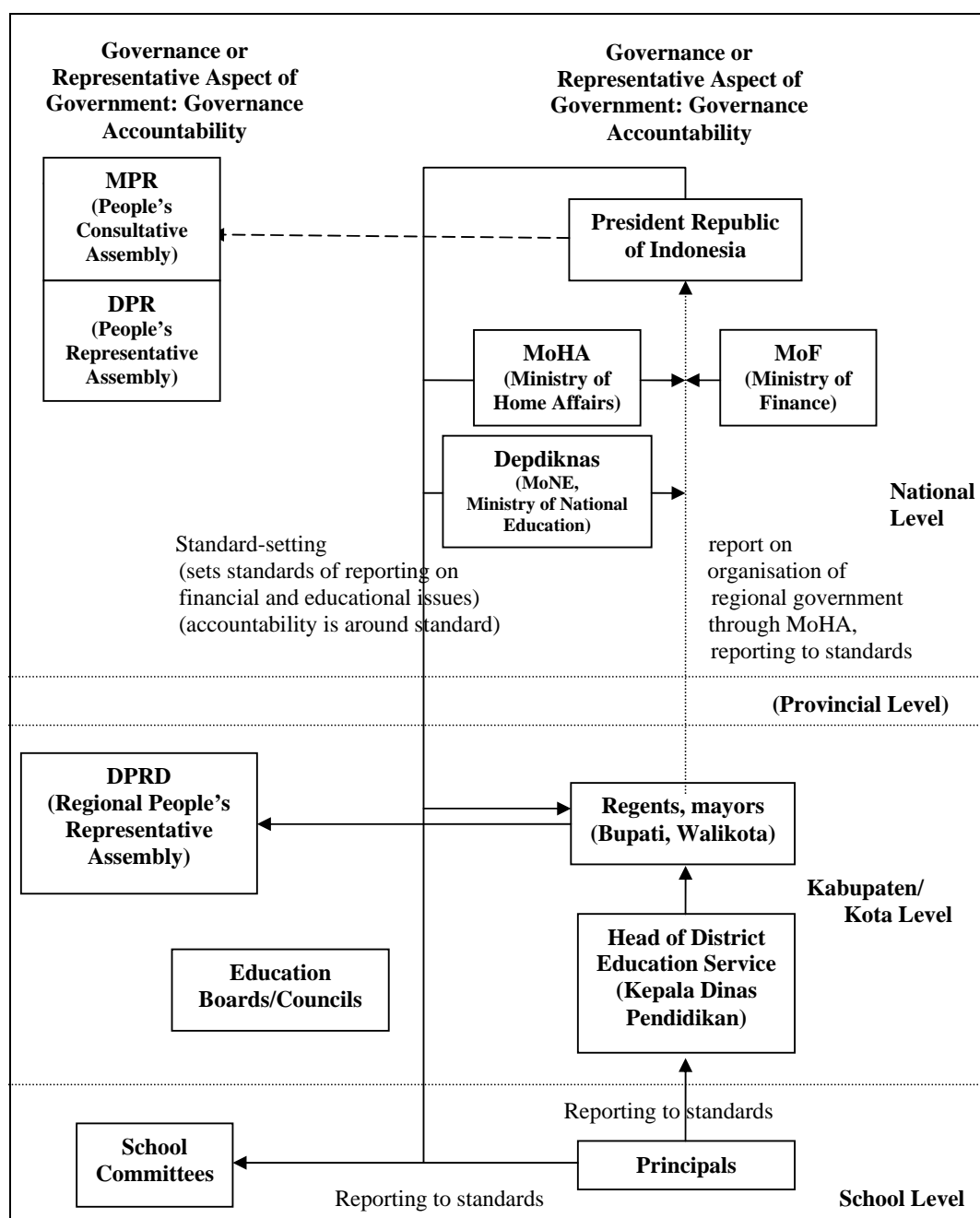


Figure 2. Flows of Governance and Managerial Accountability in Decentralised Indonesia (Source: World Bank, 2004)

According to the decree, the main objectives of the establishment of these two bodies are: (a) facilitating and channelling societal aspirations and initiatives through policy and programmes, (b) increasing responsibility and active participation from all layers of society in implementing educational programming, and (c) creating an environment conducive to transparency, accountability, and democracy in educational services (MoNE, 2002a).

It argues that the community, as the main stakeholder in education, should take a major role in managing it. This parallels with the SBM idea that in a decentralised education system, the responsibility of education management extends to the community. These objectives, along with the expanded roles of ECs and SCs, reflect that the function of community engagement as stated in the decree is not merely to share the responsibilities of implementing educational programmes – i.e., to serve in an advisory or supporting role – but also to exercise control, as in a controlling or mediator role.

According to the decree, the role of an EC is to serve as:

- a) An advisory agency in deciding and implementing educational policy
- b) A supporting agency in terms of providing financial, administrative, and physical labour assistance in the implementation of educational programming
- c) A controlling agency in terms of transparency and accountability in educational implementation and outcomes, and
- d) A mediator between local government (executive) or parliamentary bodies and society (MoNE, 2002a).

Furthermore, an SC is meant to serve as:

- a) An advisory agency in deciding and implementing educational policy
- b) A supporting agency in terms of financial, administrative, and physical labour assistance in the implementation of educational programming
- c) A controlling agency in terms of transparency and accountability in educational implementation and outcomes, and
- d) A mediator between executive bodies and society in the field of education.

Accordingly, the function of ECs, as described in the decree, includes:

- a) Increasing society's attention and commitment to achieving educational quality
- b) Facilitating cooperation between society (individuals and organisations) and the government and local parliament, pertaining to the implementation of quality education
- c) Receiving and analysing the aspirations, ideas, demands, and educational needs that are proposed by society

- d) Giving input, advice, and recommendations to local governments and/or local parliaments about educational policy and programmes, performance criteria for the local education sector, educational workers, educational facilities, and other factors involved in education
- e) Motivating parents and society to participate in education to improve its quality and equity
- f) Evaluating and supervising educational policy, programmes, implementation, and outcome

and the functions of SCs include:

- a) Increasing society's attention and commitment to achieving educational quality
- b) Facilitating cooperation between society (individuals and organisations) and the government and local parliament, pertaining to the implementation of the quality of education
- c) Receiving and analysing aspirations, ideas, demands, and educational needs that are proposed by society
- d) Giving input, advice, and recommendations to educational institutions about educational policy and programmes, *Rancangan Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Sekolah* (RAPBS) (School Budget of Revenue and Expenditure Plan), school performance criteria, criteria for educational workers, and criteria for educational facilities
- e) Raising funds from the community to support education at the local school
- f) Evaluating and supervising educational policy, programmes, implementation, and outcome at the school level.

The roles and functions of the two bodies are quite similar but they are placed at different levels, as the ECs' roles and functions lie at the district level while SCs' roles are at the school level, such as offering recommendations and considerations regarding RAPBS. Although the decree specifies the roles of ECs and SCs in four areas (advisory, support, control, and mediation), Sumintono's (2006) study on SCs and ECs in Lombok suggested that most of the time both the council and the committee operate merely in an advisory capacity.

EC membership comes from various elements of society, including non-government organisations in education, prominent social figures, education scholars, foundations that manage educational institutions, the business sector/industry and professional associations, and professional organisations in the field of education. Elements of the bureaucracy and the legislature can be represented by a maximum of four to five people. The maximum membership for an EC is 17, and should always be an uneven number. SCs, on the other hand, have a membership made up of elements of society including parents/caregivers, prominent social figures, education scholars, business sectors/industry and professional associations, professional organisations from the field of education, alumni and representatives of the students, teachers and foundations who manage educational institutions, and the village advisory board. The minimum number of members is nine, and the number of members should always be uneven.

The formation of education councils and school committees is conducted through transparent, accountable, and democratic mechanisms, including elections. Based on the guidelines of the decree, the EC's establishment processes involve the *bupati* (head of district)/*walikota* (head of municipality) and/or the community establishes a preliminary committee consisting of a minimum of five members. The task of this committee is to prepare for the establishment of an EC; this includes conducting a dissemination forum, setting up criteria for the candidates, selecting candidates based on community input, publishing the candidates' names, facilitating the election, and reporting the results to the mayor. Following this, the mayor constitutes the establishment of the EC by mayoral decree.

Likewise, the decree states that the formation of SCs should begin with the formation of a preliminary committee by the community and/or the head of the educational institution. The committee should consist of a minimum of five members that are education practitioners (teachers, heads of institutions, and heads of foundations), education professionals (NGOs, prominent social figures, religious figures, and industry associations), and parents. Its task is to prepare the establishment of the full SC, which includes conducting a forum for the dissemination of information, setting up criteria for candidate selection, selecting candidates based on community input, publishing the candidates' names, facilitating the election, and reporting the results to the mayor.

Following this, the head of the educational institution constitutes the establishment of the SC by decree. It is then followed up by instituting organisational rules.

By 2007, 436 of 440 districts in Indonesia had formed ECs in their districts (Suparlan, 2008). However, SCs were established in every school in 2002 to implement support for the autonomous schools through community participation (Shoraku, 2008). The establishment of these bodies involves a long process filled with many obstacles and challenges. Initially, the Committee for Developing Education Councils and School Committees was established by the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education from the Ministry of National Education. The task of this committee has been to disseminate information and facilitate the formation of ECs and SCs throughout all Indonesian regions. In order to motivate the development of these bodies, the government subsidizes those districts that already have ECs and SCs in place.

To gain further understanding of and provide support for these local communities, MoNE and the National Planning and Development Body (*Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/BAPPENAS*), in cooperation with the World Bank and Canada International Development Agency (CIDA), conducted regional consultations in the province of West Sumatra regarding the degree of applicability and acceptance of ECs and SCs (Amirrachman, 2004, p. 44). Similarly, in an effort to build capacity, MoNE conducted a one-week induction workshop on the roles and functions of ECs and SCs during 2002 and 2003 in several regions (Amirrachman, 2004, p. 48).

Moreover, symposia on the role and function of these bodies were provided as a learning tool for ECs and SCs to improve their quality and performance. Finally, in 2006 the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education designed the Empowerment Programme for school committees, with ECs serving as the agent that acts to empower the SCs (MoNE, 2002b). The goal was to empower the ECs to take on the role of supporting the SCs in such a way that they become empowered as well.

Unfortunately, it appears the implementation of the decree has not yet met the government's goals. It could be that the stakeholders in education are still unsure of how to implement the policy, as the act of engaging in educational management rather than merely supplying resources is still not commonplace for Indonesian communities.

A survey by the World Bank indicated that school committees are in fact in place, but are not yet operating as effective vehicles for quality improvement. A Bali impact crisis survey in 2003 revealed that 97% of schools had an SC established; however, in more than 80% of these schools, the committees met at most once every 6 months and played only a peripheral role in the school's decision making process (World Bank, August 2004, p. 31).

Furthermore, this project's focus group discussions with teachers and principals in Lampung and Makassar and a meeting with SCs in Central Java have illustrated that confusion exists about the role of these committees, along with a high level of scepticism about what can be achieved. Another survey of 36 schools in five districts undertaken by the Managing Basic Education Project in 2003 documented that SCs have been constituted, but are meeting at a frequency of only two or three times a year to discuss problems regarding facilities and fund raising. Thus, teachers felt the committees were not active (World Bank, August 2004, p. 32).

Meanwhile, there is concern over funding for these new institutions. The World Bank's study also found there were not enough public funds to sustain the SCs (World Bank, August 2004, p. 32). Most committee and council members are volunteers who work part time for these institutions. Hence, it may be difficult for them to make an optimal commitment as there is no material reward involved. Likewise, questions have arisen regarding the funding for ECs as was documented by Dharma, a chairman of Balikpapan EC during 2004-2006. He questioned how these bodies could function well and do their jobs if there is insufficient support in terms of funding (Dharma, 2005).

One additional concern is the accountability of these bodies, as neither the ministerial decree nor the attendant regulations clearly specify an accountability mechanism. For example, although the guidelines stipulate that ECs are independent and should be situated on the same level as local governmental bodies, their formation is invoked by mayoral decree. The mechanism of election also appears to be unclear because, although an election is required, *musyawarah*⁴ is listed as a first option (Amirrachman, 2004, p. 47).

⁴ Indonesian term for 'consensus'. While it stands as a neutral term, it was generally misused during the New Order regime to avoid voting at the expense of popular aspiration. See Amirrachman, p. 47

Thus, even though the SBM programme for decentralising education is the government's chosen way forward, the political, educational, and social history of Indonesia make it difficult for the implementation of such an approach to yield favourable results (Shoraku, 2008). There is some argument that education decentralisation has even widened educational inequalities. In terms of quality, the recent reforms have resulted in gaps between schools located in different areas (Shoraku, 2008, p. 17). For example, Indriyanto (2003) argued that schools in poorer areas now tend to have a lower quality of education as compared to schools in prosperous areas. Because of SBM, schools are now dependent on the community for support, and therefore students from poor communities may not enjoy as good educational opportunities as their counterparts from more affluent communities. New research on the reality of this disparity after the introduction of FSP does not seem to be available as yet; hence, there is no further information to report.

While these bodies have been studied by others who focused on the local community's response and reaction to their establishment (Amirrachman, 2004) and the policy analysis and implementation of the decree (Sumintono, 2006), this study investigates the practice of parent participation at school within the context of decentralisation, emphasising both the characteristics and levels of participation by the community in this new reform, and the role of the SCs, specifically whether the local SC has represented community participation as mandated by the law. Conclusions concerning community participation – specifically in regards to access and control over resources – will be drawn by studying parental participation and the dynamic relations within the SCs at two schools in Depok city. As a context for these observations, a description of the two relevant bodies, SCs and ECs, has been provided in this chapter.

3.4. Conclusion

Chapter 2 provided a conceptual framework for this research, and brought the literature on participation and decentralisation together. To explore the context further, this chapter has documented Indonesia's experience with centralisation and decentralisation and discussed the effect of the recent decentralisation reform on community participation in education.

Historically, centralisation has been the dominant mode of the Indonesian political system which is marked by heavily centralised governments during the Sukarno Guided Democracy and the Suharto Era. Meanwhile, decentralisation was implemented on a limited basis only during Dutch colonial times and a short period of Sukarno's Parliamentary Democracy, just after independence. The fear of disintegration drew political leaders such as Sukarno and Suharto to the idea of strong centralisation, and more recent legislation on decentralisation (Law No. 22/1999 implemented in 2001) is considered to be a 'big bang' policy, as it transforms the country from the most centralised to the most decentralised system in the world.

This new reform has affected the education sector in terms of the devolved authority and financial responsibility which were transferred to the districts (the third layer of government hierarchy). A new emphasis on community participation was raised in the new education decentralisation policy, and this differs from the previous notion of the term. While in the past, communities were thought of only in the role of suppliers and beneficiaries, the new policy stresses the importance of communities as active stakeholders in education, giving them spaces in educational governance and management.

At school levels, SCs have been established to build community involvement and empower the community through the SC's role as an advisory, supporting, controlling agency and mediator. However, studies have shown there is no clear statement about the transfer of power to the communities, and thus SCs tend to play only a minor role in their school's decision-making processes, operating most of the time mainly in an advisory capacity. Hence, the notion of community participation in education, as stated in the new policy, seems to be ambiguous concerning whether the purpose of SCs is to create community empowerment, or to serve merely as a means of achieving efficiency in education services.

Therefore, situated in this new context of education decentralisation and its greater emphasis on the role of communities as active stakeholders in education, this research intends to investigate parental participation in school management as one form of community participation in Depok city, Indonesia. This study seeks to determine the extent of parental involvement in school management using the level of participation

framework. It also gives special attention to the role of SCs as community representatives in the schools.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This study explores community participation in education in a decentralised setting. Using a case study of two schools in Depok city, stakeholders' perceptions of the dynamics involved in parent participation in educational management were documented. The study gave particular attention to factors concerning parents' access to and control over resources. In addition, the Indonesian government's Free School Programme, initiated in 2009, emerged as a new factor in the context that significantly impacted the parental participation explored in this study.

This chapter discusses the qualitative methodology used in this research. It begins with the research inquiry, and subsequently details the theoretical framework (ontology) and epistemological position of the research methodology. Further, it presents the story of the process that was involved in bringing the study into the field. Finally, the process of data analysis is clarified.

4.2. The Research Inquiry

My interest in studying community participation in education stems from my personal background as a government official of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia. When the Indonesian government began to promulgate decentralisation in the realm of education, the concept of community participation surfaced as well. In this regard, as a student of development studies, I am interested in relating the context of education decentralisation in Indonesia with the concept of participation documented in the development literature. This is my rationale behind choosing a case study of community participation in education in Indonesia.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to investigate the practice of community participation in education through gaining access to and control over financial resources at the local school level, since the policy of decentralisation was applied in Indonesia. The study concentrates on parents' participation and the role of SCs at the school level

in Depok city, West Java, Indonesia. The focus of the study is to ascertain the characteristics and levels of parents' participation in access to and control over financial resources at the local schools, and how parents are represented by the SCs, which are mandated by the decentralisation policy to serve as a vehicle for community participation at the school level.

4.3. Qualitative Case Study

Qualitative research can be defined as the study of people in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2). Qualitative research draws upon what is known as an interpretivist paradigm. Interpretivist social scientists are interested in people's experiences, thoughts, interactions, and emotions.

As the study's purpose is to examine parental participation, a qualitative case study design was chosen over other methodologies that focus on quantification, in order to emphasise in-depth inquiry. As suggested by Stark and Torrance:

‘Social reality’ is created through social interaction, albeit situated in particular contexts and histories, and seeks to identify and describe before trying to analyse and theorize. It assumes that things may not be as they seem and privileges in-depth inquiry over coverage: understanding the case rather than generalizing to a population at large. (2005, p. 47)

Case study is appropriate for understanding a contemporary phenomenon, such as participation, within a real-life context, when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posted, and the investigator has little control over events (Yin, 2009, p. 2). A key issue in the case study approach concerns depth versus coverage, and within the logic of a case study approach, the recommended choice is always depth (Stark & Torrance, 2005, p. 35).

Case studies can provide a profound understanding of phenomena, events, people, or organisations. In essence, it is a methodology capable of opening the door to the ‘sensemaking’ process created and used by individuals involved in the phenomena,

events, groups, or organisations under study (Weick 1995 cited in (Berg, 2007, p. 285). For this project, the phenomenon of participation is assumed to consist of social interaction as opposed to isolation, as it occurs within the particular contexts of educational decentralisation policy and the FSP, newly initiated by the Indonesian government.

Case study methodology is often criticised as weak in the area of generalisation, especially as compared to survey research in which samples are specifically intended for generalisation to a larger, more universal population. However, Yin (2009, p. 43) argued that comparisons involving samples and universality are inappropriately applied. Rather than relying on statistical generalisation as survey research does, case studies rely on analytical generalisation. Analytical generalisation allows the researcher to attempt to generalise a particular set of results to some broader theory. For example, the theory of participation that led to a case study of the two schools in Depok is the same theory that helps identify other cases to which the results are generalisable.

One major epistemological issue to be addressed concerning case study methodology is where to draw the boundaries – i.e., what to include and what to exclude – and thus, how to define the knowledge that is being pursued; what is the case being studied made of (Stark & Torrance, 2005, p. 34)? For this particular study, the boundaries have been defined as follows: (a) firstly, it is conducted in Depok city, Indonesia; (b) secondly, it involves public schools, not private ones; (c) thirdly, community participation in this study is limited to the parents' participation and does not include other stakeholders' participation; and (d) fourthly, parental participation in this study is limited to the factors of access to and control over financial resources. By setting these boundaries, it was expected that this case study would produce a particular descriptive, inductive, and ultimately heuristic set of data that succeeds in illuminating understanding of the specific issues under investigation (Merriam, 1998, p. 29).

4.4. Epistemological Position

The qualitative case study approach is grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly 'interpretivist', in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experimented with, produced, or constituted (Mason, 2002, p.

3). Interpretivism sees human beings as unique and recognises that people have different subjectivities, which are how we view the world in terms of where we stand. Thus, the concept of participation in this study is understood as the participation interpreted and experimented with by the parents of the two schools under investigation within the context of education decentralisation. The concept of participation might be differently interpreted and experimented with by other participants, in other schools, or in other contexts of the social world.

This interpretive approach involves the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at an understanding and interpretation of how people create and maintain their social world (Neuman, 1997, p. 68). Knowledge is partial and there is no single truth about the world, but there are multiple realities which are socially constructed by groups and individuals. Therefore, meaning is situationally and historically specific. In order to make sense of meaning, context is thus important (Mason, 2002). True meaning is rarely simple or obvious on the surface; one needs to study details of the data, contemplating its many messages and seeking among its parts to reach a complete understanding of it.

For example, when analysing data collected for this study, I tried to grasp the concept of transparency regarding the school budget as reflected by the different realities of individual participants from both schools. From the headmasters' point of view, they feel they are transparent to the school community when they provide information on the notice board. On the other hand, parents experience a different reality that does not reflect such transparency, as the fact that the notice boards are located in the headmasters' offices means parents are reluctant to check the posted information. Adding to this perception is the parents' lack of alternative mechanisms for accessing information, such as meetings.

In an attempt to establish further understanding on this matter, I sought the opinion of an Educational Office official and discovered another piece of reality – headmasters are obliged to provide school financial information on their notice boards. And, an NGO practitioner offered a further perspective, divulging that headmasters are actually afraid of being blackmailed by certain journalists and NGO practitioners if they do not supply

enough information; interestingly, this reality was also acknowledged by a headmaster. From this illustration, it is clear that reality can have multiple meanings, and is not simple. Thus, researchers need to contemplate the varied messages embedded in those realities.

4.5. The Methods Used

According to Burns (1994, p. 313), the main techniques used in case study methodology are observation (both participant and non-participant, depending on the case), semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Due to time limitations, this study applies two of these methods: the interview, which includes a focus group discussion and in-depth individual interviews; and document analysis as a supplementary technique. However, a simple survey was also conducted before the interviews to collect baseline data on parental participation.

4.5.1. Semi-structured Interviews

The main data collection method used in this study is the in-depth semi-structured interview, specifically individual interviews and a focus group discussion (FGD). Semi-structured interviews were selected as they provide a flexible structure for the interview process, and at the same time allow the researcher and the interviewees to explore themes as they come up. Thus, semi-structured interviews give some space for the researcher to accommodate new issues or concerns regarding the research topic which may arise during the fieldwork.

Flexibility and sensitivity to the existing social context are characteristic of case study methodology, as opposed to rigidly standardised or structured processes (Mason, 2002). The emphasis is on how the interviewee frames and understands issues and events (Bryman, 2001). In this study, such flexibility worked well in accommodating an important theme which appeared during the fieldwork, even though it had not been anticipated in the interview guide; this was the new government policy concerning FSP. Ultimately, this new theme proved to be crucially related to the study's topic.

Qualitative or semi-structured interviews use a “thematic or topic-centred approach where a research has a number of themes or issues which are wished to cover, or a set of starting points for discussion rather than a formal question and answer format” (Mason, 2002, p. 62). This interview method can also be termed a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Mason, 2002). An interview guide keeps researchers on track so they do not go off onto irrelevant topics. The guide used in this study was divided into two overarching themes, parents’ participation and the role of SCs as representatives of the parents. However, a new theme on FSP was inserted later during the fieldwork.

Within the theme of parents’ participation issues included contributions to school finances, attendance at the meeting, and control over financial resources; in the latter theme on the role of SCs serving as parents’ representatives, issues concerning who is involved and whose interests are represented by the SCs were addressed. Yet, the fieldwork did not result in data adequate for drawing conclusions concerning whose interests were represented by the SCs. Most respondents felt uncomfortable discussing this issue and hence, the data is not rich enough to be reliable.

Most of the individual interviews were conducted at people’s homes or at the school sites, depending on the respondent’s preference. Interviews with parents mainly took place in their homes at their convenience, while interviews with teachers and headmasters were primarily conducted at the schools. Interviews were voice-recorded except for those of a few respondents who refused to give permission for it.

I found the FGD to be one of the most valuable tools of the research investigation. The focus group method is a form of group interview in which there are several participants (in addition to a moderator or facilitator). There is an emphasis on a particular, tightly defined topic and the focus is upon interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning (Bryman, 2001, p. 337).

The focus group approach was employed in this study as an opportunity for people to probe each other’s reasons for holding a certain view (Bryman, 2001; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007). In contrast, during a normal individual interview the interviewee tends to hold a certain view without any challenges. Individuals answer in a certain way during a focus group, but as they listen to others’ answers, they may want to

qualify or modify their views; or alternatively, they may want to voice agreement or disagreement with something they had not thought before hearing the others' views. Thus, this study benefited from the FGD in terms of respondents probing each other's views.

When the individual interviews were conducted a certain amount of information was gathered. The focus group, on the other hand, produced some remarkably good data that enriched the information gleaned from individual interviews. Sometimes, within the dynamics of a focus group, individuals argue with each other with the result that they arrive at a more realistic account of what the participants think. Hence, the focus group not only produced more data and verified the individual participants' perceptions, but also enriched the quality of the information that was collected.

Furthermore, in focus groups participants are able to bring to the fore issues relating to topics they deem to be important and significant (Bryman, 2001). Sometimes such issues are not predicted by the researcher, and in fact, during this study it was in the focus group that the researcher discovered how much the government's new FSP had influenced parental participation. This issue was not predicted to have been a factor but ultimately was shown to have significant implications for the research topic.

However, it is worth noting that the potential understanding of the impact of FGD could have been diminished if I, as a researcher, had not been aware of the power relation issues involved. Specifically, the less powerful participants were more likely to limit their voices due to their concern about the presence of more powerful stakeholders. Because of this, I made sure the headmaster kept a distance from the FGD, for instance. However, the SC secretary was involved in the FGD. While there was a possibility that the dynamics of the FGD could have been influenced by the presence of the SC secretary, it appears from the ways in which parents freely expressed their opinions that this was not the case. Since they criticised the SC in the presence of the SC secretary, it is likely they considered him to be an ordinary parent just like themselves, rather than seeing him as someone powerful. Three males and 12 females were present at the meeting, and this gender imbalance did not necessarily affect the process, as once again, everyone spoke freely.

When arriving home after conducting the interviews or FGD, I quickly wrote down in my journal my impressions and reflections concerning the fieldwork. This resulted in a reconstruction of what was going on during the fieldwork in the form of a dense descriptive narrative. During data analysis, this journal helped me to place the data in its appropriate context. I also recorded the various meetings, with the participants' permission.



Figure 3. Parents from School 2 taking part in the focus group discussion
Source: Author

4.5.2. Document Analysis

Document analysis is particularly relevant in this study, in relation to the new governmental policy of education decentralisation as well as the new policy regarding the FSP. Official documents were gathered from three sources: (a) the Ministry of National Education for policy regarding education decentralisation, the establishment of SCs, and the FSP and/or *Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* (BOS); (b) the Depok Local Government for the Depok city's statistical data; and (c) the Depok Educational Office for data concerning local policy on education. Unofficial documents were also collected from the two schools that served as study sites.

Accessing data from both the local government and the Depok Educational Office took time and effort, as the bureaucratic procedures were quite complicated. For example, at

times it was not really clear who was in charge of providing a specific set of data. Most of the time, I was transferred from one official to another, and each time the officials would ask for an official letter to convince them of the necessity of providing the data. Some of the data I needed had still not been made available by the end of the fieldwork period. Most data from MoNE was accessed through its website, and while data from both the schools was not difficult to access, neither school seems to update their data frequently, such that more recent data was not available for this project.

4.5.3. Data Quality

It is easier to lie with numbers than it is to lie with detailed observations of natural settings, especially when field data is collected with others and extensive quotes are presented in context (Douglas, 1976, p. 115)

Case study methodology calls for multiple data sources to allow for triangulation through converging lines of enquiry during data collection, improving the reliability and validity of findings. Corroboration makes a case study report more convincing (Burns, 1994, p. 321). In this study such triangulation was accomplished through verification of the techniques used, so that the quality of the information gathered could be assured. Firstly, simple questionnaires were employed to collect baseline data and create a general picture of participants' perceptions of the study topic. Subsequently, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to access more in-depth perceptions of the participants. At the same time, an FGD was conducted in order to verify information from the individual interviews. Finally, this study also made use of policy documents related to the research topic to support the context of the study.

The quality of data collected in an interpretive approach differs from that collected through a quantitative approach. Neuman (1997, p. 368) pointed out that while a quantitative approach emphasises precise and consistent measures of the same objective, an interpretive approach requires that the researcher hold participants' subjectively interpreted experiences within a social context. In this way, high-quality field data captures such processes and provides an accurate understanding of the participants' viewpoints.

In qualitative research, values are present and explicit; that is, the researcher brings his or her own personal subjectivities that influence the research process. A field researcher does not eliminate subjective views to get quality data; rather, quality data includes subjective responses and experiences. Quality field data contains detailed descriptions from a researcher's immersion and authentic experience in the social world of the participants. Then, meaning is articulated through language (Mason, 2002). Thus the process for conceptualising, planning, and undertaking the research is fundamental if the research is to be considered ethical, credible, and trustworthy. Qualitative research should be accountable for its quality and claims – in other words, it should not attempt to position itself beyond judgement and should provide its audience with material upon which they can judge it (Mason, 2002, p. 7). Hence, in reporting my findings, I have chosen to display my data as it is (see Chapter 6) using extensive quotes, so that readers can grasp the reality it portrays so well.

4.6. Research Procedure

4.6.1. Getting into the Field

In an attempt to capture the big picture of decentralisation as it has been implemented at the local level, I initially made contact with people familiar with the pertinent issues, especially concerning the role of SCs. Through education mailing lists, I was able to gain insight about the teacher's point of view and the educational practitioner's point of view, as well as the government official's point of view. Also, some of the problems that had occurred in the implementation of education decentralisation were widely discussed on the mailing lists, providing even more input for me about the topics on which I should focus. My engagement with this virtual community has been a critical factor in my ability to stay up-to-date with educational issues in Indonesia, especially issues related to decentralisation, while studying in New Zealand.

I chose Depok city as my study site in part because of my familiarity with the city. The input and descriptions I obtained from my interaction over the Internet with the Indonesian educational community gave me further information about this city. Information about the city's educational system was drawn from the mailing list as well as from other online resources such as the websites of the local government, the local

newspaper, and the national newspaper. Moreover, since the time I had in which to conduct fieldwork was fairly limited, the city's location at only a one-hour drive from Jakarta made it quite accessible. The fact that the city is the newest municipality in West Java Province as well as the most rapidly developing one also flavoured my curiosity.

The first week of fieldwork was mainly used for dealing with permission procedures, which was quite time-consuming as many layers of bureaucracy were negotiated. While dealing with these permit applications, I visited prospective schools as the first step toward identifying those appropriate for conducting a case study. The headmasters were the targets of my first meeting in every school, for it was assumed they would be the information gatekeepers. My plan called for gaining access to a headmaster in order to make it easier for me to deal with other stakeholders. Especially in the Indonesian context, where hierarchical culture is very strong, it is difficult to approach people without permission from their superior. The headmaster is considered to be the superior at the school level.

In the first school, the female headmaster received me with a bit of suspicion. Since the initiation of the free education programme, many local NGOs and journalists had visited the school to investigate whether or not they still collected money from parents. The headmaster even had a traumatic experience regarding this matter, and so it was understandable that when I arrived for my very first visit, she suspected that I was one of 'them'. After some explanation, the headmaster finally permitted me to conduct a study in her school, and the story that comes from my conversation with this headmaster is revealed later in this paper.

I visited the next school another day, but they refused to allow me to conduct a study there. The headmaster implicitly admitted that there was tension at that time between the school (i.e., the headmaster) and the SC, and he was afraid that the study might unearth some unexpected information. Even though that school was considered to be the best by the city's Educational Office (EO), I did not insist on collecting data there. Rather, I decided to move on and approached another school which was recommended by the headmaster who refused my project. In this latter school I was very much welcomed by, again, a female headmaster. After gaining permission, I frequently visited these two schools to conduct my fieldwork.



School 1



School 2

Figure 4. The sites where data collection for the study took place

Source: Author

The first school is considered to be in the rural area of Depok but it is close to Jakarta. Significantly, it lies on the boundary between Depok city and Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. While the second school is located in the centre of Depok city. The characteristics of the two schools are quite similar; they are both public schools governed by female headmasters, and from observation it can be seen that the condition of the buildings and facilities are almost the same. However, the economic background

of the parents at the two schools differs significantly. The second school's parents are quite a bit wealthier than the first school's parents, and this was distinguished as a significant feature of the schools so that it became a determinant factor in the analysis of parents' perception concerning their participation at school.

After gaining permission from the school headmasters, I started to visit each school regularly to interview headmasters and teachers. Some teachers preferred to be interviewed at their homes during their leisure time. Most parents were interviewed at home as well, as they felt more comfortable and appeared to not experience any kind of pressure at home. During the fieldwork, I also visited the Depok Educational Office (EO) to collect documents and conduct interviews with EO officials. This was important in gaining insight about what is happening in education in general in Depok city. I also visited the Depok EC, which provided valuable documents as well as interviews with the head of the EC. In order to obtain balanced information, one of the heads of the Depok NGO for education, which was known to be a very vocal critic of the government, was also interviewed.

4.6.2. The Respondents

As this is an investigation of the extent to which parents have access to and control over school resources, parents were the main respondents in this study. Parents' perceptions of their own participation and their understanding of their school's situation are the main components of the research. Other stakeholders relevant to parental participation were also interviewed to explore different perspectives and thus verify the data; these included headmasters, teachers, and school committee members. Furthermore, key informants were interviewed to clarify the data collected from the main respondents. A Depok Education Office official, a head of the Depok Education Council, and an NGO practitioner were all interviewed to enrich the previous data gathered from main respondents.

From many stakeholders in the school community, I chose four main stakeholder groups as participants: parents, school management (headmasters), teachers, and SC members. These stakeholders are considered to be directly related to the research topic. In the first school, 13 parents answered the questionnaires, and four parents, four teachers, a

headmaster, and an SC chairman were interviewed. In the second school, 13 parents participated in answering the questionnaires, and the same number of parents, teachers, and headmasters were interviewed as in the first school, along with one interview with the secretary of the SC. The FGD was conducted only in the second school as it was almost impossible to arrange one in the first school due to the inactive SC which made it difficult to gather parents and SC members there.

Because its aim is to generate an in-depth analysis, representativeness is less important in qualitative research than in quantitative research (Bryman, 2001). This study used purposive sampling without a rigid or statistically determined number of samples. Rather, I stopped adding data samples when I felt there was no more new information or insights emerging and a certain saturation point had been reached. The parents recruited for the study were parents of year-four and year-five students. This choice was based on the assumption that at these levels, parents should be more familiar with some of the school's issues than parents of year-one or year-two students. Teachers were recruited through an invitation for voluntary participation after the study was explained to a group of teachers by the researcher. Headmaster recruitment certainly did not require a sampling technique. Other respondents, such as the EO official, the head of EC, and the NGO practitioner, were mainly recruited using snowball sampling.

To respect and secure the respondents' right, ethical issues were taken into consideration in conducting this research. The following section highlights the various steps that were taken and the issues that were considered in order to protect the rights of all parties involved.

4.6.3. Ethical Considerations

Prior to the fieldwork, I applied for low-risk notification from the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct Committee. This was followed by an internal department process whereby several ethical issues requiring special consideration were raised and clarified. In line with the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct, my research was classified as low risk and the level of potential harm to participants was deemed insignificant. However, I continued to maintain an awareness of any and all ethical issues that might arise during the fieldwork.

Before each interview, respondents were provided with information sheets and consent forms which were translated into *bahasa*, the Indonesian language. Almost all respondents completed the consent forms. The researcher consistently emphasised to the respondents that their participation was voluntary, their responses would be kept anonymous, and they could choose to withdraw from the research process at any stage without any consequences. It was also acknowledged that the interviews were recorded, which the respondents had the right to refuse if they felt insecure or uncomfortable.

The procedure for conducting the interviews and FGD was carefully thought out. At the beginning, I always introduced myself, and explained my research and why I had asked an individual to participate. More importantly, I always mentioned my current position as a government official at the Ministry of National Education along with my status as student. It was important to disclose my complete identity so that misunderstanding and misinterpretation during the fieldwork could be avoided. Furthermore, honesty is a value that should be inherent in a researcher. In addition, I always clarified that my research did not at all relate to my position as a government official; rather it was my own individual research necessary for the fulfilment of my master thesis requirements.

Another ethical issue that arises during data collection is related to the relationship between the potential benefit of a research project and any potential harm it may cause (Berg, 2007). Because my research was categorised as low risk, the potential for harm was minimal. Still, during my fieldwork I tried to reflect on what kind of benefit I could share with people involved in my study. I decided to share about how parents can improve their children's education. I accomplished this by relating some of my

experiences as a mother and discussing issues with them such as “how can one inspire children to love reading?” or “how do we prevent our children from sitting in front of the TV all day?”. However, I did not position myself as more knowledgeable than the participant; rather, the relationship between participants and myself was understood to be a reciprocal alliance where both parties were in a “comparable social position” (Dowling, 2000, p. 29). I also realised at some point that I was receiving some benefit myself from discussing these issues with them. For example, as a government official working for MoNE, I knew some practical issues regarding the implementation of MoNE’s policy of FSP.

In relation to the credibility of the research process, qualitative research should involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity. This is based on the belief that a researcher cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached from the knowledge and evidence they are generating. Instead, they should seek to understand their role in that process (Mason, 2002, p. 7). A moment I will never forget took place at the end of the FGD session. Some parents had been very enthusiastic during the FGD, and I asked them to do a bit of self-assessment concerning their involvement with school life. It seems to me that in that moment, the parents realised that they had not done much for their school, and they became conscious that their participation was indeed important for their children’s improvement. In the meantime I also reflected on my own role during the fieldwork which positioned me not always as a student doing research, but sometimes as a mother, a friend, a government official, or even a scholar in some specific areas. This self-positioning was fundamental in establishing and maintaining relationships with the participants instead of being detached from them.

4.7. Data Analysis

According to Neuman (1997, pp. 426-427), data analysis in qualitative research is a search for patterns in the data. Once a pattern is identified, it is interpreted in terms of social theory or the setting in which the data was collected. The qualitative researcher uses these patterns to move from the description of a historical event or social setting to a more general interpretation of its meaning. Data analysis involves examining, sorting, categorising, evaluating, comparing, synthesizing, and contemplating the coded data.

The process of data analysis in this study began once the fieldwork had been conducted. Each time I finished an interview, and after the FGD, I wrote down my impressions and reflections in my research journal. A few transcriptions were even done during the fieldwork, so that I was able to ascertain and confirm some of the main issues while still in the process of data collection. After 2 months in Depok, I returned to New Zealand to continue with the writing process, including the ongoing processing of data by transcribing texts, reviewing the contents, highlighting substantive statements, and ignoring any irrelevant materials, repetition, or digression.

As the respondents all spoke Indonesian, transcriptions took a very long time and involved many steps. First, I transcribed the recorded data in its original language. Then, I translated it into English. During the translation I continually consulted with a proof reader to check whether or not the English translation was correct, as well as with a few people back home in Indonesia to ensure I had correctly captured the meaning of an occasional interviewee expression. I faced difficulties in grasping the meaning of some Javanese expressions from the interviews; hence, I also clarified these with some Javanese individuals, mainly through e-mail or chatting. I regularly visited online Indonesian dictionaries to check a few confusing words that have multiple meanings, and at the same time considered the context in which they had been spoken.

Once transcribed and translated, the data was ready to be analysed. Data analysis can be defined as consisting of three concurrent flows of action: data reduction, data display, and conclusion and verification (Berg, p. 47). Data reduction involves focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data into more a manageable form. Qualitative data needs to be reduced and transformed in order to make it more readily accessible and understandable, and to draw out various themes and patterns (Berg, p. 47). I accomplished this by firstly summarising the most important and interesting aspects of the data, and then categorising these into several main themes, each of which referred back to the theoretical framework and research questions.

At this stage, coding was utilised based on thematic findings. For example, I coded the transcribed data on parental participation into main themes such as financial contribution, attendance at the meeting, access to information, and involvement in school budgeting. Other themes also appeared, such as transparency and accountability.

Coding allows researchers to reduce excessive amounts of data into manageable piles, so they can quickly retrieve relevant parts of it. At the same time, truly analytic moments occur as the result of a burst of insight or pattern recognition (Neuman, 1997, pp. 421-422).

The next step is to classify the main issues that emerge into specific themes for data presentation (display). Data display is intended to convey the data as organised information that permits conclusions to be analytically drawn. Display may involve tables, tally sheets of themes, or summaries of various statements. These displays help the researcher in understanding and observing certain patterns in data (Berg, 2007). I presented the data from this project by dividing the display on parental participation into two contexts, before and after initiation of FSP. This division assisted me in understanding the changes in parental participation that came about as a result of the free school programme. Furthermore, tables and diagrams were utilised to display the characteristics and levels of parent participation investigated in this study.

Conclusion and verification is the final stage of analysis, after the data has been collected, reduced, and displayed. Conclusions drawn from the patterns apparent in the data must be confirmed (verified) which involves assuring that all of the procedures used have been clearly articulated. For this project, after finishing with the findings I identified the various patterns for my discussion. Further, conclusions were drawn based on the patterns and my analyses of them. To ensure the quality of my conclusions, I consistently verified them with the findings, the patterns, and my analyses, as well as with the methodology I used.

4.8. Summary

This study treated the concept of participation as a contemporary phenomenon created by social interaction. Case study methodology was chosen as a means of accessing a deeper understanding of this contemporary phenomenon – participation – and was implemented to investigate the characteristics of parents' participation in the management of their children's schools. A deep understanding of a particular sample and its context was preferred, rather than a wider coverage of the overall population.

Guided by an interpretive approach, this study explored the meaning of participation from the interpretations or perceptions of the parents involved as they interpreted their social world. According to the interpretive approach, reality is not simple and obvious but rather, can have multiple meanings; thus, researchers need to study the details of the context and contemplate its many messages.

The main methods used in case study are observation, interviews, and document analysis. Considering the limitations on time, this research employed interviews and document analysis, but not necessarily observation. Individual interviews and an FGD were conducted, and both resulted in a rich description of the reality under investigation. Document analysis supplied the research with secondary data that could not be accessed through the interviews. A simple survey was also used to collect baseline data, but this was not considered to be the main research tool. In qualitative research, triangulation can improve the reliability and validity of findings, and thus, this study employed multiple data sources and verified techniques used in order to ensure the quality of information gathered.

As a final point, data analysis is completed by seeking patterns in the data and grouping them into thematic findings. The processes involved in this include data reduction, where data is simplified, focused, and transformed into manageable forms by a coding process; and data display, where data is presented and organised in the most understandable way. In this study, the data was distinguished by its context, namely before and after FSP, so that readers will be able to understand the changes that took place in those two contexts. Ultimately, data analysis for this project concluded with checking the reasonability of the data through verification.

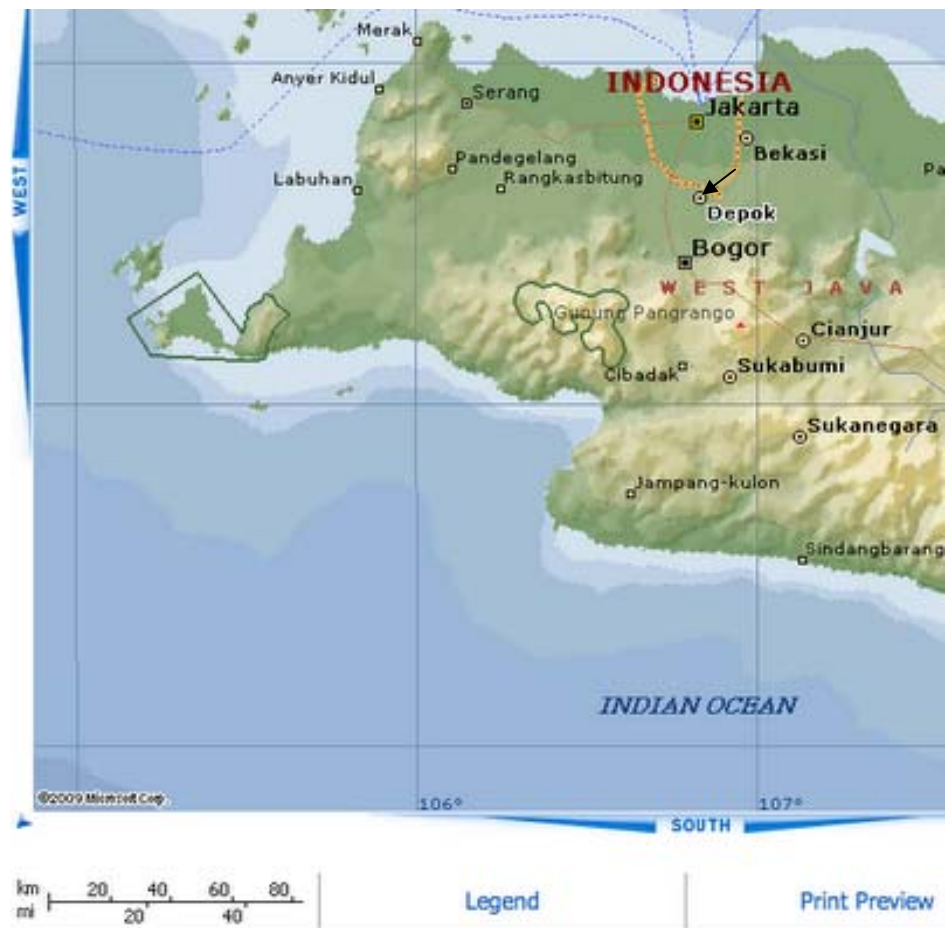


Figure 5. A West Java map (Indonesia) showing the research site Depok

Source:

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_JuzXwE0GBQo/SavOdNnBpdI/AAAAAAAAAe0/NkYoFGu32qw/s400/Picture+1.png

CHAPTER 5: FREE SCHOOL PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN DEPOK CITY: DECENTRALISATION IN ACTION

5.1. Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 have been mainly concerned with developing a conceptual context for the research topic by reviewing the literature on participation and decentralisation. This chapter narrows the scope of the study by moving from this wider perspective to the more operational context of Depok city, where the study took place. The next section provides a brief description of Depok's geography, demography, economy, and education. Depok is one of 440 districts in Indonesia to gain the autonomy to manage its own education programme since education decentralisation was implemented in 2001.

The following is devoted to describing the new FSP policy, introduced by the Indonesian government in 2009 to promote free compulsory education. Understanding the mechanisms involved in this new programme became important once it was discovered during fieldwork that the community participation in education under investigation by this study had been significantly influenced by its introduction. The final section of this chapter attempts to detail how education is undertaken in the city, specifically within the context of the decentralisation policy highlighted in the implementation of FSP at the local level in Depok.

5.2. Depok's Geography, Demography, Economy, and Education

Depok is located in West Java, the most populated island in Indonesia. Formerly part of Bogor Regency in the south of Jakarta, Depok was officially founded in 1999, as stated in Law No. 15/1999, and thus is considered to be one of the youngest municipalities in West Java. To the north the city shares a border with Tangerang municipality and Jakarta, to the east it shares a border with Bekasi city and Bogor municipality, and to the south and west it neighbours Bogor municipality. With an area comprising of 200.29 square kilometres, the city consists of six *kecamatan* (sub-districts): Pancoran Mas, Sawangan, Sukmajaya, Cimanggis, Beji, and Limo.

Geographically, Depok is strategically situated as a neighbouring city of Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. Because of its convenient location, and in conjunction with the development of an integrated transportation system in the region, Depok has grown rapidly. As a consequence, there are increased numbers of residential areas, educational institutions, and trade and service organisations due to migration.

One of the effects of this migration is that Depok's population continues to grow at a high rate. By 2008, the population of Depok was 1,503,677, including 780,092 male citizens and 723,585 female citizens. The city's average population growth that year was 3.43% and population density was 7,507.50 persons per square kilometre. It is predicted that by the year 2010 the city's population will reach 1,610,000, with a density of 7,877 persons per square kilometre (Depok Local Government, 2006).

In 2006, the total potential work force in the city stood at 61.33% of the population; however, only 44.63% of that number was actively working and the remaining was unemployed (Depok Local Government, 2008, p. 38). In terms of income, 5.77% of the total population in 2005 lived below the poverty line, which currently sits at 206,000 rupiahs (USD 22.37) per capita per month, and is predicted to rise to 323,000 rupiah (USD 35.07) per capita per month by 2011. By the same year, it is expected that the number of poor will rise to 7.9% of the total population (Depok Local Government, 2006, p. 25).

As a result of the decentralisation that has been slowly implemented since 2001 and the revenue sharing mechanisms this has brought into play, local governments now have more political and financial power. This has increased the economic potential of Indonesian cities. Depok is one of the ten biggest cities in Indonesia, having the highest population growth rate (3.82% between 2000 and 2005) (Salim & Kombaitan, 2009, p. 123). In terms of economy, Depok's gross regional domestic product (GRDP) has shown significant growth, expanding even faster than Jakarta's in 2001 (Salim & Kombaitan, 2009).

Table 4. Population and GDRP of the Ten Largest Cities in Indonesia

Cities	Population (000)		Pop. Growth (%)	GRDP (Rp. Billion)		GRDP growth	
	2000.00	2005.00	2000-2005	2001.00	2004.00	2000-2001	2003-2004
Jakarta	8,256.50	8860.4	1.18	236,541	275,937	4.32	5.75
Surabaya	2,578.10	2,622.00	0.34	48,947	56,020	4.25	5.78
Bandung	2,140.00	2,303.90	1.49	16,079	19,874	7.54	7.49
Medan	1,904.30	2,046.50	1.45	19,828	23,623	4.66	7.29
Bekasi	1,663.80	1,997.50	3.72	9,531	11,111	5.09	5.36
Semarang	1,342.60	1,448.20	1.53	13,624	15,509	3.40	4.76
Tangerang	1,315.90	1,455.20	2.03	16,762	19,766	3.43	4.10
Depok	1,143.40	1,378.90	3.82	3,694	4,433	5.89	6.41
Palembang	1,451.40	1,344.00	-1.53	8,376	10,263	4.17	6.58
Makassar	1,091.60	1,201.40	1.94	7,633	9,791	7.30	8.60

Source: Salim & Kombaitan, 2009, p. 123

In the education sector, by the 2007/2008 school year the number of primary schools in Depok totalled 372 schools serving 132,782 students (357 students per school) and employing 4,950 teachers. There are also 150 junior secondary private and public schools with 46,965 students and 3,135 teachers, and 53 senior secondary private and public schools with 15,718 students and 1,251 teachers.⁵ In addition, 68 vocational schools serve 19,515 students with 1,371 teachers. The percentage of citizens with senior secondary diplomas in Depok city is the highest in the nation.

5.3. The Free School Programme (FSP)

The basic format for education in Indonesia starts with 6 years of primary school, followed by 3 years of junior secondary education. Children are required to enrol in primary school by age 7. At age 13, junior secondary school begins, requiring another 3 years of study. Education at all levels is delivered through both public and private institutions. However, private education constitutes only 17% of enrolment at the primary level, while at the two secondary levels – junior and senior high school - private schools serve 40% and 50%, respectively. This means that overall, the role of

⁵ Note: Because Depok is located near Jakarta, it has been common for some primary students to continue their secondary education in Jakarta, especially since Depok has fewer secondary schools, as compared to their primary schools.

the government in education is greater than the private sector's role. In general, private schools, except for those at the top end, are considered to be of lower quality than public schools (Lanjouw, Pradhan, Saadah, Sayed, & Sparrow, 2001). In 1994, school attendance was made obligatory up to the age of 15 (primary school up to junior secondary school) through the government programme, *Wajar Dikdas 9 Tahun*⁶, or '9-year mandatory basic education'. However, before FSP was implemented educational financing was still the responsibility of the government and the community, which meant that parents still shared the financial responsibility of educating their children. As a result, drop-out students had been a phenomenon in Indonesia's educational system.

In 2009, expenditure on public education constituted 20% of the government's budget, as mandated by Law No. 41/2008 concerning the National Income and Expenditures Budget (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Nasional/APBN*) (Depkeu, 2008). This government allocation is the highest of all the sectors, and it is the first time that education expenditures have reached 20% of government spending since such a level was mandated by the country's 1945 Constitution, Chapter 31. This matter has been a concern; although the 20% level is mandated by the constitution, it has never before been carried out in practice. Such increases in the education sector budget have resulted in the implementation of FSP by the Ministry of National Education in 2009. It is expected that the number of drop-out students will decrease significantly or even drop to zero as FSP is implemented.

Free 9-year compulsory education is mandated by Law No. 20/2003 concerning the National Education System. It is stated in article 34 (2) that the national government and the local government are responsible for the implementation and the accomplishment of free compulsory education (article 34 (2) UU 20/2003 [Law20/2003], 2003, p. 15, translated). As a consequence of this law, the government must deliver educational services free to every educational participant between the ages of 7 and 15 years.

Initially, in 2005 MoNE initiated a School Operational Assistance programme (BOS) in order to accelerate implementation of the 9-year compulsory education programme. BOS was designed as a general subsidy for all public and private primary and junior secondary schools. Since then, the subsidy was increased twice, once in 2006 and again

⁶ *Wajar Dikdas 9 Tahun* is the Indonesian name for the country's compulsory education programme.

in 2007, but then fell in 2008 (Kompas, 2009b). In 2009, as the national budget for the education sector rose, it resulted in a significant increase in BOS allocations. Within this year, the government, i.e., MoNE, introduced FSP and stipulated that the BOS fund allocations would be doubled (Kompas, 2009b).

According to the BOS handbook 2009, the purpose of BOS is to free the public primary and junior secondary schools from the responsibility of paying for the operational costs involved in running the school ⁷ (MoNE, 2009). This applies to every school within the compulsory education system, with the exception of the International Standard School (*Sekolah Beratarf International/SBI*) and the International Standard Pilot School (*Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf International/RSBI*). BOS is also applied to private school costs; however, private schools are still allowed to collect money from educational participants.

The allocation of funds to the schools is on a student per capita basis. The details of the BOS allocations for 2009 are⁸:

For elementary schools at city: 400,000 rupiahs/student/year

For elementary schools at district: 397,000 rupiahs/student/year

For secondary schools at city: 575,000 rupiahs/student/year

For secondary schools at district: 570,000 rupiahs/student/year

BOS is a central government (i.e., MoNE) programme. The programme is funded entirely from the national budget (APBN) and implemented through the deconcentration funding mechanism (Widyanti, Suryahadi, & Weatherley, 2008). Funds are distributed from MoNE's budget from APBN into provincial BOS committees and then further distributed to the bank accounts of beneficiary schools.⁹ At school level, the use of the

⁷ Refer to footnote no. 12 for an explanation of what are included in a school's operational costs.

⁸ There is no explanation in the BOS Handbook for the insignificant differences that exist between allocations for city schools and those for rural schools.

⁹ The procedure of BOS allocation is explained in the BOS handbook (p. 22) as follows:

1. The central BOS Committee collects data on the amount of students per school from every province.
2. Based on those data, the central BOS committee decides the amount of the fund allocated to every province.
3. Provincial and district BOS committees verify the data as a basis for BOS allocation per school.
4. District BOS committees establish a decree on the list of BOS school beneficiaries.
5. District BOS committees deliver the decree to the provincial BOS committee with the list of school beneficiaries attached.
6. Provincial BOS committees distribute the fund to schools listed in the decree.

funds must be decided together by the school management and SCs, and BOS funds should be listed as one of income resources in RAPBS (MoNE, 2009, p. 27). The school management is obliged to publish the amount of the funding allocated to the school in the beginning of academic year, and report on monthly expenses every quarter on the notice board with the head of the SC's signature on the report (MoNE, 2009, p. 35). In terms of accountability, school management has to report to the district BOS committee (in the EO) and is audited by the Local Monitoring Body (Badan Pengawas Daerah/BAWASDA).

At the local level, the local government has the responsibility of disseminating and implementing the programme. Moreover, local governments have to cover the operational cost of BOS from their Local Government Income and Expenditures Budget Plan (*Anggaran dan Pendapatan Belanja Daerah/ APBD*) make up the difference if the BOS funds from the central government are not sufficient to cover all needs. For example, Depok local government supplemented the BOS fund in the amount of 10,000 rupiahs per student per month.

Although the BOS fund increased in 2009 to ensure that the 9-year compulsory education programme is carried through, the implementation of FSP in every district varies, as each district has a different level of ability to finance its education. Because the BOS fund only covers school operational costs such as enrolment fees, text books, assessment fees, and school maintenance, it is still the responsibility of parents to finance extra costs such as uniforms, notebooks, and school bags. The fact that FSP does not free parents absolutely from every financial responsibility concerning education was emphasised by Bambang Sudibyo, the Minister of the National Education, speaking to the participants in the national conference on education in February 2009 (Kompas, 2009c). Practically speaking, however, there has been enough lack of clarity about the programme to yield confusion and social unrest during its implementation.

Overall, the implementation of FSP depends on the commitment of each of the local governments to education, as well as their financial capabilities. Not all districts are willing or able to implement FSP by allocating local government budget subsidies to the BOS fund. For example, since the national government (i.e., MoNE) introduced FSP,

officials in Malang city have stopped allocating subsidy support to the BOS fund (Suara Pembaharuan, 2009b). Peni Suparto, the mayor of the city, said their decision to cease the local subsidy was based on the increasing amount of BOS funds coming from MoNE. The head of Malang EO, H.M. Sofwan, explained that the Malang EO prohibited the schools from collecting money from parents, as the money from the government was enough to cover the schools' operational costs. However, some schools still collected money from the parents. This situation is considered to be one of the challenges in implementing decentralisation in education.

Despite support for FSP, the policy has also been strongly criticised as government propaganda. Critics have pointed to advertisements about the programme on national television which have been accused of misleading people, as they do not reflect the actual facts. The reality is that the fund is not sufficient for supporting all school programming, and this puts school management in a dilemmatic position: they are supposed to free parents from making contributions, but if they do, they will lack adequate resources to run their schools. When the national media reported on this, one of teachers in SDN 02 Lebak Bulus, South of Jakarta, said, "The fund is not enough, especially for a school with many extra-curricular activities" (Suara Pembaharuan, 2009b).

Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW), an anti-corruption NGO based in Jakarta, on their evaluation of MoNE's performance for 2004-2009, noted that the BOS allocation has not reached its target because it has not appropriately addressed the actual needs of the educational participants, as has been demonstrated by research from the Office of Educational Research and Development of MoNE (Kompas, 2009a). Ade Irawan, the programme manager of the public service monitoring division said that "Based on the results of MoNE research, to achieve the BOS objective, the money needed per student per year would be 1.8 million for elementary students, and 2.7 million for junior secondary students" (Kompas, 2009b). Hence, the BOS allocations of 400,000 rupiahs per student per year is not enough for elementary students' needs, nor is the allocation of 575,000 rupiahs per student per year adequate to meet the educational needs of junior secondary students (Kompas, 2009a).

Given this disparity between the advertisements and the actual facts of the BOS fund, the chairman of the Indonesian Teachers' Club, Ahmad Rizali, pointed out that MoNE should stop running the advertisements (Suara Pembaharuan, 2009a). He suggested that FSP should not be a commodity for political purposes, and the BOS implementation should be carried out with strong controls in place. Corruption in the delivery of BOS funds also attracts criticism from the public. Febri Hendri, a researcher in the education division of ICW, stated that corruption of BOS funds is very ironic, because according to the Supreme Audit Agency (*Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan/BPK*) 60% of BOS-beneficiary schools have corrupted the funds and thus, parents are still forced to contribute to the schools, albeit in a less direct fashion (Suara Pembaharuan, 2009a). The Agency also estimated that approximately 13.7 million rupiahs per school has been diverted due to corruption.

5.4. The Implementation of FSP in Depok city

In Depok, criticism regarding the need for free education has been raised since before FSP was launched, as local citizens considered education to be very expensive there. In 2007 a coalition of Depok's NGOs advocated for the community by protesting to the Depok EO for free and accessible education for the poor (Tempo Interaktif, 2007). The Depok EO responded by initiating the drafting of a local government law regarding free education. However, the draft was never finished (according to the interview with the Head of Depok's EO carried out for this research project). Still, an NGO practitioner in Depok acknowledged the city's role as a pioneer in initiating the dispensation of *Dana Sumbangan Pendidikan/DSP* (education operational fund/school enrolment fee), since they had begun the process in 2007, while the other districts have just implemented it in 2009 when FSP was introduced (as reported during the interview with an educational NGO practitioner for this research project).

Regarding the high cost of education in Depok, the SCs have been criticised for their dominant role when collecting funds from parents. There has been a suspicion that the headmasters and the SCs collaborated to extract excessive amounts of money from parents, and that is how the educational costs became so high (as reported during the interview with an educational NGO practitioner for this research project, and in discussion on an educational electronic mailing list). In fact, this phenomenon has been

widely recognised and does not only happen in Depok, but also in other cities and municipalities. It has been a national concern for many education observers, and as such has shown up in local and national newspapers as well as in online forums.¹⁰

However, the FSP initiative, which is a necessary answer to the problem of high cost education, is viewed variously and confusingly by local stakeholders. Parents have responded happily, as indicated in parents' interviews for this research, because they do not have to contribute financially to the schools anymore. However, at the same time they also worry that the FSP will result in a lower quality of education. This was revealed during the fieldwork, as well as the fact that FSP has impeded some extracurricular activities.

On the other hand, a number of local governments feel uncertain about their budgetary commitment to implement the programme, as described in the previous section. Meanwhile, schools also have concerns regarding insufficient money from government to support all the programmes the schools have in place (according to interviews with teachers and headmasters undertaken for this research). Generally, SCs responded to this situation unhappily, as they felt their roles had been diminished since they were no longer allowed to raise money from parents (as reported in interviews with SC members and the Head of Depok EC during this research project). Thus, from various stakeholders' points of view, the implementation of FSP is still problematic.¹¹

¹⁰ Criticisms regarding the role of SC in collecting money from parents has come up in many national media such as *Kompas*, *Suara Pembaruan*, *Antara*, *Koran Tempo* and *Media Indonesia*. It has also become a hot topic in one of the biggest education mailing lists in Indonesia, The Centre for Betterment in Education (CFBE). For examples, see:

parents complained to the local legislative on extortion by the school management, <http://www.kompas.com/read/xml/2009/05/26/18380174/sekolah.lakukan.pungli.orangtua.murid.mengadu.ke.dprd>; *LSM: Sebagian Besar Komite Sekolah Sarang KKN* (NGO: most of school committees are corruption, collusion and nepotism's web), <http://www.tempointeractive.com/hg/nasional/2004/01/12/brk.20040112-17.id.html>; *Komite Sekolah akan mengembalikan sumbangan dana pendidikan* (school committee will return education operational funds to parents), <http://www.antaranews.com/berita/1249042572/komite-sekolah-akan-kembalikan-dana-sumbangan-pendidikan>; and (school committees have deluded parents), <http://dir.groups.yahoo.com/group/cfbe/message/17227>

¹¹ See for example:

Bogor Education Council and School Committees' are questioning the FSP, <http://www.bogornews.com/mod.php?mod=publisher&op=viewarticle&artid=2323>; Head of Jambi Education Council said that the FSP has misled communities, http://www.tvone.co.id/berita/view/17825/2009/07/09/program_sekolah_gratis_dinilai_menyesatkan_masyarakat/; and the FSP which is confusing, <http://edukasi.kompas.com/read/xml/2009/07/21/08583236/sekolah.gratis.yang.bikin.bingung...>

Regarding the role of SCs in generating money from parents, the Head of Depok EC and a Depok EO official both argued that there is a misperception of the SCs' role in collecting money (as reported in interviews for this research). Community targets for ongoing education fundraising are now the corporations and entrepreneurs, instead of the parents. Thus, in their point of view, SCs have no justification for feeling their role has diminished as a result of FSP.

As a consequence of education decentralisation, much of the authority to deal with education had been devolved to local government. The implementation of BOS at Depok city is governed under the Depok EO, which is a subdivision of the local government. The Depok EO follows through on instructions to disseminate and deliver BOS funds to schools in Depok city. Even though BOS guidelines do not prevent the community (parents) from contributing voluntarily, Depok EO itself has prohibited such parental contribution by delivering instruction letters addressed to each headmaster of a public primary or secondary school in Depok city, because the Depok local government had already allocated an additional fund to supplement BOS, called '*BOS pendamping*', totalling 10,000 rupiahs per student. Within the 2008/2009 academic year, the Depok local government allocated 26 billion rupiah from its APBD to the BOS fund for 232,000 public and private school students in Depok (Media Indonesia, 2008).

One of the requirements for schools receiving BOS funds is that they develop a school income and expenditure budget plan (RAPBS) designating the estimated amount of BOS funds they expect to receive as part of the school's income. The rules also stipulate that BOS funds can only be used for certain types of school expenditures which are restricted to 13 kinds of expenses as listed in the BOS handbook.¹² BOS beneficiary schools are required to report the use of funds to the district-level BOS team at the end of each semester. According to BOS programme regulations, schools whose BOS

¹² Expenses listed in the BOS handbook are: 1. Activities regarding student enrolment such as enrolment fees, form printing, and administration fees, 2. Reference books for the library's collection, 3. Textbooks for the library's collection, 4. Extra activities, including remedial costs, enrichment learning costs, sports, art, red cross, and others, 5. The cost for daily assessment, gradual assessment, final assessment, and student portfolios, 6. Stationary such as writing books, chalk, pencils, pens, papers, newspaper and magazine subscriptions, and refreshments, 7. Power and services such as electricity, telephone lines, and water, 8. School maintenance, 9. Honoraria for non-permanent teachers and staff, 10. Teachers' professional development, 11. Transport subsidies for poor students, 12. Costs regarding BOS management such as stationary, correspondence, incentives for administrators, and transport, and 13. Desktop computers, maximum one for elementary school, and two for junior-secondary schools. If all the allocations have been covered and there are funds left, the remains can be used for teaching aids, lesson media, and school furniture.

income is equal to or greater than their planned expenditure as entered in the RAPBS should not collect fees from students' parents (Widyanti, et al., 2008).

Through Ministerial Decree No. 44/U/2002 and as mentioned in the BOS handbook, parents and the community as a whole were granted the space to be involved in the school budgeting process through the school committee's mechanism. This is also part of the parent participation explored in this study. Situated in this context of FSP, where parents no longer have responsibility for school finances, parents' access to and control over school resources has been investigated, with the finding that this context has indeed resulted in significant changes in many areas of parents' participation.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter describes education decentralisation in practice, illustrated by the dynamics involved in the implementation of FSP. Initially in 2005, MoNE launched a BOS fund to subsidise all public and private primary and secondary school students. By increasing the amount of the BOS fund in 2009, the government implemented FSP to free parents from financial responsibility for school operational costs. However, as the government funds only cover a limited numbers of items, other costs become the responsibility of local governments and the parents. This condition has attracted public controversy due to the insufficiency of the funding and questions over who should be responsible for covering any shortfall.

As a result, the implementation of FSP varies among districts, depending on the commitment of local governments and their financial capabilities. In some districts, elementary and secondary education have been delivered freely as mandated by Law 20/2003. However, in other districts, parental contributions still occur as the local governments do not fully commit to supporting the programme. Consequently, the programme is often criticised as not having met the expectation of delivering free education. This situation illustrates the challenges involved in the implementation of education decentralisation.

At the local level, the implementation of FSP affected local stakeholders variously. In Depok city the FSP has resulted in the growth of local government financial

responsibility to the education sector, and at the same time the termination of parental financial contribution to school operational cost. To support the schools, Depok's local government allocated subsidies to be paid into the BOS fund. Also important is the impact of FSP on the role of SCs in school management. Before FSP was introduced, SCs played a significant role regarding the money they collected from parents. Thus, the introduction of FSP has, to some extent, reduced their roles in school management since parental contributions are no longer made. This condition of increases in governmental roles in educational financing and the absence of parental financial contributions contextualises the study's findings on parental participation in school management regarding access to and control over resources. These findings will be explored in detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN A CHANGING CONTEXT

6.1. Introduction

Following a description of the study's area and the context of the new government's FSP in the previous chapter, this chapter presents and describes in detail the research findings. It is devoted to answering the two research questions of this study: first, *“what are the characteristics of parents' participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources, and to what extent have they participated, in the context of education decentralisation?”* and second, *“to what extent have the School Committees, as the mechanism for community participation mandated by the education decentralisation policy, represented parents at school?”*

This chapter is comprised of two sections. The first presents findings on the first research question and is divided into four areas of focus: (a) parents' financial contributions to the school, (b) parents' involvement in school meetings, (c) parental access to financial information, and (d) parental involvement in the budgeting process. The next section explores data gathered in answer to the second research question, with emphasis on two areas: (a) parental involvement in SCs, and (b) stakeholders' perceptions of the SCs' role as parents' representative.

A main finding of this research was that the overall practice of parental participation in school management regarding financial resources has changed significantly as a consequence of the introduction of the policy of FSP by the government in 2009. To show the changes, the results from the first section (discussed below in Section 6.2.) of this study are separated into parental participation before FSP started, and parental participation with FSP in place. As FSP is a new programme just initiated in 2009, parental involvement with the SC since the introduction of FSP is still not clear. Hence, the discussion in the second part (Section 6.3) concentrates on the period of time before the FSP.

6.2. Characteristics of Parents' Participation

Parents' participation at the two schools investigated in this study has been broken down into four categories for the purpose of this research, namely:

- Parental financial contributions to the school
- Parents' involvement in the school's meetings
- Parents' access to the school's financial information
- Parents' involvement in the school budgeting process (decision making).

The data suggests that the characteristics of parents' participation in each of these areas vary, and that significant changes occurred simultaneously in these four areas of parents' participation as a result of FSP.

According to the findings of this study, the enforced ban on any parental financial contributions in Depok city schools as a consequence of FSP has significantly impeded a number of extracurricular activities. Data from both schools in this study showed that some extracurricular activities have been stopped because the schools could not manage to find the extra funding to cover the costs involved. The headmasters had become afraid to collect money from parents to sustain these programmes because of the prohibition spelled out in the letter from the Depok EO. It was argued by both headmasters who were interviewed that even though there was allocation for extracurricular activities in the BOS fund, it did not add up to enough to cover expenses for all extra activities. This finding will be explored in more detail in the following section.

To investigate the practice of parental participation in school management, a simple survey was conducted prior to fieldwork, involving basic descriptions of parental participation. The question "How do you participate in school management?" was followed by three answer options, of which parents were allowed to choose more than one. Data from this initial survey revealed that parents participated in schools mainly through financial contributions; in fact, this answer was ranked as the first choice of parents. The second most significant type of parental involvement was attendance at meetings. No parent chose the third option, which was involvement in school budgeting (see Figure 5).

How Do You Participate in School Management?

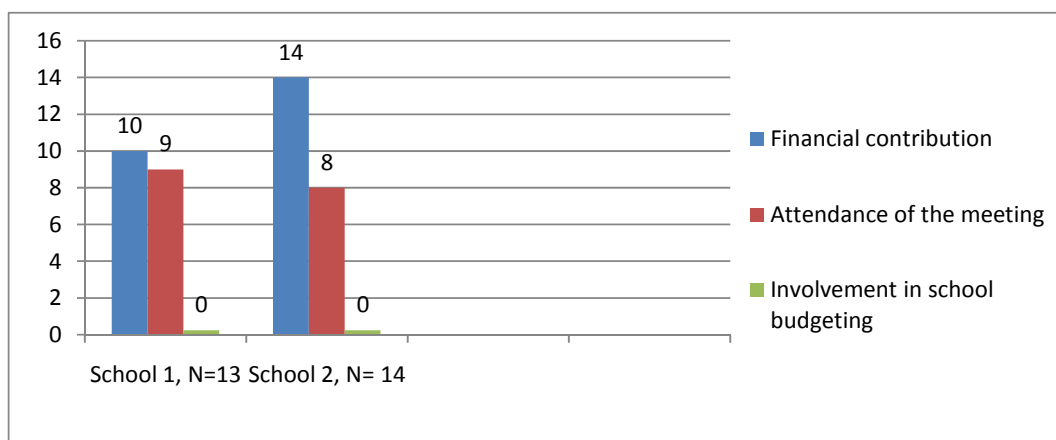


Figure 5. Parents' participation in school management

Note: Parents could choose more than one answer.

6.2.1. Financial Contribution

Before FSP

Before the changes brought about by FSP, it had been characteristic for Indonesian schools to have parents supply the financial resources to run the school. Parental contributions mainly covered enrolment fees (*Sumbangan Operasional Pendidikan/SOP*) that were collected once for the whole length of a child's study, in addition to monthly fees and some other extra fees. Article 2 of Law No. 48/ 2008 on education financing mentions that the national government, local government, and community are all responsible for educational financing; therefore, parents contributed financially to their children's educational cost.

Hence, it is not surprising that historically parents have perceived that their main mode of participation in school management takes the form of financial giving. As reported above, most parents responding to the preliminary survey for this research project chose 'financial contributions' as their form participation in the administration of their local school. Specifically, 10 of 13 of parents in the first school, and 13 of 14 in the second school chose this response (see Figure 5).

Data from a subsequent FGD conducted at the second school also revealed parents' assumptions that when someone asked them about their participation at school, they

were talking about monetary contributions. When the facilitator asked the question “Do you think that so far, you have participated at this school?”, the responses were mainly about financial contributions (*Field note, FGD, School 2*). As one parent stated:

The form of our participation is actually by contributing money to the school. Every time we are invited by the School Committee to have a meeting at school, what we are thinking about is money and money. Honestly, our expectation is that they are going to explain to us the financial condition of the school. (*FGD, Parents 1, School 2*)

Parents’ contributions have been a very significant support for the school in that they provided resources for school buildings and facilities. As the headmaster at the second school noted:

So far, parents’ participation is good. They have really supported me since I first took on the position as a headmaster. When I arrived in 1999, there was no upper storey on the building. Then we planned everything, the parents and committee had a meeting on this matter, what we were going to build, and how much money every parent had to contribute. Every year there was an improvement in school facilities; we built the fence, the drainage ditch, the playground, and most importantly, we built more rooms such as the computer room and prayer area. All of these became possible as a result of the parents’ participation. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 2*)

The headmaster of School 1 confirmed this experience. According to her, parent participation had been quite good in terms of financial support for school facility improvements (*Interview, Headmaster, School 1*).

After FSP

The FSP initiated by the government in the beginning of 2009 changed the characteristics of parental participation dramatically. From that point on, parents were freed from financial contribution to school operational costs. During interviews, all five parents reported that before FSP, they contributed money to help with school finances through paying school fees (*Interviews, Parents, School 1*).

The parents in School 1 reported that once schools were mandated to be free, they only participated in paying for their children's extra uniforms (i.e., batik¹³ and sport uniforms) and their extracurricular activity, which was computer¹⁴; they no longer made any financial contributions at all due to the change imposed by the new government funding policy (*Interviews, Parents, School 2*).

The head of the Division of Primary and Secondary Education of Depok EO explained the local government's policy regarding the FSP and its consequences for parental contributions this way:

It is true that since government initiated the *Program Sekolah Gratis* (Free School Programme) in 2009 as the continuation of *Bantuan Operasional Sekolah/ BOS* (school operational fund programme), we delivered letters to every headmaster in the public primary and secondary schools, instructing them to stop collecting parental contributions, which are known as *Sumbangan Operasional Pendidikan* (Education Operational Funds). From then on, parental contributions have ceased, at least for the time being.

Furthermore, he explained there was a future possibility that the EO would allow voluntary parental contributions, but at that moment all types of parental contribution were banned.

The result of FSP has been that parents' participation in school management has decreased through the lack of opportunity to contribute financially. This is reflected by changes in parents' perception of their participation in the school system; most parents interviewed came to feel that since there was no longer an obligation to contribute financially, they did not need to participate in school management at all anymore. The parent's interviews and FGD revealed this perspective, and parental comments during the FGD illustrated that they felt they didn't know much about school finances as they

¹³ Batik is a traditional costume of Indonesia. Students are required to wear batik on Friday.

¹⁴ The treasurer in the first school explained that the cost for uniforms and batik falls under private expenses and is not included under the school's operational costs that are covered by BOS funds. While the cost for the school's computers was collected from parents as the BOS fund had not been disbursed at that time, when the BOS fund came into being the parents were offered an opportunity to take back their money. However, the parents declined and left the money to cover other school needs. These contributions were collected before April 2009, when parental contributions were still allowed in Depok.

had stopped attending meetings and going to the school to ask about these issues. One parent noted in an FGD:

Since FSP we have had no idea about the details of the school's financial allocations. Before, when the committee still collected money from us, there was a breakdown about the use of money at school (*FGD, Parent 2, School 2*).

The parent's interviews also clarified the weakening of their participation in school activities. Most of them expressed that without being able to make a contribution, they didn't feel they had a right to have a say in decision making. One parent's comments during the interview clearly described this perspective:

Since the school is free, there is no more parents' contribution. As a result, the process in the school seems only one-way, and parental participation is stagnant. Parents cannot participate anymore. We also feel reluctant to complaint when we do not agree with something. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*)

The headmasters' views on parent's participation reflected the same picture:

Now, since the school is free, parents are not aware about what happens at school anymore. They think that the government has already paid for them, so there is nothing else to do. They have become distant from the school and their attention to school issues is diminished. When they were still contributing financially to the school, they were more aware, because they felt that they had given something that could become lost if they did not pay attention to what was happening at the school. Therefore, they were more concerned about school and encouraged their children more. Now, they have become ignorant, because everything is handled for them. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 2*)

I can sense that since everything is free, it's more difficult now, and parents are just not paying attention anymore to school (*Interview, Headmaster School 1*).

The teacher interviews demonstrated similar perceptions. Teachers on the whole felt that parent's participation had changed slightly since schools had become free. This was a concern, as it was seen as likely to influence the teaching and learning process. These

two comments from teachers' interviews described the weakening of parent's participation:

In my opinion, as a consequence of free school, parents act as if do not have any responsibility anymore since they feel they do not have to pay anything. Or just because they are busier now, I have no idea. When the school still collected money from them, they paid more attention to it. They came sometimes to ask about the teaching and learning process at school, and about their children's progress. (*Interview, Teacher 1 School 1*)

Since they are freed from paying school fees, parents seem not care enough. They just demand the best in achievement for their children, but do not want to sacrifice in terms of supporting the school financially. (*Interview, Teacher 3 School 1*)

It seems that rather than being freed up to participate in the school process in a multitude of ways instead of always thinking about money, FSP has instead led to decreased investment on the parents' part, because they assume that since they did not pay they cannot have a say.

The Implication

Additionally, some extracurricular activities in both schools were curtailed as a result of the prohibition on collecting parental contributions. In the first school, badminton and some other sports were stopped due to inadequate funding, such that only two extracurricular activities were still running – computer and dance. Meanwhile, in the second school, drum band, taekwondo (martial arts) and dance were all discontinued¹⁵. The cause was confirmed by all the parents interviewed at both schools and was also supported by the headmasters and the SC secretaries in both schools, as being the lack of financial contributions since the implementation of FSP.

¹⁵ Extracurricular activities in Indonesian schools are varied. The research does not reveal who made the decisions on which kind of activities would continue to run in the schools, but commonly headmasters and teachers have the flexibility to make these choices and parents do not decide, although they are consulted in the parent meetings.

However, this development has come to concern parents, some of whom regret these activities were stopped. Parents acknowledged that while they were happy they did not have to pay for their children's education, they were also troubled about the loss of extracurricular activities. In fact, the interviews revealed that parents would not mind sharing the financial responsibility for their children's activities. But, the headmasters apparently did not want to take the risk of breaking the law by collecting money from parents. Parents' feelings regarding this matter are illustrated in these quotes:

It is true that we are happy as now we are free from any kind of financial requirement. However, it has unfortunately resulted in the cessation of some activities. In fact, we parents would not mind if we had to pay some amount of money for our children's improvement. *(Interview, Parent 3, School 2)*

It never came to mind before that the quality of the school would diminish as a result of the FSP. But then suddenly, some of the activities stopped. Parents are wondering why such a condition developed. Actually, I have heard from the other parents and there are no objections from us to paying for our children's extra activities. *(Interview, Parent 1, School 2)*

As a matter of fact, allocations for the extracurricular activities are listed in the BOS handbook. Yet, headmasters in both schools have found the money from the government to be inadequate for supporting the full range of activities.

Likewise, the role of the SCs before FSP had been very significant in generating money from parents, mainly for school renovations and extracurricular activities. Since that time, however, the sensitivity of the issues surrounding the extraction of money from parents has become a major concern. The head of the Division of Primary and Secondary Education at Depok EO warned that,

Even though the BOS guideline stated that community participation is not banned, we have to be really careful as it is a sensitive matter; that's why we warned the headmaster to be responsible for this (generating parental contribution). *(Interview, Head of Division of Primary and Secondary Education at Depok Educational Office).*

It appears that ever since the EO instruction letter prohibited them from collecting money from parents, the headmasters have been afraid to generate parental

contributions of any kind. Even the SCs quit collecting money from parents. These concerns were expressed by the headmasters in both schools:

Collecting even a small amount of money will bring trouble to us. There was first an unwritten announcement from the EO, but recently an instruction letter¹⁶ just arrived to warn school headmasters not to collect any kind of financial contribution from parents (*Interview, Headmaster School 1*).

In fact, the school committee asked me to rerun some extracurricular activities that were stopped for a while by collecting money from parents. But I can't; it's not because I am afraid, but what can I say if it is actually being banned. No more collecting money from parents (*Interview, Headmaster School 2*).

On the other hand, a Depok EO official and an NGO practitioner who were interviewed presented opposing views regarding the insufficiency of funding for extracurricular activities. The Depok EO official noted:

As a consequence of parents' contributions being banned, the Depok local government allocated additional funds for schools through what we called *BOS Pemd*a (local government school operational fund). The money should be enough, as the government money was meant to be the same amount as the schools earned before the FSP, or even more than before. If they still consider the money to be not enough, then they have to adjust by selecting only some of the activities to run." (*Interview, Head Division of Primary and Secondary Education of Depok Educational Office*)

The NGO practitioner supported this in his explanation:

The money from the BOS fund should be enough for schools, as there are three resources available: the national government budget, the provincial government budget, and the local government budget. If the schools complain about the insufficiency of money for extracurricular activities, they are just trying to justify generating more money from parents. Or perhaps they are not professional enough in managing the funds.

¹⁶ Refers to instruction letter from Unit Pelaksana Teknis/UPT (Technical Operational Unit under EO) No. 421073/UPT/2009

Furthermore, he contended that some schools were turning extracurricular activities into too much of a luxury experience, costing a great deal of money. He suggested that activities should be prioritised according to which the most were needed by schools, so that parents did not have to bear the burden of high contributions because of such activities. However, as mentioned earlier in this section, the parents interviewed did not object to contributing toward their children's improvement.

Summary of Findings

This section has presented the data regarding parental participation in terms of financial contributions. Prior to FSP, parents viewed their participation in school management mainly as contributing financially. However, this changed dramatically as a consequence of FSP, as revealed during the fieldwork for this project. It appears FSP has switched the status of parental financial contributions from 'active' to 'none'. Consequently, parents felt that since they had no financial responsibility to the school, their participation was now weaker. They felt reluctant to have a say in matters related to the management of the school, as they did not pay anything for their children's education. This perspective was also supported by the headmasters and teachers; they felt that, somehow, FSP had lessened parental involvement in school life. It appears likely that parents became disempowered and lacking in motivation to become involved in school management as a result of FSP.

Another consequence of FSP discussed in this section is the suspension of some extracurricular activities, as schools have not had sufficient funds to support them since parental contributions were banned. After FSP, collecting parental contributions has become a significant issue, with school management (i.e., headmasters) feeling afraid to take the risk of collecting money from parents due to the government's stipulations. Instead, they have preferred to discontinue some activities, which has become a major concern for the parents. Parental interviews suggested parents have no objection to sharing some of the financial responsibility for their children's activities.

6.2.2. Involvement in the Meeting

Further results from the preliminary parents' survey revealed that attendance at meetings is another significant form of parents' participation in school management, ranking second after making financial contributions. Generally, data from both schools showed that more than half the parents indicated they attended meetings. Specifically, 9 out of 13 parents in the first school and 8 out of 14 parents in the second school chose attendance at meetings as a form of their participation (see Figure 5).

Before FSP

Before FSP, only one regular parent's meeting was held every year, usually during the enrolment period. It was facilitated by the SCs and held for the purpose of gathering parents to discuss parental contributions. Prior to FSP, this meeting was an integral part of the budgeting process (RAPBS) and involved school management presenting the budgeting plan and discussing it with parents and the SCs. It was also a mechanism for making a decision regarding the amount of parental contribution required for that year.

The meeting related positively to contributions and thus appears to have been a mechanism for asking parents for money. Parents' responses in this research project's FGD illustrate how for them, meetings were always associated with their contributions. For example, in the FGD parents immediately responded that donations were the main topic of discussion in the annual meeting (*Field note, FGD, School 2*). The secretary of the SC in the second school also admitted that whenever they had a meeting with parents, it was impossible to avoid the impression that the gathering was associated with parental financial contributions (*SC secretary, FGD, School 2*).

According to the headmasters, the level of parent attendance at the annual meeting was at around 80% in School 2 and 50% in School 1. However, the SC members revealed that most of the time, only a half or less of the parents invited attended the meeting, and these were always the same people each time. This fact indicates that only a limited number of parents were actually active enough to attend the annual meeting. From this data, it can be said that the level of attendance in the meeting is in middle moderate level with most of the time only the same parents actively engaged in the meeting.

The Quality of the Meeting

When analysing parental involvement in the meetings, it is not merely a matter of attendance; the quality of the parents' involvement in the process of the meeting itself must be examined as well. The most important point is to examine the power relations among stakeholders involved in the meeting. How much power had parents exercised during the meeting? Data from interviews and FGD suggest that parents exercised some extent of power and were not merely passive participants. For example, the content of parental interviews suggested that for the most part, parents could raise an objection if they could not afford to pay a certain amount of money. Parents' financial contribution was effectively negotiated between the attending parents and school management during the meeting before it was stipulated to all parents (See Appendix 5, p. 186, for the explanation of the budgeting meeting/RAPBS meeting procedure).

Data also suggest that the meetings had been mechanisms for informing and consulting parents as well as making decision by parents. Parents were able to access financial information through the meetings. Comments parents made during interviews at the first school clarified that the annual meeting was seen as a mechanism for informing and consulting with parents on school finances rather than as a mechanism for decision making. The headmaster had already designed the school's financial scheme, and at the meeting parents were asked to give their input on this scheme. It is likely that even though parents were in a position to bargain, the headmaster held more power than they concerning this decision.

Of the four parents interviewed, only one had attended the meeting. She explained how the meeting went, saying:

At that time the meeting discussed the BOS (school operational assistance). The school explained how much money they get and what the allocations are. Then, there was also an allocation for computer activities, which had already been paid by parents. The committee asked parents whether we wanted the money back or would like to just leave it there in case the government money is not enough. The parents reached a decision not to take the money back. So, the scheme regarding finances is designed by the school, and then offered to the floor in the meeting. (*Interview, Parent School 1*)

It also can be inferred from the interview that there was a kind of trust between the parents and the school management in regards to allowing the previously collected computer activities money to stay with the school in spite of subsequent government funding. Regarding the parent's contributions for computer activities, two other interviewees who had not gone to the meeting verified that the schools gave them a questionnaire concerning whether or not they would agree to contribute money for computer activities.

On the other hand, teachers' views on the quality of the annual parents' meeting in the first school were diverse (*Teachers' Interviews, School 1*). Two of three teachers (Teachers 2 and 3) saw the quality of the meeting as quite good, noting that the headmaster informed parents in the meeting about the money the school had received and its allocation. While both said that parents were always consulted about the use of money, one felt the final decision was always up to the headmaster, while the other said that parents ultimately made the decision about money. Teacher 2 said that the headmaster had designed the school budget before the meeting and then asked the parents for their agreement.

Another teacher (Teacher 1) saw things differently regarding the quality of the meeting; to him, the parents' involvement in school budgeting was only a formality for the purpose of legitimacy. Everything was already prepared by the headmaster and what was needed from the parents was their agreement and signatures. It is also worthwhile to note that this teacher perceived the role taken by the headmaster as too dominant.

In addition, the head of the SC described the quality of meeting this way:

In every meeting regarding parents' contributions, firstly we tell the parents about the school needs, and how much money the school needs in support. And then we divided the amount of money with the number of parents so we reach the amount of money parents should pay. Then, parents are welcome to have their voice heard as to whether they agree or disagree with that amount. If we can reach a consensus, then we agree to pay that amount. If not, then we hold a vote. So, the decisions are made by the majority. There are always one or two parents who disagree with the result of the meeting, but we always try to accommodate their interests, and never force them to pay. (*Interview, Head of SC, School 1*)

Meanwhile, the quality of the meeting in School 2, as captured in the FGD dialogue, appears to be better. It seems their meeting was not only a mechanism for informing and consulting parents, but also a mechanism for parental decision making. Decisions were made mainly by consensus or voting, and the committee functioned rather like a facilitator. When asked who decided the amount of the donation parents should pay, the FGD parents replied that parents were the actors who decided about the amount of money they paid. And the mechanism they used was voting, so the majority view of parents in the meeting was the deciding factor. As noted by a parent:

So far, the decisions are made by the majority voice. It is quite democratic and there is no enforcement on that matter (*FGD, Parent 4, School 2*).

This statement was supported by another parent:

In fact the meeting is quite democratic, because every time the school has a problem parents are invited to talk. This includes topics such as what the problems are, what the school needs, and how to solve the problems. Actually, it is fair enough for us. But, how can parents be more active at school if the meeting is held only once in a year? We need more meetings; for example, three-monthly. (*FGD, Parent 3, School 2*)

The parent interviews illustrated a similar perception of the annual meeting. Even though only half the parents interviewed expressed awareness of the school meeting, the involvement of parents in the meeting was regarded as quite good. The meeting was perceived as quite accommodative to them. Some parent comments on this were:

I think the meeting was quite democratic. Parents were able to speak and our concerns had been accommodated and our problem had been solved. The function of committee was more as a facilitator, because we the parents make the decisions. For example, when we arrange the budget for extracurricular activities, every parent has the right to suggest the amount of money we will contribute. First, it was inventoried how much money we need, then it was divided by the number of parents. Finally, we reach a consensus about the money we should contribute. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*)

Regarding the amount of money parents should contribute, there was a kind of bargain. So, the decision was made on the basis of the majority voice. It was not a kind of one way decision from the top. (Interview, *Parent 4, School 2*)

After FSP

The previous section illustrates that before FSP, parents, to some extent, were involved in the annual school meeting and the quality of this meeting was usually quite good. Parents also exercised some forms of power such as raising objections and bargaining regarding the amount of their financial contributions. However, data from the field revealed that since FSP was implemented in the beginning of 2009, there have been no more annual parents' meetings. All the parents agreed that no more meetings had occurred once parents no longer held the responsibility for making donations. As the meetings ceased, parents no longer had a mechanism to raise their concerns and to access information. Conversation during the FGD revealed this fact. For example, one parent in the FGD stated:

When the government launched the FSP, they suddenly stopped us from paying school donations, with no further explanation as to why is that so. After that, there is no more information on school financing, and no more meetings. All we know is that the donations are stopped, that's all. (FGD, *Parent 2, School 2*)

This statement was confirmed by the secretary of the SC during the FGD, who declared:

Yes, because of this FSP condition, that the school is not allowed to collect money from parents, it places the headmaster in a dilemmatic situation. Because, if we gather parents for a meeting the image will be negative, as the people anticipate the meeting will be correlated with money the parents will have to contribute. The headmaster does not want to take that risk. So, for a while, as we do not collect the money from parents, we also inactivate the meeting. (FGD, *The Secretary of SC, School 2*)

Summary of Findings

Data from both schools demonstrates the change in parents' involvement in the annual school meeting from before to after FSP. Before FSP, according to stakeholders, the

parents' meeting involved a certain number of parents, most of the time the same ones. From this data, it can be said that the level of attendance in the meeting is typically moderate, with the same parents actively engaged in the meeting most of the time. Parents perceived the meeting to be quite democratic and accommodative; they felt they were likely to have their voices heard and to play a part in making the final decision. This indicates that to some extent, parents had exercised some forms of power.

Another finding is that in spite of suspicion that the meetings had been tools for legitimising the decisions of the school management, parents were still able to receive benefits from the mechanisms that occurred in these meetings. Through the mechanisms, parents were consulted, provided with access to the school's financial information, and had a limited involvement in decision making. Of note, the quality of parents' involvement in the annual meeting at the first school seemed lower as compared to that of the second school. In the first school, the meeting was used more as a mechanism for consulting and informing parents, but not as a vehicle for decision making. Meanwhile, in the second school the meeting seems to have been a mechanism for decision-making as well as informing and consulting parents.

However, the data revealed that the introduction of FSP impacted the parents' meeting at both schools in similar ways. The immediate consequence was the cessation of parental contributions along with the cancellation of further meetings. As a result, no description of the quality of meetings post-FSP was possible, and it seems that currently parents do not have a mechanism for raising their concerns and accessing information, as the meetings are not held any longer.

6.2.3. Access to Financial Information

This study also recorded parents' access to the schools' financial information as a measurement of control. The issue was explored by asking questions about whether parents received information regarding school finance. The responses indicated the same situation in both schools, in that most parents were not informed regarding school finances. In fact, the number of parents informed about school finances was only a half the number of those who were not (see Figure 6).

The previous section noted that the occurrence of parent meetings related positively to parents' contributions. Likewise, parents' access to school financial information correlated positively with the existence of the annual meeting, which in the past served as the mechanism for communicating to parents about school finances. Interviews revealed that parents mainly received their information on school finances through the meetings. Most of those who felt they had some access to financial information were the same parents who had been relatively active in attending annual meetings.

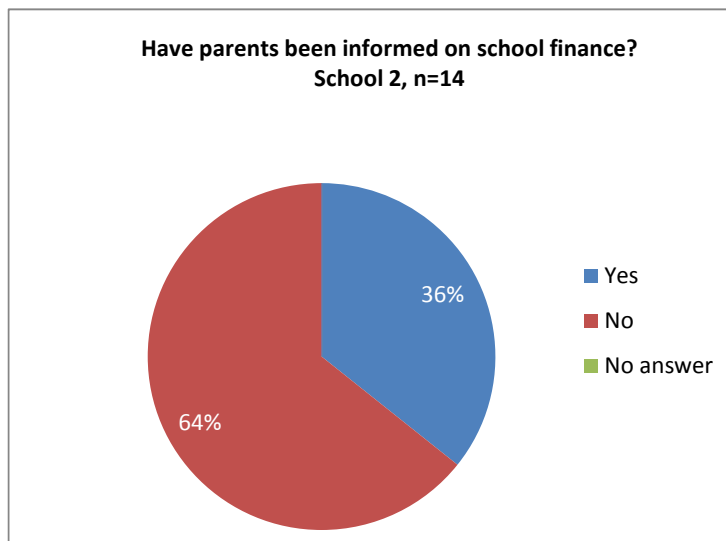
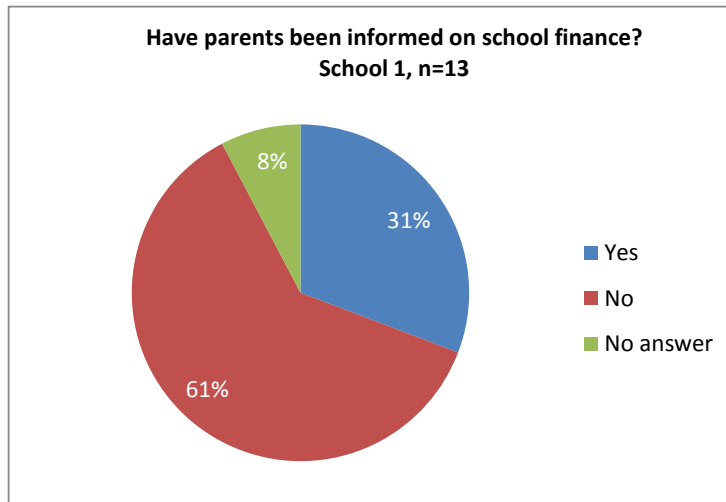


Figure 6. The percentage of parents with access to school financial information

Before FSP

Data collected during the FGD demonstrated that when meetings were still held, parents had in fact been informed about school finance to some extent. Statements from many parents came up concerning this, such as:

Yes, before the free school programme, there was a report on the money which was gathered from our contributions. But there is no report on the schools financial resources now that they come from the government fund. (*FGD, Field note, School 2*)

The first time my child enrolled, the SC reported on the use of money in the meeting – not a kind of written report, though. But that was when the committee still collected money from the parents. (*FGD, Parent 1, School 2*)

Since the government is covering the school fee, we don't know anything about the allocation of the money. No more information about school finances. (*FGD, Parent 3, School 2*)

After FSP

During data collection for this project, special attention was given to parent's access to information about school finances after the implementation of FSP. Parents were asked whether they knew about the FSP programme, about the money allocated to every student, and about the use of this money. The research found that parents lacked knowledge about the amount per capita and the allocation of the fund. In response, parents generally reported they knew about the FSP. At the first school, 11 of 13 parents confirmed they knew about it, and all parents at the second school responded that they knew about it. It is therefore remarkable that none of parents in either school reported knowing the amount of the money allocated per capita, or the distribution of funds.

Supporting this, statements made during individual parent's interviews demonstrated that in School 1 only one parent recognised that she had been informed about the BOS fund; and no parents in School 2 felt they had been informed regarding it (Parents' interviews).

I never knew about the amount of government funds going to the school and their allocation. There has never been any dissemination at all about the fund, whether in the form of a written report or information in the meeting. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*)

What I know is, after the FSP we were freed from financial contributions. But I never know the amount of money the school gets from the government and its allocation, as the school never disseminated this information to us. (*Interview, Parent 4, School 2*)

The parents' comments in FGD confirmed the results from the questionnaires that no one knew the amount of funds allocated per capita at their school (*FGD note, School 2*). When the facilitator probed why this might be so, all participants replied that so far, no such information had been delivered to them. The facilitator then further asked, "What about the notice board or other written information?", and all participants answered, "No, not at all". Even more surprisingly, the SC chairman at the first school did not know the BOS allocation per student, either.

FSP is promoted massively through the national media (mainly television), and the BOS handbook suggests having every participating school put an FSP banner in front of their building (BOS Fund, 2009). Yet even with all this publicity and visibility, there was little public information when it came to specific amounts; actually, at both schools in this study, the FSP banner was never raised.

Thus, analysis of the data indicates an issue with transparency when it comes to use of monies from the BOS fund. This was true even though schools are *required* to detail the local allocation of BOS funds and the amounts involved in school expenses on their notice boards. Compliance with this requirement was encouraged by the Head of the Division of Primary and Secondary Education of the Depok EO, who stated:

We encourage the headmasters to report the money they managed on the notice board – how much money was allocated for their schools and the details of the allocation, in order to increase transparency.

Interestingly, the headmaster of the first school commented in her interview that,

There is a notice board in my room, but we haven't posted anything on it, as the financial report has not been finished yet. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 1*)

Transparency was a complicated issue, not only in terms of public access over school financial information, but also related to attempts by the press and NGOs to exercise control in the matter. Headmasters from both schools shared their concern over blackmail attempts they had experienced whereby a few journalists and individuals from NGOs threatened to publish stories that schools were withholding financial information unless they were paid a sum of money. This arose from incidents when the NGOs and journalists came to the schools to verify the fund allocations, and the schools would not provide them with sufficient information.

This problem was reported not only by the headmasters, but was confirmed by an NGO practitioner as well. During an interview, he characterised his understanding of the events that occurred as blackmail toward the schools, stating it was one reason he strongly recommended that every school post public notices clearly outlining the financial condition of the school and the allocation of funds. Thus, the notice board policy is an effort to avoid blackmail situations as well as to ensure transparency of information for the public.

While it has been clearly established in this section that there was not enough communication on this issue from the school to parents, it also appeared that for their part, the parents were reluctant to ask for information from the school. As expressed by a parent in the FGD:

Perhaps, as long as our children still get a good education at school, the teacher still actively teaches the children, and we can see that from day to day our children improve their knowledge, that's enough for us. It means that the government fund has been spent in a proper way. No need to question how much money the school gets, how the money is spent, and for what. We feel uncomfortable asking such questions, perhaps because we are from an eastern culture. (*FGD, Parent 1, School 2*)

This was supported by another parent's comment in an individual interview, as follows:

In our culture, when you do not contribute anything, it seems inappropriate for you to become so critical as to make a comment on the school's finances. It can be said that the money you contribute is, in fact, to pay for your right to have a say at school. But, if you do not pay anything, how come you are brave enough to criticise the school's financial decisions? (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*)

Under these conditions, it seems that since the funds were generated from the government's budget and not from parents' contributions, the accountability of the school shifted in an upward direction, toward the BOS team and local monitoring body (BAWASDA), rather than downward toward the parents (Headmasters' interview). In fact, schools participating in the BOS fund are obliged to make quarterly reports to these bodies on their expenses, while accountability to parents is limited to postings on the notice board as required by the EO. Consequently, parents' access to financial information has become quite limited and their control has grown very weak.

Summary of Findings

The key finding here is that the context of FSP has influenced parental access to financial information. The data reveals that before FSP parents knew the details of the school's budget to some extent from the SC reports at the school meetings. However, the data also suggests that since the introduction of FSP, parents have had only limited access to information, despite requirements concerning dissemination of information regarding FSP money allocated to each school. Ultimately, this has led to serious transparency issues which in turn have resulted in parents coming to feel they do not have the right to know much about or participate in the school's financial process

Finally, the absence of parental contributions has affected the accountability mechanisms involved; specifically, since the schools' resources have come to be mainly derived from the government, school accountability has shifted upward to the Depok EO and away from the previously downward direction toward the parents. Thus, not only was information more limited and the parents' ability to access it compromised, the opportunity to have input into and control over financial decisions was transferred from the parents to government funding sources.

6.2.4. Involvement in the School Budgeting Process

Ideally, a school budgeting plan, or school income and expenditure budget plan (RAPBS), should involve all the stakeholders at the schools as required by education decentralisation through SBM. As a consequence, parents – as the main stakeholders – should play a more active role, using the SC as the appropriate mechanism.

The process of planning a school budget is described as follows. Firstly, school management (headmasters, teachers and school treasurer) propose their budget plan in a school management meeting. SC members (chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer) participate in this meeting by offering input, advice, and recommendations, as mandated (Ministerial Decree No. 044/U/2002). The end results of the meeting are submitted to the SC for correction and feedback and subsequently, school management draft the budgeting plan and submit it again to the SC for discussion in the RAPBS plenum involving parents. Representatives of ordinary parents from each class (parents who do not belong to the SC board) are invited to this plenum, which once served as an integral part of the parents' annual meeting prior to FSP. It is at this stage that parents are directly involved in the budgeting plan. Finally, after discussion and consultation in the plenum, the budgeting plan is constituted by joint decree of the headmaster and the SC.

However, results from the preliminary survey carried out for this research showed that no parents chose involvement in school budgeting meetings (RAPBS meeting) as their form of participation (see Figure 5). Moreover, no parents interviewed at the second school reported ever attending such a meeting and only one parent at the first school had ever done so. It is possible that parents were not familiar with the term 'RAPBS,' and so were confused by the question. Or it could be that because only the representatives of parents were invited to attend, the majority felt they are not actually involved in the RAPBS meeting.

Because this study focused on parents' involvement through the mechanism of SCs, which are assumed to represent parents, an additional section on SC involvement in school budgeting is included below.

Before FSP

The stakeholders who participated in this study held very diverse opinions regarding parents' involvement in the RAPBS meetings. Committee members reported that parents were not involved in the meeting, while the headmaster from School 1 said that parents were involved through representatives from each class. The parents themselves seemed not to have any knowledge of the meeting. In the parent interviews, only one recognised the meeting as involving discussion about school budgeting. Some of the diverse comments on the subject include:

Parents are not involved in the RAPBS meeting. We, the SC, act as the parent's representatives. I think parents have no other choice than try to trust us, for parents are not brave enough to confront the school by themselves (*FGD, SC's secretary, School 2*)

As long as I know, parents have been involved in activities such as school renovation. But regarding the routine budgeting meeting, I am not sure if there is such meeting (*Interview, SC's Chairman, School 2*).

Before FSP, we conduct an RAPBS meeting with parents yearly to make a budgeting plan. We discussed how much money parents should contribute and the allocation of the money. Firstly, I design the plan, then offered it to the SC and then the SC proposed it to the forum in the parent's meeting. In the forum, usually some concerns would come up from parents such as objections, requests for reducing the contribution, and things like that. Parents gave input as well. And finally, the forum decided, usually based on consensus; sometimes by voting if we did not reach a consensus (*Interview, Headmaster, School 1*).

The second school's headmaster's statement supports School 1's headmaster's explanation. He confirmed that the RAPBS meetings involved the headmaster, SC members, a few teachers and parents' representatives from each class. However, he acknowledged that it was mainly a meeting between the school and the SC, saying it was then the responsibility of the SC to disseminate the decisions reached in the meeting back to parents.

The process of the RAPBS meeting as described by the Head of Depok EC shows that before FSP, parents were involved in the meeting, but after FSP, only SC members and

school management have been involved. The head of Depok EC described the process of RAPBS meeting as follows:

The sequences of RAPBS meeting are: firstly, the plan is drafted by school management (i.e., the headmaster and teachers). After that, schools invite the SCs to discuss the plan and explore whether there are input, objections and changes from the SCs. When the parents' contribution was still allowed, parents were also invited to the RAPBS meeting and, together with SCs and school management, parents discussed the plan (*Interview, Head of Depok EC*).

From these diverse descriptions, the most likely scenario appears to be that only a small number of parents' representatives were ever involved in the RAPBS meetings. Parents' participation in school budgeting is regarded as a form of indirect participation through representation in the SCs. Thus, to understand the reality of the process it is important to fully recognise the role of SCs in the meetings and the ways in which they disseminated information and consulted with parents regarding the budgeting plan.

The Changing Role of SC in the School Budgeting Process

Just as with parents' participation, the role of the SCs was also impacted considerably by the new FSP programme. Before the initiation of FSP, the SCs' function of collecting money from the parents was very significant. Every parental contribution was made through the mechanism of the SCs, and thus SCs had a strong effect on school budgeting through their ability to generate money from the local community. Naturally, because of this, these committees exercised considerable control over financial resources in school budgets.

Consequently, when SCs were no longer allowed to generate money from parents, their power weakened, as clarified by the SC Chairman in School 2, who commented:

The SC is now in the phase of apparent death, as it no longer has a role to play since parents' financial contributions have been banned.

Even worse, the headmaster of the second school remarked that perhaps SCs will no longer be needed since the BOS handbook has already fixed every allocation and SC input on budgeting was no longer necessary (*Interview, Headmaster, School 2*). The

change in the SCs' involvement in the RAPBS meeting can be detected from statements concerning this matter:

Unfortunately, after FSP was initiated, the portion of the SC's role in school budgeting declined because every allocation was already set up by the government (i.e., the Ministry of National Education). This is a matter for the SC, as we are not able to be more involved. While before we had authority to administer or make some changes regarding the budget allocation, now every allocation is already fixed and we are not allowed to do anything. Our involvement is very limited now (*Interview, SC's secretary, School 2*).

In the first school, the situation appears to have degenerated even further, as noted by the head of the SC:

I have been involved at school in terms of the implementation of temporary funds for such things as school renovation. I should know each cent of government fund allocated to school, how much the school gets and what the money is spent for. However, we do not deal with things like the budgeting plan which is the responsibility of the school management. Because it is the school management that really knows the school's needs, so let them make a plan. After the school gets the fund, then we will be involved in its implementation, but I am not sure regarding BOS (the government fund). It seems that with the routine budget plan I will not be involved, but for temporary funding, the headmaster asked me to assist her as it is required by the regulation. (*Interview, Head of SC,, School 1*)

This statement more or less established that, compared to the SC in the second school, this SC was even less engaged in school budgeting process. This was further clarified by the headmaster, the SC chairman, and teachers' statements in the first school:

I am the one who sets up the budget plan, and the SC only acts to legitimize it. So far the chairman has always agreed with my plan. Because, according to him [the SC chairman], it is the right of school to administer the budget. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 1*)

It is not because the SC is not allowed to propose the budget; but rather, I think the budget proposal is the prerogative of the headmaster. Because she is the stakeholder

who knows what is needed by the school. But for sure, we are involved in its implementation and control. (*Interview, SC's Chairman, School 1*)

In the school budgeting meeting, everything is already set up by the headmaster. Parents are invited merely in order to get their agreement, and the SC is only a formality. All of the decisions are in the hand of the headmaster. Even the teacher's voices are never considered by the headmaster. (*Interview, Teacher 1, School 1*)

RAPBS is created by the teachers and the headmaster, because we teachers and the headmaster are the stakeholders that really know exactly what the school needs. Parents are not involved in this scheme and the SC only acts in terms of agreeing and signing. But unfortunately, teachers have a lack of initiative, so the planning was done mainly by the headmaster with my consultation. (*Interview, Teacher 3/school's treasurer, School 1*)

Thus, it seems that after FSP, the SCs were relegated to the rubber-stamping role of a legitimizing entity. This development was also recognised by the head of the Depok EC, a body that acts as an umbrella for all SCs within Depok city, who described the role of SCs in Depok city as deteriorating significantly as a consequence of FSP. He asserted that the SCs only played a role in terms of controlling the movement of funds, and were no longer involved in planning and implementation. The control exercised by the SCs was also very weak, as most of the time their function was merely to sign the budgeting plan. Although the schools' expenditures should have been reported to the government as well as to the SC – an opportunity for the SCs to once again play a significant role – the SCs' control had become, in fact, very limited. The culture of *ewuh pakewuh*¹⁷ – feeling reluctant to ask about sensitive matters – was blamed as the reason for this condition.

Generally, the SCs' situation in Depok city after FSP was described by the Head of EC as follows:

As a consequence of FSP, the roles of SCs in Depok city are generally weakened. Actually, before that their roles were extraordinarily important in improving the quality of education in each unit of an educational institution. They were quite powerful, as they managed the money from parents' contributions. However, their roles deteriorated

¹⁷ *Ewuh pakewuh* is a Javanese expression meaning to show the feeling of reluctance toward discussing someone's view.

as the programme ran. In fact, the RAPBS required an active role by the SCs as stated in the head of the Education Office's decree. As the FSP was implemented, the SCs' roles became limited to merely controlling the flow of finances and sometimes only to signing documents. Ideally, they should be engaged in planning, not only in signing the plan. FSP should not become a justification for SCs to reduce their role at school.

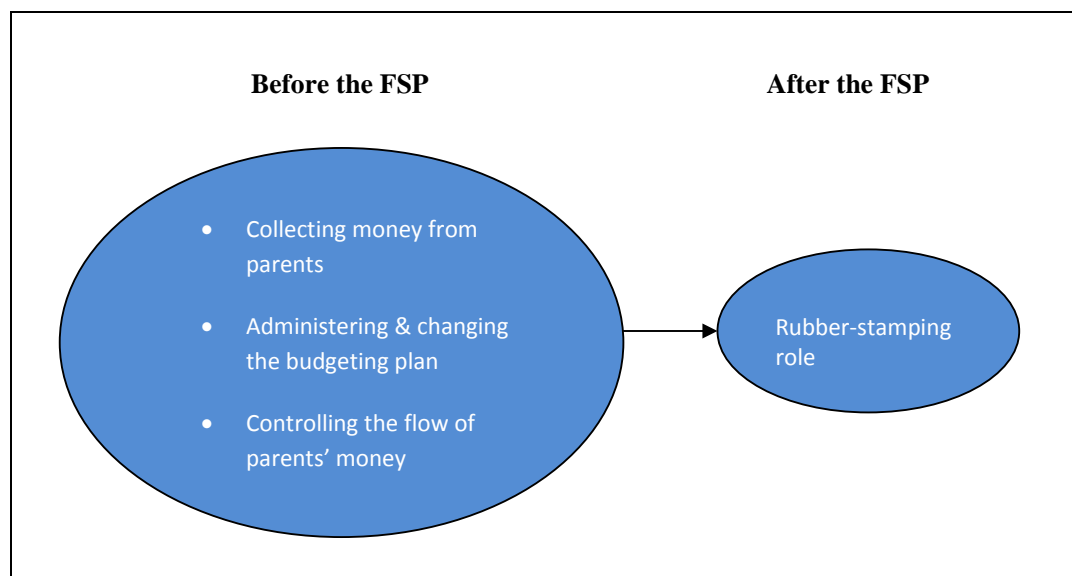


Figure 7. The changing role of SCs in the school budgeting process

Source: Author

After FSP

Just as parents in School 2 had previously played a relatively significant role in the decision making concerning the school budget through the SCs, the parents in School 1 were also involved in the school budgeting meeting, but to a lesser degree. However, the fieldwork for this study exposed a change in the level of parental involvement as a result of FSP. Specifically, once parental contributions stopped, school management no longer had any accountability to the parents. Consequently, parents were no longer invited in the RAPBS meeting and the role of SCs in the school budgeting meeting deteriorated markedly.

The first school headmaster explained the school budgeting process that has developed since the implementation of FSP:

Even though parents are freed from making financial contributions, they are still involved through representatives from every class, but it is not the same anymore. Now the meeting is only a kind of reporting on the fund to parents. I had already set up everything; the SC is involved merely in terms of legitimizing. (Interview, *Headmaster, School 1*)

A similar picture emerged from the second school headmaster's point of view. According to her:

After FSP, the allocation of funds was already restricted because of BOS guidelines, and we have to follow those guidelines. From then on, the involvement of the SC and the parents is very limited because every allocation already fixed. Parents are not involved anymore. In the meeting, we only inform them about how much money the school gets yearly, and what the mechanism of delivery will be. So, after FSP I am the one who makes the RAPBS, and then the SC has a look at that and agrees. The SC is not able to do more than that, as every allocation already made fixed. (Interview, *Headmaster, School 2*)

The headmasters' explanations, above, clarified some changes in parental involvement in school budgeting, such as:

- Since school was made free, the parents' involvement in school budgeting had become very limited.
- The meeting was held merely to inform the parents and report on the use of the money.
- Parents were no longer engaged in the planning of allocations, and neither they nor the SCs were able to give input on planning.
- The function of the SCs was limited to legitimizing the RAPBS.

Although both headmasters acknowledged that parents were still invited to the RAPBS meeting, the reality was that there were no more meetings that year, as confirmed by parents.

These conditions were a result of the mechanism for budget allocation that had been set up by the government in the BOS guidelines as a companion process to FSP. There are 13 items listed in the BOS guidelines for the allocation of government funds. Thus, practically speaking, the restrictions placed on the allocation process indicate very limited space for parent and SC involvement.

Summary of Findings

Results from this study suggest that before FSP, parents were more likely not to be involved directly in the budgeting (RAPBS) meeting, and that only a small number of parents' representatives from every class had been involved. Generally, SCs had represented parents in the meetings, and then disseminated information and consulted with them on the budgeting plan in the annual parents meeting.

While minor differences were found to exist in the levels of involvement by parents and SCs in each of the schools, the introduction of FSP appears to have significantly altered the roles of both parents and SCs in the school budgeting process. Once parental contribution stopped, school management no longer showed accountability to parents. Parents were no longer invited to the RAPBS meeting and, consequently, parents' involvement in budgeting process decreased.

Specifically, the SCs' role seems to have diminished substantially, as there was no longer a means for SCs to offer input or make a correction to budgeting plans. The role of the SCs became one of rubber stamping the headmaster's decisions. Parents' control over school financial resources lessened as indicated by the weakening of the SCs involvement in the decision making process in the RAPBS meetings, and the fact that there were no more annual parents' meetings. Without parents' meetings, there was no mechanism for the SC to consult on the budgeting plan with parents.

6.3. Parents' Representation in School Committees

Parents' representation is just one of several factors included under the umbrella theme of parental participation; however, it is an important one. This section will describe how parents are represented by the SCs. It will not distinguish between before and after FSP,

as the implementation of FSP has been too recent for an accurate assessment of parents' representation after FSP to be carried out. It is worthwhile noting that FSP is a new theme that was introduced to the researcher during fieldwork, and thus had not been included in the research design prepared previous to going out in the field. Since the FSP context has turned out to be quite a significant variable in regards to the study's topic, the researcher decided during data collection to include FSP in the data analysis and research report. Representation here is measured in terms of parents' involvement in SCs (see Section 6.3.1) and stakeholder perceptions of the role of SCs as parent representatives (see Section 6.3.2).

6.3.1. Parents' Involvement in School Committees

Parents' representation in the SCs seems to be problematic. The measurement of parents' involvement in SCs provides some indicators of low parental involvement.

Firstly, even though both SCs in this study were elected by parents, the mechanism of election is not clear and parents lacked knowledge of the election process. As it was described by the SCs and headmasters, the process of election involved parents' representatives from each grade (grade one to grade six) who are invited to the school. They then select names among themselves to propose as nominees, and then parents vote on the selected nominees. In the first school, five nominees are elected. Respondents from School 2 did not describe their election process clearly because, interestingly, the last SC election was held 5 years ago, so none of the parent participants remembered it well enough to explain it fully. However, the mechanism for selecting parents from each grade to attend the meeting is not clear. Interviews and conversation from FGD revealed that it is also not apparent which segments of parents are to be present at the meeting.

Secondly, there are hardly any mechanisms for engaging parents in SCs. Parents felt there were not enough mechanisms to allow meetings with SC members; most parents said the frequency of meetings with the SC was very low. The lack of meetings was blamed as the reason for the low involvement of parents within the SC. As a parent noted in FGD:

How can parents be active within the SC if we never have a mechanism to meet with the SC? The meeting is only once in a year, which is definitely not enough.

In an interview, another parent claimed that communication with SC members was not intensive enough, as the only mechanism was through the meeting which was held only once a year. He also expressed that the approach of most SC members to their work was not personal enough (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*).

On the other hand, the SC members blamed the low level of parents' attendance at the meeting for the lack of parent involvement.

We always encourage all the parents to come to the meeting, but the parents who attend are always the same persons time after time. (*Interview, SC's Chairman, School 1*)

It is hard for me to communicate with parents, because when they were invited to the meeting, only a few of them attended. Generally, they make the justification that they will accept whatever decision results from the meeting. (*FGD, SC's Secretary, School 2*)

Thirdly, another factor that also influenced parents' engagement with the SCs was the lack of active participation in school life on the part of both SCs. It seems that only one or two members of the SCs were active at the schools, while the rest were only on the board as a formality. This reality was exposed in the parents' interviews, the headmasters' interviews, and the SC members' interviews, as well as in FGD. The interviews at the first school revealed that only the head of the SC remained active in the school, for instance giving input to the headmaster, checking and agreeing upon the school budget plan, and having a meeting once a year with parents (before FSP). It was acknowledged by the headmaster that:

The SC members are not active; the only one who is active is the head of SC. Usually, every time school gets funds, I'll call him to come to school. Then we discuss the funds, and consider what we will do with the money, put it either toward school renovation or other programmes. If he thinks that we need to have a meeting with parents to talk about this, then we decide who is going to be invited. Sometimes there are some changes in the middle of the programme; I always ask his permission on that. After we finished the entire programme, I'll give him a report (*Interview, Headmaster School 1*).

This statement was communicated to the head of the SC, and his response appeared to be in agreement with the headmaster's point of view:

The SC members consist of the chairman, secretary, treasurer and ordinary members. However, since the committee does not manage the fund, I rarely meet with the other members. And the thing is, they also busy with their own business (*Interview, SC's Chairman, School 1*).

The parents' interviews also revealed they knew only the SC chairman, and did not know the other committee members.

The situation in the second school was similar. The FGD and the parents' interviews demonstrated the reality that only the chairman and the secretary of the SC were known amongst the parents. And in fact, only two of them were active at school, according to the headmaster. Even more surprising was that the same committee had remained in office for almost 5 years, which was exceptional since the rules of the organisation established that elections must be held once every 3 years. As related in both the headmaster's and the chairman of the SC's interviews, it was the headmaster's wish that the relationship with the incumbent SC be maintained, in order to avoid inconsistency when it came time for her to hand over her position to a new headmaster.

To conclude, parents' representation in SCs were 'problematic' as was apparent from low parental involvement in the committee indicated by a number of measurements: lack of clarity in the process of SC elections and lack of knowledge about the process on the parents' side; a lack of active involvement on the part of the SCs, with only one or two members involved at the schools; and a consistent lack of communication and connective mechanisms (meetings) between the SCs and parents.

6.3.2. Stakeholders' Perceptions of SCs as Parents' Representatives

Parents' Perspective

Interestingly, although parents' involvement within the SC was likely to be low, from the parents' perspective the role of the SC as their representative at school was important. Generally, parents perceived the SC's role as a bridge between themselves and the schools. All parents, both on the questionnaires and in the interviews, contended that the existence of the SC was important. Answering the question "Do you agree that the SC is the body that represents parents at school?", 100% selected "Agree" (totalling 13 and 14 respondents from the first and second schools, respectively). And when asked whether the SC was important for representing parents' interests to school management, all parents in both schools responded positively that the SC was important to them.

Parents' interviews and FGD verified this perspective, with comments such as:

Honestly, the SC is important as a place for us to complain. However, not every parent realises the SC function as the channel for complaining or raising a concern. We don't know the mechanisms, and as a result parents tend to overlook this body. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*)

As far as I know, the SC's role is as a bridge between the school and the parents. And in my opinion, the SC here has functioned well. For instance, some extra activities were run by the SC. (*Interview, Parent 4, School 2*)

The SC really helps us; the SC is like a bridge between us and the school. Regarding the budgeting, through the SC the process of budgeting becomes transparent, because every allocation by the school is reported to the SC. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 1*)

Parents are benefited by the mechanism of representation in the SC, since it is by such mechanism parents are kept well-informed of the school activities, the learning process, facilities, teachers' improvements, etc. There is a kind of transparency as everything is being reported to SC. (*Interview, Parent 3, School 1*)

The benefit to parents of the SC's mechanism is that parents do not have to make their own decision, as it is already represented within the SC mechanism. And the result is

indeed relieving and helpful. If there were no parent's representation such as the SC, when parents are confused about something, we wouldn't know where to go to ask for help. (*Interview, Parent 1, School 2*)

Through the SC at least there is a mechanism for parents to get some access to information and establish some degree of trust with the school. (*Interview, Parent 4, School 2*)

The SC is important for representing us. If there is no SC, who is going to talk to school to raise some concerns? So far I have no interests; I feel alright, nothing to complain about. That's why I've never talked to the SC (*Interview, Parent 2, School 1*).

So far, I have never attended the school meeting. However, I think the SC is important as a mediator for parents. For example, if the school ask for our financial contribution, we can count on the SC to negotiate with the school so that the amount of the contribution is affordable. It is impossible for us to negotiate straight to the school as we are powerless than the school (*Interview, Parent 1, School 2*).

It is evident that parents felt SCs were important, and were needed for defending their interests, since they felt uncomfortable with approaching school management on their own.

However, one parent argued:

I feel that I am not really represented by the SC, because so far, the SC's approach to parents has not been enough. They should be more actively asking for input from parents and channel it to the school. Actually, the SC position is quite strategic as a bridge, to represent us at school, as we are parents in the powerless position. Yet, I admit that in terms of organising the extracurricular activities, the SC's contribution is meaningful (*Interview, Parent 3, School 2*).

Other Stakeholders' Perspectives

Other stakeholder points of view also agreed with the parents' perception of SCs. According to the headmaster and a teacher in the first school, the SC tended to be 'on the parents' side'. As explained by the headmaster:

I think the SC prefers to defend the parents' interests. I can see it as every school's decision to not have the SC enter into an agreement straight away until the parents had been asked for their agreement. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 1*)

This statement was supported by a teacher who was also the school treasurer:

In my opinion, the SC is too tolerant toward parents. He (the head of SC) always agrees with the parents' agenda. For example, when making a decision about parents' voluntary financial contributions, he prefers not to determine the amount of money and let the parents decide how much money they can afford. (*Interview, Teacher 3, School 1*)

while the headmaster in the second school look at the SCs role in more positive way:

I consider the quality of this school to be quite good as compared to other public schools in Depok city. This could happen as there is a harmony and partnership between the school, the SC and the parents. It is good that the SC members here still come to school sometimes, while the SCs in other schools seem to have become inactive. (*Interview, Headmaster, School 2*)

The SC secretary also argued that up to that point in time, the SC had always stood for the parents and had been very critical of the school, especially regarding school budgeting. The SC secretary noted:

Honestly, during our administration, we are always critical of the school, the school finances are always discussed with us, and the headmaster always performs carefully. We always ask for every detail of the financial report. Once we, the SC, the headmaster and the teachers had a tension regarding the budget allocation. We always try to represent the parents at school (*FGD, SC's secretary, School 2*).

The description above reflects that, generally, parents and other stakeholders perceived the role of SCs to be more on parents' side.

Summary of Findings

Notably, the notion of 'representation' is problematic as shown in the reality of parents' involvement in the SCs and the stakeholders' perception of the SC's role which seemed to contradict each other (see Figure 8). On the one hand, the parents' involvement with the SC was rather low, as indicated by their lack of knowledge of the SCs' election process and their confusion about the various processes. Additionally, it was apparent that the SCs were not all that active at the schools and that there was lack of clear and effective mechanisms within the SCs (e.g., rare meetings, communications and other mechanisms of consultation). Finally, members of the SCs were considered fairly inactive by parents.

On the other hand, stakeholders expressed positive comments regarding the role of SCs as parent representatives. Parents felt that the SC was important for representing their interests at school, and the other stakeholder perspectives also supported the fact that most of the time SCs had acted as parents' advocates. It is more likely that parents felt they were in a vulnerable position when defending their interests at school; hence, even though they did not really engage with the SC, they still felt they needed the SC to speak on their behalf.

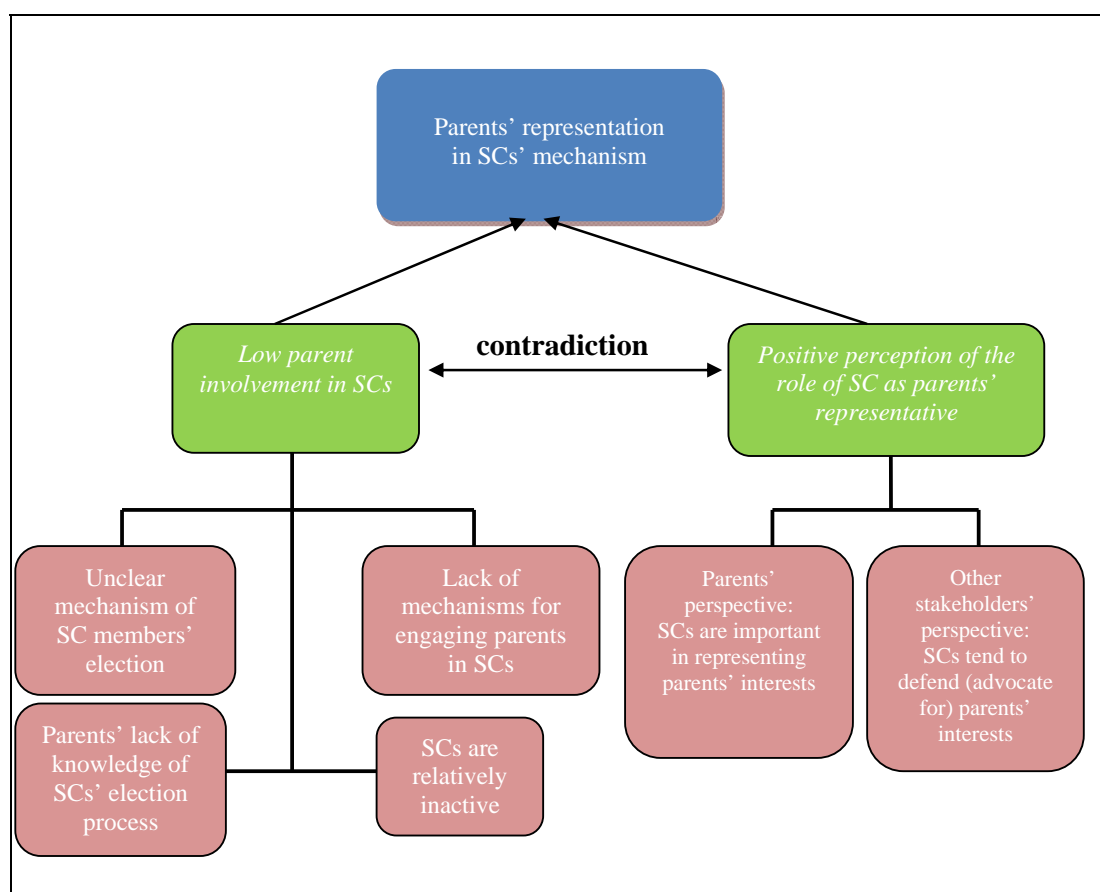


Figure 8. Indicators of parents' representation in the SCs' mechanism
Source: Author

6.4. Conclusion

Within the context of education decentralisation, parental participation in school management, particularly regarding access to and control over financial resources, was investigated in this study. Overall, the characteristics of parents' participation in the areas of financial contribution, attendance at the annual meeting, and control over financial resources (access over financial information and involvement in school budgeting plan) changed significantly as a consequence of FSP, a new government policy which frees parents from paying for the operating costs of their local school. The changes in parents' participation as a result of the absence of their financial contribution brought about by FSP are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Characteristics of Parents' Participation in Managing Financial Resources at School

	<i>Before the FSP</i>	<i>After the FSP</i>
<i>Financial contribution</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No contribution
<i>Involvement in the parents' meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once-a-year meeting • Moderate level of attendance with most of the time only the same parents actively attended the meeting • High-quality meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting
<i>Control over financial resources:</i> <p><i>a. Access to financial information</i></p> <p><i>b. Involvement in school budgeting plan</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some access to financial information (mainly through the mechanism of the meeting) • Some extent of involvement through representation in SCs • Involvement in decision making regarding parents' money • A small amount of parents' representation attended the RAPBS meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited access to financial information (as the meeting ceased) • Minor involvement of SCs, mainly in terms of legitimization • Parent representation was no longer invited in the school's budgeting (RAPBS) meeting

Source: Author

Regarding the first research question, this study finds that parents' participation in school management is closely related to parental contributions. When parental contribution stopped, it subsequently affected parents' participation in other areas. Thus, without parental contribution, parents are unlikely to participate in school management. The changes identified in this data happened simultaneously, in that a change in one form of parents' participation – the elimination of financial contributions – led to an unexpected change in another form of parents' participation – the discontinuation of annual meetings and decline in SC activity. Because there was no longer an annual meeting, parents lost their access to financial information. The relationships between these changes, as identified through analysis of the collected data, are described by the flowchart in Figure 9 below. In the end, overall changes resulted in a reduction in parents' control over school resources.

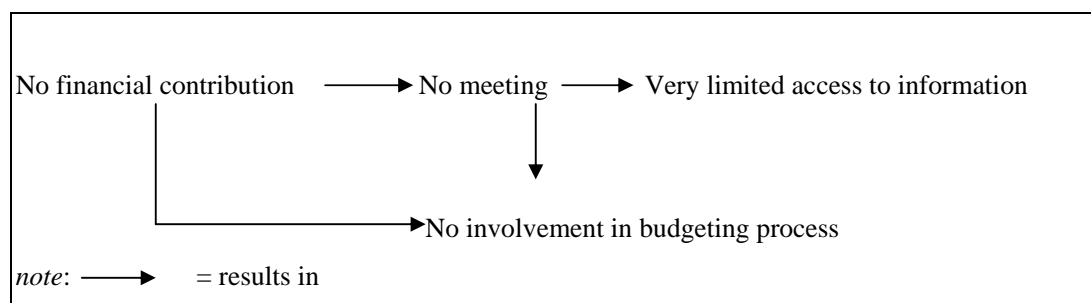


Figure 9. Changes in parents' experiences of access to and control over school finances after the implementation of FSP

Source: Author

In regards to financial contributions, FSP has resulted in a dramatic shift from 'active contribution' to 'no contribution'. Most notably, parents perceived their participation weakening as the absence of their financial contribution made them feel they had no responsibility, and therefore no power, to be involved in school life. This condition necessarily created a distance between them and the school that had not existed before, and parents were disempowered. Moreover, FSP and the absence of parental contributions also impeded the operation of some extracurricular activities. In both schools participating in this study, some extracurricular activities were stopped, as the schools could not manage to get extra funding for running them.

The most significant finding regarding parents' participation in the annual school meetings was the revelation that after FSP was implemented, parents' annual meetings

ceased. Even though the frequency of these meetings before FSP was very limited, their quality was perceived by parents as quite good, and they offered a venue where parents were more likely to express their concerns and, to some extent, become involved in decision-making regarding their financial contributions. As a result of the discontinuation of meetings after FSP, there is no longer a mechanism for parents to raise their concerns.

The context of FSP has considerably affected the level of parents' access to financial information which has resulted, most strikingly, in the fact that parents do not know the amount of the government's budgeted allocation to their local school (the BOS fund) and its usage. Without sufficient information, it is hard for parents to control the allocation of the school budget.

Parents' involvement in school budgeting should be analysed in relation to the role of the SCs, as parents have not been involved directly in the process, but rather through representation by the SCs. Even before FSP, only a few parent representatives attended the budgeting meeting, which was integral to the parents' meetings. Yet SCs, as the parents' representatives, engaged in budgeting process in terms of administering and giving input for some changes in the budgeting plan. The changes brought about by FSP have lessened even further the role of the SCs in the school budgeting process, so that instead of giving input and making occasional changes to the budgeting plan, the representatives have for the most part become mere legitimizing agents for the budgeting plan. In fact, the allocation of the money from the government fund has already been restricted to what is spelled out in the BOS guidelines so that there is almost no room for the SCs to play their traditional role in making decisions concerning local school funds.

This is a significant transition from when, as the body with the authority to represent parents at school, the SCs were actively involved in the budgeting process because the school resources were made up mainly of parent contributions. Analysis of the data also pointed to a change in direction concerning the accountability of school management; now, the school is accountable in an upward direction, toward the monitoring committee of the BOS fund, whereas once it was accountable downward toward the SCs and the parents.

Regarding the second research question, it seems that parents' representation in SCs is problematic rather than a clear situation. On the one hand, their involvement within the SCs was low; but on the other hand, parents felt the SCs had represented them well at their schools. They recognised the importance of SCs as a bridge between themselves and the schools, and along with the headmasters and teachers, acknowledged that most of the time the SCs had acted as advocates on the parents' behalf. It is highly likely that parents need SCs to speak and act for them, as they felt vulnerable to impact school management on their own.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATION DECENTRALISATION CONTEXT

7.1. Introduction

This thesis examined the practice of community participation in an education decentralisation context. As outlined in Chapter 1, the specific objective of this thesis was:

To observe the characteristics and the extent of parents' participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources as it occurs in the context of education decentralisation.

This specific objective emanated from the general research question in this study, “has decentralisation enhanced community participation?” To answer this question, I specifically looked at the case of parental participation in school management in Depok city, Indonesia. The following specific research questions guided the research for this thesis:

1. What are the characteristics of parents' participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources, and to what extent have they participated, in the context of education decentralisation?
2. To what extent have the School Committees, as the mechanism for community participation mandated by the education decentralisation policy, represented parents at school?

Using a qualitative case study approach, the research explored the perceptions of parents and other stakeholders concerning parents' participation in school management and the role of the SC as the parents' representative. This research revealed some characteristics of parents' participation and the reality of parents' representation in SCs as they occurred under education decentralisation as shown by the findings reported in Chapter 6.

During the fieldwork, the government's new FSP policy was discovered to be a significant factor influencing the practice of community participation in education. Hence, this study also covers FSP in the analysis and discussion sections. The most significant feature of this new policy is that parents of students in primary and secondary education no longer need to make a financial contribution to school operational costs. In Depok, this diminishing parental role in sharing the financial responsibility for their children's education led to decreased parents' participation in school life in general. On the other hand, as mentioned in Chapter 5, FSP has allowed marginalised students from poor families who previously could not access education to benefit significantly from by having access to a free education. While this contrast of outcomes presents an interesting opportunity for policy debate, it is not the intention of this research project to discuss these aspects of FSP.

This final chapter attempts to place the main findings presented in the previous chapter into the context of the research questions selected for this study. Section 7.2. offers an overview of the research findings. Section 7.3 describes the characteristics and extent of community participation as these relate to the first research question, and section 7.4 discusses the second research question on school committees serving as parents' representatives. Subsequently, Section 7.5 answers the general research question "Has decentralisation enhanced community participation?", and the chapter finishes with a final concluding statement, recommendations for future policy decisions, and a possible agenda for further research in this area.

7.2. Overview of the Findings

In relation to the first research question, the study found that, as a result of FSP, the characteristics of parental participation in school management had changed significantly toward a passive and weakening participation. The findings suggested that parental participation in the areas of involvement in the school meeting, access to financial information, and involvement in budgeting processes were impacted by the absence of financial contribution to their schools (see Table 5). Once parental financial contribution stopped after the implementation of FSP, the characteristics and extent of their participation in school management also changed significantly, as identified and described below.

FSP resulted in a dramatic change in parental financial contribution, from active contribution to no contribution. This finding documents that the absence of parental financial contributions has had an impact on parental participation; parents came to feel reluctant about having their say in school matters once they no longer paid into the system.

Subsequently, the termination of the parental role as financial contributor also affected parents' involvement in school meetings. As these meetings ceased when parental contributions stopped, parents had no forums in which to raise their concerns. This, in turn affected parental access to financial information, since after FSP implementation, school meetings were discontinued.

Regarding parents' engagement in the school budgeting process, parental participation in the process was shown to have declined. Initially, when school resources were made up mainly of parental contributions, parents engaged in the school budgeting process through their representatives at the budgeting meeting. At the same time, SCs, as the parents' representatives, were involved in the whole budgeting process (see Appendix 5 for a diagram of school budget planning process). There was a significant transition in the role of SCs after the implementation of FSP, from active involvement in budget planning to passively serving as a mere legitimising agent of the plan (see Figure 7). Thus, the absence of parental contributions significantly diminished the role of SCs and consequently, parents' involvement in the budgeting process was limited following cessation of the meetings.

Answering the second research question on the extent of the SCs' role as parent representative, the findings suggest that the SC's representation of parents had been somewhat problematic (see Figure 8). On the one hand, the data revealed that parents' involvement in SCs was low, as perceived by the parents themselves as well as other stakeholders. On the other hand, the findings showed that parents still viewed SCs as their representative and felt the SCs' function as a bridge or mediator between themselves and school management was indeed important. While parents' perceptions seem to contradict the reality of their involvement somewhat, it is clear that since parents felt vulnerable when it came to impacting school management, they believed they needed SCs to speak and act on their behalf. This position also suggests that parents were not yet feeling empowered as a result of the new educational policies.

7.3. Discussion of Research Question 1: The Characteristics and the Extent of Community Participation

This section discusses the first research question of this study: “What are the characteristics of parents’ participation in school management regarding access to and control over financial resources, and to what extent have they participated, in the context of education decentralisation?”

To examine the extent of parental participation in school management, this study modified Deshler & Sock’s (1985) participation framework. Initially, the findings on the characteristics of parents’ participation were summarised in Table 6 on the next page. Based on those characteristics, the extent of parental participation was examined as illustrated in Figure 10 (p. 129). The assessment included the emergence of parents’ participation *before* and *after* the implementation of FSP so that it illustrated the changes in the characteristics and extent of parents’ participation between these two periods (before and after the FSP).

The parental participation examined in this study ranged from the lowest level, that of financial contribution, to the highest level, namely empowerment, where parents were involved in decision making at every stage (see Figure 10). To determine the extent of parental participation in school management, an assessment of power relations among the stakeholders involved is necessary, as suggested by Deshler & Sock (1985), Michener (1998), and White (1996). These authors documented that a key characteristic of participation is the existence of power relations among stakeholders involved in participation. The result of this study showed that before the government implemented FSP, parents’ involvement in school management was already approaching a stage of a more genuine participation, with parents holding a limited of power in decision making in school budgeting (as presented in Chapter 6). According to the framework in Figure 10, the degree of parents’ participation had reached the fifth level.

Table 6. Characteristics and Extent of Community Participation in Education from Two Case Studies in Depok City

Characteristics of Participation	Level of Participation						
	Before FSP			After FSP			
	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Non</i>
Financial contribution	V Active contribution						V No contribution
Attendance at the school meeting		V Once-a year meeting					V No meeting
Access to financial information		V Some access to financial information				V Very limited access to financial information	
Involvement in school budgeting (Decision Making Process)		V Some extent of involvement				V Minor involvement	

Source: Author

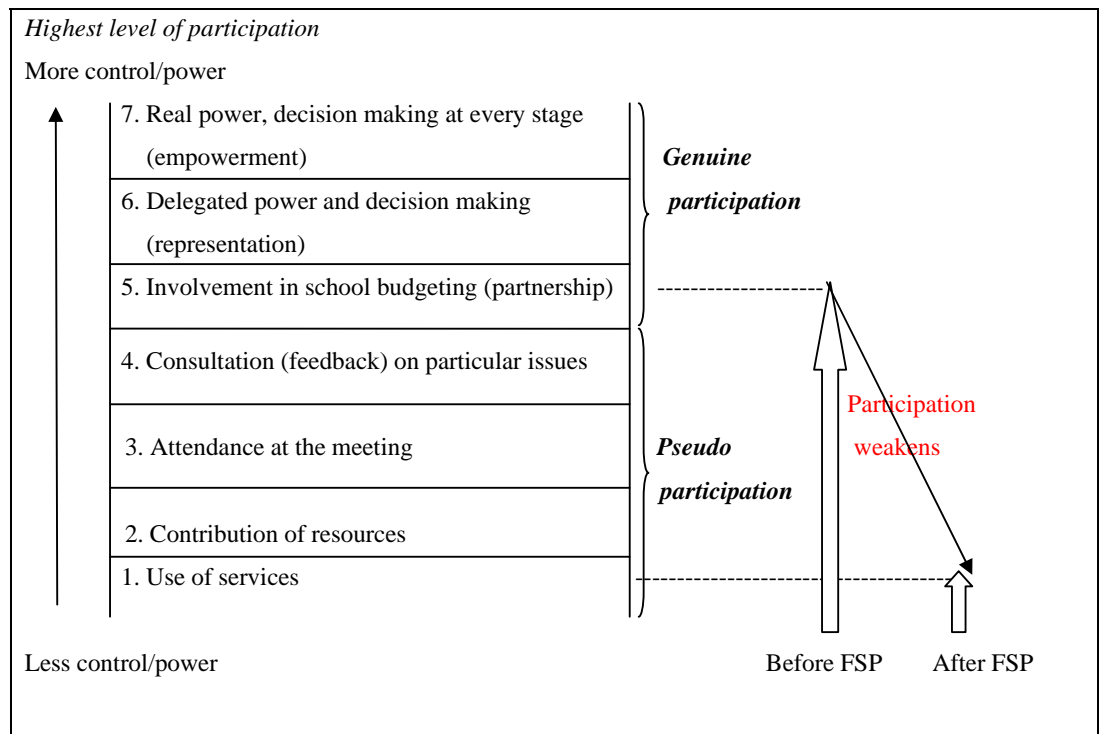


Figure 10. The degrees of community participation in education found at two case study sites in Depok city, Indonesia

Source: Author, modified from Deshler & Sock's typology of participation, 1985

However, parent participation had not reached a stage of empowerment where parents were involved in all stages of the decision-making process. People are empowered when they are involved not only in implementation, but also in management and decision making (White, 1996, p. 7). The findings of this study illustrated that parents had in the past held some degree of power. For example, parents reported exercising the ability to raise objections concerning the school budget when they felt they could not afford the amount set, and subsequently bargaining with the school management regarding the amount they were to contribute. Nevertheless, their involvement was very limited in scope, concerning only the money they contributed, while other decisions regarding the government (BOS) fund were still in the hands of school management. Other findings also supported this reality, such as reports of the school meeting as a mechanism of their involvement occurring only rarely, limited numbers of parents involved in the meeting, and parents lacking access to school financial information.

The extent of parental participation in school management worsened after the introduction of FSP. Their participation was in fact reduced to the very lowest level of the continuum, where they only participated in terms of using services. Thus, participation was degraded to a level of pseudo participation (tokenism), which according to Smith (1998, p. 197) is often criticised as no more than using the service on offer or providing input to resource it. The level of parent participation in education after FSP began was actually worse than Smith's description on tokenism, as it involved sending children to school without even having a means of contributing input in terms of ideas, preferences, or directions related to the children's education. This decline came as a consequence of the parents' new inability to share in the financial responsibility for their children's education.

In contrast, the government has come to bear the full responsibility and burden for providing education resources. This condition challenges mainstream criticism of community participation as a part of the justification for rolling back the state, reducing spending on social welfare, and shifting the burden from the public sector to the communities (Craig & Mayo, 1995, p. 4). The picture arising from this study shows FSP as having strengthened the government's role in the education sector by reducing the burden on the community to almost zero. This has resulted in a weakened position

for parents in terms of school management, which in itself contradicts the stated purposes of education decentralisation policy: to engage the community in education.

The reality of community participation as observed in this study also conflicts with Sumintono's (2006) finding on the implementation of SBM policy, which suggested that societal participation promoted through SBM policy was used by the government as a means of transferring the burden of educational finance to the community. This kind of participation is categorised as a useful ideological device for throwing responsibility for community development onto the shoulders of those least able to bear it (Smith, 1998). In contrast, the practice of community participation discovered through this study involves a highly significant role for the government in education financing, since the implementation of FSP resulted in passive participation on the part of parents. Still, it is worth noting that Sumintono's study was conducted in a different context, before FSP was introduced.

Although the benefits of FSP to the students (and their parents) have been acknowledged in this research, in terms of community participation the data suggests that more genuine participation might be achieved through community involvement in financial responsibilities. This study illustrates that when parental contribution stopped, it resulted in weakening parents' participation in other areas of school management (access to information, involvement in the meetings, and involvement in decision making for school budgeting). Parents felt that their power basis was gone; for them, the fees they paid were 'tickets' that allowed them to raise their voices and thus, raise their concerns. This finding partly supports Smith's argument that community resourcing may lead to genuine participation (Smith, 1998), such as parents' involvement in decision making related to budget planning, as demonstrated in this study.

In conclusion, the newly implemented FSP removed community resourcing for education and this resulted in changes to the characteristics and extent of parents' participation in education. Their weakened and passive form of involvement transitioned them from a more genuine participation to pseudo participation, as seen in Figure 10.

7.4. Discussion of Research Question 2: The Extent of SCs' Roles as the Parents' Representatives

Their powerlessness is often conveniently interpreted as passivity and indifference, but the real problem is the lack of opportunity for their direct involvement. (Midgley, 1986, p. 9)

This section attempts to answer the second research question in this study: "To what extent have the School Committees, as the mechanism for community participation mandated by the education decentralisation policy, represented parents at school?" In carrying out this assessment, only data from before the implementation of FSP was considered, as not enough time has passed to accurately answer this question for the time period since the introduction of FSP.

The main finding concerning this question is that the issue of representation is more clouded than clear, as indicated by the contradicting facts observed during the fieldwork. While parent and other stakeholder perspectives support the idea that the SCs' mechanism has benefited parents, the actual involvement of parents within SCs is found to be limited. This finding opposes Rahman's (1993, p. 226) argument that formal channels for community participation do not necessarily benefit local communities. In fact, parents mostly feel SCs are important and have succeeded in defending their interests concerning school management such as facilitating negotiations regarding the amount of contribution parents make to the school. This finding also shows that to some extent SCs have represented the views and perspective of parents, challenging the views of Botes and Van Rensburg (2000) that because many community organisation are not democratically elected, the involvement of local leaders may not truly represent the broader community's views and perspectives.

However, another finding indicated that actually, parents rarely engaged with the school through the mechanism of the SCs, as indicated by a few facts: (a) only a small number of SC members were seen to be active in the management of the school; (b) during the year, SC meetings were held only rarely; (c) there was a lack of means through which parents could communicate with SC members; and (d) despite the fact that the committees' members were elected, most parents interviewed were not knowledgeable concerning the election process at their school. All these findings combined to support the conclusion that there was not a sufficient, clear, and effective mechanism for

representation that would allow parents to become engaged in school management. Yet, from the point of view of the SC members and headmasters, the reason for the parents' low level of engagement with their SC was the parents' ignorance and the small number of parents who chose to be active in school life, the parents who attended school meetings were almost always the same few people.

Nevertheless, even under these conditions, parents expressed that they felt SCs were important for bridging the gap with school management. It can be concluded that the weak position of parents was problematic enough to make them appreciate any assistance, imperfect as it may be. Thus even though they were rarely involved with their SC, they believed they needed the SC to bolster their representation before the school administration. This has resulted in an unbalanced power relationship between the two. In this sense, parents were once again disempowered, and it can be concluded that the stage of real representation in participation had not been reached (refer to the framework described in Figure 10).

7.5. Discussion of the General Research Question: Has Decentralisation Enhanced Community Participation?

It has been argued by a number of scholars that the second wave of decentralisation in the 1980s, usually called democratic decentralisation, has integrated participation into the many debates on decentralisation. Many advocates of decentralisation have mentioned there is a significant link between participation and decentralisation; decentralisation has opened wider the potential for community participation (Gaventa & Valderama, 1999; Goldfrank, 2002; Pimbert, 2001) and is a way of opening governance to wider public participation (Blair, 2000; Brinkerhoff, et al., 2007; Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007; Gaventa & Valderama, 1999).

Contrary to those arguments, this study's results suggest that decentralisation in Indonesia has not strengthened community participation in education. Goldfrank (2002, p. 53) noted that according to its advocates, decentralisation is a necessary step for achieving participation as it establishes an institutional foundation for the participation of the people. This study's finding illustrates in part Goldfrank's argument that decentralisation policy has put in place a fundamental basis for community participation in education through the establishment of SCs; this has been established as true for the

two case studies that were explored. However, the policy and the institutions (SCs) facilitated by the government have made insignificant contributions to strengthening community empowerment and have not succeeded in encouraging the wider community to take part in the process.

This study's findings verify that SCs, as an institutional channel mandated for community participation by education decentralisation policy, were not effective in representing parents in school management. This was indicated by the fact that parent participation has not been facilitated by a clear, sufficient, and effective mechanism; rather, there is a notable lack of parental involvement in the SCs and as a result, parents have not been empowered. Moreover, community participation in education has degraded into the lowest level following the implementation of FSP, as illustrated by low parental involvement and the diminishing role of SCs in school management. This finding supports Blair's (2000, p. 25) argument that decentralisation does not necessarily bring empowerment and more equitably shared benefits.

In terms of the extent of community empowerment in the decentralisation context, whether decentralisation is a means or an end, this study indicates that decentralisation in Indonesia is a more pragmatic way for the government to improve the provision and maintenance of public services, as argued by pragmatic school of decentralisation (Schönwälder, 1997 p. 757). IMF supported the Indonesian government in promulgating this policy, with the aim of improving the quality of, and at the same time reducing the cost for, public service delivery (Kristiansen & Pratikno, 2006, p. 514). This type of decentralisation views decentralisation as a policy tool, used by the state and often supported by international organisations (Schönwälder, 1997 p. 757).

Although the policy of education decentralisation (MoNE Decree No. 44/U/2002 and Law 20/ 2003) also mentioned some element of community empowerment such as controlling and evaluating role of SCs (MoNE, 2002a), in practice Sumintono's (2006) study found that the transfer of power to SCs is not obvious and most of the time SCs have played only as an advisory role. This is supported by World Bank's (August 2004) research finding that in practice, the SCs' involvement in school life involved only peripheral roles. In this sense, empowerment, as argued by the political school of decentralisation (Schönwälder, 1997), is most likely not the purpose of education decentralisation in Indonesia.

Furthermore, preliminary observation reveals that community participation in education has declined significantly since the government put FSP into practice in 2009, undermining the stated purpose of education decentralisation policy to engage community in educational management. While Bray (Bray, 2001) suggested that decentralisation is a desirable policy in which governments share control in a more balanced way with communities and other actors, the case of education decentralisation in Indonesia appears to have gone in the opposite direction. FSP has strengthened the government's role and rolled back the community's role into that of becoming a mere beneficiary as a result of the absence of their financial responsibilities.

Therefore, this study raises concerns over the ability of Indonesia's current decentralisation in education to enhance community participation. The findings suggest that promoting community participation through a policy of decentralisation, in the absence of a clear and effective mechanism for accomplishing such, does not necessarily result in participation that is meaningful and empowering. The results show that the SCs, as institutions to ensure community participation, have not been found to enhance or facilitate this community empowerment. This could be due to the fact that neither the government nor the local bodies have set clear operational guidelines, such as designating the number and frequency of meetings or defining the mechanisms to be used to carry out representation or decision making. The government, in this case, appears to be using community participation as a means of achieving their development goals, and has put less focus on the empowerment of the people.

7.6. Final Concluding Statement

This research shows that in the Indonesian context, decentralisation has not necessarily enhanced community participation in education. Even though education decentralisation policy supplied communities with institutional channels for participation in educational management through the establishment of SCs, the empowerment of the communities, which is the highest stage of participation (Deshler & Sock, 1985; White, 1996), has not been reached. Moreover, the new policy of FSP introduced by the government in 2009 diminished parental contributions, and decreased the extent of parental participation and altered its characteristics. Hence, the findings of this thesis suggest that financial contribution is one of the important factors which affected the extent and characteristics

of community participation. Finally, the study suggests that there is a potential contradiction between the implementation of FSP and the stated purpose of the education decentralisation policy to encourage greater community participation in education. Without minimising the benefits of FSP, this thesis therefore proposes that strengthening the role of the State in educational financing without also moving clearly toward the direction of a new role for the community might leave the community in a confusing situation without knowing how to position itself in a constructive role in education.

7.7. Recommendation for Policy and Further Research

This research can assist with a better understanding of community participation in education in the Indonesian decentralisation context, especially when there are similarities between the two case studies involved in this project and other settings. Research findings provided in this study may be used by school management to reflect on their approach to involving community at their school. Decision makers involved with education policy in both local and national governmental bodies may also be informed by these findings in relation to further developing the policies for decentralisation in education services.

Regarding FSP, the government may be helped by this research to consider strategies with which to engage the community and empower school committees, without neglecting the importance of access to better education. The ‘free school’ promoted by the government must be accompanied by other regulation of community participation so that communities are not distanced from the school management, but keep involved.

While this study focuses on the Indonesian context, the results may offer a better understanding of the complexities of decentralisation as they relate to community participation in other geographic locations. Decentralisation is not necessarily the only possible answer for involving community. Moreover, any new factors, such as FSP in this case, may need to be evaluated to check their consistency with the decentralisation that has been carried up to that time in any given country. The Indonesian case illustrates the potential difficulties caused by conflicting policies that generate significant and unhelpful confusion upon implementation.

There are several areas in which further research into community participation in education decentralisation could be useful. Firstly, a study of the organisation of SC with a focus on the mechanisms for community representation in SCs (i.e., who is involved, who plays a dominant role, how the mechanism of involvement is to work, and whose interests matter) is recommended. Secondly, this study is limited to parents' participation; thus, research on the involvement of other stakeholders such as community figures, NGOs, and industry associations, would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of SC mechanisms. Thirdly, as establishment of the committees is a government initiative, there is a lack of ownership from the community. Thus, complementary research to discover the best strategies for involving the community in SCs would be very helpful, not only to develop a broader knowledge of community participation, but also to generate specific, practical benefits. Lastly, this case study focuses on community participation in Depok, a city where parents have been freed from financial contributions to education. A comparison study in other cities and districts in Indonesia which have not chosen to free parents from such financial contributions would be crucial for gaining a more comprehensive picture of the reality of community participation in education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Parent's Questionnaire

Section 1

Parents' Participation at School

1. How do you participate in school management? (you can choose more than one answer)

Financial contribution
Attendance at the meeting
Involvement in school budgeting

2. Do you attend the RAPBS meeting?

Yes
No

3. Have you been informed on school finance?

Yes
No

Section 2

Free School Programme (the BOS fund)

4. Do you know about 'Program Sekolah Gratis' (Free School Programme)?

Yes
No

5. Do you know the amount allocated from the BOS (School Operational Assistance) fund for each of your children?

Yes
No

6. Do you know how the BOS fund is used at the school?

Yes
No

Section 3

Parents' perspective on the role of the SC as their representative

7. Do you agree that the School Committee is the body that represent parents at school?

Agree
Disagree

8. How do you perceive the role of the School Committee in representing your interests at school?

Important
Not important

Appendix 2: Parent's Interview Guide

Section 1: Parents' participation

1. How are you involved in school management?
Financial contribution
Attendance at the meeting
Involvement in school budgeting
2. How do you perceive your participation at school?
3. Do you attend the school meeting? How many meetings take place during a year?
4. Can you explain the process of the school meeting, such as how decisions are made and who actually makes a decision?
5. Are you involved in the RAPBS (school budgeting) meetings?
6. Can you explain the process of a RAPBS meeting? Who is involved and how is the decision making process carried out?
7. Have you been informed on school finance? How? (through the meeting, newsletter, school notice board, etc)

Section 2: The BOS fund (FSP)

8. Does money from the BOS fund cover educational costs for your child or children?
9. How much is the BOS fund allocation per child?
10. Do you know what the BOS fund is used for? What are the allocations of the fund?

Section 3: Parent's representation at school through the SC

11. Do you know the members of the School Committee?
How many of them do you know?
How do you know them? (through the meeting, having heard from friends, newsletter, etc)
12. Are there mechanisms that allow you to meet the SC members regularly? If so, what are they?
13. How do you perceive the role of SC in representing parents at school?
14. In what ways do you think the SC has represented your interests at school?

Appendix 3: Headmaster's and Teacher's Interview Guide

Section 1: Parents' participation

1. How do you perceive parents' participation at your school?
2. Do parents attend the school meeting? How many meetings are there in a year?
3. Can you explain the process of the school meeting, such as how decisions are made and who actually makes a decision?
4. Do parents become involved during RAPBS meetings?
5. Can you explain the process of a RAPBS meeting? Who is involved and how are decisions made?
6. Have parents been informed on school finance? How? (through the meeting, newsletter, school notice board, etc)

Section 2: The BOS fund (FSP)

7. How much is the allocation of the BOS fund per child?
8. What are the allocations of the BOS fund?

Section 3: Parents' representation at school through the SC

9. How do you perceive the role of SC in representing parents at school?
10. In what ways do you think the SC has represented parents' interests at school?

Appendix 4: Human Research Ethic Committee's Document



Massey University

19 March 2009

Amaliah Fitriah
6/443 Church Street
PALMERSTON NORTH

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
(Research Ethics)
Private Bag 11 222
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animaethics@massey.ac.nz
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www.massey.ac.nz

Dear Amaliah

Re: Community Participation in Education within the Context of Decentralisation: The Case of Bogor City, Indonesia

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 19 March 2009.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research."

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Sylvia V Rumball (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Research Ethics)**

cc Mr Gerard Prinsen
School of People, Environment and
Planning
PN331

Mr Nawal El-Gack
School of People, Environment and
Planning
PN331

Dr Henry Barnard, HoS
School of People, Environment and
Planning
PN331

**Required information for in-house ethics document from Masters
and PhD students**

Name: Amaliah Fitriah
Research topic: Community Participation in Education Decentralisation
Context

1. Summarise your research project (1 paragraph)

The project aims to investigate whether decentralisation in Indonesia has enhanced community participation in education regarding access to and control over resources. Decentralisation reform, which was promoted by the Indonesian government in 1999 and enacted in 2001, will be a specific context for this study. In the education sector, the policy states explicitly that the objective of the reform is to make a place for societal participation (Ministry of National Education/MONE Decree No. 44/2002). The decree also mandates the establishment of the School Committee at school level and the Education Council at city/municipality level, as places for community participation in education. Since the concept of participation has been mentioned specifically in the policy, the researcher is eager to know what actually happens in practice by assessing community participation in education regarding access to and control over resources. Special attention is given to the role of School Committees as vehicles for community participation at the school level.

2. Summarise your methodology (1-2 paragraphs)

A qualitative case study will be used as the approach for this research, and the study is situated in a hermeneutic/interpretative framework where participation will be assessed as it is perceived by the participants. Hence, fieldwork is needed to interview people on their perceptions about their participation. Semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) will be the main tools of this study. They will be supplemented by official documents about the decentralisation policy. Moreover, conversation on a group mailing list about the criticism of Education Councils will be used to access knowledge concerning people's perceptions about the council. The sample of the study will be made up of parents, teachers, headmasters and SC members in two schools in Depok city (West Java).

3. Reflect on the following ethical issues with relation to your research project:

• Recruitment & access to participants

To gain the perspective of the education community, recruitment will begin through the schools where the prospective participants, such as teachers and headmasters, can best be approached. The schools will be selected purposively – one from a rural area and one from an urban area - from the city's schools listed on the local government's website. Then, using the snowball technique, the schools will be asked to give the names of parents or school committee members who will possibly be available for an interview. The researcher will explain to

parents that she obtained their names from the school, but at the same time it will be stated that the participants are free to decide whether or not to participate in the interview, with emphasis on the fact that they don't need to feel under pressure to be involved, as the interview is nothing to do with the school. For the members of the Education Council, the researcher will write a letter to the head of council and some members to ask about their willingness to participate. Next, appointments will be made for interviews with all who respond affirmatively.

- Obtaining informed consent

Firstly, the participants will be informed that their involvement in the research is voluntary. A written consent form will be used whenever possible and presented prior to conducting any interview. In cases where there is a circumstance that hinders the possibility of obtaining written consent (for example when participants are afraid to sign anything), explicit verbal consent will be sought. Before signing the form, participants will be informed about their rights, including their right to withdraw from the interview at any stage and withdraw any information they have shared at any time after the interview. It will be understood by both the researcher and the participants that the consent form is a kind of legally binding document to protect researcher, the university and the participants themselves.

- Anonymity & confidentiality

Prior to initiating any process of data gathering, the participants will always be informed that their anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained at all times and their participation in the research will not influence their position in the school, the council or the society itself. The researcher will not disclose the data for other purposes than the research itself and any disclosure will be in an anonymous form.

- Potential harm participants/researcher/university

This research is considered to be low risk which holds minimal potential harm to participants, the researcher and Massey University. Depok city is a secure place just one hour from Jakarta by land transport. The researcher has visited the city many times before, so it will not difficult to adjust to its environment. The researcher and the participants speak the same language, *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language), which will be beneficial for both in term of trust and comfort. However, it is important for the researcher to considering power relations among the participants. For example, when cross-checking the information from parents, teachers, principals and the council members, the researcher will not use names, in order to maintain each participant's privacy and security.

- Handling information/data

In order to protect the identity of the participants, all information will be coded. For example, while doing the interviews, the interviewees will be labelled in terms of gender, stakeholders' group identification (parents, teachers, principles,

or council's members), locations and date of interview. This coding will be maintained for the rest of the research stages.

- Use of information

The information gathered from the field will be used for thesis purposes only, and will not be disclosed for other purposes. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure all data is stored in a safe place. The consent forms will be stored separately from the data copies (cassettes, transcripts, files, etc) to avoid identification of the participants.

- Promising access to information

All information gathered from the participants will be made available for them to access at any time upon their request.

- Conflicts of roles

As a government employee at the Ministry of National Education, the researcher will be honest with respondents about her position. There is a risk that the participants will consequently say what they think the researcher wants to hear, and not what they actually think, if they see her as a government employee rather than as an independent researcher. In this case, triangulation, by seeking the individual's view and the group's view as well, will be useful for verification. It will also be highlighted that the researcher come as a student, not as a government official, but it is understood that people may still doubt the researcher's neutrality.

- Use of research assistant(s)

Utilising FGD in my research requires me to employ a research assistant as it will be impossible for me to be moderator, note-taker and recorder at the same time. The first step with the research assistant is to make an agreement with him/her concerning confidentiality to ensure he/she will not disclose any information from the data collection.

- Cultural/gender concerns

There are no obvious cultural and gender issues or sensitivities regarding the research topic. The research area is quite a diverse urban and semi-urban environment with no specific gender or cultural issues. However, the researcher will consider the customs there, such as respecting elders and asking permission from the authorities for any kind of activity.



Massey University

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Te Kura Pukenga Tangata

Community Participation in Education Decentralisation Context in Depok City, Indonesia

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

The study is being carried out by Amaliah Fitriah who is currently studying for a Master of Philosophy in Development Studies in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences on NZAID Scholarship under the supervision of Gerard Prinsen.

Project Description and Invitation

This project aims to investigate community participation in education within the context of decentralisation in Indonesia regarding access to and control over resources, and whether decentralisation has enhanced such participation. Special attention is given to the School Committee as a body mandated by decentralisation policy as means for community participation. The stakeholders' groups in education communities are parents, teachers, principals and the members of the School Committees.

Hence, the researcher invites those stakeholders to participate in this project.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

The study primarily involves interviews of participants (teachers, principals, parents and members of the School Committees) from two selected schools at the primary level education, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with parents in these two schools in Depok city, West Java, Indonesia.

The two schools are public schools chosen purposively in consideration of their location (urban and rural). The names of participants will be obtained from the schools. From each school four parents, two teachers, a headmaster and two members of the School Committees will be interviewed.

Risks will be minimised in this project as the researcher will maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants.

Project Procedures

Firstly, the researcher will send a letter to the Education Office in the research area to gain permission for conducting the research. Then, the two schools will be selected from the list of schools gained from the local government's website. After receiving participants' names from the schools, the researcher will contact the participants, through phone calls or by asking directly, to make appointments. The interview will be

conducted at the most suitable time for the participants and in a comfortable place of their preference. Each interview will take about 60 minutes.

The study will be carried out over a maximum of two months, from the end of April to the end of June 2009.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question
- Withdraw from the study
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded
- This interview will be recorded, you have the right to ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during interview

Project Contacts

If there is a question regarding this project, please contact:

Researcher

Amaliah Fitriah

Phone : +64063569650

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e-mail : f_email2003@yahoo.com

Supervisor

Gerard Prinsen

Institute of Development Studies

Massey University, Palmerstone North

New Zealand

e-mail : G.Prinsen@massey.ac.nz

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Research Ethics), telephone +64 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz”.



COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Te Kura Pukenga Tangata

Studi Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pendidikan di Era Desentralisasi

LEMBAR INFORMASI PENELITIAN BAGI PARTISIPAN

Penelitian ini dilakukan oleh Amaliah Fitriah yang sedang mengikuti program Master of Philosophy in Development Studies pada College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University Palmerstone North, New Zealand, dibawah bimbingan Gerard Prinsen dan Nawal ElGack. Di Indonesia peneliti bekerja sebagai staff pada Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan di Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Jakarta. Namun demikian, penelitian ini tidak berkaitan dengan pekerjaan peneliti sebagai staff di Depdiknas. Penelitian ini semata-mata untuk kepentingan thesis yang sedang dikerjakan oleh peneliti.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali partisipasi masyarakat dalam pendidikan di era desentralisasi berkaitan dengan akses dan pengawasan terhadap sumberdaya pendidikan, apakah desentralisasi telah meningkatkan partisipasi masyarakat dalam pendidikan. Fokus penelitian ditujukan pada peran Komite Sekolah (KS) sebagai lembaga yang dimandatkan oleh kebijakan desentralisasi pendidikan sebagai wadah bagi partisipasi masyarakat. Pihak berkepentingan yang akan dilibatkan dalam penelitian ini adalah orang tua, guru, kepala sekolah, anggota KS dan pemangku kebijakan.

Penelitian ini menggunakan teknik wawancara partisipan yang terdiri dari orang tua siswa, guru, kepala sekolah, dan anggota KS dari dua sekolah yang diseleksi pada tingkat pendidikan dasar dan Diskusi Kelompok Terfokus pada KS di masing-masing sekolah di kota Depok, Jawa Barat, Indonesia.

Informasi yang diberikan dalam penelitian ini akan dijaga kerahasiaannya dan hanya akan digunakan untuk kepentingan penulisan thesis master peneliti. Nama partisipan akan dirahasiakan kecuali partisipan memberi ijin untuk penggunaan nama partisipan.

Untuk itu, peneliti meminta kesedian pihak terkait untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat membawa manfaat bagi pengembangan penyelenggaraan pendidikan yang lebih melibatkan masyarakat yang pada gilirannya dapat berguna bagi kepentingan masyarakat banyak khususnya orang tua siswa.

Peneliti sangat mengharapkan kesediaan Anda untuk memenuhi undangan ini. Jika Anda memutuskan untuk berpartisipasi, maka Anda berhak untuk:

- Menolak untuk menjawab pertanyaan yang Anda tidak ingin untuk menjawabnya
- Mengundurkan diri dari penelitian
- Mengajukan pertanyaan-pertanyaan yang berkaitan dengan penelitian selama penelitian berlangsung
- Menyediakan lembar pernyataan berkaitan dengan ketidaksediaan nama anda digunakan dalam penelitian, kecuali Anda member ijin pada peneliti
- Memperoleh ringkasan dari temuan penelitian ini jika penelitian sudah memperoleh hasil
- Wawancara akan direkam, Anda berhak untuk meminta rekaman dimatikan saat dimana Anda merasa tidak ingin direkam

Jika Anda memiliki pertanyaan mengenai penelitian ini silahkan kontak:

Peneliti

Nama : Amaliah Fitriah
 Tlp : +64063569650
 Hp : +642102534505
 e-mail : f_emale2003@yahoo.com

Supervisor

Nama : Gerard Prinsen
 Institute of Development Studies
 Massey University, Palmerstone North
 New Zealand
 e-mail : G.Prinsen@massey.ac.nz

“Penelitian ini telah dievaluasi dan dinilai sebagai penelitian dengan risiko rendah. Dengan demikian tidak dievaluasi oleh Massey University’s Ethic Committee. Peneliti bertanggung jawab sepenuhnya atas isu-isu etis berkaitan dengan penelitian ini. Jika ada hal-hal berkaitan dengan penelitian ini yang ingin anda tanyakan selain dengan peneliti, silahkan menghubungi Prof. Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to Vice-Chancellor (Research Ethics), tlp. +64 06 350 5249, e-mail: humanethics@massey.ac.nz”.

Terimakasih atas kesediaan dan kerjasama Anda



Massey University

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Te Kura Pukenga Tangata

**Community Participation in Education Decentralisation Context in Depok City,
Indonesia**

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me.

My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/ do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: Date:

Full Name – printed:



Massey University
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Te Kura Pukenga Tangata

Studi Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pendidikan di Era Desentralisasi

LEMBAR PERSETUJUAN PARTISIPASI

Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi penelitian dan telah dijelaskan tentang rincian penelitian ini. Pertanyaan-pertanyaan saya telah dijawab dengan memuaskan, dan saya mengerti bahwa Saya dapat menanyakan hal-hal yang belum jelas kapan saja saya butuhkan.

Saya setuju/tidak setuju wawancara ini direkam.

Saya ingin/tidak ingin hasil wawancara saya dikembalikan pada saya.

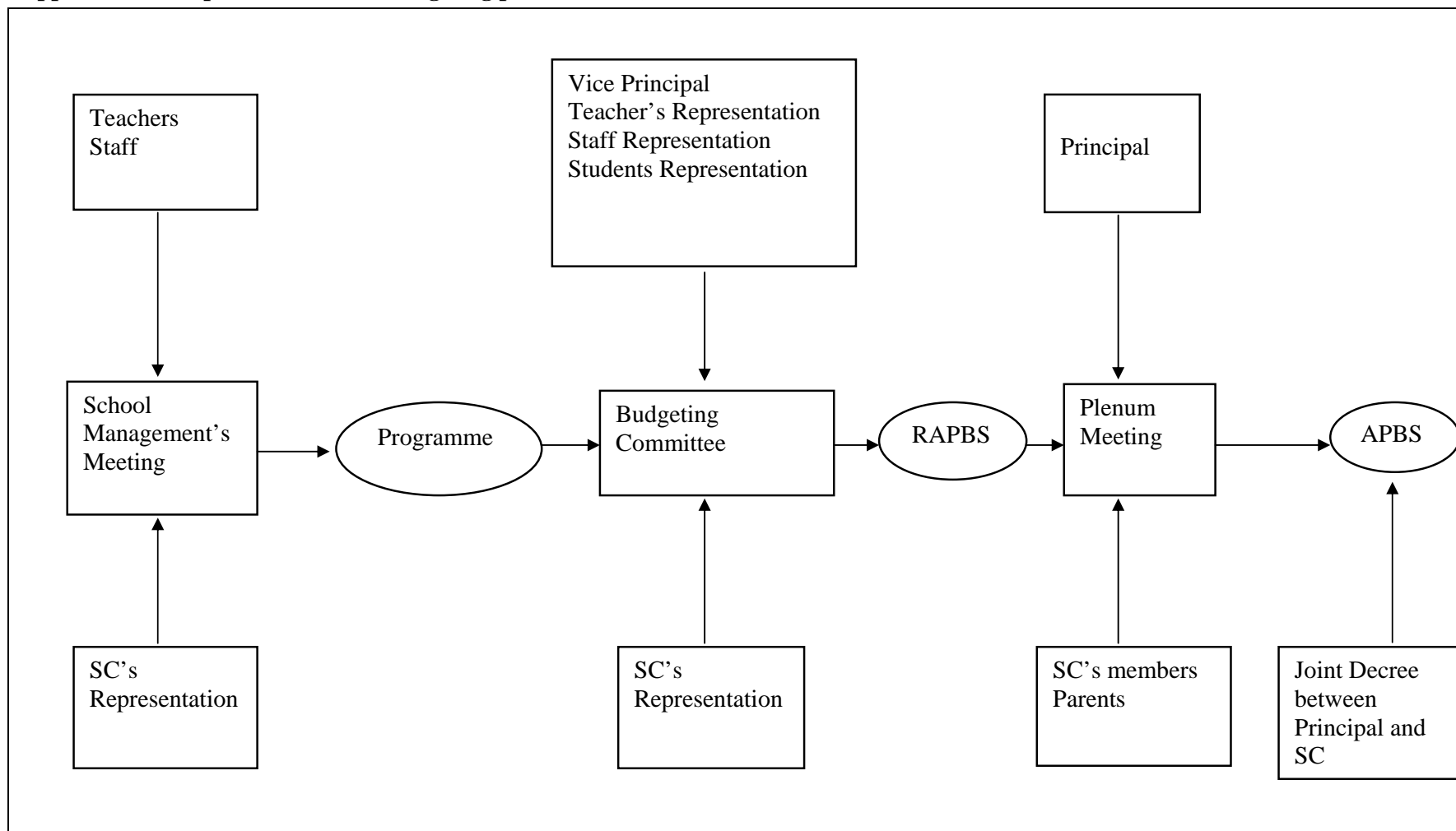
Saya bersedia/tidak bersedia data-data dari hasil wawancara saya ditempatkan pada dokumen resmi.

Saya setuju untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini dibawah ketentuan-ketentuan yang telah ditetapkan dalam Lembar Informasi.

Tanda Tangan: Tanggal:

Nama Lengkap:

Appendix 5: The process of school budgeting plan (RAPBS)



Source: Depok Education Council