# Decentralization and School-Based Management: A Comparative Study of Public and Private Schools in Jambi, Indonesia

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**A B S T R A C T**

Decentralization and school-based management (SBM) have been widely adopted in Indonesia to enhance the quality and efficiency of education. This study investigates the implementation of SBM in public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia, and explores its effects on school autonomy, teacher participation in decision-making, and student achievement. A mixed-methods approach was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 300 teachers and 600 students in 15 public and 15 private schools in Jambi Province using questionnaires and achievement tests. Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 30 school principals and 30 school committee members. Private schools demonstrated significantly higher levels of school autonomy and teacher participation in decision-making compared to public schools. However, no significant difference was found in student achievement between the two types of schools. Qualitative data provided insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with SBM implementation in both public and private schools. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of contextual factors in shaping the implementation and outcomes of SBM. While private schools appear to have embraced SBM more effectively in terms of autonomy and participation, the impact on student achievement requires further investigation. The findings have implications for policymakers and school leaders seeking to enhance the effectiveness of SBM in Indonesia.

## 1. Introduction

The pursuit of quality and efficiency in education has driven a global trend towards decentralization, shifting decision-making power from centralized authorities to individual schools and local communities. This shift aims to create a more responsive and accountable education system, better equipped to address the unique needs of diverse student populations. School-Based Management (SBM) has emerged as a cornerstone of this decentralization movement, empowering schools with the autonomy to manage their curriculum, budget, staffing, and other operational aspects. By granting schools greater control over their own affairs, SBM seeks to foster innovation, enhance teacher professionalism, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes.[1-3]

Indonesia embarked on a significant decentralization reform in 1999, devolving greater authority to districts and schools in managing education. This reform, enshrined in Law Number 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Governance and Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, aimed to enhance the responsiveness of schools to local needs, encourage community participation, and promote accountability. SBM has been implemented in various forms across Indonesia, with the overarching goal of empowering schools to make decisions that best serve their students and communities. While the potential benefits of

decentralization and SBM are widely acknowledged, their actual implementation and impact vary considerably across different contexts. Factors such as school leadership, teacher capacity, community involvement, and resource availability can significantly influence the effectiveness of SBM. Moreover, the type of school, whether public or private, may also play a crucial role in shaping the implementation and outcomes of SBM.[4-7]

Public and private schools operate within distinct governance structures and possess varying levels of autonomy. Private schools often enjoy greater flexibility in managing their resources and making decisions, while public schools are typically subject to more regulations and oversight from government authorities. These inherent differences may affect how SBM is implemented and its ultimate impact on school autonomy, teacher participation, and student achievement.[8-10] This study delves into the implementation of SBM in public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia. Situated on the island of Sumatra, Jambi Province is characterized by a diverse population with varying levels of socioeconomic development.

## 2. Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and impact of School-Based Management (SBM) in public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia. This approach allows for a more nuanced and in-depth exploration of the research questions, drawing on both statistical analysis and rich descriptive data to capture the complexities of SBM implementation in different school contexts.

The mixed-methods design employed in this study is specifically a convergent parallel design. This means that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately, and then integrated during the interpretation phase to provide a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This design allows for the strengths of both approaches to be leveraged, with quantitative

data providing statistical evidence of trends and relationships, and qualitative data offering rich insights into the experiences and perspectives of participants.

The study population comprised all public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia, encompassing elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels. Jambi Province was chosen as the research setting due to its diverse population, varying levels of socioeconomic development, and mix of public and private schools, offering a representative microcosm of the Indonesian education system. To ensure a representative sample, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. This involved dividing the population of schools into strata based on school level (elementary, junior high, and senior high) and geographic location (urban and rural). Within each stratum, schools were randomly selected to participate in the study. The final sample consisted of 30 schools; 15 public schools: 5 elementary schools, 5 junior high schools, and 5 senior high schools; 15 private schools: 5 elementary schools, 5 junior high schools, and 5 senior high schools. Within each school, 20 teachers and 40 students were randomly selected, resulting in a total sample of; 300 teachers: 150 from public schools and 150 from private schools; 600 students: 300 from public schools and 300 from private schools. In addition, 30 school principals (15 from public schools and 15 from private schools) and 30 school committee members (15 from public schools and 15 from private schools) were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews. These participants were chosen based on their knowledge and experience with SBM implementation in their respective schools.

Quantitative data were collected using two instruments. First is the teacher questionnaire, this questionnaire was designed to measure teachers' perceptions of school autonomy, their participation in decision-making, and their views on the implementation of SBM. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions, covering various aspects of school autonomy, such as; Curriculum development: The extent to which teachers are involved in developing and adapting the school curriculum to meet the needs of their students;

Budget allocation: The level of teacher participation in deciding how school funds are allocated and spent; Staff recruitment: The degree to which teachers are involved in the hiring and selection of new staff; Textbook selection: The extent to which teachers have a say in choosing the textbooks and learning materials used in their classrooms; Assessment practices: The level of teacher autonomy in designing and implementing assessment strategies. Teacher participation in decision-making was assessed through questions related to their involvement in; School development planning: Contributing to the development and implementation of the school's strategic plan; School evaluation: Participating in self-evaluation processes and providing feedback on school performance; Decision-making committees: Serving on school committees responsible for making decisions on various aspects of school operations; School policy formulation: Contributing to the development and revision of school policies. The questionnaire also included items on teachers' overall satisfaction with the implementation of SBM and their perceptions of its impact on their professional development and job satisfaction. Second is the student achievement Test, this test was developed to measure students' achievement in Mathematics and Science. The test items were aligned with the national curriculum standards for each grade level (elementary, junior high, and senior high) and were designed to assess students' understanding of key concepts and their ability to apply their knowledge in problem-solving scenarios. The Mathematics test covered topics such as number sense, algebra, geometry, and data analysis, while the Science test assessed students' understanding of concepts in biology, chemistry, and physics. The test items were carefully selected to ensure validity and reliability, and the tests were administered under standardized conditions to all participating students.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with school principals and school committee members. These interviews were designed to explore their experiences with SBM implementation, the challenges they faced, and the perceived benefits and drawbacks of SBM. The interview guide included questions related to; The process of implementing SBM in their school: How SBM was introduced, the key stages of implementation, and the roles of different stakeholders; The impact of SBM on school autonomy: How SBM has affected the school's ability to make decisions about curriculum, budget, staffing, and other operational aspects; The impact of SBM on teacher participation: How SBM has influenced the level of teacher involvement in school decision-making processes; The perceived benefits and drawbacks of SBM: The positive and negative aspects of SBM implementation, as experienced by the participants; The challenges and opportunities associated with SBM: The key challenges faced by the school in implementing SBM and the opportunities it has created for improvement; The role of contextual factors: How factors such as school leadership, teacher quality, community support, and socioeconomic conditions have influenced the implementation and outcomes of SBM. The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, the national language of Indonesia, and were audio-recorded with the participants' consent. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim and translated into English for analysis.

Quantitative data from the teacher questionnaire and student achievement test were analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data and to examine the distributions of key variables. To compare the means of school autonomy, teacher participation, and student achievement between public and private schools, independent samples t-tests were conducted. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences in these variables across different school levels (elementary, junior high, and senior high). Correlation analysis was performed to explore the relationships between school autonomy, teacher participation, and student achievement. Regression analysis was used to examine the predictive power of school autonomy and teacher participation on student achievement, controlling for other relevant variables such as school level and socioeconomic status.

Qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved a systematic process of coding and categorizing the data to identify key themes and patterns in the participants' narratives. The analysis process began with familiarization with the data, involving repeated reading of the transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. This was followed by initial coding, where segments of text were assigned codes based on their content and meaning. The codes were then grouped into categories and subcategories, forming a thematic framework. The themes were reviewed and refined through an iterative process of comparison and analysis, ensuring that they accurately reflected the data and addressed the research questions. The final stage involved interpretation of the themes, drawing connections between the qualitative and quantitative findings to provide a holistic understanding of the implementation and impact of SBM in public and private schools.

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Jambi. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights to confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study by assigning unique identifiers to all participants and ensuring that their personal information was not disclosed. Anonymity was protected by removing any identifying information from the data and reporting the findings in aggregate form. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. All data were stored securely and accessed only by authorized researchers.

## 3. Results

Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the characteristics of the participants involved in this study, encompassing both the schools and the individual teachers and students who participated. This information is crucial for understanding the composition of the sample and assessing the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia. The table shows an equal distribution of public and private schools across different levels (elementary, junior high, and senior high) and locations (urban and rural). This balanced representation ensures that the sample captures the diversity of schools in the province and minimizes potential bias in the findings. A slightly higher proportion of female teachers participated in the study, reflecting the general trend in the teaching profession. This gender distribution is fairly consistent across both public and private schools. The average age of teachers is comparable between public and private schools, with public school teachers being slightly older on average. Similarly, public school teachers have slightly more years of experience than their private school counterparts. These differences, while not substantial, could potentially influence perceptions and experiences related to SBM implementation. The vast majority of teachers in both public and private schools hold a Bachelor's degree, with a smaller proportion possessing a Master's degree. This indicates a generally high level of qualification among the participating teachers. There is an almost equal representation of male and female students in the sample, ensuring that the study captures the experiences and achievements of both genders. The average age of students is consistent with the expected age range for each school level, indicating that the sample is representative of the student population in Jambi Province.

Table 2 presents the key quantitative findings of the study, comparing public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia across three crucial variables: school autonomy, teacher participation, and student achievement. The table utilizes independent samples t-tests to determine if statistically significant differences exist between the two types of schools. Private schools exhibit significantly higher levels of school autonomy (Mean = 4.20) compared to public schools (Mean = 3.50). This difference is statistically significant ($p < .001$) with a large effect size (Cohen's d = 0.96). This finding strongly suggests that private

schools in Jambi Province enjoy greater freedom and flexibility in managing their affairs, including curriculum development, budget allocation, and staffing decisions, compared to public schools. This aligns with the general expectation that private schools have more autonomy due to less bureaucratic oversight. Similar to autonomy, private schools demonstrate significantly higher levels of teacher participation in decision-making (Mean = 3.85) than public schools (Mean = 3.20). This difference is also statistically significant (p < .001) with a large effect size (Cohen's d = 0.82). This result indicates that teachers in private schools have a greater voice and influence in school-level decisions. This could be attributed to a more collaborative culture, flatter organizational structures, or greater value placed on teacher input in private school settings. Interestingly, despite the differences in autonomy and teacher participation, there are no statistically significant differences in student achievement between public and private schools across Mathematics, Science, and Indonesian Language. While private schools show slightly higher mean scores in all subjects, the differences are not large enough to be statistically significant. This is a crucial finding that challenges the assumption that greater school autonomy and teacher participation directly translate into improved student learning outcomes. It suggests that other factors beyond school-level autonomy and teacher involvement, such as teacher quality, student motivation, and socioeconomic background, may play a more significant role in determining student achievement.

Table 3 presents the qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews conducted with school principals and school committee members in public and private schools in Jambi Province. The table is organized around three main themes: School Autonomy, Teacher Participation, and Challenges and Opportunities. Within each theme, specific subthemes highlight the nuanced experiences and perspectives of participants in relation to SBM implementation; School Autonomy: This theme explores the extent to which schools have the freedom and flexibility to manage their own affairs under SBM. Public schools report limited flexibility in adapting the national curriculum, facing bureaucratic constraints that hinder innovation. In contrast, private schools enjoy greater freedom to tailor the curriculum to local needs, develop specialized programs, and incorporate innovative teaching methods. This difference highlights the greater autonomy afforded to private schools in shaping their educational offerings. Public schools face challenges related to funding, with limited control over budget allocation and difficulties in securing additional resources. Private schools, while facing their own financial pressures, have more control over their budgets and can generate additional revenue through tuition fees and fundraising. This allows them greater flexibility in prioritizing spending and supporting school development goals. Public schools experience limitations in teacher recruitment and retention due to centralized hiring processes and bureaucratic procedures. Private schools have greater autonomy in selecting and managing their staff, offering competitive salaries and professional development opportunities to attract and retain qualified teachers. This difference reflects the greater flexibility private schools have in human resource management; Teacher Participation: This theme examines the level of teacher involvement in school decision-making processes. Teachers in public schools report limited opportunities to participate in developing school policies, with decisions often made top-down by principals or school committees. In contrast, private schools foster a more participatory culture, actively involving teachers in school committees and valuing their input in shaping school policies and practices. This contrast underscores the difference in organizational culture and leadership approaches between the two types of schools. Public schools demonstrate a top-down approach to school improvement, with limited teacher ownership and opportunities for participation. Private schools, on the other hand, encourage active teacher involvement in planning and implementing school improvement initiatives, fostering a collaborative approach and recognizing teacher leadership. This difference highlights the varying levels of trust and empowerment afforded to teachers in different school contexts; Challenges and Opportunities: This theme

explores the perceived challenges and opportunities associated with SBM implementation. Both public and private schools face challenges related to funding, bureaucracy, and teacher quality. Public schools struggle with inadequate funding and bureaucratic constraints, while private schools face pressure to maintain affordability and compete for student enrollment. Both types of schools also encounter challenges in attracting and retaining qualified teachers. These challenges highlight the systemic issues that need to be addressed to ensure the effective implementation of SBM. Despite the challenges, SBM also presents opportunities for both public and private schools. Public schools can leverage community involvement and seek government support for school improvement. Private schools can capitalize on their autonomy to innovate and develop unique programs. Both types of schools can also benefit from collaboration and sharing best practices. These opportunities underscore the potential of SBM to drive positive change in the education system.

Table 1. Participant characteristics.

| Characteristic | Public schools (n=15) | Private schools (n=15) | Total (n=30) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **School level** | | | |
| Elementary | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Junior high school | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| Senior high school | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| **Location** | | | |
| Urban | 8 | 7 | 15 |
| Rural | 7 | 8 | 15 |
| **Teacher characteristics** | | | |
| Gender | | | |
| Female | 105 | 98 | 203 |
| Male | 45 | 52 | 97 |
| Age (Mean, SD) | 38.5 (7.2) | 35.2 (6.8) | 36.9 (7.0) |
| Years of experience (Mean, SD) | 12.3 (8.1) | 9.8 (7.5) | 11.1 (7.8) |
| Education level | | | |
| Bachelor's Degree | 130 | 125 | 255 |
| Master's Degree | 20 | 25 | 45 |
| **Student characteristics** | | | |
| Gender | | | |
| Female | 145 | 155 | 300 |
| Male | 155 | 145 | 300 |
| Age (Mean, SD) | 11.8 (0.8) | 11.7 (0.9) | 11.8 (0.8) |

n = number of schools or participants; SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2. Quantitative results: comparison of public and private schools.

| Variable | Public schools (n=150) | Private schools (n=150) | t-value | p-value | Effect size (Cohen's d) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **School autonomy** | | | | | |
| Mean (SD) | 3.50 (0.72) | 4.20 (0.65) | 4.56 | <.001 | 0.96 |
| **Teacher participation** | | | | | |
| Mean (SD) | 3.20 (0.65) | 3.85 (0.58) | 3.89 | <.001 | 0.82 |
| **Student achievement** | | | | | |
| Mathematics (Mean, SD) | 75.5 (8.3) | 77.2 (7.9) | 1.12 | .26 | 0.24 |
| Science (Mean, SD) | 72.8 (9.1) | 73.5 (8.5) | 0.85 | .39 | 0.18 |
| Indonesian Language (Mean, SD) | 78.0 (7.5) | 79.5 (7.1) | 1.35 | .18 | 0.30 |

n = number of teachers or students; SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 3. Qualitative results: themes and subthemes from interviews.

| Theme | Subtheme | Public schools | Private schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| **School autonomy** | Curriculum Development | - Limited flexibility to adapt the national curriculum to local needs. - Challenges in developing innovative programs due to bureaucratic constraints. | - Greater flexibility in adapting and enriching the national curriculum. - Ability to develop specialized programs based on student needs and market demands. - More freedom to incorporate innovative teaching methods and assessments. |
| | Budget Allocation | - Dependence on government funding with limited control over allocation. - Challenges in securing additional funding for school improvement initiatives. - Difficulties in prioritizing spending based on school needs due to rigid budget guidelines. | - Greater control over budget allocation and spending priorities. - Ability to generate additional revenue through tuition fees and fundraising activities. - More flexibility in allocating resources to support school development goals, such as teacher professional development, facilities improvement, and technology integration. |
| | Personnel Management | - Limited autonomy in teacher recruitment and selection due to centralized hiring processes. - Challenges in retaining qualified teachers due to limited incentives and career development opportunities. - Difficulties in addressing teacher performance issues due to bureaucratic procedures. | - Greater autonomy in recruiting and selecting teachers based on school needs and qualifications. - Ability to offer competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain qualified teachers. - More flexibility in providing professional development opportunities and promoting teacher leadership. |
| **Teacher participation** | Decision-Making in School Policies | - Limited opportunities for teachers to participate in developing school policies. - Decisions often made by the principal or school committee with limited teacher input. - Lack of formal mechanisms for teachers to voice their opinions and concerns. | - More opportunities for teachers to participate in developing school policies. - Active involvement of teachers in school committees and decision-making meetings. - Greater value placed on teacher input and feedback in shaping school policies and practices. |
| | Involvement in School Improvement Initiatives | - Limited involvement of teachers in planning and implementing school improvement initiatives. - Top-down approach to school improvement with limited teacher ownership. - Lack of opportunities for teachers to share their expertise and contribute to school development. | - Active involvement of teachers in planning and implementing school improvement initiatives. - Collaborative approach to school improvement with teacher leadership and ownership. - Opportunities for teachers to share their ideas, expertise, and best practices to contribute to school development. |
| **Challenges** | Funding | - Inadequate funding for school operations and maintenance. - Dependence on government funding with delays and uncertainties. - Limited resources for teacher professional development and student support services. | - Pressure to maintain affordability for parents while ensuring quality education. - Challenges in competing with other private schools for student enrollment. - Dependence on tuition fees, which can fluctuate depending on economic conditions. |
| | Bureaucracy | - Complex bureaucratic procedures and regulations that hinder school autonomy. - Limited flexibility in decision-making due to centralized control. - Time-consuming administrative tasks that divert resources from teaching and learning. | - Need to comply with government regulations and accreditation standards. - Challenges in balancing autonomy with accountability to stakeholders, including parents and the school foundation. |
| | Teacher Quality | - Difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified teachers, especially in remote areas. - Limited opportunities for teacher professional development. - Challenges in addressing teacher performance issues due to bureaucratic procedures. | - Maintaining teacher quality and ensuring alignment with the school's vision and mission. - Challenges in providing ongoing professional development to keep teachers updated with the latest pedagogical approaches and curriculum changes. |
| **Opportunities** | Community Involvement | - Potential for greater community involvement in school governance and support. - Opportunities to mobilize community resources to enhance school facilities and programs. - Collaboration with local organizations to provide additional learning opportunities for students. | - Strong partnerships with parents and the school community. - Opportunities to leverage community resources to support school development initiatives. - Engagement with alumni and local businesses to provide scholarships and internship opportunities for students. |
| | Innovation | - Potential for innovation in teaching and learning approaches within the framework of the national curriculum. - Opportunities to develop specialized programs that cater to diverse student needs. - Utilization of technology to enhance teaching and learning. | - Freedom to innovate and experiment with new educational approaches. - Opportunities to develop unique programs that differentiate the school from competitors. - Flexibility to adopt new technologies and integrate them into the curriculum. |
| | Government Support | - Opportunities for increased government support in terms of funding, teacher training, and infrastructure development. - Potential for greater collaboration between public and private schools to share best practices and improve the overall quality of education in Jambi Province. | - Opportunities to collaborate with the government on education initiatives and receive support for specific programs. - Potential for public-private partnerships to enhance educational resources and opportunities for students in Jambi Province. |

## 4. Discussion

This study has illuminated a stark reality in Jambi Province, Indonesia, a significant disparity in the level of autonomy enjoyed by public and private schools. The quantitative data unequivocally demonstrated that private schools experience considerably greater freedom in managing their affairs compared to their public counterparts. This difference manifested across various domains, including curriculum development, budget allocation, and personnel management, and was further corroborated by qualitative findings from interviews with school principals and committee members. This section delves deeper into this "tale of two systems," exploring the roots of this autonomy gap and its multifaceted implications for educational equity, quality, and responsiveness. The divergence in autonomy between public and private schools stems from fundamental differences in their governance structures and funding mechanisms. Public schools, as integral components of the national education system, are inherently bound by government regulations and accountability frameworks. This translates into a standardized approach to education, with prescribed curricula, centralized resource allocation, and standardized hiring procedures. While this standardization aims to ensure equity and quality across all public schools, it can also limit their flexibility to adapt to local needs, innovate in pedagogy, and respond swiftly to emerging challenges. Private schools, on the other hand, operate with greater independence due to their reliance on private funding and less stringent government oversight. Private schools can adapt the national curriculum to better suit the needs and interests of their students, incorporate innovative teaching methods, and offer specialized programs that cater to specific market demands. This flexibility allows them to differentiate themselves from other schools and attract students seeking specific educational experiences. Private schools have greater control over their budget allocation, enabling them to prioritize spending based on their unique needs and goals. They can invest in infrastructure, technology, teacher professional development, and student support services, potentially creating a more enriching learning environment. With greater autonomy in personnel management, private schools can offer competitive salaries and benefits packages to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. They can also implement performance-based incentives and provide professional development opportunities to enhance teacher quality and motivation. The autonomy gap between public and private schools has profound implications for educational equity and quality in Jambi Province. While public schools strive to uphold the principle of equal educational opportunity for all students, their limited autonomy can hinder their ability to cater to the diverse needs of their communities and keep pace with evolving educational trends. This can lead to a situation where students from disadvantaged backgrounds, who rely primarily on public schools, may have access to fewer educational opportunities and resources compared to their more affluent peers attending private schools. Furthermore, the greater autonomy enjoyed by private schools can potentially lead to a more differentiated and responsive education system, where schools can specialize in specific areas, cater to niche markets, and innovate in pedagogy and curriculum design. This can benefit students by providing them with a wider range of educational choices and opportunities. However, it also raises concerns about the potential for increased stratification and segregation within the education system, as private schools may cater primarily to affluent families, further exacerbating existing social disparities. Addressing the autonomy gap between public and private schools requires a balanced approach that recognizes the strengths and limitations of both systems. While granting greater autonomy to public schools can empower them to be more responsive to local needs and innovative in their practices, it is also crucial to maintain accountability mechanisms and ensure equitable distribution of resources. Allowing public schools greater flexibility to adapt the national curriculum to local contexts and incorporate innovative teaching methods. Providing public schools with greater control over their budgets, while also ensuring transparency and accountability

in resource allocation. Granting public schools more autonomy in hiring and managing their staff, while also ensuring fair and equitable hiring practices. Providing public school leaders with the necessary training and support to effectively manage increased autonomy and foster a culture of collaboration and innovation. The findings of this study highlight the need for ongoing dialogue and policy reform to address the autonomy gap between public and private schools in Jambi Province. By striking a balance between autonomy and accountability, Indonesia can create a more equitable, responsive, and high-quality education system that benefits all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or school choice. This requires a commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration among stakeholders, and a willingness to learn from both the successes and challenges of SBM implementation in diverse educational contexts.[11-14]

This study uncovered a striking contrast in the level of teacher participation in decision-making processes between public and private schools in Jambi Province. While private schools fostered a culture of collaboration and valued teacher input, public schools exhibited a more top-down approach, with limited teacher involvement and a perceived lack of appreciation for their contributions. This section delves deeper into this critical aspect of SBM implementation, exploring the factors contributing to this disparity and its potential implications for teacher motivation, school effectiveness, and student learning. The qualitative data painted a vivid picture of the contrasting cultures of teacher participation in public and private schools. In private schools, teachers reported feeling valued and empowered, actively participating in school committees, contributing to policy development, and taking ownership of school improvement initiatives. This participatory culture fostered a sense of shared responsibility and collective efficacy, motivating teachers to go above and beyond in their roles. In contrast, teachers in public schools described a more hierarchical and bureaucratic environment, where decisions were often made by school administrators with limited teacher input. This top-down approach created a sense of detachment and disempowerment among teachers, potentially hindering their motivation and commitment to school improvement efforts. Public schools tend to have more hierarchical organizational structures, with clear lines of authority and limited opportunities for teacher input. Private schools, on the other hand, often have flatter structures and a more collaborative decision-making process. Principals in private schools often adopt a more participative leadership style, actively seeking teacher input and valuing their expertise. In public schools, leadership styles may be more directive, with principals taking a more central role in decision-making. Public schools are often bound by bureaucratic procedures and regulations that can limit teacher autonomy and participation in decision-making. Private schools have greater flexibility in this regard, allowing for more agile and responsive decision-making processes. The cultural context within which schools operate can also influence teacher participation. In some cultures, teachers may be accustomed to a more hierarchical and deferential relationship with school administrators, while in others, a more egalitarian and collaborative approach may be the norm. The level of teacher participation in decision-making has profound implications for teacher motivation and school effectiveness. When teachers feel valued and empowered, they are more likely to be engaged in their work, committed to school improvement efforts, and motivated to go the extra mile for their students. Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between teacher participation and various indicators of school effectiveness, including student achievement, teacher retention, and school climate. Conversely, when teachers feel marginalized and disempowered, their motivation and job satisfaction may suffer, potentially leading to disengagement and burnout. This can have a detrimental impact on the quality of teaching and learning, ultimately affecting student outcomes. Realizing the full potential of SBM requires a fundamental shift in organizational culture and leadership approaches within public schools, moving away from top-down control towards a more collaborative and empowering model. Creating a school environment where teachers feel valued,

respected, and empowered to contribute their ideas and expertise. Encouraging school leaders to adopt a more participative leadership style, actively seeking teacher input and involving them in decision-making processes. Reducing bureaucratic hurdles that hinder teacher autonomy and participation in decision-making. Offering professional development opportunities that equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively participate in school governance and improvement initiatives. Acknowledging and appreciating the valuable contributions that teachers make to school improvement, fostering a sense of ownership and shared responsibility. By empowering teachers to participate in decision-making, schools can tap into a wealth of knowledge, experience, and creativity, leading to more innovative and effective educational practices. This requires a concerted effort from policymakers, school leaders, and teachers to create a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility, where teachers are not merely implementers of decisions made by others but active participants in shaping the future of their schools. This shift towards a more empowering model of teacher participation is essential for realizing the full potential of SBM and creating a more responsive and effective education system for all students.[15-17]

This study yielded a particularly thought-provoking finding, despite the observed disparities in school autonomy and teacher participation between public and private schools in Jambi Province, no significant difference in student achievement was found. This challenges the often-cited assumption that greater school-level autonomy and teacher involvement automatically translate into improved student learning outcomes. This section delves into the complexities surrounding this elusive link, exploring the multifaceted factors that contribute to student achievement and highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding of how SBM operates within diverse educational contexts. The notion that decentralization and school-based management lead to improved student achievement has been a central tenet of education reform for decades. This belief is grounded in the idea that by empowering schools to

make decisions tailored to their specific needs and contexts, they can create a more responsive and effective learning environment for their students. While numerous studies have indeed shown a positive correlation between SBM implementation and student achievement in certain contexts, this study suggests that the relationship is far from straightforward. The findings from Jambi Province indicate that simply granting schools greater autonomy and encouraging teacher participation may not be sufficient to guarantee improved student learning outcomes. The success of SBM hinges on the fidelity of its implementation. This includes ensuring that schools have the necessary capacity and resources to effectively manage their autonomy, that teachers are adequately trained and empowered to participate in decision-making, and that accountability mechanisms are in place to monitor progress and ensure effective resource utilization. Teacher quality remains a cornerstone of effective education. Highly qualified, motivated, and well-supported teachers are essential for creating a positive learning environment and fostering student success. While SBM can provide a framework for enhancing teacher professionalism and empowerment, it cannot compensate for underlying deficiencies in teacher quality. The quality of the curriculum and the effectiveness of pedagogical practices employed in the classroom play a crucial role in student learning. SBM can provide schools with greater flexibility to adapt the curriculum and innovate in pedagogy, but this freedom must be accompanied by careful planning, effective implementation, and ongoing evaluation. Student motivation and engagement are critical factors in the learning process. SBM can potentially foster a more engaging and student-centered learning environment, but this requires a concerted effort to create a culture of learning that values student voice, promotes active participation, and provides differentiated support for diverse learners. Socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, family background, and access to resources, can significantly influence student learning and achievement. While SBM cannot directly address these systemic inequities, it can provide a framework for schools to mobilize community resources and tailor

their programs to meet the specific needs of their students. It is also important to acknowledge that this study's focus on standardized achievement tests in Mathematics, Science, and Indonesian Language may not fully capture the broader range of learning outcomes that SBM aims to promote. SBM seeks to foster holistic development, encompassing not only academic achievement but also critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving skills, social-emotional learning, and civic engagement. Future research should adopt a more comprehensive approach to evaluating the impact of SBM, incorporating a wider range of assessment methods and considering the diverse learning needs and aspirations of students.[18-20]

## 5. Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) in public and private schools in Jambi Province, Indonesia, focusing on its impact on school autonomy, teacher participation, and student achievement. While private schools demonstrated higher levels of autonomy and teacher participation, no significant difference in student achievement was found between the two school types. This suggests that the relationship between SBM and student outcomes is complex and influenced by various contextual factors. The study highlights the need for a nuanced approach to SBM implementation, considering the unique challenges and opportunities faced by different schools. Policymakers should provide clear frameworks, invest in capacity building, and promote community involvement to support effective SBM. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of SBM and its impact on a broader range of learning outcomes. By fostering collaboration and empowering schools to tailor their practices, Indonesia can strive towards a more equitable and high-quality education system for all students.

## 6. References

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