

# The Situations and Problems of Educational Decentralization to the Local Government Organization in Southern Thailand

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## Abstract

This research aims to study the current situations of educational management systems and find the guidelines for educational management system development of transferred schools and Local Government Organization in Southern Thailand. The results found that: the problems of management are the instability of school transferring acceptance policy, which is according to the mayor; and insufficient budget for school administration. Student quality has improved after transferring from being under Educational Service Area (ESA) to Subdistrict Municipality because Subdistrict Municipalities promote academics. However, teachers lack of opportunity to participate in external training and development. Problems include: the policy is changing up to the Chief Executive of the SAO, schools have low authority leading to management inflexibility, the SAO has no educator, and educational policy and practice are impacted by local politics. The obstacles are educational policy is not seriously and continuously implemented, law and regulations are not supportive for practices, there is no educational supervisor and an insufficient budget. The guidelines are the Subdistrict Municipality should improve the budgeting system to match schools' needs, and revise and update the relevant laws and regulations to allow teachers to be able to participate in the external training and development with expenses coverage, the SAO needs to urgently recruit competent personnel and teachers to work at the SAO and schools, provide schools with administration authority, and solve the local politics problem that intervene the school administration, the Department of Local Administration (DLA) should decentralize personnel recruitment and budgeting authority to the PAO, and the PAO should provide more administration authority to schools.

**Keywords:** Decentralization, Transferred School, Local Government Organization

## Introduction

Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (1997) emphasizes on educational management and decentralize powers to localities to administrate and manage education according to the need of that localities. Section 43 stipulates that the State shall provide fundamental education thoroughly and up to the quality and support participation of local government organizations and the private sector. In addition, Section 78 stipulates that the State shall decentralize powers to localities for the purpose of independence and self-determination of local affairs. Moreover, Section 80(4) of Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, (2007) also prescribes

provisions on educational management which encourage and support decentralization of power of local administrative bodies to participate in provision of education to develop the quality of education to allow equality and to conform with the directive principles of fundamental State policies. Furthermore, Section 289 also prescribes that the local government organizations shall have the right to provide education and professional training in accordance with the suitability and the need of that locality and participate in the provision of education and training by the State, with due regard to the standard and educational system of the country.

National Education Act, (1999) and Amendments (No. 2) (2002) stipulates that the local government organizations shall have the right to provide education at any level or all levels in accordance with availability, suitability and the need of that locality as well as prescribes the criteria for assessment of availability of local administrative organizations and responsible for coordinating and promoting local administrative organizations to mobilize resources for provision of education and participation in educational management (National Education Act, 1999). This policy is in line with Section 16(9) and Section 17 (6) of Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization to Local Government Organization Act, 1999) which prescribe that all types of local government organizations including Provincial Administrative Organizations (PAO), Sub-district Administrative Organizations (SAO), Municipalities, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Special Administration of Pattaya would have the power in educational management and to transfer public service, including educational management, to local government organizations.

Transferring of educational institutes to local government organizations is clearly defined in Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization to Local Government Organization Act, 1999). It is expected that the policy of transferring of educational management would have significant impact on the stakeholders, as evidenced by movement of the Primary School Teachers Association of Thailand or Teaching Profession and Education Personnel Organization which opposed the enforcement of Section 16(9) of Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization to Local Government Organization Act, 1999). These organizations do not agree that the education should be managed by SAOs and claimed that the SAOs lack knowledge in academic education, and understanding in teaching philosophy and psychology as well as lack of readiness in terms of human resources and quality of personnel in educational management; administrators of most local government organizations do not have visions on education, especially basic education; SAOs do not have availability and suitability on educational management, even it is required that educational institutes would only be transferred to local government organizations when they have passed availability assessment criteria. Moreover, it is stipulated that educational institutions must be transferred within 2010. In addition, transfer of educational institutes would create various adverse impacts such as educational management quality, career advancement, career stability, including benefits and welfares (Ngernprasertsri et al, 2003: 49-64).

From the assessment results of educational management of local government organizations in 2008, it was found that the implementation of laws and government policies related to educational management of local administrative organizations in 2008 have set higher target for level of involvement for the local government organizations in the educational management system to be 20 percent and educational institutes under LGOs have good standards of not less than 80 percent for the educational management system according to the assessment criteria of Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment. In terms of quantity, the number of educational institutes increased from 146 units in 2005 to 333 units in 2008. There are altogether 1,481 schools under LGOs. The number has increased steadily every year from 2005 and constitutes about 3.7 percent of all educational institutes in Thailand. Most of educational institutes provide pre-primary and primary education. In

addition, LGOs have provided non-formal education, and informal education in the form of child development centers which consist of 18,780 units, an increase of 16.56% from 2005. Qualitatively, LGOs have implemented internal and external quality assessment in order to promote educational institutes to have good quality which are higher than the average results of all educational institutes in Thailand and encourage educational institutes under their affiliation to participate in national tests at both secondary educational year 3 and year 6. Educational institutes under affiliation of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, have higher test results in all subjects than the average results of all educational institutes in Thailand. Meanwhile, educational institutes under affiliation of LGOs have lower test results in all subjects than other educational institutes. For the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) in secondary educational year 6, educational institutes under affiliation of LGOs have higher test results in mathematics and social study than the national average. Meanwhile, educational institutes under affiliation of BMA have lower test results in most of the subjects than the national average. It is noted that there are small number of educational institutes which provide secondary educational year 3 and year 6 under affiliation of LGOs. Moreover, LGOs have little management experience on this educational level. There is also delay and unclearness in the transfer of educational institutes (Progress report on educational management of local government organizations in 2008, 2010: c-e).

From literature review relating to transfer of educational institutes to LGOs, it was found that only small number of institutes were transferred in the southern region due to different contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to study decentralization of educational management to LGOs. This study focuses on Nakhon Si Thammarat, Trang, Phatthalung, Satun and Songkhla province. The objectives are to study current conditions and determine approaches to develop the management system and educational management for transferred educational institutes and the responsible LGOs in the southern region. In this regard, the study adopts mixed method research by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data in order to present research results to LGOs to determine policy relating to practical approach for decentralization of educational management to LGOs accordingly.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To study current condition of educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and responsible LGOs in the southern region.
2. To determine approaches to develop educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and responsible LGOs in the southern region.

### **Research Methodology**

Research on decentralization of educational management to LGOs in the southern region has been conducted as follows:

1. Collect and analyst research results on decentralization of educational management to LGOs to study issues relating to educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs. In this regard, related research works on decentralization of educational management to LGOs in Thailand from TDC (ThaiLIS Digital Collection) and database of educational agencies are explored. Keywords for the search are “Decentralization of educational management to LGOs” “Transfer of educational institutes to LGOs” and other keywords relating to decentralization of educational management to LGOs. Data has been collected from the enforcement of Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization to Local Government Organization Act, 1999 to 2014. Ancestry approach is also adopted by exploring the list of research results from the previous research reference lists.

2. Select research works by considering the specific terminology of the keywords “Decentralization of educational management to LGOs” in each research, to determine whether they are in the same scope. After the consideration, it was found that 12 research works gave similar definitions.

3. Collect complete research works by contacting the agencies that published the research works to request for permission to use research results. Then record the research data and check the accuracy and completeness of the data and analyze the data, using content grouping methods to find issues relating to educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs. It was found that 12 research works on decentralization of educational management to LGOs can be classified into 4 parts which are 1) Contexts which are divided into 2 areas: political and public; 2) Central administration which are divided into 3 aspects: central policy, legal regulations and structure; 3) Local government organizations which are divided into 8 aspects: budget, political, legal regulations, community, human resources, executives, academic and management system; and 4) Educational institutes which are divided into 3 aspects: attitude of involved parties, executives and stakeholders.

4. Study current condition and determine approaches to develop educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region by adopting Case Study method. The research has been conducted as follows:

4.1 Areas of this research are educational institutes that were transferred to LGOs in the 5 southern region provinces including Nakhon Si Thammarat, Trang, Phatthalung, Satun and Songkhla province which consist of 9 educational institutes under affiliation of Provincial Administrative Organizations, 2 educational institutes under affiliation of Sub-district Administrative Organizations and 1 educational institute under affiliation of municipality, total 12 institutes. The transferee LGOs consist of 4 PAOs, 2 SAOs and 1 municipality, total 7 LGOs. Transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region for at least 1 semester were selected in order to observe changes in the conditions regarding educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region. The study results would be useful to determine approaches to develop the management system and educational management for transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the other areas accordingly.

4.2 Population in the research who are Key Informants can be classified into 2 groups as follows:

1) Transferred groups including 12 executives of educational institutes and 15 teachers.

2) Transferee group including

2.1) Management of LGOs who are responsible for educational management, namely 4 Chief Executives/Deputy Chief Executives of Provincial Administrative Organizations, 1 Chief Executive of Sub-district Administrative Organization and 6 Deputy Chief Executives of Sub-district Administrative Organization

2.2) 5 Directors of Educational Division

2.3) 2 Educational Supervisors

2.4) 3 Educational Scholar

2.5) 1 Educational Administrator

4.3 Data collection tools are questions for interviewing and in-depth interviews on the current conditions of the educational administration and management system and approaches to develop educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region. Whereas, the questions for the interview were from the analysis of the research works and relevant literature review.

4.4 Data collection. The research team has coordinated with the PAOs, SAOs and Municipality that are sample groups for research to request for cooperation to be Key Informants of the research, including management of LGOs who are responsible for educational management, Directors of Educational Division, Educational Supervisors, Educational Scholar, Educational Administrator and head of departments in educational institutes. In this regard, the research team collected data from the transferred educational institutes and transferee LGOs by themselves.

4.5 Analysis of data obtained from in-depth interviews and related literature reviews were analyzed and explained according to the issues. Emphasis is being placed on documents, points of views and opinions of all Key Informants relating to current condition of educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region.

## **Research Results**

1. Under current condition of educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region, it was found that there are 3 formats of transfers including transfer to Municipality, transfer to Sub-district Administrative Organizations and transfer to Provincial Administrative Organizations. The current conditions, problems and operating results for each format are as follows:

### **1<sup>st</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Municipality**

The problems and obstacles in municipality's management within the transfer were unclear transfer policy of educational institutes which are subject to Major's decision and insufficient budget, especially for construction of buildings to accommodate learners. Meanwhile, the problem in the management of educational institutes after the transfer was budget reimbursement policy for training of teachers and school personnel which can only be reimbursed by an order from the municipality. Mayor's policy has effect on budget allocation to schools, even though the municipality received more budgets, but significant parts of the budgets are for durable articles.

In addition, it was found that the quality of education of the transferred educational institutes when compared to when they were under the management of Office of the Basic Education Commission has been improved because the municipality promotes academic subjects and competition. Teachers lack opportunities to participate in trainings of external agencies. Management has improved because it has received support from several aspects, such as learners' transportation vehicles, contract teachers, and the institute can conduct its own procurement.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Sub-district Administrative Organizations**

The problems and obstacles in SAO's management within the transfer were unclear policy of educational institutes which are subject to decision of Chief Executives of SAO. The policy will be changed after changing of Chief Executives of SAO and lack of personnel, especially in the educational area. Meanwhile, the problem in the management of educational institutes after the transfer was that the institute is not a legal entity and has ineffective management, lack of teachers and politic has effect on and educational management policy of educational institutes.

In addition, it was found that the educational administration and management of the transferred educational institutes when compared to when they were under the management of Office of the Basic Education Commission has been improved because the institutes have been getting more budgets. Teachers have the opportunity to access to personal development.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Provincial Administrative Organizations**

The problems and obstacles in PAO's management within the transfer were lack of serious implementation and continuity both at the ministerial level and the PAOs, legal regulations that do not facilitate the operation, lack of educational supervisors and poor understanding between PAOs and school directors as well as insufficient budgets. Meanwhile, the problem in the management of educational institutes after the transfer was that some learners have better academic achievements, while some do not have any improvement. There is a tendency of higher number of learners. Teachers have accessed to personal development and are happy to work. The school also has more effective management depending on the support from PAOs.

When comparing the quality of education of the transferred educational institutes to when they were under the management of Office of the Basic Education Commission, it was found that some learners have better academic achievements, while some do not have distinct improvement. Nonetheless, the improvement also depends on cooperation of administrators, teachers, parents and local politicians.

Learners have more opportunities to participate in various academic activities as the PAOs have more financial supports for education. There are more teachers who are specialized in each subjects because the PAOs can use the budget to employ teachers. Nonetheless, teachers lack the opportunity to attend trainings of external agencies. Management is improved because the PAOs can manage the works independently according to the specified development independently and receive cooperation from community.

2. Development approaches on educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region are divided into 3 formats as follows

### **1<sup>st</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Municipality**

Development approaches on educational administration and management system are that the municipality should improve the budget management system to meet the needs of educational institutes to be timely and allow the organization and educational institutes to use the budget within required period. Moreover, learners should be allowed to participate in other activities in addition to academic activities, especially political activities at suitable level.

For management of teacher development, the Division of Local Administrative Development should amend related regulations to allow teachers to attend training organized by both internal and external agencies of the municipality and receive reimbursements for training expenses. Furthermore, the Mayor should clearly define educational management policy and coordinate with schools and communities on educational management.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Sub-district Administrative Organizations**

Development approaches on educational administration and management system are that the SAOs should urgently recruit personnel who can perform tasks both for the parts of SAOs and schools, decentralize management authority for the transferred institutes in the same nature of juristic person and manage local political issues that have an impact on educational management of the SAO and schools. Moreover, local politicians should continue to adhere to educational policies so as to promote maximum effective educational management of schools transferred to the SAOs.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Format Transfer of Educational Institutes to Provincial Administrative Organizations**

Development approaches on educational administration and management system are that the PAOs should authorize the localities to recruit personnel and allocate budgets in accordance with the provisions of Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization to Local Government Organization Act which state that "Transfer of works, money and positions" The objectives are to allow the PAOs and schools to have appropriate budget for management

according to the requirements. Division of Local Administrative Development should monitor budget spending of all institutes thoroughly and fairly. In this regard, the DLA and PAOs should amend the regulations to facilitate operations of the PAOs to be able to solve problems on personnel, laws, regulations and management by coordinating with the Ministry of Education to review the regulations and the transfer process as well as adjusting the rules on transferring of educational personnel to be in line with decentralization principles to allow successful educational decentralization to LGOs.

PAOs should have a clear budget allocation policy and create understanding with educational institutes in terms of regulations, financial and durable articles to allow effective, flexible and fast management as well as allowing the schools transferred under the PAOs to be legal entities.

Educational Service Area Office should continue to be advisor and coach for the transferee LGOs, especially in the academic field so that the PAOs can perform educational tasks successfully and allowing institutes to participate in various activities of the Educational Service Area Office as they used to.

## Discussion

1. Current conditions of the educational administration and management system and approaches to develop educational administration and management system of the transferred educational institutes and the transferee LGOs in the southern region in each aspect are as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Issue:** Problems with the policy of educational decentralization are caused by many factors, including providing opportunities for institutes and LGOs to accept the transfer voluntarily, allowing teachers to have the freedom to be transferred to any Educational Service Area Office, determination of scope on sizes of institutes and the transferee, negative attitudes of school administrators towards the executives of transferee LGOs, negative attitudes of teachers towards transferee, uncertain educational management policies of the transferee (management policy will be changed after changing of executives) which is consistent with the resolutions of the meeting of Decentralization to the Local Government Organization Committee in 2007. The following issues are discussed.

1) As a result of allowing institutes and LGOs to accept the transfer voluntarily, many educational institutes and SAOs, which are under transfer plan, require the quality of the institutes to be developed more effectively as they have supervising organizations.

2) Teachers have the freedom to be transferred to any Educational Service Area Office, personnel can voluntarily choose to either be transferred or not transferred. Nonetheless, the payroll rates are not consistent with the principle of decentralization which include transfer of works, money and positions etc. As a result, many teachers do not want to be transfer red and affect the learning management as there would be insufficient specialized teachers and will affect the quality of learners and educational institutes.

3) Determination of clear scope on sizes of institutes with the transferee LGOs so as the LGOs would be well prepared. However, it is difficult for many LGOs to accept the transfer of educational decisions with the right size to their potential. In an overview, each type of LGOs have different educational management capability. Determining the exact rules of the school size suitable for each type of LGOs would be one solution.

4) The problem on negative attitudes of school administrators towards executives of the transferee LGOs and negative attitudes of teachers towards the transferee. This problem involves both the decision to transfer and the operation after the transfer. If personnel of educational institutes lack confidence in the administration of LGOs, they will not ask to be transferred. Chuenjit Wongphanas et al (2013) concluded that educational administrators, institutes, teachers and educational personnel under the Ministry of Education do not wish to

work under the management of LGOs. They also opined that qualifications of education personnel of LGOs do not meet with standard. The problems are caused by lack of qualified and experienced personnel in educational management of LGOs. As a result, the transferred educational institutes would also lack experienced personnel to perform the operation. Although the transfer is made voluntarily, if, after the transfer, executives of educational institutes and teachers have negative attitudes towards executives of transferee LGOs and the LGOs, then it would be difficult for them to work and cooperate with one another.

5) Problem regarding uncertainties in educational management policies of the transferee as the policy will be changed after changing of executives. This issue does not affect the decision to transfer educational institutes but would be a problem in management of educational institutes due to lack of continuity of LGOs' policy, which would affect operation of educational institutes. In addition, the factor also involves relationship between executives of LGOs and executives of educational institutes. If the relationship is good, educational institutes would be able to access to higher amount of educational management budget conveniently. On the other hand, if the relationship is not good, educational institutes' request for budget allocation and resources for educational management will be ignored. Nonetheless, this relationship may be improved after a change of executives of LGOs and/or administrators of educational institutes.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Issue:** After examining legal regulations relating to transfer of educational institutions to LGOs under the 3 formats, it was found that there is nonconformity in legal regulations which would obstruct operations and impose negative impact on both LGOs and educational institutes in terms of budget management, personnel development and readiness of buildings. For example, the PAOs do not yet have operating rules for themselves but they have to apply regulations imposed by Ministry of Education which do not meet with the needs and nature of works of the localities. The institute reckoned that the regulations on budget and durable articles of PAOs have too many details and procedures, resulting in lack of flexibility in management which is different from when they were under the Ministry of Education.

These problems are conforming to the findings of research work of SEAMEO Innotech (2012) which stated that legal conflicts such as regulations on budget, etc. obstruct or hinder management of local authorities. Panuwat Phakdeewong (1998) stated that in order to successfully decentralize educational management, it is necessary to revise regulations which are inflexible and do not facilitate educational decentralization and even abolish some regulations which do not contribute to the development of education in accordance with the educational decentralization policy.

In addition to these issues, the research also found that these laws and regulations have high correlation to legal entity conditions of educational institutions. Before the transfer, the educational institutes have legal entity situations. However, after the transfer, the educational institutes would lose their legal entity situations which is something that they are not accustomed to. Meanwhile LGOs themselves are adhering to the local authority and management. Therefore, both organizations need to coordinate together to determine suitable practices. The research also found that some LGOs grant management power to educational institutes just like in their former state. As many transferred educational institutes mentioned about issue on legal entities, policy maker should study the form and method of decentralization to educational institutes on such matters.

Another interesting point is to push for amendments of laws regulations to facilitate the operation. From interviews with officers in operating level of LGOs and educational institutes, it was found that although there are various regulatory issues and needs for legal amendments, no tangible implementation is taken. However, operator may reckon that various laws are determined by the top-level organizations which are not active in solving the



issues, not until the top-level organizations accelerates the problem-solving process or the lower-level authorities propose their requirements and push for amendments of the laws.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Issue:** Readiness of localities regarding human resource. According to the studies, it was found that SAOs have insufficient human resources, especially in the educational field, and the PAOs lack educational supervisors. This finding is consistent with the research results on operation according to transfer of educational management policies in a meeting of Local Government Organization Committee on 25th June 2007 which found that LGOs still lack education personnel and educational supervisors to supervise, monitor and evaluate educational performance. The results also conform to study of SEAMEO Innotech (2012) which indicated that LGOs had not prepared or lack the ability in educational management such as academic leadership etc. Moreover, the research results of Chuenjit Wongphanas et al (2013), who studied factors for transfer of educational management to LGOs in Pathum Thani Province, Nonthaburi Province and Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, indicated that LGOs have limited education personnel and the qualifications of their personnel do not meet with educational management standards, resulting in ineffective educational management. The problems of inadequate and incompetent personnel are considered as important problems which can significantly affect quality educational management. This is considered primary component of educational decentralization. According to Educational management policy of LGOs 2002-2016 (Sakunpanich, 2004), it was stated that local authorities can handle educational management if they have potential, such as executives of LGOs have educational management ability, educational personnel and manpower of LGOs. In addition, Weidman and DePietro-Jurand (2011) mentioned that, in educational decentralization, manpower and personnel development are important factors that strengthen local authorities. Therefore, it is very important to solve these problems urgently.

For this issue, it should be noted that, in the past, educational decentralization focused on transfer of teachers in educational institutes to LGOs. But this research found that another problem of educational decentralization is that both LGOs and educational institutes are aware of the problem of insufficient human resource. Therefore, it is very important that LGOs have to determine measures to solve the problem. Moreover, the authorities responsible for educational decentralization have to consider the readiness of LGOs in greater details, i.e. not only considering human resource of LGOs when accepting the transfer of educational institutes. Nonetheless, they must also take into account the ability or potential to handle problems that may arise after the transfer of educational institutes as well.

**4<sup>th</sup> Issue:** Management quality of the transferred educational institutes. It was found that the transferred educational institutes have more flexible management and receive more budget and support on building, as well as more development opportunities for learners and teachers. In addition, educational institutes are better accepted by the community. These improvements are signs that objectives of educational decentralization policy are being achieved in accordance with Ministry of Education (1999a; 1999b) which stated that the objectives of educational decentralization were to alleviate problems on educational management which had been depending on centralized management. The principle of decentralization of educational management was to allow the educational management system to be in line with the government's plan and process of decentralization of administration power to localities and people. This also reflects that LGOs can manage education according to Section 80 (4) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, 2007 and Section 41 of the National Education Act, 1999.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Ikoya (2008) who found that the decentralization of education in the form of school management team enable schools to have more suitable and usable physical facilities. The results also are conforming to research works of Madeira (2012) who studied the effects of decentralization on educational

management in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and found that educational decentralization increases resources for some schools.

Factors that facilitate increase of resources for the transferred educational institutes are budget availability and effective budget management of LGOs. This findings conform to Ikoya (2008) who explained that educational decentralization stimulates responsibility and reduces corruption in administration of educational institutes. In addition, Husen and Posrlethevaite (1985) said that decentralization of education creates efficiency, especially in the aspects of expenses and personnel management. However, budget allocation for educational institutes also depend on emphasis given by executives of LGOs and relationship between administrators of educational institutes and executives of LGOs as well.

**5<sup>th</sup> Issue:** Educational quality of the transferred educational institutes. It was found that quality of education of most of the transferred educational institutes have improved in terms of learner quality and learning achievement. In addition, teacher quality is considered in term of promotion of teacher development. The consideration of quality of education, which includes quality of learners and teacher, is in accordance with the concepts of Weidman and DePietro-Jurand (2011) who explained that The objectives of educational decentralization is not to increase efficiency of educational management like in the beginning of the policy enforcement, but would emphasize on improving quality of educational management, including the quality of learners. As a result, evaluation of educational decentralization policy would give more attention to the effect on learners.

Quality of learners can be considered from desirable characteristics of the learners and learning achievement. The results of the study on most of the transferred educational institutes and transferee LGOs, it was found that desirable characteristics of the learners have improved, but in terms of academic achievement, there has not been distinct improvement. The results are consistent with the works of Leme, Paredes and Portela (2009) who studied effect of decentralization on learning achievement of learners in Brazil using the difference in difference method. The results showed that there was no change in student achievement.

The reasons that there was no distinct improvement in learners' achievements may be varied. Firstly, most of the educational institutes have been transferred to LGOs for only a short period of about 5 years, which is considered as the beginning of management under the LGOs and required adaptation of the transferred educational institutes. Secondly, the transferred institutes still maintain the same courses and educational management before transferring. Therefore, besides management under the new affiliation, teaching concepts and methods remain unchanged. Thirdly, the objectives of decentralization of education management to LGOs are to allow management to meet the needs of localities but does not emphasize on improvement of learning achievement.

2. Approaches to develop the management system and educational management for transferred educational institutes and the responsible LGOs in the southern region

There are different approaches and formats to develop the management system and educational management for transferred educational institutes and the responsible LGOs in the southern region. After the transfer of educational institutes to municipality, there is a need to expedite budget management system and teacher development by amending regulations and coordinating with other agencies. In order to allow the transfer of educational institutes to SAOs to be effective, problems on insufficient personnel must be solved in the parts of both SAOs and the educational institutes as effective educational management requires personnel with knowledge and capabilities. Meanwhile, in the process to transfer of educational institutes to the PAOs, it is required to solve the problem of lack of educational personnel, especially educational supervisor and amend legal regulations to facilitate the PAOs' operation. In an overview, the problems of educational personnel, laws and regulations and management are consistent and in connection with the suggestions and approaches to

educational decentralization of Decentralization to the Local Government Organization Committee in 2007, including determination of clear policy guidelines on transferring of educational institutes for LGOs and amend the rules for transferring educational personnel in accordance with the principles of decentralization etc. If the guidelines can be complied with, educational decentralization to LGOs will be more successful.

It can be observed that the problems of educational decentralization to LGOs are the same problem that were found many years ago, reflecting that the implementation of the solution is not as successful as it should be. If considering the concept of Weidman and DePietro-Jurand, (2011) that discusses 4 reform frameworks related to educational decentralization, including (1) Using political and legal frameworks which consist of assignment of roles and responsibilities, scope of power and identification of coordination mechanism between various levels of components; (2) Reducing the size of the central education administration and change the role from operator to facilitator and providing support to local authorities and schools in a timely manner; (3) Strengthening local authorities both in terms of manpower and personnel competent; and (4) enhancing local financial management at the appropriate level. It was found that the main problems of educational decentralization to LGOs are reformation in section 3 relating to manpower and personnel competent of LGOs that require urgent and serious attention. (Jermstittiparsert et al, 2016a; 2016b; Sriram and Dhirathiti, 2017)

## **Recommendations**

From analysis of the research results and relevant literature review and case studies, researcher would like to propose policy-based recommendations on improvement of management of educational decentralization to LGOs as follows:

### **1. Ministry of the Interior**

1.1 Should expedite educational decentralization in the aspects of budget, personnel and general administration to meet the goals of educational decentralization to LGOs by coordinating with the Ministry of Education throughout the implementation of educational decentralization

1.2 Should amend regulations on educational transfer in accordance with the principles of decentralization, especially budget management, recruitment and personnel development to be fast and efficient and consistent with the needs of localities, as well as determine measures to monitor the educational operation management of the LGOs and their personnel to be under the same standards.

1.3 Should amend the regulations to allow the transferred educational institutes to be legal entities. In addition, it is necessary to study the issue and coordinate with the Ministry of Education in order to determine the form and method for allowing educational institutes to be legal entities under the supervision of LGOs. In addition, it is required that both LGOs and educational institutes shall understand the scope of power of one another.

### **2. Department of Local Administration**

2.1 Should cooperate with the Office of the Basic Education Commission, which is the original affiliated agency of the transferred educational institutes to develop teachers and educational personnel and enhance academic knowledge of the institutes continuously. This cooperation can be done in both formal approaches such as agreement to dispatch personnel for training and informal approaches, such as studying training data of the Office of the Basic Education Commission on a yearly basis and publicizing the information within the agencies, etc.

2.2 Department of Local Administration should consider allocating budgets and monitoring the budget spending of affiliated agencies to be consistent and fair for each educational institutes so as to increase effectiveness of educational management of educational institutes.

### **3. Local Government Organizations**

3.1 Should create confidence and faith for the executives and teachers in educational institutes, including citizens, to motivate and lead to transfer of educational institutes to LGOs, in particular, the operation of recruiting personnel with sufficient knowledge and ability to be responsible for the educational work of the organization, and allocating budgets to suit the needs of educational institutes.

3.2 Educational policy of local leaders should be earnestly and continuously implemented, as well as not allowing local politics to influence educational management policy and budget.

3.3 Laws should be amended to facilitate operations, such as regulations relating to budget reimbursement for trainings.

3.4 Should prepare explicit personnel recruitment and development plan and conduct educational personnel recruitment such as educational supervisors and academic experts who have sufficient knowledge to support, promote and develop educational quality to be more efficient.

3.5 Should delegate executives to have the authority for decision making to use budget in order to allow educational institutes to have more flexible management by studying the scope and format suitable for allocating budgets for educational institutes under the supervision of LGOs.

3.6 Should adjust approaches and budgets by determining the budget allocation proportion according to the conditions and necessities of educational institutes.

### **4. The Transferred Educational Institutes and Executives of Educational Institutes**

4.1 Should understand the roles of local educational management and promote teacher development to enhance academic knowledge.

4.2 Should have positive attitude toward local leaders, determine appropriate budget and create understanding with stakeholders to promote and stimulate transfer of educational institutes.

### **Suggestions for Further Researches**

1. As the data is obtained from a case study involving only a small number of population which are specific in the context of each local government organizations, the conclusions would only represent the populations involved. Therefore, it will be useful if the same research can be conducted with more samples and populations in order to compare the obtained results with results of this study.

2. Provide overview prospects of the operation to groups of stakeholders, such as communities and personnel responsible for educational decentralization of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Education in order to allow them to receive comprehensive information from all parties.

3. From the study, it was found that there are some issues that should have more in-depth studies, such as regulations and laws that should be amended to allow budget management to be more agile or study the appropriate legal entity form of educational institutes under affiliation of local government organizations.

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