

School Based Management: Decision Making By Student Representatives at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of student representatives in decision-making within the framework of School-Based Management (SBM) at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung, located in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis. Participants included two student representatives, three teachers, and two students selected purposively to represent diverse perspectives. The findings reveal that student representatives play a significant role in promoting exemplary leadership, facilitating effective communication between stakeholders, and providing inclusive spaces for discussion. These three aspects are fundamental in supporting collaborative decision-making and ensuring that student voices are meaningfully integrated into school governance. The presence of structured mechanisms such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) further enhances the effectiveness and transparency of student-related decisions. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of participatory leadership practices in religious educational institutions and highlights the importance of empowering students in shaping a more democratic and responsive school environment. It is recommended that other madrasahs consider formalizing student participation in decision-making to foster school improvement and student engagement.

Keywords: *School-Based Management, Student Representatives, Decision Making, Leadership*

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, School-Based Management (SBM) has been promoted as a key strategy to improve the quality of education by decentralizing authority to the school level. This approach is aligned with national education reforms that emphasize local autonomy, community involvement, and participatory governance in school operations. In the era of globalization, the challenges faced by the education system are increasingly complex, including the need to improve the quality of education, reduce educational disparities, and adapt the curriculum to the demands of a changing job market (Andersen & Kreye, 2023). In China, schools still face limitations in terms of resources, both human and financial (Cao, 2024). In addition, the success of SBM is highly dependent on the ability of principals and teachers to manage the autonomy given. SBM provides schools with greater autonomy in decision-making, allowing them to better respond to local needs and contexts. Indonesia has also reported increased learning outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction after implementing SBM (Hariria et al., 2016). School-based management (SBM) in the global context of the world can begin by explaining the importance of education as one of the main pillars in social and economic development (Ummah, 2019). SBM encourages innovation and creativity in the learning process. This approach also emphasizes active participation from various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and communities, which is expected to increase support for education and create a more conducive learning environment (Aburizaizah et al., 2019).

In Indonesia, Decision-making of student representatives in madrasas is a topic in the context of education in Indonesia, especially in efforts to improve the quality of educational management in religious institutions (Potabuga & Kryati, 2021). Student representatives have a crucial role in managing various aspects related to students, including character development, extracurricular activities, and relationships between students and the school. (Goh et al., 2020). In the context of madrasah, where education is not only focused on academic aspects but also on the formation of morals and religious values, the right decision-making by student representatives is very important. various challenges faced by student representatives, such as limited resources, social dynamics among students, and the need to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Solehudin et al., 2023).

The importance of school-based management research, especially in the context of decision-making by student representatives in madrasas, is very relevant in efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Hassan et al., 2015). School-based management (SBM) is an approach that gives schools more autonomy in management and decision-making, which aims to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the educational process (Andersen & Kreye, 2023). In the context of madrasas, where education focuses not only on academic aspects but also on character building and religious values, the role of student representatives is very important. The purpose of research on School-Based Management (SBM) in the context of madrasah student representative decisions is to understand how the application of SBM principles can influence decision-making related to students who have broad responsibilities, ranging from managing student activities, developing extracurricular programs, to handling social issues faced by students (Feska Ajepri, 2016). Thus, the question arises about the role of student representatives in the decision-making process in schools that implement School-Based Management (SBM), and what impact it has on student participation in school activities.

METHOD

Research Design

This study applied a qualitative approach using a case study design to examine how student representatives engage in decision-making within the context of School-Based Management (SBM) at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung, Medan, Indonesia. The research was grounded in an interpretive paradigm, allowing the researcher to explore the experiences and social dynamics in a real educational setting.

Participants

Participants were selected purposively to capture a diversity of perspectives related to student leadership and school governance. The study involved two student representatives, two teachers, and two senior students. Below is the profile of the participants:

Table 1. Participant

Participant Types	Gender	Age	Last Education	Length of Service
Student Representative	Male	31	S1	2023–2025
Teacher 1	Female	32	S1	2018–2025
Teacher 2	Male	24	S1	2021–2025

Participant	Gender	Age	Class Level
Student 1	Male	16 years	XII
Student 2	Male	16 years	XII

Data Collection

Data were gathered through three primary methods: observation, interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted over two weeks during the daily activities of student representatives. Interviews were held with participants three times a week, each lasting approximately 20 minutes. To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were used. Relevant documents such as meeting minutes, student activity reports, and school policies were also reviewed to support triangulation.

Data were analyzed thematically. Patterns were identified from field observations and categorized into core themes emerging from the interview responses. These themes included exemplary leadership, effective communication, and inclusive participation. Thematic coding allowed for an in-depth understanding of how student representatives function within the SBM framework and their influence on decision-making processes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the findings research, obtained three findings namely, (a) exemplary behavior helpful leadership solve problem (b) communication in exchange opinions and provide suggestions, and (c) provide room open For discussion between student representatives, students, and also teachers to run smoothly more effective. Each finding This will discussed as following :

Exemplary Leadership That Helps Solve Problems

Exemplary leadership is the ability of a leader to be a good example for his followers, which can help in solving problems. Effective leaders demonstrate integrity, good communication, and the ability to listen, thus creating an environment that supports collaboration and innovation in facing challenges (Waruwu and Silaen, 2024). The participants said that leaders who are able to inspire and motivate their teams to think creatively and find solutions together will be more successful in solving problems. They must also be willing to take responsibility for decisions made and learn from mistakes, thus creating a culture of continuous learning.

"For related matters with taking The decision was attempted with Making SOP or Standard Operational Procedure in the section regulation discipline student Specifically For things about violation Whether violation minor, violation medium, or violation It usually also becomes heavy share in taking decision In determining bullet points certain to condition sanctions that will be given to students who violate rules and discipline." (Participant 1, Interview, May 8, 2025)

"I'm not the complicated one complicated Well , the easiest one remember time That I Once difficulty look after letter permission sick . Usually complicated until must meet the on-duty teacher, BK teacher, guardian class too and that his position I ca n't take it anymore walking here and there, but Mr. A, please help the process So fast and easy. He is very friendly and patient. He doesn't only operate duty, but also care The same students . That's what makes I respect." (Participant 5, Interview, May 16, 2025)

From the results Interview with participant 1 discuss importance not quite enough answer on decisions taken and learning from error For create culture learning sustainable. Respondents emphasize the importance of SOP (Standard Operational Procedure) in handle violation discipline students, including various level violations (minor, medium, serious) and the appropriate sanctions. One of Respondent share experience positive about a a helpful leader speed up the processing process letter permission sick, showing good leadership through help and care to student.

One of the respondents emphasized the importance of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in addressing student disciplinary violations. These SOPs clearly categorize types of violations (minor, moderate, and severe) and outline specific sanctions for each category. For example, in the case of student misconduct, the student representative collaborates with school staff to refer to the SOPs before making decisions. This systematic approach ensures that all decisions are consistent, fair, and free from personal bias. The implementation of SOPs not only guides disciplinary actions but also fosters transparency and accountability in school governance. By using SOPs, student representatives are able to

legitimize their decisions, increase trust among students, and reduce potential conflicts. This demonstrates how structured decision-making tools contribute to a more democratic and orderly school environment.

In general overall, interview This highlight importance good leadership, which involves member team in the process of taking decision, as happened at the MAS Al - Washliyyah 22 Tembung school a student representative give they chance For contribute, and appreciate input them. With method this, exemplary leadership No only help in solve problems, but also constructive trust and commitment between member team. exemplary effective leadership create synergy in team, allows they For face challenge with more good and achieve objective together. Same thing with a student representative, he is someone who plays a role important For advance school especially in interact.

"I see the role of the student affairs officer or what we often call WK 3 as a balancer, ensuring that madrasah policies remain in line with the needs and aspirations of students so that his role is very important. I also think he is able to negotiate and find win-win solutions solution." (Participant 2, Interview, May 10, 2025)

"I see the student representative as a very important figure in decision-making concerning aspects of student life at the madrasah. He has an important role and good management and leadership skills, and is able to manage various conflicts from every problem that arises." (Participant 3, Interview, May 10, 2025)

On the important role of student representatives at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung, Respondents emphasized the importance of the role of student representatives as a balancer that ensures that madrasah policies remain in line with students' needs and aspirations, thus highlighting the role of student representatives in the ability to negotiate, find win-win solutions, and effective leadership skills are important points revealed in this interview.

According to Ramadhan the leadership of a student representative is very important in creating a conducive environment for students and helping to solve various problems that may arise in the school environment. As a student representative, this role not only involves administrative tasks, but also includes the responsibility to be a good example for other students (Ramadhan, 2024). The following is a long explanation of exemplary leadership that can help solve problems in the context of a student representative.

"Mr. A is that firm But fair. Time is there problem fight different child class , sir That direct down hand call them. But no direct punish, father rather invite discussion , search root the problem. After that 's new There is solution together agreed children involved. I salute you. with method father That finish problem." (Participant 4, Interview, May 16, 2025)

This interview describes Mr. A's leadership style at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung in handling conflicts between students from different classes. Although firm, Mr. A is known to be fair and wise. He does not immediately punish, but invites discussion to find the root of the problem. After that, he helps students reach a mutually agreed solution. This shows that Mr. A applies a restorative approach in resolving conflicts, focusing on problem solving and reconciliation, not just on punishment. This attitude emphasizes the importance of the process of dialogue and mutual understanding to achieve fair and sustainable solutions.

In this case, it is revealed that Exemplary Leadership in Solving Problems plays an important role in creating a conducive environment for solving problems. By being a good role model, establishing harmonious relationships, listening to students' voices, organizing constructive activities, acting as mediators in disputes, developing assistance programs, and utilizing technology, student representatives can contribute to overcoming various problems faced by students. This exemplary role not only plays a role in solving problems, but also in shaping students' character and leadership in the future and building self-confidence and cooperation.

Communication in Exchanging Opinions and Giving Suggestions

Communication in conveying ideas and providing recommendations to a leader is a very important part of every organization, whether in the business sector, government, schools, or society. A good communication process not only supports more appropriate decision making, but also strengthens the bond between leaders and team members (Muslikhah, 2018).

In the school that the researcher observed MAS Al- WASHliyyah 22 Tembung, the participants said that effective communication in exchanging opinions and providing suggestions is an important aspect in creating a healthy and productive school environment. As a student representative, he acts as a bridge between students and the school, including teachers and administration.

“Consultation regarding activities outside Which may be when they want an answer but have not received it directly from their parents Then they need further explanation from their teachers Namely one of the bridges is student affairs. In addition, we also expect the students If things that really want to be discussed or deliberated, I will always try to find a way out.” (Participant 1, Interview, May 8, 2025)

This highlights the important role of student representatives in maintaining healthy and productive communication and relationships between students and the school at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung. The main point is the role of student representatives as a bridge of communication. When there are problems or questions from students (for example, regarding activities outside of school) that have not been resolved, student representatives play a role in providing further explanations or finding solutions. Student representatives act as a liaison between students and the school to ensure that every problem is resolved. This shows that student representatives have an important role in creating a conducive school environment.

Therefore, the ability to communicate well is essential to ensure that students’ voices are heard and taken into account in decision-making. Effective communication is key to building a good relationship between student representatives and students. When students feel that they can communicate with student representatives without fear or anxiety, they are more likely to share their opinions and suggestions.

“Mr. A is easy approached. If there is problem , we Can direct chat The same he is good direct or via chat. he always give clear and easy explanation understood . he No Once belittle opinion we, even though We Still students.” (Participant 4, Interview, May 16, 2025)

“Way communication good. No only he who conveyed information, but we are also active give input. For example, time There is OSIS meeting, opinion We heard and discussed together. We feel appreciated and listened to The same father that.” (Participant 5, Interview, May 16, 2025)

One respondent emphasized that Mr. A was approachable and always open to students’ opinions and suggestions, both in person and via chat. He provided clear and easy-to-understand explanations, creating an open and inclusive atmosphere. The interview results highlighted good two-way communication. Not only did Mr. A convey information, but he also actively listened to and discussed input from students, for example in OSIS meetings. Students felt that their opinions and input were valued and heard.

In the process of exchanging opinion, difference opinion is It's a natural thing . Student representative must capable manage difference This with constructive way with create an atmosphere in which students and teachers are invited discuss feel comfortable For disclose different views without Afraid will consequence.

“Often interact and exchange opinions especially in matters related to extracurricular activities and student development. Student representatives usually invite discussions and ask for input before making important decisions.” (Participant 2, Interview, May 10, 2025)

"If decision the related with activity extracurricular or problem discipline student, i often involved For give input and opinions."
(Participant 3, Interview, May 10, 2025)

The explanation states that the student representative actively encourages interaction and exchange of opinions among students before making important decisions. This creates an environment where students feel comfortable expressing different views without fear of consequences. This process ensures that decisions taken take into account the student perspective as a whole. When decisions relate to extracurricular activities or student discipline issues, the student representative involves all parties involved to find a common solution that is acceptable to all parties. This creates a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for the decisions made, thereby increasing the likelihood of success and acceptance among students. This interview emphasizes the importance of student participation in the decision-making process at MAS Al- Washliyyah 22 Tembung to create an inclusive, democratic, and collaborative environment.

When giving advice or explaining an issue, the student representative should use clear and simple language. This is important so that all students, regardless of their background or level of understanding, can understand the information being conveyed. Avoiding jargon or complicated terms will help convey the message more effectively.

Communication in exchanging opinions and providing advice to student representatives at MAS Al- Washliyyah 22 Tembung school is a very important aspect in creating an inclusive and productive school environment. By developing good communication skills, student representatives can function as effective and inspiring leaders, which in turn will improve student well-being and engagement in school.

Providing Open Space for Discussion Between Student Representatives, Students and Teachers to Make it More Effective

Providing an open space for discussion between student representatives, students, and teachers at MAS Al- Washliyyah 22 Tembung school is an important step in creating an inclusive, collaborative, and productive learning environment. Effective discussions can help address issues, improve communication, and strengthen relationships between all parties involved in the educational process.

"Discussion point meeting with student That is most from guardian class Possible directions, advice and so on That But no close Possibility Besides it is also there need addition guidance from BK. This BK as for accompany his name guidance career or guidance related activities with positive things if possible they involved in things that are not Far from objective education We Especially objective term long." (Participant 1, Interview, May 8, 2025)

The importance of open space for discussion as stated by Hidayanthi et al namely discussion lies in its ability to increase the involvement of all parties. When students and teachers feel that they have a voice in decision making, they are more likely to be involved in the teaching and learning process (Hidayanthi et al., 2022) Open discussion can also encourage innovation, generating new ideas that can improve the quality of education in schools. In addition, creating an atmosphere of mutual trust between students, teachers, and student representatives is essential for effective collaboration.

"Communication can be improved. Regular meetings need to be held more often and clear communication protocols need to be created to ensure information reaches all teachers in a timely and effective manner, because I think if that is done then it can build a more transparent and accountable system." (Participant 3, Teacher Interview 2, May 10, 2025)

"Discussion room the open one help We understand each perspective. Sometimes, teachers have different views different with students, and Mr. A can be a good mediator For mediator difference that. As a result, the

solution obtained more wise and accepted all party.” (Participant, Student 1 Interview, May 16, 2025)

To ensure that the discussion goes well, a Student Representative at MAS Al-Washliyyah 22 Tembung school carries out important things to build effective communication channels. Holding regular meetings between student representatives, students, and teachers can be one way to discuss relevant issues. These meetings can be held monthly or as needed. In addition, forming a discussion forum that involves all parties allows them to share opinions and suggestions openly. Utilizing technology, such as communication applications or online forums, can also facilitate the exchange of ideas and opinions outside of school hours.

Encouraging active participation from all parties is key to creating an effective discussion. Using brainstorming techniques can help gather ideas from all participants, creating an atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable speaking. Giving everyone the opportunity to speak and valuing every opinion expressed, no matter how big or small, will encourage more people to participate. In discussions, differences of opinion are natural. Therefore, student representatives and teachers must be able to manage these differences in a constructive way. Encouraging constructive discussions and creating an atmosphere where differences of opinion can be discussed openly will help everyone feel valued. Inviting all parties to work together to find solutions that are acceptable to all parties will also create a sense of togetherness and collaboration (Marliana and Indihadi, 2020).

When discussing, it is important to use clear and simple language so that all participants can understand the information being conveyed. Avoiding jargon or complicated terms will help convey the message more effectively. In addition, building trust is the foundation of effective discussions. Student representatives and teachers must keep promises and commitments made to students and teachers, and convey information honestly and openly.

Developing communication skills is also very important. Student representatives and teachers should continue to develop their communication skills through training or workshops on effective communication, leadership, and conflict management. It is also helpful to reflect after each discussion to evaluate what went well and what needs to be improved.

Washliyyah 22 Tembung School has students from diverse backgrounds. Valuing this diversity and seeing it as an asset will enrich discussions. Leaders should encourage minority voices and provide opportunities for students or teachers who may have differing views to speak. Creating an environment where everyone feels accepted and valued, regardless of their background, will go a long way in creating a positive atmosphere for discussion. After discussions have taken place, it is important to follow up on the results achieved. Taking minutes of each meeting or discussion that records important points and decisions made will help all parties understand the results of the discussion. Additionally, informing all parties about actions taken based on the results of the discussion shows that their opinions are valued and have an impact.

“For me, it is also important to have mutual respect. All parties must be willing to listen to other people's opinions without judging. A comfortable and safe atmosphere for expression is the key to a successful discussion. Mr. A has an important role in creating such an atmosphere.” (Participant 5, Student Interview 2, May 16, 2025)

Give room open for discussion between student representatives, students, and teachers at MAS Al- Washliyyah 22 Tembung school is step important in create environment inclusive and collaborative learning. With build channel effective communication, encouraging participation active, manage difference opinion, and appreciate diversity, discussion can walk more effective. In addition, with follow up results discussion and building trust, all party can Work together to achieve common goals and improve the quality of education in schools.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study reveal that the decision-making process carried out by madrasah student representatives within the framework of School-Based Management (SBM) plays a crucial role in shaping an inclusive, participatory, and effective educational environment. Through the implementation of exemplary leadership, student representatives are not only able to address student-related problems but also foster a culture of mutual respect, accountability, and collaboration. The existence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for handling student disciplinary violations illustrates the structured and systematic approach adopted to ensure fairness and clarity in decision-making. Moreover, the study shows that effective two-way communication between student representatives, students, and teachers is a key factor in ensuring that student voices are heard, considered, and incorporated into school policies and activities. Open dialogue and mutual understanding enable all parties to feel valued and involved in the governance of the madrasah. In addition, the provision of open spaces for discussion encourages active participation, facilitates conflict resolution, and strengthens the relationship among stakeholders, thereby reinforcing democratic values within the school community. Overall, this research underlines the significance of empowering student representatives in the context of SBM, not merely as administrative participants but as pivotal figures in driving positive change, nurturing student agency, and contributing to the overall improvement of educational quality in madrasah. To sustain and maximize these contributions, it is essential for schools to institutionalize student participation through clear policies, structured roles, and formal mechanisms such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). By embedding student involvement into the school governance system, schools can ensure that student voices are not only heard occasionally but consistently integrated into decision-making processes. This institutionalization will promote a more democratic, accountable, and inclusive educational environment in the long term.

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