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Effectiveness of School-Based Management (SBM) System in Hong Kong in the Posthumanism Context

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Abstract

Hong Kong has implemented School Based Management since 2000, and approximately 415 secondary schools are operating under SBM with a view to improving school effectiveness. Through literature review, there has been little research work on the effectiveness of the SBM in HK despite operating for 26 years. This study measured the effectiveness of SBM implementation through a cross-sectional study with a random sample of 647 teachers from 71 secondary schools. The questionnaire developed in this study was supported by Confirmatory Factor Analysis, with reliability and validity. A theoretical framework showing the relationships between shared vision of the school, four features of SBM (participation in decision-making, professional development, empowerment and flexible use of financial resources), and effective implementation of SBM was supported by the Structural Equation Model. The results, first of their kind, showed that SBM was implemented effectively in Hong Kong under a shared vision and four features of SBM in the post-humanism context.

Keywords: *Shared-vision, Participation in Decision-making, Professional Development, Empowerment, Effective Measurement, School-Based Management, Post-humanism Context.*

1. Introduction

In the past decades, many countries around the world restructured their education through School-Based Management (SBM) with a view to enhancing the quality of education provided by schools (Amon & Bustami, 2021; Arar & Nasra, 2020; Beare, 1991; Beare & Boyd, 1993; Caldwell, 2005; Cheng, 2022; De Grauwe, 2005; Grinshtain & Gibton, 2018; Isa et al., 2020; Sun, 2022). In the 1990s, SBM became one of the most frequently discussed approaches to restructuring in the USA (Hanson, 1991). In March 1991, the Education and Manpower Branch and the Education Department of Hong Kong proposed implementing a reform for public-sector schools, the School Management Initiative, with the aim of improving school effectiveness (Education and Manpower Branch & Education Department, 1991). Since 2000, all aided schools in Hong Kong have adopted SBM (Education Commission, 2019). The Education Bureau set up a Task Force in 2019 to review and improve the implementation of SBM (Education Commission, 2019). All the above changes assume that SBM will positively enhance the effectiveness of schools by decentralising decision-making (Patrinos & Fasih, 2009), empowering teachers (Chui & Chui, 2025a; Wall & Rinehart, 1998), and fostering autonomy and

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accountability (Arcia et al., 2011), with the goal of improving school effectiveness.

The features of SBM vary across countries (Grauwe, 2005), and the effects of implementing SBM on school effectiveness are mixed across countries (Amon & Bustami, 2021; Arar & Nasra, 2020; Isa et al., 2020). In Hong Kong, the advantages of SBM were yet to be realised. (Cheng, 2022; Kwan & Li, 2015). Since there have been no relevant studies on the effectiveness of SBM in improving school outcomes in Hong Kong, this study aims to examine the effective implementation of SBM features in Hong Kong secondary schools through a cross-sectional study with responses from a random sample of 680 teachers from 67 schools in 2026. A questionnaire was developed with a literature review and adapted from related measurement scales to measure six constructs, including four features of SBM in Hong Kong, namely empowerment, teachers' participation in decision-making, professional development and flexibility in using financial resources; shared vision as an important antecedent of implementation of SBM; and effective implementation of SBM.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 School-based Management (SBM) in Hong Kong

Over the past decades, SBM has represented a strong global trend in school restructuring adopted by many countries, aimed at improving the quality of education through decentralisation, autonomy initiatives, site-based decision-making, site-based budgeting, and the empowerment of teachers (Cheng, 2022). The school-based management in the USA aimed to improve the quality of education by empowering certain groups, such as teachers and parents, establishing a school council on the school site, and increasing flexibility in resource use (Hanson, 1991).

The School Management Initiative (SMI) (Education and Manpower Department, 1991) was introduced in 1991 with 18 recommendations to improve the quality of education with measures similar to the SBM in the USA. Since 2000, all aided schools in Hong Kong have adopted SBM (Education Commission, 2019). There are two basic principles in implementing school-based management: 1. School-based management seeks to provide schools with enhanced flexibility and autonomy in their daily operation and resource management according to the needs of their students. 2. School-based management seeks to enhance transparency and accountability in the use of public funds and school operations by providing a participatory decision-making mechanism where all key stakeholders are involved (Education Bureau, 2019).

Key elements of school-based management consist of defining responsibilities, widening participation, developing the professionalism of teachers, providing more flexibility for schools to use their financial resources in setting goals through school development plans according to the needs of students, an annual evaluation of effectiveness and developing a culture and characteristics unique to the school (Education Bureau, 2019). The ultimate goal is to improve school effectiveness with better student achievement.

Regarding the flexibility in using financial resources, the Government has introduced the Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) and the Capacity Enhancement Grant to facilitate schools' implementation of school-based management and the formulation of long-term development plans. Schools can use these grants to contract out services or employ additional

staff beyond the approved establishment. The purpose is to relieve teachers' workload so that they have the capacity to implement education reform initiatives, such as developing school-based curriculum, enhancing students' language proficiency, and addressing diverse and special learning needs. Besides, schools are allowed to retain any unspent provision of the OEBG and use the grant flexibly on special school programmes, such as measures to improve the teaching and learning environment.

To ensure decentralisation with accountability, SBM requires the School Management Committee (SMC), the highest authority in the management of a school, to include the principal, teachers, parents, alumni, and community representatives, in addition to representatives of the sponsoring body of the school to play a significant role in making important decisions regarding school policies, budgeting, and staffing. Before the introduction of SBM, SMC is not registered as a legal entity. After the introduction of SBM, the Incorporated Management Committee (IMC), registered as a legal entity with representatives from the School Sponsoring Body, the principal, a teacher, a parent, and alumni as members, was introduced to replace the SMC and to act as the highest authority for the management of schools with legal responsibilities.

2.2 SBM and School Effectiveness

Cheng (2022) pointed out that there are barriers to schools adopting SBM to achieve the aim of enhancing the quality of education, due to a lack of understanding of the complex nature of SBM, and to research and building capacity for school effectiveness. The assumption that greater autonomy under SBM leads to enhanced student learning has not yet been confirmed due to a lack of robust international evidence and a comprehensive framework to support it. A literature review found mixed results regarding the relationships between SBM and school effectiveness (Amon & Bustami, 2021; Arar & Nasra, 2020; Bandur, 2012; Berhanu, 2023; Caldwell, 2005; Cheong Cheng & Mo Ching Mok, 2007; Hilman et al., 2025; Nir, 2002; Pamuji & Lawal, 2026; Rohma, 2020). Arar and Nasra (2020) found a positive relationship between all SBM dimensions and school effectiveness in a sample of Arab teachers in Israel. Results showed that implementing SBM in the Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia, was ineffective (Berhanu, 2023). Caldwell (2005) found that SBM significantly improved students' learning in Victoria, Australia. The results of a study in Indonesia indicated that the implementation of SBM was only partially successful in enhancing learning (Amon & Bustami, 2021). The assumed positive effects of SBM in Hong Kong on school effectiveness were yet to be validated (Kwan & Li, 2015). The above literature review suggests that the effectiveness of SBM is affected by many factors, and further research is needed to examine the effective implementation of SBM features in Hong Kong and to identify which SBM features are most important for enhancing school effectiveness.

2.3 Special Features of School-Based Management in Hong Kong

Features of School-Based Management vary widely across countries, from a few decisions of little importance being transferred to school professionals, to parents and the community receiving significant powers over most decisions concerning the school's management. School-Based Management can be classified as a continuum of the degree to which decision making is devolved to the local level, from weak, moderate, somewhat strong, strong, to very strong (Patrinos & Fasih, 2009). Hong Kong is rated as strong in this continuum.

Grauwe (2005) proposed that SBM needs a minimum of resources and competent teachers, with management focused on school support, a clear focus on quality improvement, and a concern for equity. A review of the SBM documents issued by the Education Bureau on SBM implementation reveals four key features aimed at strengthening decentralisation of decision-making with accountability to improve school effectiveness. The four features are: resources for flexible use with accountability, and three features related to enhancing teacher competence for effective implementation of SBM, including professional development, empowerment, and participation in decision-making.

2.4 Flexibility in Using Financial Resources

Before the implementation of SBM, schools in Hong Kong had very little flexibility to use their financial resources to enhance educational quality. To enhance education quality, a school needs to develop a school development plan through a consultative process involving teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders (Education Bureau, 2019). This plan serves as a roadmap for the school's development and improvement, and teachers are empowered to contribute their ideas and expertise to its formulation.

Resources are a key factor in the successful implementation of SBM (Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003) and enhancing the quality of education (Muliati et al., 2022). To facilitate effective school development, SBM provides schools with flexibility in the use of financial resources. This matters because schools face different contexts: variations in student needs, teacher workforce composition, subject expertise, learning gaps, and community expectations. Uniform funding rules can produce inefficiency when the same resources are used for dissimilar problems. Flexible discretion addresses this mismatch by allowing schools to deploy resources where they generate the greatest educational value.

SBM typically requires schools to develop School Development Plans (SDP) that specify goals, strategies, timelines, and evaluation indicators. Flexible financial discretion can improve implementation quality when it enables coherent planning: activities in the SDP can be adequately funded, staff time can be supported (for example, release time for professional development), and resources can be purchased to match instructional plans.

Thus, flexible funding is not simply “more autonomy”; it functions as a mechanism for operationalising strategy. School effectiveness improves when the plan is not merely written but funded and executed.

To improve teaching quality, with support for financial resources through the block grant, teachers can actively participate in curriculum development and revision committees, tailoring the curriculum to the school’s context and their students' specific needs and aspirations.

This study proposes that the flexibility in the use of financial resources is a key feature in Hong Kong that improves the effective implementation of SBM and school effectiveness. If this feature can be implemented effectively, it will contribute significantly to the effective implementation of SBM and improve the quality of education provided.

2.5 Professional Development

Teacher effects are significant for quality teaching and among the most important factors affecting student achievement (Chetty et al., 2014; López-Martín et al., 2023; Rockoff, 2004). Professional commitment is widely regarded as a central factor in teaching effectiveness and learners' achievement, and teachers' professional commitment is essential for enhancing teacher effectiveness and performance (Alzoraiki et al., 2023; Garg, 2024).

One feature of SBM is encouraging schools to provide professional development opportunities for teachers. With the introduction of SBM, three days on the school calendar can be assigned to teachers' professional development, with no students attending school. Teachers are required to complete 50 hours of professional development courses or activities. Schools can also allocate resources flexibly, supporting teachers' professional development through workshops, seminars, and training sessions to enhance their teaching skills and keep up with the latest educational practices.

Professional development of teachers is needed to improve school effectiveness through enhancing teacher effectiveness, which is one of the most important factors contributing to school effectiveness (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Effective teacher professional development can enhance teachers' teaching and students' learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Lynch et al., 2025), teachers' knowledge and teaching effectiveness (Hill & Chin, 2018). With enhanced teaching effectiveness, SBM will positively affect the quality of education.

Teacher participation in decision-making under SBM is another factor which needs teachers' professional development. Skills and knowledge related to planning, management, and the flexible use of financial resources for school development require expertise beyond professional teaching. In light of the need to participate in decision-making, teachers' professional development is required to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed.

The rapid development of AI and other educational technologies is another factor leading to the emphasis on professional development. With sufficient financial support, the application of AI and other new technologies in teaching and learning will greatly improve the quality of instruction. Professional development of teachers can equip teachers to acquire new knowledge and skills in using technologies with effective and flexible financial resources support, leading to enhanced quality of teaching and learning.

Teacher professional development is most powerful when it is relevant to real classroom challenges. Sims et al. (2025) proposed that effective professional development should focus on developing teachers' insights, motivating change, strengthening teaching techniques, and embedding these changes in teachers' practice. Implementation of SBM impacts teachers with new insights and motivation, developing teaching techniques to bring about change in teaching practice with a view to improving teaching effectiveness. Hence, SBM lays down a background facilitating effective professional development of teachers.

Based on the above literature review, this study proposes that professional development of teachers is a feature of SBM and will significantly affect the effective implementation of SBM in improving the quality of education by enhancing participation in decision-making and

flexibility in using financial resources.

2.6 Participation in Decision-Making

A special feature of SBM is the formal structure that sets up processes and requirements for schools to involve teachers in decision-making. Schools under SBM require teachers to take part in decision-making through the rules and policies in place. At least one teacher was elected to sit on the Incorporated Management Committee, a legal entity with the highest authority to manage the school's operations in an accountable manner.

Various committees are set up under SBM to manage the administration of teaching, student support, facilities support, financial matters, and the planning of the school's objectives. The majority of members of these committees are teachers.

Research studies showed that teachers' participation in decision-making can enhance their sense of efficacy and job satisfaction (Sarafidou & Chatziioannidis, 2013), and the quality of school decision-making (Ndiku et al., 2009). Teachers' level of participation and willingness to participate in decisions are associated with school effectiveness (Baydar, 2022).

Teachers' shared decision-making, which enhances school effectiveness, can be explained by the fact that teachers, as front-line workers, have a better understanding of the school's performance and the needs of staff and students. Their participation in decision-making can target areas for improvement and thus be more effective in enhancing the school's performance and effectiveness.

Participation in decision-making, coupled with financial autonomy to use resources flexibly, can have an even greater impact on improving school effectiveness. Each school in Hong Kong can use the money in a block grant amounting to several million dollars flexibly. With the flexible use of resources and the application of technologies to improve teaching effectiveness, online learning in Hong Kong during COVID-19 was found to be enhanced (Chui et al., 2025a, 2025b). In the current era of AI and rapid technological development, participation in decision-making with financial autonomy will enable a school to implement SBM effectively, enhancing teaching quality and school effectiveness.

This study proposes that teachers' participation in decision-making, supported by professional development and empowerment, will be significantly associated with the effective implementation of SBM, leading to enhanced school effectiveness.

2.7 Empowerment

Teachers are formally empowered under SBM through an organisational structure with committees in place, roles in developing school plans, modifying curriculum to meet the specific needs of students, and influencing the budget, with a view to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning (Education Bureau, 2019). These formal committees are responsible for planning, deciding and implementing matters related to teaching and learning, students and whole-person development policies.

Employee empowerment was found to be an important factor contributing to organisational success (Jose & Mampilly, 2014). Teacher empowerment was significantly associated with self-efficacy and internal motivation (Ergeneli et al., 2007), and participation in decision-making (Chui, 2024). This study proposes that, through psychological empowerment within the formal organisational structures of SBM, teachers will be more motivated to participate in and decision-making according to their expertise, leading to the effective implementation of SBM and enhancing the quality of education provided by the school.

2.8 Shared Vision

Vision has been recognised as an important factor contributing to organisational success (Jose & Mampilly, 2014; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). According to research studies, shared vision is essential for effectiveness of implementing SBM features and to enhance school effectiveness (Chui, et al., 2024). SBM in Hong Kong provides a vision of enhancing school effectiveness through the four special features. To implement the four features, teachers and the whole school have to share the vision and understand the rationale for making changes under SBM with good reasons. If not, teachers will perceive SBM as another bureaucratic measure to monitor their work, leading to resentment and frustration of having more rules to follow. This study proposes that a shared vision of the school will enhance the effective implementation of the four key features of SBM, which, in turn, leads to overall effective implementation of SBM.

2.9 Systemic Improvement via SBM – the UK Experience

England's schooling landscape is being remodelled and the move from hierarchical to heterarchical modes of governance has implications for systemic change strategies. Balancing local and networked autonomy with centralising policies complexifies choices for schools, creating tensions that this article explores through the context of curriculum resourcing policies. Drawing on key ideas from implementation science and data from a Wellcome-funded study of primary teacher professional learning in mathematics in England, the researchers exemplify the challenges of implementing centralised improvement policies in a nominally schools-led, self-improving, heterarchical education system via School-based Management System. Each of the 19 participating schools had evolved a bespoke curriculum, and these hybridised ‘mashups’ of different resources were enacted with varying degrees of fidelity by teachers. The implications of this comparative case for systemic improvement was discussed, both in the use of educational resources and for policy implementation more generally (Gripton, 2025).

2.10 Post-humanism and SBM

Strom & Lupinacci (2019) examine how post-human theories can challenge established assumptions in educational leadership preparation. They argue that educators often enter doctoral programmes with individualistic, human-centered, and linear understandings of leadership and research. Schooling systems reinforce these perspectives through quantitative measures that represent students, teachers, and learning as numerical outcomes. Drawing on post-human and ecological thinkers, the chapter discusses pedagogical approaches that interrupt these assumptions. It proposes more relational, interconnected, and plural understandings of

educational practice, emphasizing productive differences and relationships with the more-than-human world. They offer a conceptual foundation for rethinking how educational leaders understand their responsibilities and undertake research.

Magno & Becker (2024) propose post-critical educational leadership as a means of developing more just and sustainable educational governance. Drawing on relational and posthuman-associated concepts, including intra-action and assemblage, the authors describe leadership as an ongoing process shaped by human and nonhuman relationships. They question static, hierarchical, and market-oriented governance arrangements and advocate participative approaches grounded in trust, cooperation, solidarity, and justice. They also emphasize leaders' awareness of their identities, emotions, assumptions, and positions within changing educational contexts. Leadership consequently becomes a collective, evolving practice rather than a function confined to formally appointed administrators.

Yilmaz (2026) examines educational leadership within environments increasingly mediated by artificial intelligence. Combining post-human philosophy, transpersonal psychology, and relational leadership theory, he develops a model of conscious leadership. The concept of the "algorithmic self" describes how awareness is shaped through relationships between human cognition and technological mediation. The proposed model brings together psychological depth, ethical reflection, and technological understanding. Rather than treating AI simply as an instrument or a threat, the article situates leadership within interconnected human–machine systems. It emphasizes that educational judgment and responsibility must be reconsidered as technological infrastructures participate in institutional decision-making. The model is theoretical rather than an empirically validated management intervention.

2.11 Research Gap: Measurement of the Effective Implementation of SBM in HK

From the above Literature Review, there is little research conducted in Hong Kong to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the special features of SBM in the post-humanism context. This study is designed to fill the gap and to find out whether the four special features are implemented effectively, as well as the overall implementation of SBM is well received by teachers.

As a result of this gap, the Research Question for this paper is:

To research and ascertain the Effectiveness of School-Based Management in Hong Kong in the Post-humanism Context

In order to do so, a questionnaire was designed to measure the effective implementation of the four features, as rated by teachers; the shared vision; and the effectiveness of the special features of SBM, based on a literature review and adaptation from related measurement scales.

3. Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework for this study, related to the proposed hypotheses, is presented to show the relationships among shared vision, special features of SBM, and the effectiveness of SBM implementation (Figure-1).

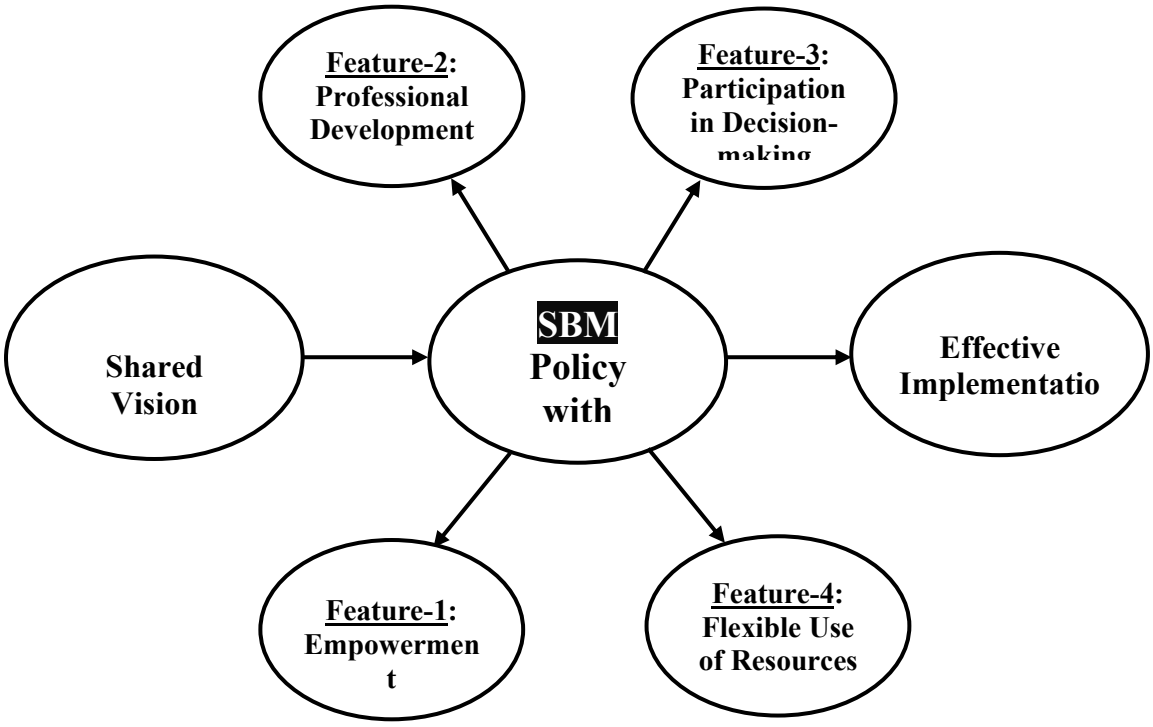

Figure-1: Theoretical Framework for the Effectiveness of SBM Implementation in the Post-humanism Context

3.1 Hypotheses

According to the literature review and the proposed theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed. Hypothesis 1 is related to the effectiveness of SBM implementation. Hypotheses 2 to 4 propose the relationships among shared vision, effective implementation of the four features, and teachers' overall perception of the effectiveness of implementing SBM in Hong Kong, respectively.

Given the nuanced relationships among the four features, as discussed in the literature review and findings from research studies, Hypotheses 5 to 10 are put forward regarding the relationships among shared vision, each specific feature, and effective implementation as perceived by teachers. Consequently, the 10 Hypotheses (**H**) above-mentioned are detailed as follows:

H-1: SBM is effectively implemented in Hong Kong

H-2: Shared vision will significantly improve the implementation of the four features of School-Based Management, namely empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making and flexible use of resources.

H-3: The effective implementation of four features of School-Based Management, namely empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making and flexible use of resources, will enhance the effectiveness of SBM.

H-4: Shared vision will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM.

H-5: Shared vision will enhance the empowerment of teachers, which will then affect teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

H-6: Shared vision will enhance the professional development of teachers, which will then affect teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

H-7: Empowerment of teachers will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM through teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

H-8: Professional development of teachers will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM through teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

H-9: Teacher participation in decision-making will significantly enhance effective implementation of SBM.

H-10: Professional development of teachers will significantly enhance the effective implementation of SBM.

3.2 Materials and Methods

3.2.1 Research Design

This research used a cross-sectional survey with a questionnaire developed to measure the six constructs in this study: Shared vision, Empowerment, Participation in Decision-making, Professional Development, Flexible use of Financial Resources, and Effective implementation of SBM. The development of instruments went through the following stages:

1. Review of related literature and instruments already developed;
2. Proposing constructs related to this study and defining the constructs to be measured;
3. Developing instruments according to the proposed construct and situation of secondary schools in Hong Kong and with reference to instruments used by other studies;
4. Seeking comments from some focused groups and professionals with relevant experience and expertise to refine the proposed instruments;
5. Collection of data to validate the instruments;
6. Confirmatory Factor Analyses for validating the instruments;
7. Using the Structural Equation Model to investigate the relationship among variables according to the proposed theoretical framework.

3.2.2 Measures

(A) Shared Vision (the Variable is referred to as "Vision" hereafter)

Vision is defined as the shared vision and actions taken to implement SBM throughout the school by all stakeholders, including managers, the principal, teachers, and the whole school. Six items were developed using a 5-point Likert Scale, based on the definition and with reference to scales adopted by other studies. Two examples are "The Incorporated Management Committee and all staff share the vision and mission of the School", and "The principal shares the vision with all staff frequently".

(B) Empowerment (the Variable is referred to as "Empowerment" hereafter).

Empowerment is defined as teachers' psychological empowerment, a motivational construct characterised by four cognitions: meaning, impact, competence, and self-determination. Four items were developed, based on the literature reviewed and the definition of Empowerment proposed in this study, to measure teachers' psychological empowerment. Two examples of the items are "Teachers are empowered to make important decisions of the school", and "Teachers can influence the planning of the school".

(C) Teacher Participation in Decision-Making ("Participation")

This study defines *Participation* as opportunities for teachers to take part in decision-making and to bring about changes in school policy and actions related to financial resources, teaching, curriculum, and students' development. Five items were developed to measure teachers' opportunities in participation in decision-making. Two examples of the five items are "Opportunities for teachers to participate in decisions about the use of financial resources" and "Teachers actively participate in decision-making".

(D) Professional Development ("Development")

In this study, *Development* is defined as teachers' pursuit of professional development through support and requirements provided by the School. Five items were developed using the definitions and measurement scales employed in other studies. Two examples are "The School supports my professional development" and "The School requires teachers to pursue professional development every year".

(E) Flexible Use in Financial Resources ("Resources")

This study defines *Resources* as the flexibility in using resources to support teaching and learning, in accordance with the rules set by the Education Bureau under SBM. Five items were developed using the definitions and measurement scales employed in other studies. Two examples are "The School flexibly uses financial resources to support improvement in teaching" and "The School flexibly uses financial resources to support students' needs".

(F) Effective implementation (Effectiveness)

This study defines effectiveness as teachers' perceptions of the overall effectiveness of SBM implementation in their schools. Six items were developed using the definitions and measurement scales employed in other studies. Two examples are "The School implements SBM effectively" and "Implementation of SBM in our School can improve students' achievement".

4. Results And Analysis

More than 647 teachers from 71 secondary schools, out of a total of 358 aided secondary schools selected from a random sample, responded to the survey. After cleaning data with incomplete responses, 647 cases were analysed by SPSS and AMOS version 31.

4.1 Demographic Data

The demographic data for teachers show that the average age is 34 years. 34.5% of teachers have less than 5 years of working experience in the present school. 49.5% of teachers have more than 10 years of teaching experience in their present school, and 35.7% of them have more than 10 years of teaching experience in their present rank. 33% of teachers are in the senior ranks. 50.5% of them are female teachers, and 49.5% are male teachers. The demographic data are similar to those for secondary teachers in Hong Kong.

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Measurement model with each construct to be measured, a second-order factor consisting of four constructs of SBM features, and all six constructs were confirmed with excellent goodness of fit indices. The Cronbach Alpha reliability of all the scales, measured by SPSS version 31, lies between 0.825 to 0.956. The goodness of fit indices and reliability of all measurements are reported in Table-1. The analyses above show that all six constructs are distinct, reliable and have discriminant validity.

4.3 Means and T-tests of the Six Variables

The means of all constructs' means, and one sample t-test are analysed with results shown in Table-1. The t-test results show that all the mean values are significantly above three on a five-point Likert scale. The results show that all four key features are effectively implemented, and the shared vision and the effectiveness of SBM feature implementation are also perceived as highly satisfactory by teachers. The results show that four features of the SBM are effectively implemented under shared vision of the whole school, and teachers perceived the overall implementation of SBM is effective. Hence, Hypothesis-1, which states that SBM is effectively implemented as perceived by teachers. The results are the first of its kind after the implementation of SBM in Hong Kong, supporting the effectiveness of implementation of SBM.

Table-1: Model Fit Indices, Reliability, Means, and Significance Tests for Constructs

Construct	CFI	IFI	RMSEA	Reliability	Mean	*p*
Participation	.999	.999	.036	.911	3.57	<.001
Development	.999	.999	.024	.825	4.09	<.001
Empowerment	.996	.996	.125	.947	3.48	<.001
Finance	.995	.995	.082	.925	3.92	<.001
Second-order factor of four features	.992	.992	.045	.913	3.77	<.001
Shared Vision	.998	.998	.043	.917	3.89	<.001
Effectiveness	.998	.998	.043	.956	3.76	<.001

Note: CFI = Comparative Fit Index; IFI = Incremental Fit Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. Reliability coefficients are Cronbach's alpha. All *p* values are from one-sample *t*-tests.

4.4 Structural Equation Model (SEM)

A structural equation model is put forward, according to the theoretical framework as shown in Figure-1 for analysis by Amos Version 31. The goodness of fit indices of the SEM Model is excellent (CFI=0.965; IFI=0.965; RMSEA= 0.050).

A second model analyses the effects of shared vision and various features on the effective implementation of SBM, as shown in Figure-2. The goodness of fit indices of the SEM Model is excellent (CFI=0.969; IFI=0.969; RMSEA= 0.048).

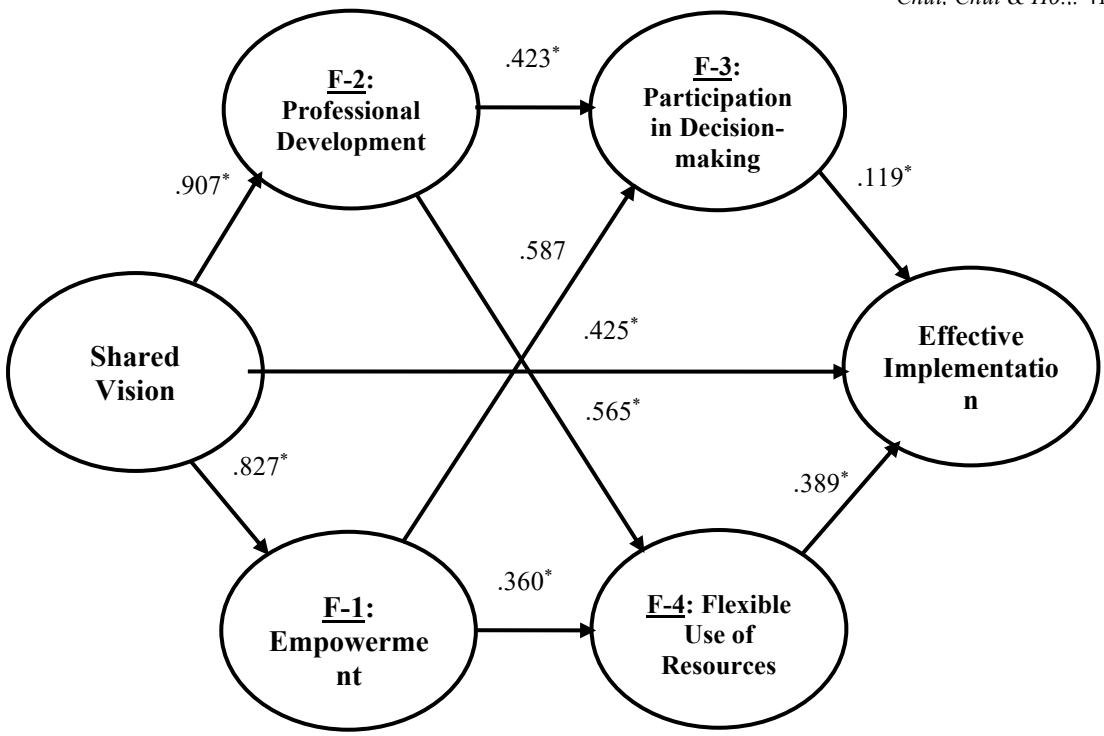

Figure-2: Second SEM Model (**F** = Feature)

Both models provide excellent goodness-of-fit indices. As the second model provides more nuanced information about the effects among variables, the standardised direct and total effects among the variables for the second model are reported in Table-2 below

Table-2: Direct and Total Effects Between Constructs in the Second SEM Model

Outcome Variable	Shared Vision		Empowerment		Development		Participation		Financial Flexibility	
	DE	**TE**	**DE**	**TE**	**DE**	**TE**	**DE**	**TE**	**DE**	**TE**
Empowerment	.827	.827	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Development	.907	.907	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Participation	ns	.873	.587	.587	.423	.423	—	—	—	—
Financial Flexibility	ns	.810	.360	.360	.565	.565	ns	ns	—	—

Effective Implementation	.425	.845	ns	.211	ns	.270	.119	.119	.389	.389

Note: DE = Direct Effect; TE = Total Effect; ns = not significant. All reported coefficients are significant at $p < .001$.

From Table-2, it can be seen that *Shared vision* has a significant total effect on each of the four SBM features, ranging from .810 to .907. This result supports Hypothesis 2, which states that shared vision will significantly improve the implementation of the four features of School-Based Management, namely empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making and flexible use of resources.

The four features of School-Based Management, namely empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making and flexible use of resources, have significant total effects ranging from .119 to .389 on effective implementation of SBM. The results support Hypothesis 3, which states that the effective implementation of four features of School-Based Management, namely empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making, and flexible use of resources, will enhance the effectiveness of SBM.

Shared vision has a significant direct effect of .425 and a significant total effect of .845 on the effective implementation of SBM. The results support Hypothesis 4, which states that shared vision will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM.

Shared vision has a significant direct and total effect of .827 on empowerment and empowerment has a significant direct and total effect of .587 and .360 on participation and financial flexibility, respectively. The results support Hypothesis 5, which states that shared vision will enhance teachers' empowerment, which will then affect teachers' participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

Shared vision has a significant direct and total effect of .907 on professional development of teachers and professional development of teachers has a significant direct and total effect of .423 and .565 on participation and financial flexibility, respectively. The results support Hypothesis 6, which states that shared vision will enhance teachers' professional development, thereby affecting teachers' participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

Empowerment has a significant direct and total effect of .873 and .810 on teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources, respectively. Teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources have a significant direct and total effect of .119 and .389 on effective implementation of SBM, respectively. The results support Hypothesis 7, which states that empowerment of teachers will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM through teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

Professional development of teachers has a significant direct and total effect of .423 and .565 on teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources, respectively. Teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources have significant direct and total effects of .119 and .389 on the effective implementation of SBM, respectively. The results support Hypothesis 8, which states that Professional development of teachers will significantly enhance the effectiveness of SBM through teacher participation in decision-making and flexible use of financial resources.

Teacher participation in decision-making has a significant direct and total effect of .119 on effective implementation of SBM. This result supports Hypothesis 9, which states that teacher participation in decision-making will significantly enhance effective implementation of SBM.

Flexible use of financial resources has a significant direct and total effect of .389 on the effective implementation of SBM. This result supports Hypothesis 10, which states that Flexible use of financial resources will significantly enhance effective implementation of SBM.

The results of the above analyses support all ten hypotheses of this study. The theoretical model in this study is also supported by the data collected. 77.9% of the variance in effective implementation of SBM is explained by shared vision and four specific features of SBM, supporting that shared vision and the effective implementation of each feature are important antecedent factors leading to SBM's perceived effectiveness by teachers.

5. Discussion

The results of this study show that, in the context of SBM in Hong Kong, teachers have positive perceptions of shared vision, and four features of SBM, namely, empowerment, professional development, participation in decision-making, and flexible use of financial resources, and overall effective implementation of SBM. The mean values of all constructs are significantly above the mean value of 3 out of a 5-point Likert scale. The results give support to the effective implementation of SBM in Hong Kong for the first time.

The mean values of the four SBM constructs, in decreasing order, are: professional development (4.09), flexible use of financial resources (3.92), participation in decision-making (3.57), and empowerment (3.48). Since the implementation of SBM and the surge in AI and technologies to enhance quality teaching, professional development has the highest rating, which is not unexpected. As discussed in the literature review, professional development is needed to enhance teaching quality, especially amid rapid technological and AI developments, and to acquire the knowledge and skills required for planning, decision-making, and management.

The total effect on effective implementation of SBM by the four features, in decreasing order, is flexible use of finance (.389), professional development (.270), empowerment (.211), and participation in decision-making (.119). The results show that schools under SBM should attach great importance to enhancing the four features of SBM with a view to improving school effectiveness.

Flexible use of financial resources accounts for 15.1% of the variance of effective implementation. The flexible use and availability of financial resources support a school in taking actions to solve problems related to teaching and learning, such as the online teaching required during COVID-19. The fact that flexible use of financial resources can better support fulfilling these needs according to their priority, leading to better quality of teaching and learning is supported by principals (Ming Pao, 2026). The Education Bureau has been continuously improving the flexible use of financial resources by introducing the EOEBG to replace the original OEBG (Operating Expenses Block Grant) (Education Bureau, 2025). The above facts offer support for the importance of flexible use of financial resources on effectiveness of SBM.

Research found that, in some countries during COVID-19, the effectiveness of online teaching and learning was affected by insufficient financial support for the hardware and software needed for online instruction. However, schools in Hong Kong have not encountered any problems due to a lack of financial and hardware support. Although online teaching is not practised by schools after COVID-19, there is still a need to use technology and implement measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Hence, schools should maximise the positive effects of this feature under SBM. Since the use of financial resources can lead to effective implementation of SBM, it is suggested that the Education Bureau should consider increasing the financial resources provided to schools for improving school effectiveness.

Shared vision has the strongest direct and total effect on the effective implementation of SBM. The result is consistent with many research studies on the importance of shared vision on organisational performance. The support for Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 shows that shared vision can significantly enhance the effective implementation of SBM, directly and through the intervening variables of empowerment and professional development.

In order to implement SBM effectively, the whole school, including IMC, the school principal and teachers need to have a shared vision. The results suggest that schools under SBM need to attach great importance to consistently and continuously sharing the vision to achieve better implementation of SBM and improve school effectiveness.

Teachers are found to be psychologically empowered in this study. SBM provides a formal organisational structure, policies, and support for teachers, which play a very important role in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning (Education Bureau, 2019). The measures introduced provide teachers with the environment to understand and experience the four cognitions of empowerment. It takes time for teachers to work under SBM to understand and experience its real benefits. The finding in this study that teachers have a positive perception of being empowered is consistent with the goals and assumptions underlying the implementation of SBM. Since teacher empowerment has significant positive effects on all three other variables in this study, schools should place great importance on further enhancing it.

This study found that teachers hold a positive perception of participation in decision-making, and that participation has a significant direct and total effect on the effective implementation of SBM. The results support the emphasis on SBM's participation in decision-making, with requirements

for schools to establish a structure for teachers' participation at every level of decision-making, including the highest authority level of the school, the Incorporated Management Committee. The results support making teachers' participation in decision-making a key feature of SBM.

This study found that the implementation of SBM, as perceived by teachers, is effective. The objective data of Hong Kong students' outstanding performance in the PISA in the past decades may lend support to teachers' perception of the positive effects of the implementation of SBM. Further research is needed to find out whether there are significant effects of effective implementation SBM on school effectiveness and improvement.

6. Conclusion

Through literature review, there has been little research work on the effectiveness of the SBM in HK despite operating since 2000. This study was successful in developing a validated questionnaire for measuring shared vision, four key features of SBM and effective implementation of SBM. The questionnaire can be used in future studies related to the above constructs.

According to the findings of this study, we can conclude that SBM is implemented effectively in Hong Kong. The four features of SBM, including empowerment, professional development, teachers' participation in decision-making and flexible use in financial resources, are well received by teachers, and contribute to the overall effective implementation of SBM in the Post-humanism context.

The government should further enhance the implementation of SBM Policy, with special attention attached to the feature of flexible use of financial resources, and the possibility of providing more financial resources to further improve the quality of education.

Professional development of teachers is found to have significant effects on teacher participation in decision-making, flexible use of financial resources and effective implementation of SBM. It is suggested that the government and schools should attach more importance to the professional development of teachers, with more resources provided and more courses targeting the need of teachers in providing quality teaching, especially in area related to effective use of AI and technology.

7. Limitations & Further Research

This study is a cross-sectional study and causal relationships between variables cannot be validated. Further longitudinal studies are required to support the causal relationships.

The effectiveness of SBM depends on many contextual factors such as culture, financial resources available, and government influence such as the authority to request implementation of SBM and to hold each school accountable for the effectiveness of implementation. Hence, the results of this study may not apply to other countries with different culture and government system.

Further research is needed to find out what positive outcomes are associated with the effective implementation of SBM Policy, such as school culture, teacher morale, effective use of AI and technologies, and quality of school education in the post-humanism context.

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