

**VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION DURING THE INTRODUCTION OF
REGIONAL AUTONOMY IN INDONESIA**

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the transformation of vocational secondary education (hereon referred to as 'VSE') in Indonesia during the transitional stage of the implementation of regional autonomy, a radical political arrangement intended to prevent the disintegration of the nation, following political instability. It has involved the transfer of most formerly central government responsibilities directly, and without adequate preparation, to the lowest level of government in districts and cities, bypassing the provincial governments, the second level of the government hierarchy.

The methodology employed for this research is the 'explanatory case studies' approach to answer how and why the shift to regional autonomy influenced the development of VSE. It consists of multiple issues and cases that reflect this 'holistic' phenomenon. The research methods employed were those of data collection, particularly of government policies and information, observation and the conducting of in depth interviews with a cross section of personnel involved in central, provincial and local policy implementation. Vocational Secondary Schools were studied in six districts in the provinces of West Java, Banten and Bangka Belitung.

The introduction of regional autonomy has, politically, empowered local governments in districts and cities to become more autonomous and independent in managing most sectors by their own authority. In the education sector, especially in the field of VSE, during the transitional stage, the reins of development have still been controlled by central government, through the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE). However, achievement of the national mission for this particular area of education is critical.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy, the role of the DVSE, as the central education office responsible for VSE development, has been limited merely to directing national policy. Hierarchically, the DVSE no longer has direct links with vocational secondary schools (SMK, which is the acronym for their name in Indonesian: *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan*) in districts and cities. Yet, the DVSE still provides practical support in the form of a funding incentive scheme of block grants for selected schools to implement. In addition, personal ties and the experience of working jointly in the past have significantly influenced schools to continue to communicate directly with the central office. Similarly, in the provinces, the Provincial Education Offices (EOP or, in Indonesian: *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*) are no longer involved in managing the needs of the SMKs and are only responsible for implementing the policies of the provincial governors, including the distribution of the block grants, the new scheme for

supporting the schools financially. However, when it comes to dealing with VSE, most local governments, newly-empowered and autonomous, appear unprepared to handle the tasks and responsibilities devolved to them, due to lack of resources and experienced personnel. In addition, besides the complexity and expensiveness of the schools (SMKs) being the main reasons, VSE development has also not been a local government priority. The local governments have their own agendas, represented by their populist programs and policies, for developing and improving the local economy and prosperity of their people.

The SMKs, as tangible indicators of measurement of VSE development, find themselves in a critical situation, following the sudden termination of central government support, but with local governments as yet unready to assume this support role. Since the introduction of Regional Autonomy, SMKs are having to cope with various problems related to school operations, management and development, as well as with trying to establish effective relationships with the newly-empowered local government bureaucracies. However, there have also been positive outcomes. All of this tension has stimulated, encouraged and forced schools to optimize their own resources. Combined with the new spirit of autonomy, this has improved schools' independence, self-reliance and confidence in carrying out their tasks and responsibilities. These have been unintended outcomes for the education sector of the new political arrangements.

This research will be important for the vocational secondary education development programs in Indonesia, especially the policy makers, senior bureaucrats and administrators in the central, provincial and district governments. This evaluation of the impact of the regional autonomy on the VSE programs will be useful in devising future VSE development programs. In addition, the discussion of the political context of the education sector will be of interest for political scientists and specialist in government administration in Indonesia and internationally

DECLARATION

“I, Turijin Turijin, declare that the PhD thesis entitled VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION DURING THE INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY IN INDONESIA is not more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work”.

Signature



Date 28 June 2012

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GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APBD	Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (Provincial/Local Government Annual Budget)
AusAid	Australian Agency for International Development
BAPPEDA	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah (Regional Development Planning Board), in the provinces, districts and cities
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Balitbang	Badan dan Penelitian Pengembangan (Research and Development Centre)
BAPPENAS	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Development Planning Board)
BKD	Badan Kepegawaian Daerah (Regional Civil Service Agency)
BKN	Badan Kepegawaian Nasional (National Civil Service Agency)
BPS	Badan Pusat Statistik (Central Statistics Agency), formerly Central Bureau of Statistics
Bupati	Regent (Head of a District)
DAK	Dana Alokasi Khusus (Special Allocation Fund)
DAU	Dana Alokasi Umum (General Allocation Fund)
Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi	Provincial Education Office at the level of province, responsible to the provincial Governor
Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten	Local Office at district level, responsible to the regent or the Head of the District
Dinas Pendidikan Kota	Local Education Office at city level, responsible to the mayor or the head of the city
Ditjen Dikdasmen	Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah (Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education)
Dikmenjur	Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan (Vocational Secondary Education)
Dit. Dikmenjur	Direktorat Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan (Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education)
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Assembly), Indonesia's Parliament, located in Jakarta
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People's Representative Assembly), in the provinces, districts or cities
DVSE	Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, responsible for vocational secondary education (VSE)
EOD	Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten (Local Education Office)
EOP	Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi (Provincial Education Office)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GBHN	Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara (Board Outline of State Policy)
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Cooperation)
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISO	International Standards Organization
Kabupaten	district/regency
KADIN	Kamar Dagang dan Industri (Chamber of Industry and Commerce)
Kandep	Kantor Departemen (Local Department Office), located in

	Districts or Cities, in existence before the introduction of regional autonomy
Kanwil	Kantor Wilayah (provincial-level office of a central government ministry), in existence before the introduction of regional autonomy
KBK	Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (Competency-Based Curriculum)
Kecamatan	sub-district or city
Kelurahan	village administrative unit (below that of sub-district)
Kota	city
Kotamadya	Municipality
KPU	Komisi Pemilihan Umum (Electoral Commission)
LG	local government, of a district or city
Menpan	Kementrian Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara (Ministry for Administrative Reform)
MONE	Ministry of National Education
MONEV	Monitoring and Evaluation (system for)
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly), the supreme decision-making body, comprising Members of Parliament and regional, military and community representatives
New Order	The Government of President Soeharto, 1966 to 1998
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAD	Pendapatan Asli Daerah (Locally-Derived Revenue)
PERDA	Peraturan Daerah (Local Government Regulations)
PP	Peraturan Pemerintah (Government Regulations)
PPPG	Pusat Pelatihan dan Penataran Guru (Centre for Teacher Training and Upgrading)
SD	Sekolah Dasar (Primary School)
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (Vocational Secondary School)
SMP	Sekolah Menengah Pertama (Junior High School)
SMA	Sekolah Menengah Atas (Senior High School)
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UU	Undang-Undang (Laws)
VSE	Vocational Secondary Education

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

For decades, the education sector in Indonesia was managed under a centralised system. Programs, policies and matters related to schools, such as curriculum, facilities, financial and staffing issues, were all determined by the central government in Jakarta. The changing of the Ministry of Education and the changing of regulations has been a regular feature of the central government and is representative of its power. This has typically occurred every five years, or after a new president is elected¹. The central government used to be assisted by the provincial governments in the provinces in controlling the implementation of its national mission at school level in the districts and cities, directly, without the involvement of the government at local level (local governments). In 2001, regional autonomy was introduced, changing the governmental system from a centralized one, ushering in a new era of decentralization, devolving some sectors - including education - to local governments, in districts and cities, but not to the second level of government, in the provinces. It was predicted that this transitional stage of regional autonomy would see impacts on all sectors - including vocational secondary education (VSE), the focus of this research. The Department of National Education has grouped VSE in five areas of study: Technical, Agriculture, Business, Tourism and the Arts, with approximately 5000 schools (1000 state and 4000 private)² located in 33 provinces, managed by Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) part of the Ministry of National Education (MONE). This study investigates the impact this policy has had on the development of VSE.

The establishment of regional autonomy in government has become a worldwide trend. In Indonesia, the primary objective is “satisfying the needs of the public, improving the responsiveness of governments to public concerns and increasing the quality of services”³. Regional autonomy or, as it is popularized by most writers and researchers, decentralization

¹ Presidential elections in Indonesia are conducted every five years and the elected president has the prerogative rights to appoint the ministers to assist him or her in running the government.

² Dikmenjur (2006), Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2006, (original title: *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan*, 2006), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur

³ Rondinelli et al, (1983) cited by Hope, Kempe Ronald Snr (2000), “Decentralization and local governance theory and the practice in Botswana”, *Development Southern Africa*, Vol. 17, No 4, October , p.2

or regionalization, is the transformation of government from centrally-based to locally-based power, politics and bureaucracy⁴.

In 1974, following these trends, Indonesia attempted to introduce the concept, with three basic principles: devolution, deconcentration and co-administration and, also, in 1990, with the introduction of territorial decentralization. However, these initiatives failed, as there was no political commitment from President Suharto and his government⁵. By the time of Suharto's fall in 1998, Indonesia had experienced four decades of highly-centralized government.

In early 1999, it was the political decision of President Habibie, in order to accommodate the pressure and the tensions from the regions and, most importantly, to save the nation from the threat of territorial disintegration, that motivated the current policy of decentralization. The Habibie government promulgated Laws 22 and 25 of 1999 on Regional Autonomy. These laws devolved decision-making powers and revenue from the central level to the third level of government (in the districts and cities), and not to the second level of government (in the provinces). In theory, the power of central government was to decrease, while the local governments in districts and cities, now relatively free from the control of the provincial bureaucracy, would become more powerful.

In January 2001, under the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, regional autonomy was finally implemented, following the passing of these two laws. It stimulated dynamic changes, both nationally and regionally. As the recipient of greater powers, local governments now have the authority to manage eleven different policy sectors - including the education sector - in order to meet local needs⁶. The local governments have rationalized the pre-existing bureaucracy, by restructuring and merging, or establishing new offices, in order to accommodate their new responsibilities, devolved from the central government, as well as to provide better services to the community⁷. According to the spirit of these laws, the local

⁴ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), *Decentralization in Indonesia: redesigning the state*, Canberra, Asia Pacific Press, and Aspinall, Edward and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralization and Democratization*, Singapore : Institute of Southern Asian Studies

⁵ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003), p. 11

⁶ Colongon, Arellano A., Jr. (2003) "What is happening on the ground? The progress of decentralization", in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore: Institute of Southern Asian Studies

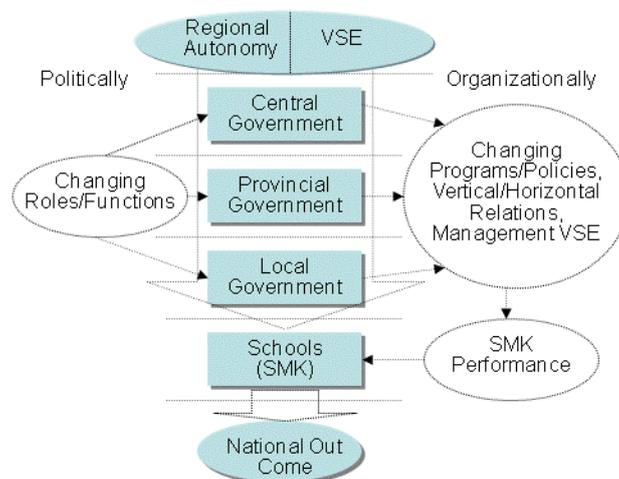
⁷ Rasyid, M. Rays (2003), "Regional Autonomy and Local Politics in Indonesia", in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies

governments now have the right to determine their own programs and policies independently, without intervention from the central and provincial governments.

The sudden change in roles of the central, provincial and local governments, as the result of such political arrangements, is impacting on the education sector, particularly with regard to the achievements and development of programs for VSE on an ongoing basis. In the past, the development of VSE was administered centrally. The education offices in the provinces (EOPs), as the right arm of the central government, directly controlled program implementation, while the Local Education Offices (EODs), in the districts and cities, had never been involved.

Now, the new Regional Autonomy Laws mean that the local governments are indeed expected to fully manage VSE themselves. However, the central government would appear to also be still responsible for the ongoing success of VSE development on a national basis. Thus, two systems, with fundamentally different principles - regional autonomy and the (former) centralized model - are still running concurrently, interacting with and influencing each other. The implication of this is that issues arise, particularly with regard to aspects of VSE development that include what the nature of the policies and programs should be at each level of government (central, provincial and local), and with regard to the relationships between the different levels in coordinating the programs. The political changes have also affected the management of VSE development and, most importantly, there is predicted to be significant impact on the schools themselves. Figure 1 below illustrates the predicted impact of regional autonomy, in relation to managing the VSE sector.

Figure 1. Regional Autonomy and Ongoing VSE Interaction



Source: Turijin, 2006

1.2 Purpose of this Research

This research is an investigation of the early implications the introduction of regional autonomy is having on the education sector, focusing on the area of vocational secondary education (VSE). The political aspects of the impact of such a radical arrangement, whereby powers have been transferred from the central level, directly down to the lowest level (in districts and cities), bypassing the provinces as the second level of government is influential but is not explored in depth. Hypothetically, the changes in roles, functions and responsibilities of every level of government mean that the development of VSE in Indonesia is now experiencing a changing environment, in a bureaucratic and administrative sense.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to explore how and why the implementation of regional autonomy has influenced VSE development and the achievement of the program's objectives. This research objective is realised through an examination of twelve technical schools located in six district government regions in three provinces.

1.2.1 The Nature of VSE Programs and Policies

Regional autonomy devolves responsibility for the education sector to local governments in the districts and cities, bypassing the provincial governments. The centralist programs and policies that have been the practice in the past are changing and are now being influenced by the power of the local leaders - regents or mayors. Each local government is to determine educational programs and policies, according to their perceived local needs, which thus might not be taking into consideration educational policy at the national level. This thesis explores the nature of local government programs and the policies, analysing influential aspects or issues, and also the implications of these for the development of the VSE sector at the national level.

1.2.2 The Vertical Relationships between the Central Government and the Regions

The introduction of regional autonomy has altered the roles and functions of every level of government, concerning the maintenance of VSE. It is likely that the system for coordination in achieving a VSE development mission on a national scale will also change and will involve all levels of governments – central, provincial and local. Unless all three parties work cooperatively, the mission of VSE development might not be achieved. This thesis will explore how, and to what extent, these three levels of government have cooperated so far in

the management of VSE development and will investigate the influential factors and issues and their implications for achieving an ongoing national VSE mission.

1.2.3 The Horizontal Relationships between Local Institutions

As the local governments in districts and cities are now empowered to manage the education sector themselves, various relevant local institutions are also involved in the process of deciding the local programs and policies for VSE. Their interactions in discussing the local VSE programs, such as with the Regional Peoples' Representative Assembly (DPRD) and with the Local Planning Bureau (BAPPEDA) and the Local Education Offices (EODs), will influence the shape and focus of their objectives. This thesis will examine how their relationships have developed and also discuss issues that influence local institutions, which, in turn, potentially influence the decision making process, and the priorities of local VSE programs.

1.2.4 The Management of VSE Development

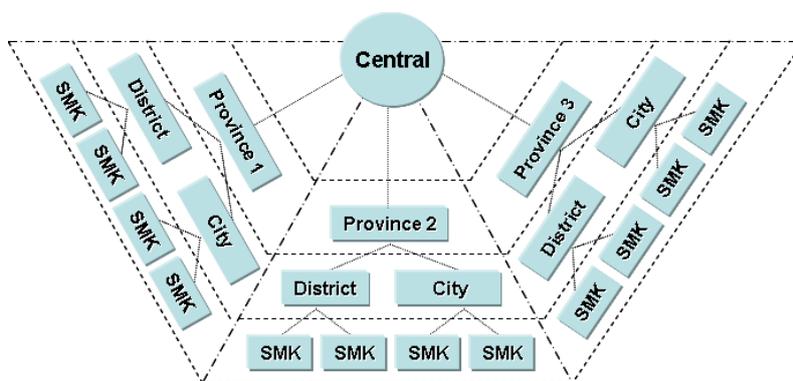
In the past, VSE development was managed via a centralised system. All VSE components, such as programs, courses, curriculum, staffing and other elements associated with the schools' needs - especially financial and material - were managed centrally through the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE). With the handover of education sector management to local governments in districts and cities, the management of VSE development is also changing. This thesis investigates to what extent the devolution of these responsibilities, from central to local level, has impacted upon management of VSE development on an ongoing basis and the achievement of the mission for VSE development on a national level.

1.2.5 The Development of Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK)

Under regional autonomy, the responsibility for managing the VSE sector has been transferred to the local governments. The vocational secondary schools (SMK) themselves are also impacted upon, due to changed management, administration and bureaucracy, from central to the local government level. Furthermore, it is asserted that mission targets for developing VSE on the national scale are also affected. Therefore, this study has been conducted to observe impacts on the SMKs, with regard to management and other associated issues.

This research employs case study methodology to obtain data from each of the levels of government - central, provincial and local. It was conducted between January and July of 2005, four years after the official introduction of the Regional Autonomy Law in January 2001, thus in the early stages of implementation - the transition time between centralisation and decentralisation. The focus is on educational rather than political impacts and, in particular, on development of VSE. The case studies were conducted in three different provinces, as illustrated in Figure 2 below, in keeping with the triangulation approach to research methodology. (See Chapter 2 – Methodology).

Figure 2. Case Study Locations



Source, Turijin, 2006

It is assumed that the case studies illustrate a national trend. Two of the selected provinces are new provincial governments, established as a result of the introduction of regional autonomy. One of these is located outside of the island of Java and illustrates the variety of situations that exist throughout all of Indonesia's provinces (currently numbered at 33). Similarly, studying a combination of districts and cities within each province also exemplifies trends regarding the composition of current local government development. (There are currently 440 local governments). Meanwhile, the two selected schools (SMKs), in each district or city, are representative of the type of SMK operating in all districts and cities, throughout Indonesia, these being the technical-based and the non-technical-based vocational secondary schools, (currently approximately 1000 state and 5000 private).

Research has been conducted mainly by interviewing the relevant people in relation to VSE development at the three levels of government. At central government level, the interviewees were selected from the Central Education Office or the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) in Jakarta. At provincial government level, they were selected from the Provincial Education Office (EOP) or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*. At local government level, they were selected from the Local Education Offices (EOD) or *Kantor Dinas Pendidikan*

Kabupaten/Kota, from the Local People's Representative or DPRD, and from the Local Planning Board (or BAPPEDA) in the selected district or city⁸. At school level, research involved interviewing the principal plus a senior teacher from two selected SMKs (see Chapter 2 - Methodology).

Although the scope of this research is limited to three provinces, a part of the total education system in Indonesia, it still nevertheless represents the pattern of the impacts on other locations throughout Indonesia. In addition, since the educational organisational, bureaucratic and hierarchical structures are similar throughout the country, the findings of this study have implications for the education sector in other parts of Indonesia.

1.3 Significance of this Research

Research studies on the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia are readily available and extensive, given its recent introduction such as Ananta (2000), Aspinall and Fealy (2003), Bjork (2003), Kingbury and Aveling (2003) and Fanany (2003). However, none of the research has specifically discussed the issues of education, particularly VSE, despite its central role in ensuring the nation has a skilled workforce. The existing research has examined regional autonomy as a process of political change, the development of political movements, power and bureaucracy and local government responses. In addition, much of the literature has been based on secondary sources and limited field work.

This research explores the interaction between the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia and the development of VSE programs. The impacts of the devolution of authority and resources from central to local level are examined, including the changing nature of programs, policies and management, the relationships vertically between central and local governments and horizontally amongst various local institutions, and their correlation with the programs' achievements. Thus, the distinctive feature of this research is not only the issues examined, but also the field work at the three levels of government and among various agencies at each level.

The findings, particularly the impact on the institutions involved in Jakarta, the provinces, the districts and the schools themselves, with regard to the development of VSE programs, add to our knowledge of how this worldwide trend towards regional autonomy is actually being implemented, as well as how VSE is being developed in Indonesia. The cases studied in this

⁸ Cities and districts in Indonesia are now empowered by Regional Autonomy to manage and maintain most sectors, including education.

thesis also provide a basis from which it can be seen whether the changes occurring as a result of regional autonomy are uniform throughout the bureaucracy.

This is, therefore, a critical piece of research, which will contribute to the understanding of how regional autonomy in Indonesia has influenced VSE. In addition, the exploration of political issues and the focus on their impact on the education sector contribute not only to the research field of education, but also to those of politics and management. Most importantly, the impacts of regional autonomy on VSE found in this study are expected to be used to maintain, monitor, control and improve future VSE development, in order to achieve better results, and continuous improvement.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter one explores the background, the purpose of the research including the scope and the focus as well as the significant of the research. An explanation of the history and structure of the Indonesian government covering decentralization and democratisation is provided. In the education system, several issues are also clarified especially in relation to the vocational secondary education (VSE). This chapter identifies the key issues examined in the thesis.

Chapter Two explains the methodology used in this research including the research design, the measurement strategy of the reliability of data, the feasibility of the research as well as the system of analysis.

Chapter Three reviews the literature on the concept of regional autonomy, policies and practices and their impact on education.

Chapter Four analyses the programs and policies in the vocational secondary education (VSE) within the structure of the Indonesian administration from the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) in Jakarta, the Education Office of the provincial governments and also the Education Office in the districts and cities.

Chapter Five discusses the impact of regional autonomy on the hierarchical relationships between the central government and regions, respectively from the perspective of each level of government as well as the schools. Until the Regional Autonomy Law of 1999, the VSE programs were centrally managed by DVSE. Under the 1999 Laws, Management is shared between central, provincial and local governments through the education offices. The

coordination is discussed to determine the important issues in the implementation of the VSE development programs.

Chapter Six discusses the horizontal relationships and coordination of Vocational Secondary Education (VSE) within the district governments and between the district government and the vocational schools. This section also discusses the influence of the Local Peoples' Representative Council (DPRD), the Local Planning and Development Bureau (BAPPEDA) and the Local Education Office (EOD).

Chapter Seven investigates changing management policies and programs in the Vocational Secondary Education (VSE) sector.

Chapter Eight examines developments at the school level especially the changing of the management of the Vocational Secondary School (SMK) from the impact of the decentralization of the Education to the local government (LG).

The conclusion brings together the results of the research, which provide the basis for recommendations and suggestions for improving the development of the VSE in Indonesia. It also identifies further areas for research.

1.5 Indonesia in Brief

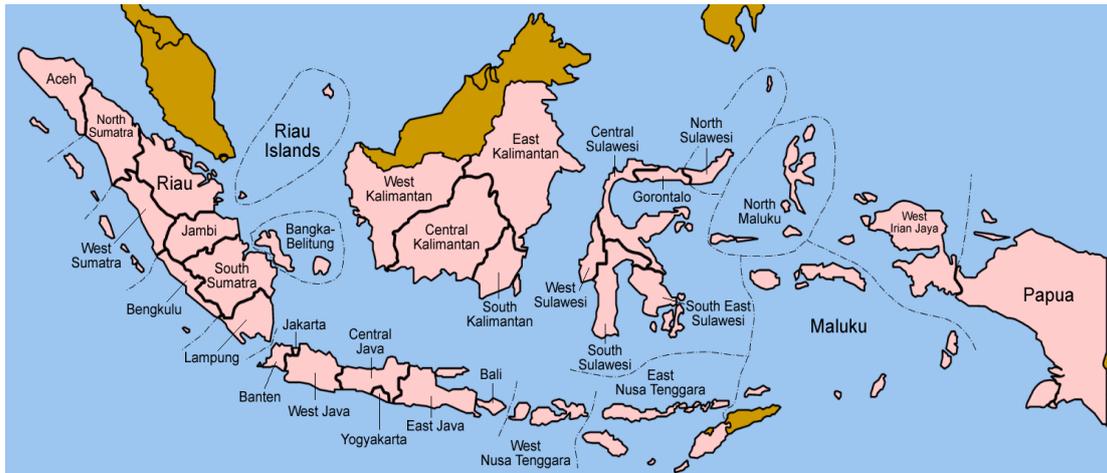
Geographically, Indonesia is comprised of 13,677 islands, with a population of 224,904,900 people,⁹ spread out over 33 provinces, seven of which were established during regional autonomy - including the two provincial governments involved in this research, Banten and Babel (Bangka Belitung). There are 440 districts and cities, 29 of which are from the new establishment¹⁰ (see Map 1 - Indonesia)¹¹. Six of the districts and cities involved in this research are from the old (former) local governments, four of them under the new Province of Banten and the Province of Babel, with the other two falling under the old Province of West Java. Some 900 languages are spoken in total, with Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*) being the official language.

⁹ Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia (2006), "Statistical data on the provinces of Indonesia 2006", BPS

¹⁰ Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia (2006), "Statistical data on the provinces of Indonesia 2006", BPS

¹¹ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), p.86

Map 1. Indonesia



Source: <http://www.google.co.id/search?q=peta+indonesia>

1.5.1 The System of Government

Indonesia is a unitary republic with a directly-elected president, who functions both as head of state and head of government. The central government, led by the president, is at the pinnacle of an administrative hierarchy. The provinces form the second level and the districts and cities - constituting the local governments - form the third. The president appoints members of the Cabinet and assigns the departmental responsibilities. Administratively, in the provinces, the governors represent the president to implement the responsibilities delegated, and in the districts and cities this is done by the local leaders - regents (in the districts) or mayors (in the cities)¹². Currently, the system of government is in transition from centralism to regional autonomy or decentralization. It has been argued, “given such diversity and vastness, it is reasonable to assume that decentralization can deliver an efficient, effective, and responsive mode of government”¹³. This research concentrates on the central government, the provinces and the districts and cities. It does not discuss the sub-district (*kecamatan*) village and neighbourhood levels of administration, as these levels of government do not play a significant role in the administration of education.

1.5.1.1 The Centralized System

For decades, Indonesia experienced central government during the Old Order (under President Soekarno), the New Order (under President Suharto) and Reformation (under

¹² Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), *Decentralization in Indonesia: redesigning the state*, Canberra, Asia Pacific Press, p. 24

¹³ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), p.1

Presidents Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarno Putri). Pyramidal bureaucracy was employed, the centre of command extending from the president down through the provincial, district and sub-district tiers of government. Subordinates were expected to respect their superiors with great loyalty, whilst also being responsible for their lower levels of government. In addition, what happened in all sectors was determined by the central government, including the election of the leaders of the provinces and districts, while the regions were merely the recipients.

In the education sector, the Ministry of National Education (MONE) would determine the main policies, which would be detailed by the lower central education offices, to be implemented directly. For example, schools' operational budget needs and other needs, such as for facilities, equipment, material and staffing, were determined by the central government. The regions, incorporating the governments of the provinces, districts and cities, as well as the schools themselves, were merely the objects of central policies and planning. The system did not allow them to decide and manage their own needs and everything depended on central funding.

Presently, Indonesia is in the transition stage of the implementation of the new policy - regional autonomy. This has been considered to be the most suitable policy for the governing of a nation with an extensive territory and such a diversity of people, in terms of culture, religions and ethnic groups.

1.5.1.2 Regional Autonomy or Decentralization

Regional autonomy was officially introduced on 1 January 2001, by devolving the powers and responsibilities to the local governments, in districts and cities, thus moving from a centralized to a decentralized system. Now, the local governments have the right to manage all sectors on their own, except "foreign policy, defence and security, monetary policy, the legal system and religious affairs"¹⁴. In addition, the local governments now have more flexibility to determine their own priorities regarding programs and policies, in accordance with their needs, without any intervention from the central and provincial governments, as

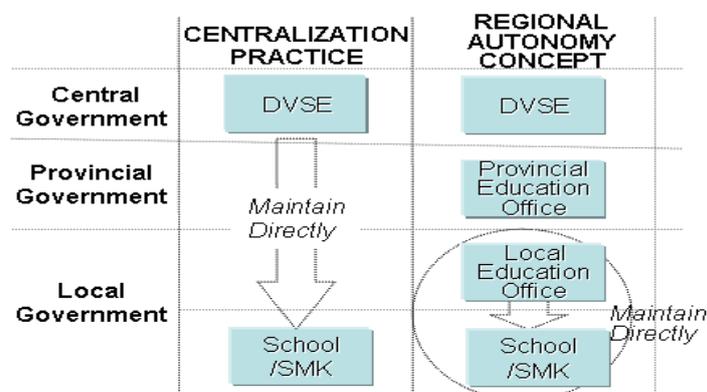
¹⁴ Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore : Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p.3

happened in the past. The local DPRD¹⁵ also has a greater role, especially in “local policy-making, programs and in the budgeting process”¹⁶.

In the education sector (the area of this research), the Local Education Offices (EOD or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten*) in districts and cities have taken over the roles and responsibilities of the central and provincial education offices in managing the schools. In comparison with centralization, the EODs are now responsible for the needs of the schools, including the operational budget, facilities, equipment, materials and staffing, including the selection of the school principal.

Thus, by the introduction of regional autonomy, as illustrated in Figure 3 below, the local governments have suddenly been empowered to run VSE. The local governments have become stronger in authority, independent in administering all of their resources and business and free from other levels of government influences. The central government has no more direct links with the schools, while the local governments have the authority to manage schools directly. Since then, the principle of centralised government, which has been the practice for decades after the independence of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, has finally changed. This is a momentous event in the history of the system of government in Indonesia.

Figure 3. Centralization and Decentralization



Source: Turijin, 2006

Following the introduction of regional autonomy, the mode of election of both the president and the local leaders in the provinces, districts and cities has also been changed. As stated in the new Law 32/2004, the President is now elected through direct elections and the local

¹⁵ DPRD is the Local People’s Representative Assembly, located in districts and cities, which has the rights to the local government budget discretions (UU 22, 1999 and Rasyid, p.67, 2003).

¹⁶ Rohdewohld, Rainer (2003), “Decentralization and the Indonesia Bureaucracy: Major Changes, Minor Impact?”, in Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore : Institute of Southern Asian Studies

leaders elected through locally-based elections, run by the Electoral Commission. At the time of this research, however, the local leaders - governor, regent (*Bupati*) or mayor (*Walikota*)¹⁷ – were still being elected by the members of parliament, thus still following the older law. However, as regional autonomy has transferred power, in particular to the local governments, this means that regents and mayors, as the most senior bureaucrats, are now able to influence policy with regards to developing VSE.

1.5.1.3 Election of the President

During the old era, the president and vice-president were selected separately by the representatives of the parties in the parliament (*DPR* or People's Representative Assembly) in the central government directly and inaugurated by the MPR (People's Consultative Assembly). The voters everywhere, whether in Jakarta, the provinces or districts, were merely choosing the political party, where the result would influence the number of representatives in the DPR or MPR. Programs and policies in the education sector were defined according to the president's policy, endorsed by the MPR, in the form of the Main Guidelines (GBHN). These then flowed down to lower level governments - the provincial and local - for their implementation. With VSE, the old Provincial Education Office (*Kanwil*) functioned as the central government's right hand in assisting with the implementation of the centralized programs, whilst the local governments were not involved.

The first improvement took place in 2001, following the introduction of regional autonomy, when it was determined that the president and the vice-president should be elected directly in a nationwide presidential election as a package¹⁸. The role of the MPR in determining the president and vice-president was abolished, as well as the GBHN system. The education sector has come under the authority of the local governments, to be managed at a local level. Thus, this is a very fundamental momentum, whereby the central government has no power to dictate local programs and policies.

Now, the president is elected directly by the people. Every citizen has a say in choosing the president and vice-president. In addition, individuals or independent citizens, that is, not just members of parties, can now also be nominated as candidates. Although the nominees should be proposed through vehicle of the available parties, neither the parties nor the DPRD has the

¹⁷ A *Bupati* is the leader of a district (*kabupaten*), and a *Walikota* is the leader of a city (*Kota/Kotamadya*).

¹⁸ Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p. 16-17

right to decide and appoint the leaders, as in the past. The election process is carried out independently, via the establishment of the Electoral Commission, and not by the MPR and DPR at central government level, as in the past. This commission is free from the party people and responsible fully for the implementation of the election process. Thus, by direct election, the election of the president and vice-president of Indonesia has been carried out democratically.

1.5.1.4 Election of Local Leaders

In the past, before the introduction of regional autonomy, the local leaders (both the governors in the provinces and the regents or mayors (in districts and cities) were also chosen by the central elite¹⁹. The process of election was in the DPRD in provinces and districts or cities, which was also dominated by the power of the political parties. Three nominees were sent to the central government for selection. The President chose the governors, while candidates for regents or mayors were decided by the Minister of Home Affairs²⁰. Particularly under the New Order Government (1966 - 1988), candidates for the position of regent and mayor not only had to obtain support from their political party and the DPRD, but also approval from the President, Suharto²¹. One implication was that the local leaders merely focused on the central programs, including those for VSE development.

Currently, following the introduction of regional autonomy, local leaders have also been elected directly. In the provinces, districts and cities, the election process is carried out independently, through the establishment of the Local Electoral Commission (KPUD) and not by the DPRD, as was the practice in the past. The KPUD is free from party people and fully responsible for the implementation of the election process. Similar to the presidential elections, all citizens are eligible to be nominated as leader candidates. The new regulation has encouraged the people to directly choose their leaders in the election process²². The candidates are also supposed to be nominated through the parties as the vehicle, with neither

¹⁹ Rasyid, M. Ryaas (2003), "Regional Autonomy and Local Politics in Indonesia", in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, pp. 63-71

²⁰ Rasyid, M. Ryaas (2003), p.64

²¹ Republika (2005), "Anticipating the Local Leaders Election", (original title, "Menyambut Pemilihan Kepala Daerah"), Kamis, 7 April 2005, Available [online] <http://www.republika.co.id/default.asp>, [20 June 2006]

²² Republic of Indonesia (2003), "The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 32, 2004 regarding Local Government", (original title "*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 Tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintah Daerah*"), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2004/pp032-2004.html, [3 September, 2006]

the parties nor the DPRD having any power to influence. The role of the central government has changed drastically, just in inaugurating the appointed local leaders after their selection through local elections. Thus, local leader elections have been decentralized, with local leaders now being democratically elected by their constituents.

With such a system, educational development is predicted to become the local political issue of the contestants, with the winner trying to respond by providing suitable programs to accommodate the demands of their constituents, rather than merely following central government policy. Although the local leaders participating in this study were elected via the old system and not directly voted in by the people in their districts or cities, nevertheless, these issues are important for consideration in discussing the relevant aspects of this research, in particular the influence of the local leaders, who have been empowered by the introduction of regional autonomy. These new powers might impact directly, through his or her policies, as an instruction, or indirectly, through the subordinate structure or staff, who are expected, for cultural or hierarchical reasons, to be very respectful and obedient to their leader.

1.5.2 The System of Education

The Indonesian education system extends from kindergarten to tertiary level, as illustrated below in Figure 4. The strata and the education model are on a 6-3-3 basis: six years of primary schooling; three years of lower secondary schooling; and three years of upper secondary schooling²³. At post-secondary, or tertiary, level, the system is comprised of academic institutes, universities, diploma schools and polytechnics²⁴. At the secondary level, education is differentiated by two main streams: General Secondary Education (GSE) and Vocational Secondary Education (VSE). In GSE, the schools are called SMA or Senior High Schools (academic) and are aimed at supporting their graduates to continue to the advanced level of education, while, in VSE, the focus of this research, the schools (known as SMK) are aimed at providing their graduates with suitable skills for finding a job²⁵. The current policy or mission of the central government regarding this specific type of education is to ‘improve the access and the quality’ of the schools (SMKs)’ and to increase the number of SMKs, in order to improve the ratio of non-SMK schools (7) to SMA schools (3). Initially, the number

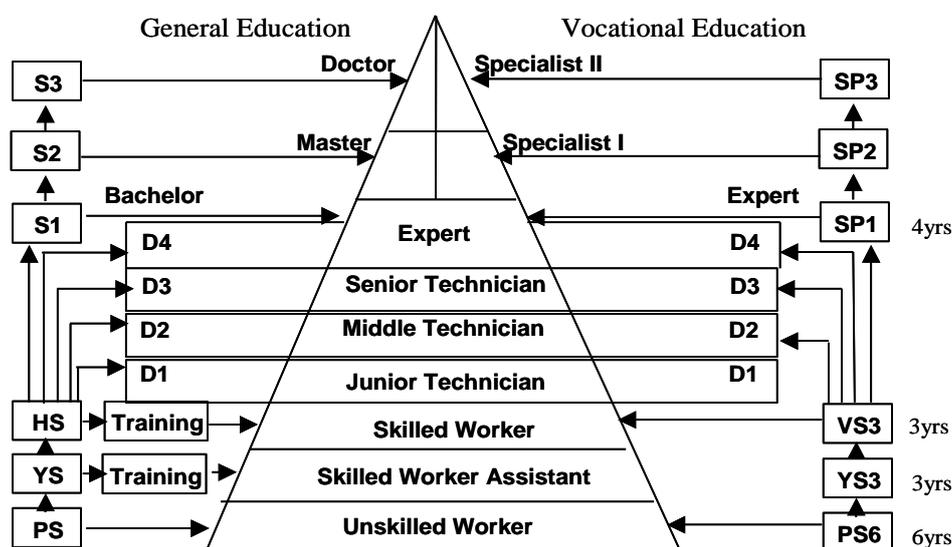
²³ Wilson, David, N. (1991), Reform of Technical–Vocational Education in Indonesia and Malaysia”, *Comparative Education*, 03050068, Vol. 27, Issue 2. Available [online], <http://0-web26.epnet.com.library.vu.edu.au/citation.asp?tb=1& ug=sid+3DC> ..[5 October 2004]

²⁴ Hadiwaratama (2002), “*Industri Berbasis Pengetahuan dan Pembangunan Teknologi Manufaktur*”, in Supriadi, (ed.), *Sejarah Pendidikan Teknik dan Kejuruan di Indonesia: Membangun Manusia Produktif*, Jakarta-Indonesia, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Dit-Jend. Dikdasmen, Dikmenjur

²⁵ Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

of SMK was to be approximately 5000 schools (1000 state and 4000 private)²⁶. Such a central policy will be challenged by the changing role and function of the government, especially by the empowerment of local governments, with their authority to independently determine their own programs and policies.

Figure 4. The Education System in Indonesia



Source, DVSE, 2005

In general, the quality of education in Indonesia is less advanced than in many other countries. The net participation rate in primary school is 94.48 %, junior high school 66.01 % and senior high school in 2006 only 52.60%²⁷. In addition, from the perspective of IEA (International Education Achievement), the reading index capability of primary school students in Indonesia ranks 38th out of 39 countries. In mathematics, the Indonesian junior high school students rank 39th out of 42 countries. Even worse, in IPA (mathematical and natural science), the ranking of senior high school students is 40th out of 42. In VSE, the focus of this research, graduates from the vocational schools (SMK) are considered able to compete in the Asian labour market, however, as the development of industrial technology, especially in Japan, is more advanced than the technology used in the SMKs, and combined with the fact that most of the SMKs have not been internationally accredited, SMK graduates are categorized as below the international standard.

²⁶ Dikmenjur (2006), Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2006, (original title: *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan*, 2006), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur

²⁷ Diknas (2006), "Recapitulation Data of National Education", (original title "*Ikhtisar Data Pendidikan Nasional*"), Available [online], <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>, Depdiknas, Jakarta, [20 August 2007]

Locally, *Kompas*, a prominent Indonesian national newspaper, reported that the existence of SMK in a particular location does not suit the needs of surrounding industry and that the graduation rate in the National Exam (UAN) was reported lower than for the SMA - 91% compared to 92.5%²⁸.

“... The system of education is not formulated by professional experts but by politicians. That is why the vision for education is not clear and has no systematic strategy for implementation”²⁹.

The statement above is a common criticism of the paradigm of the education system in Indonesia, in that, with a change of minister of education, there has followed a change in the curriculum. In fact, curriculum changes alone do not increase the quality of education and produce confusion for the teachers who have to implement them³⁰. The introduction of regional autonomy is expected to change such a centralised development strategy and bring about improvements to education, as the local governments in districts and cities have the right to develop programs themselves.

Other challenges for educational development include anticipating the global era in providing skilled human resources to enable Indonesians to compete in the world labour market. In addition, the impact of the 1997 world economic crisis is another impetus to support educational development, especially from the financial aspect. Regional autonomy has forced education to be managed locally and independently, in accordance with the various needs of the regions, and it has encouraged community participation³¹.

Indonesia's education system is, however, being faced with a multidimensional crisis³². The issue of quality is still being questioned, yet government finances are still incapable of

²⁸ Parents did not send their children to the available SMK, as they believed their children would gain better skills at the other schools. *Kompas*, 2003), “The Vocational Secondary School: the dream versus the reality”, (original title *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan antara Impian dan Kenyataan*), available [online], <http://kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0308/28/dikbud/518550.htm>, [28 September 2006]

²⁹ Surakhmad, W. as cited by Kompas (2006), “The continuous decline in the quality of education in Indonesia”, (original title *Mutu pendidikan di Inonesia terus menurun*), Available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/ver1/Dikbud/0611/15/181803.htm>, [28 November 2005]

³⁰ Surakhmad, W. as cited by Kompas (2006), “The continuous decline in quality of education in Indonesia”, (original title *Mutu pendidikan di Inonesia terus menurun*), Available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/ver1/Dikbud/0611/15/181803.htm>, [28 November 2005]

³¹ Diknas (2006), “Propenas 2000 – 2004 (National Development Programs)”, Available [online], <http://www.pdk.go.id/>, [20 June 2006]

³² Riberu, J (2004), “Revolution in the Education World of Indonesia”, (original title *Revolusi di Dunia Pendidikan Indonesia*), Available [online], <http://www.suarapembaruan.com/News/2004/05/14/Editor/edit01.htm>, [20 June 2006]

supporting the necessary developments to improve quality. In addition, globalization has demonstrated that the human resources product of education is not sufficiently qualified and competent to compete in the world market. Finally, the introduction of regional autonomy is expected to an ongoing influence particularly with respect to the changing role and function of governments with VSE development. All levels of government – central, provincial and local - in districts and cities - will have their own priorities in developing education, which could lead to the deterioration of the essence of educational development on the national level.

1.5.3 *The Vocational Secondary Education (VSE)*

Vocational education in Indonesia was first established by the Dutch in the eighteenth century. However, it was limited to the European and Chinese populations, before finally being opened up to Indonesians in the early 1900s and, even then, mainly for the upper classes³³. However, in subsequent developments, the government has departed from the original concepts. Instead of asking the private sector or the community to manage VSE independently, VSE development has been centrally organized by the government. Currently, the government is trying to re-align developmental principles with the original concept, by encouraging the private sector, industry and the community to be involved in VSE development and in establishing the vocational secondary schools (SMK).

The development of VSE in Indonesia has been a concern of the government, especially during the New Order period (1966-1998). This was reflected in the government's huge investment in this form of education from 1969 (*Pelita I*) to the end of *Pelita VI*³⁴ in 1997 (five-year development plans) to build new schools, rehabilitate existing schools, purchase equipment for students to undertake practical work, establish teacher training centres (*PPPG*)³⁵ to improve teaching quality and facilitate other associated activities. As well as government revenue, other resources were also obtained from multilateral corporations, including international financial organizations, such as the World Bank, ADB and IDB, as well as loans and grants from other countries such as the Netherlands, France, Japan,

³³ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (ed.) *History of Vocational Secondary Education in Indonesia: Developing Productive Manpower*, (original title *Sejarah Pendidikan Kejuruan di Indonesia*), Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education

³⁴ *Pelita* are the five-year plans introduced by President Soeharto under the New Order (from 1969 to Soeharto's fall in 1997. Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 13 and p. 221

³⁵ Teacher Training Centre or PPPG is a centre for upgrading the skills and knowledge of vocational secondary teachers. Several PPPGs have been established, according to the types of teacher groups, such as: Technology, located in Bandung (West Java), Malang (East Java) and Medan (North Sumatera); Arts, located in Yogyakarta (DIY); Business, in Jakarta; and Agriculture in Cianjur (West Java) (DVSE History, 2002)

Australia and Germany³⁶. During these six *pelita*, the central government's initiative in planning made VSE development one of the priority programs. The number of Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK) increased significantly from 126 to 811 public schools plus the establishment of private schools by the non-business community, to reach 3350 in total³⁷.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy, however, the momentum to increase provision has been suspended. Very few new schools have been established due, not only to the impact of the difficulty of obtaining funds, but also the changed management structure within the education system itself. The tight policy of the government regarding foreign loans has been limiting flexibility to continue to establish more new SMKs. However, the intentions and the capacity of the local governments (in provinces, districts and cities) to continue the programs is in doubt, as they are still struggling to become familiar with the new systems and financial arrangements, especially that of the General Allocation Fund (*Dana Alokasi Umum*)³⁸, for routine school activities, which, it is claimed, is very limited³⁹.

1.5.4 The Roles of Governments in VSE Development

The implications of the laws of regional autonomy are changing roles, functions and responsibilities of governments at every level. 'Autonomy' involves giving powers to the local governments in district and cities, but not to the provincial level of government. Conceptually, the responsibility for the education sector has been transferred from the central power to the local governments. Thus, educational developments are expected to match with local needs and aspirations. Following is a brief outline of the roles and functions of each level of government:

³⁶ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 13

³⁷ Siregar, K.S, (2002), "Education in Indonesia from the Japan Era to pre-Five Year Plans", (original title *Pendidikan di Indonesia dari zaman Jepang hingga sebelum Pelita*), in Supriadi, Dedy (ed.), *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp. 61-78

³⁸ *Dana Alokasi Umum* (DAU) is a part of the fiscal strategic policy to stabilize the financial capacity of the local governments. Sidik, et al, (2002), *The General Allocation Fund: The Concept, the Challenge and Prospects in the Regional Autonomy Era*, (original title *Dana Alokasi Umum: Konsep, Hambatan, dan Prospek di Era Otonomi Daerah*), Jakarta, Penerbit Buku Kompas

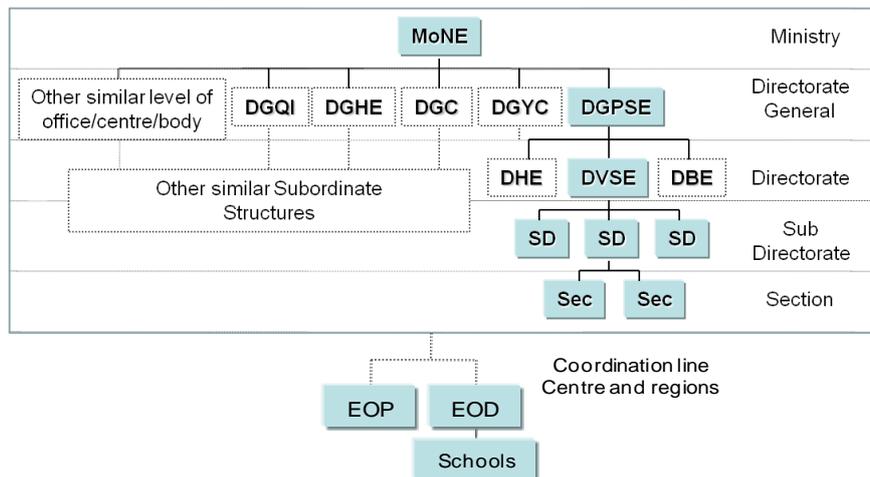
³⁹ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (ed.), p. 14

1.5.4.1 Central Government

The Ministry of National Education (MONE) is still responsible for the development of education on a national basis. As stated in the *Sisdiknas*⁴⁰ (the Education Law), the role of the central government is to formulate national education policy and standards, to assure the quality of education, in such areas as curriculum development and final assessment.

The organizational structure of the Ministry of National Education (MONE), as illustrated in Figure 5 below, consists of five Directorate Generals, who assist MONE in carrying out their responsibilities. Each is managed, with specific tasks performed at different divisional levels, each with a separate and particular assignment⁴¹.

Figure 5. Organization Structure of the Ministry of National Education



Source Turijin, 2006

- The Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE) is responsible for the university sector.
- The Directorate General of Culture (DGC) is responsible for managing culture, including museums, statues and other cultural sites.
- The Directorate of General Youth and Sport (DGYS) is responsible for youth activities and sport.

⁴⁰ *Sisdiknas* or National Education Law 20/2003 was introduced, partly to accommodate local aspirations and partly to determine the roles and functions of each level of government in supporting educational development.

⁴¹ Jones, G.R. (1995), *Organizational Theory: Text and Cases*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., New York

- The Directorate General of Quality Improvement for Teachers and Staff Education (DGQI) is responsible for the quality of the teachers and other school staff.
- The Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education (DGPSE) is responsible for managing primary (SD) and secondary (SLTP and SLTA) education. The DGSPE consists of several Directorates, including the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE), which is responsible for developing VSE, and is the focus of this research.
- The Directorates in Jakarta are responsible in formulating the national policies such as the education development system, curriculum improvement, training, standardization, and the national exams.
- The Education Offices in the Districts are responsible for the school staff and teachers as well as operational costs of the schools including salaries of the staff and teachers, maintenance cost for schools buildings and equipment, laboratory and workshop materials for students.

1.5.4.2 Provincial Government

Unlike in the past, before the implementation of regional autonomy, where the provincial governments represented the central government in implementing national programs and policies, the main role of the provincial governments in education is now limited to determining policy regarding enrolment of new students from minority groups, the poor and the marginalised sectors, and providing input into the kind of books and modules to be used at all levels of education (except university)⁴². However, with the new financial arrangements, the provincial governments have also had to assist with the implementation of the de-concentrated budget for educational development, in the form of ‘block grants’⁴³.

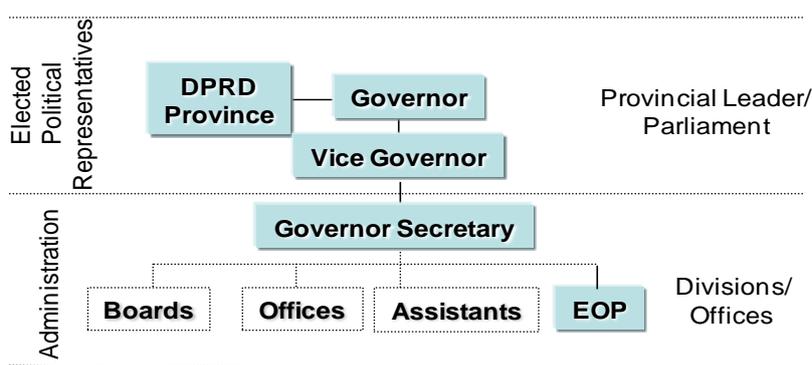
As illustrated in Figure 6, the governor is assisted by the Provincial Education Office (EOP) or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi* in coordinating education, the development of teaching staff

⁴² Republic of Indonesia, (2000), “The Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25/2000 on the Authority of the Government and The Authority of the Province as the Autonomous Region”, (original title *Kewenangan Pemerintah dan Kewenangan Propinsi sebagai daerah Otonom*), available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_99/uu/isi/pp2000/pp025-2000.html, [23 September, 2005]

⁴³ Republic of Indonesia (1999), “The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 22/1999 on Local Governments”, (original title “*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 22 tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*”), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_99/uu1999/uu-22-99.htm, [3 September, 2004]

and the provision of educational facilities for primary and secondary education, across districts and cities⁴⁴. The current EOP was restructured from the old *Kanwil Departemen Pendidikan*⁴⁵ and *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*⁴⁶, the old version of educational organization in the provinces, before the implementation of regional autonomy. The EOP, as the representative of provincial government, now has no direct links with the schools, as in the past, and most of the schools' responsibilities, including the selection of principals, have been transferred to the Local Education Offices (EOD) or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten/Kota (Dinas)*, at local government level, in districts and cities⁴⁷. Thus, problems can arise for members of the *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi* with managing VSE, particularly in determining provincial programs and policies, as the provincial leader (the governor) may use his or her power to influence to the directional focus (See Chapter 4.) It is anticipated that other issues will arise, in coordinating the provincial policies with either those of the central government or the local governments (See Chapter 5).

Figure 6. Provincial Government Structure



Source, Turijin, 2006

1.5.4.3 Local Government

Since the implementation of regional autonomy, the empowered local governments in districts and cities have greater authority over the education sector⁴⁸. Programs and policies,

⁴⁴ Republic of Indonesia, (2003), "The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20/2003 on the National Education System", (original title "*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 tahun 12003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*"), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2000/pp020-2003.html, [23 September, 2005]

⁴⁵ *Kanwil* stands for *Kantor Wilayah* or the provincial level office of the Ministry of Education. The existing office has been abolished and replaced by the new Provincial Education Office (EOP) or *Dinas Pendidikan Propinsi*.

⁴⁶ The Provincial Education Office (EOP) or *Dinas Pendidikan Propinsi* is responsible to the Governor.

⁴⁷ Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP), West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴⁸ Republic of Indonesia (1999), "The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 22/1999 on Local Governments", Article 11, Point (2)

including those for VSE development, are to be determined by the Local Education Offices (EOD) in districts and cities, who have started to handle the responsibilities formerly belonging to central government, in managing education, from primary to secondary, based on the local supremacy⁴⁹.

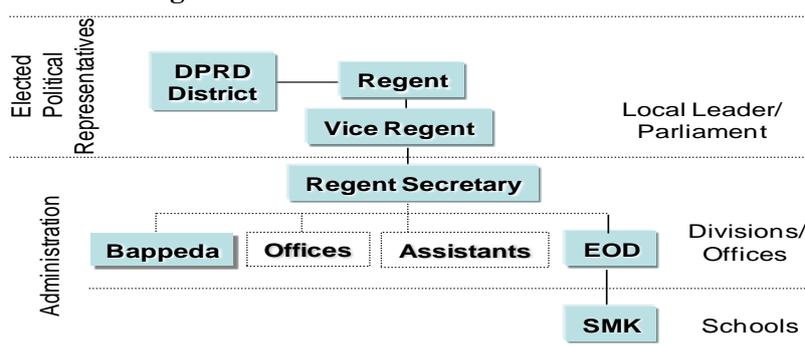
Figure 7 below illustrates the organizational structure of the local governments. The local leader (regent or mayor) is assisted by the Local Education Office (EOD) in managing education⁵⁰. The EODs have been restructured from the old Local Department Office for Education (*Kandep Dikbud*)⁵¹ and the old version of the Local Education Office. However, the way this mechanism is applied is that the process of formulating local programs and policies involves at least the local parliament or the Local People's Representative (DPRD) which, as legislator in function, has the right to approve or reject local programs and to control their implementation. At the local level, the Local Planning Bureau (BAPPEDA) is responsible for education planning and the *Dinas Pendidikan (Dinas)* is in charge of its development and implementation. The focus and direction of the local programs depends on the quality of coordination and management. In addition, the BAPPEDA and *Dinas* may also be influenced by the regent or mayor, functioning as the executive, the person most responsible for implementation, who may want to carry out his or her own political agenda (see Chapter 6). Thus, there are shifting roles and functions between the central, provincial and local educational institutions in managing the education system, which have the potential to alter the mechanisms or dynamics in developing education, particularly in the VSE sector (see Chapter 7).

⁴⁹ Republic of Indonesia, (2003), "The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20/2003 on the National Education System", Chapter XIV, Part One, Section 50

⁵⁰ Republic of Indonesia, (2003), "The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20/2003 on the National Education System", (original title "*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 tahun 12003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*"), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2000/pp020-2003.html, [23 September, 2005]

⁵¹ *Kandep Dikbud* stands for *Kantor Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, the Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture, in Districts and Cities, during the New Order, before the introduction of Regional Autonomy. The existing structures were abolished and replaced by the new Local Education Office (EOD) or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten atau Kota*, structurally falling under the Local Governments.

Figure 7. District Government Structure



Source, Turijin, 2006

1.5.5 National Policy Objectives in VSE Development

National policy for developing VSE is focused on ‘access, quality, relevancy and improvement, as well as efficient school management’⁵². In trying to implement this policy, the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE), as the education arm of central government responsible for VSE development, has introduced certain key principles. It is intended to achieve improved access to education by introducing vocational education to other types and levels of schools, such in SMP (junior high schools), SMA (senior high schools) and in *Madrasah* (Islamic schools), through providing support in the form of block grants, as listed in the ‘*Dikmenjur Programs 2004 and 2005*’⁵³. In an effort to improve quality, the existing curriculum has been modified to become more competence-based and skills-orientated, as demanded by industry. This has been done by involving relevant industries in the process of curriculum development. In addition, a new teaching focus has been introduced, whereby, students will begin studying the practical skills related to their subject specialisation in their first year, rather than waiting until their second year, as happened previously. The structure of the industry apprenticeship programs has also been increased, from six months to one year⁵⁴.

In order to apply the principles of regional autonomy in practice, the concept of ‘re-engineering’⁵⁵ has been employed, with the aim of supporting local government development,

⁵² This national policy is stated officially in the 2005 DVSE program outline. See Dikmenjur (2005), *Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2005*, (original title *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2005*), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur, and also stated in the 2004 and 2005 program outlines.

⁵³ A book of guidelines, established by DVSE, explaining the programs provided and conditions schools are required to meet in order to apply and obtain block grants.

⁵⁴ Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

⁵⁵ ‘Re-engineering’ or ‘re-adjustment’ is the concept whereby any Vocational Secondary School (SMK) can offer any new vocational course in response to local labour needs. See *Program Dikmenjur*, 2004.

in response to local labour needs. Local governments are now allowed to open any vocational secondary schools (SMKs), according to local needs. Existing SMK are now able to offer any type of vocational courses. The SMK are comprised of two groups, vocational and technical. The vocational group is made up of several streams, namely business, arts and hospitality. The technical group has an even greater number of different streams, including machinery, chemistry, agriculture, mining, shipping and aeronautics. In the past, these types of schools were only eligible to provide programs which fell in line with their streams. For example, the business school was not allowed to offer programs in arts or hospitality and vice versa. It was the same with the technical groups. Nowadays, any type of vocational school is being encouraged to offer any type of program from other school types, as long as it is agreed to by the local government and they are capable of providing the resources, such as facilities and teachers.

The national policy of 'access and improvement of quality' as the focus of VSE development has been the Central Education Office's motto and icon and has been stated in every official document, especially in the DVSE program outlines from 2004 to 2007. All institutions related to the development of VSE, whether at central, provincial or district level, are expected to support this policy when implementing their programs.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

Generally, the basic aim of any research method is to answer who, what, where, how and why things happened⁵⁶. If the researcher seeks only to explore something or to answer what research questions, then the principles of an “exploratory survey, exploratory experiment or an exploratory case study”⁵⁷ can be applied. Similarly, in answering what, who and where questions, as well as the questions how much and how many, the survey method or archival analysis might be more suitable⁵⁸. However, in dealing with a time frame, rather than frequency, or when seeking to explain, in the case of how and why research questions, then case studies, histories and experiments are appropriate. For a specific purpose, with complex conditions, or when the how or why question is being asked about “a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control”⁵⁹, the ‘case study’ is believed the most suitable one to apply.

The purpose of this particular research is to explain how and why regional autonomy is influencing VSE, especially in the transitional stage. Regional autonomy has been implemented in a very radical fashion, devolving central powers to local governments in districts and cities directly, bypassing the second level of government, in the provinces. It was introduced in a sudden manner, in an attempt to control political instability, which it was feared might cause disintegration of the nation. Therefore, it was a very distinct ‘event’ or ‘phenomenon’. In the education sector, the implications of changing the system from ‘centralisation’ to ‘decentralisation’ are expected to influence many aspects, such as: VSE programs and policies; the nature of the vertical relationship between central and regional institutions and that of horizontal relationships among local institutions with regard to managing the VSE sector; changes in the way VSE development is managed; impacts upon schools (the end target of VSE development). In addition, the pattern of the hierarchy or bureaucracy that runs VSE, involving central, provincial and local governments, as well as the schools themselves, are discussed in this study, which examines each of these different entities. Thus, this study presents a unified or holistic approach. The findings are also aimed at illustrating (but not generalizing) the situation and conditions across all of the regions throughout Indonesia.

⁵⁶ Yin, Robert K., (1994), p. 5

⁵⁷ Yin, Robert K., (1994), p. 6

⁵⁸ Yin, Robert K., (1994), p. 6

⁵⁹ Yin, Robert K., (1994), p. 9

Thus, the methodology for this qualitative research employs ‘explanatory case studies’⁶⁰ to answer how and why regional autonomy is influencing and will continue to influence the development of VSE. It consists of multiple issues or cases that reflect this ‘holistic’ phenomenon, in order to illustrate all regions of Indonesia. Based on the available methods, the principle of the ‘case study’ is considered to be the most suitable method to adopt here. Following is a discussion regarding the research design, data collection techniques, cases, interviewees, research locations, as well as the reliability and validity of the research and the technique of analysis.

2.2 Research Approach

This research seeks to explain how and why regional autonomy is influencing VSE programs. In order to obtain a clear picture of the influences, this research involved the people working in the VSE area such as the principal and deputy of the schools, teachers, and also officials from the responsible institutions in the central and regional governments, including Bappeda, the Education Office and the DPRD. Their knowledge, experience and perceptions are analysed. Triangulation techniques are used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data.

2.3 Research Design

This ‘case study’ is carried out as multiple case studies, aimed at explaining the how and the why of impacts occurring in three provinces. Due to the complexity and nature of the phenomenon being studied, this research has been fully underpinned by the principles of a ‘case study’ methodology.

“...A case study seeks to explain how and why some events occurred”⁶¹. “The method is appropriate when investigators either desire or are forced by circumstances (a) to define research topic broadly and not narrowly, (b) to cover contextual or complex multivariate conditions and not just isolated variables, and (c) to rely on multiple and not singular sources of evidence”⁶².

⁶⁰ Yin, Robert K., (1994), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, (2nd ed.,) Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publication, Inc, p. 6

⁶¹ Yin, Robert K., (2003), *Applications of Case Study Research*, 2nd Ed, Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publication, Inc., p. 69

⁶² Yin, Robert K., (2003), p. xi

This research is also qualitative as the phenomenon is characterized by specific aspects⁶³, such as issues surrounding interactions between people at central, provincial and local government level and school level. The study aims to explain how and why the impacts from the introduction of regional autonomy are happening holistically. This is done by studying developments in the field. Finally, the research provides a detailed analysis of the perceptions of the interviewees on several issues surrounding these impacts, especially on programs and policies, changing VSE management, the vertical and horizontal relationships between institutions and VSE development achievements at school level.

2.4 Data Collection

The data was collected on the basis of the ‘triangulation’ concept⁶⁴. This involved interviewing participants from three different provinces, as illustrated in Table 1, each of which contains of a district and a city, with two schools each, on the same range of issues. The aim of this was to support the reliability and validity of the findings⁶⁵. The triangulation approach is also achieved by the use of multiple data to support the findings⁶⁶, including: the ‘in-depth interview’, to obtain first-hand information from selected respondents (see 2.6 - Interviewees); examining the readily-available papers and documents, including journals, editorials, reports, theses, news, articles and government reports; analysing other potential and relevant previous findings or experiences of the researcher or other scholars. Data from these various sources was used in conjunction with each other to develop the analysis in this research.

Table 1. Triangulation

Level	Provinces												Interviewees	Data
Provincial	Province 1				Province 2				Province 3				The head of Provincial Education Office (EOP)	Interviews Documents Meetings Observations
Local	District 1		City 1		District 2		City 2		District 3		City 3		The head of Local Education Office (EOD), Local Parliament (DPRD) Local Planning Board (BAPPEDA)	
Schools	SMKA	SMKB	SMKA	SMKB	SMKA	SMKB	SMKA	SMKB	SMKA	SMKB	SMKA	SMKB	Principal and a Senior Teacher	

Source Turijin, 2006

⁶³ Lichtman, Marilyn (2006), *Qualitative Research in Education: A user's Guide*, California Sage Publications, Inc., pp. 8-15

⁶⁴ Mason, J. (1996), *Qualitative Researching*, London, Sage, p.25

⁶⁵ Layde, Derek (1993), *New Strategies in Social Research*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press

⁶⁶ There are several types of triangulation that can involve multiple data collection methods, such as interviews, observations and life histories, see Willis, Jerry W (2007), *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretative and Critical Approaches*, California, Sage Publications, especially in p.219

2.4.1 In-Depth Interviews

The ‘in-depth’ interviews, the most significant of the methods employed in this research, were carried out between January and July 2005, that is, four years after the introduction of regional autonomy in 2001. The purposive sample of selected officials (see 2.6 - Interviewees below) were interviewed, in which their positions and other associated attributes represent the pattern of the structure of the education system hierarchy, from central, provincial, district and school levels, thus representing the pattern of the structure of the education system throughout Indonesia as a whole.

By using open and unstructured questions, the interviewees were asked to discuss their opinions, experiences and expectations regarding the VSE sector during the implementation of regional autonomy. The questions were also designed to focus on the interviewees’ duties and responsibilities, with comparisons being made with the centralised system of administration. It also encouraged them to explain their relationships with other related and relevant institutions, both vertically and horizontally. Finally, the interviewees were also asked to discuss their strategies and to anticipate any perceived problems. All of the interviews were recorded, to allow further analysis, and, also, extensive notes were taken during the interviews.

2.4.2 Documents

The collection of the data was conducted parallel to the interview phase, as well as during the second visit to the locations between January and July 2005. The data obtained via this strategy is used to support the relevant discussions and findings and also in the analysis process. Official documents, in the form of annual programs⁶⁷ from Central Education Office, the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE), were collected. These documents, representing the policy-set provided by the DVSE, are aimed at informing the relevant institutions in the regions (provinces, districts and cities), including the schools (vocational secondary schools (VSS or SMK) about the DVSE’s support offered to VSE development in the regions. In the regions, official documents, including RENSTRA (Strategic Planning)⁶⁸ reports, BAPPEDA (Local Planning Board) and *Dinas* (Local Education Office) reports and school documentation were collected. Analysis of the documentation regarding the programs and policies of each institution assists in indicating the degree of commitment to VSE

⁶⁷ SMK Program Guidelines, established by the Central Education Office (DVSE) for VSE stakeholders.

⁶⁸ RENSTRA is the strategic plan of an office or school.

development. Other reports on various components of school development, such as those regarding students, teachers, support staff and financials, were gathered from school sites. These secondary sources are used to support the relevant findings in the analysis process.

2.4.3 Mass Media

In an effort to enrich the data, coverage from available mass media was also collected. Selected articles from newspapers on issues relevant to VSE development have been compiled, as well as the records of selected radio and television programs. Some of the discussions were very important and supportive to this research, especially those from television programs covering the experiences, knowledge and thoughts of several top figures. One example is the explanation by Professor Ryas Rasyid, one of the policy-makers and an expert on regional autonomy, who specifically addressed the implementation of the 'direct election' system in several local governments (see Chapter 1). This spontaneous type of information from such mass media is useful in trying to support the specific issues being analysed and discussed in this thesis (particularly in Chapter 5), revealing how the power of the local leaders might be influencing policies on VSE development at local level.

2.4.4 Meetings

Another activity to enrich the data gathered was attendance at relevant and accessible coordination meetings. As an example, with regard to the Central Education Office (DVSE), by attending the meeting of DVSE's Curriculum Division, the researcher was able to be with the officers as they were discussing service quality improvements. In Bekasi District, the researcher attended the coordination meeting held to discuss the local people's perceptions of the central programs and policies, particularly regarding the examination passing standards' score. At school level, in SMK2, Bekasi District, the researcher attended a small meeting with teachers. Such participant observations facilitate further exploring, supporting and analysing of the findings.

2.4.5 Personal Experiences

This is a case study research thesis, "...based on experience in a particular area of professional practice"⁶⁹. As a senior member of the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) since 1981, the researcher is familiar with the nature of the organisations

⁶⁹ Willis, Jerry W., (2007), *Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretative and Critical Approaches*, California, Sage Publications, p.16

relevant to VSE, in particular: the DVSE, the education offices in the Provinces (EOP or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*), and those of the Districts or Cities (EOD or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten/Kota*) and is familiar with their strategies, programs and also problems. It is the researcher's belief is that, with such personal experiences, he is in a position to focus accurately on the issues most important to VSE that have been influenced by the introduction of regional autonomy, to reveal and discuss these, and, finally, to make constructive suggestions, which will be of use to the DVSE management in dealing with future improvement and developments.

In previous research, completed for the researcher's Master's Degree in 1996, entitled 'Critical Issues in Developing and Managing an Information System in the DVSE, Indonesia', the researcher likewise brought to his research experience with all of the activities above, including anticipating problems that would arise during the research process. Meanwhile, from 2001 to 2004, the researcher was also working on a developmental project, IASTP II (Indonesia–Australia Specialized Training Project, Phase Two), based in Jakarta. This gave the researcher the opportunity to observe at first-hand the impacts of the introduction of 'Regional Autonomy Law' in several provinces: North Sumatra, East Kalimantan and East and West Nusa Tenggara. In these provinces, the vertical relationship between provincial and local governments had changed quite noticeably. A key finding from that field work was the behaviour of local leaders (mayors, regents and governors), as illustrated by the head of the BAPPEDA⁷⁰ office of West Nusa Tenggara, who claimed that his governor's invitations to local leaders had been neglected and that none of them came to the meetings⁷¹.

Thus, these experiences and knowledge are 'personal', yet, as they relate to the issues being studied, it is asserted that they also serve to reinforce the observation technique and are, thus, valuable to guiding the focus of this research.

“... Observation allows the closest approximation to a state of affairs wherein the sociologist enters into the everyday world of those being studied so that he or she may describe and analyse this world accurately as possible”⁷².

Therefore, all of the above data collection techniques, from the in-depth interviews, gathering of official documents, examination of mass media outputs and attendance of meetings,

⁷⁰ BAPPEDA is the Local Planning Bureau.

⁷¹ Nanang Samudra, Head of BAPPEDA or Local Planning Bureau of NTB: informal discussion in 2002

⁷² Layde, Derek (1993), p. 40

combined with the researcher's personal experiences, support this study by contributing full, reliable and valid data from the field work. In addition, in the capacity of researcher, the author of this thesis was able to be an observer of the relevant institutions and not a participant in their activities, related to the cases that are the subject of this research. I recognise that as a senior official from the central education office in Jakarta that I bring to this study a particular experience and perspective. My position might also have influenced the way the informants have responded to my questions and requests for data. Thus, it is argued that this data collection strategy is capable of supporting the research in describing the how and why of the happenings in the field, accountably and authentically, illustrating the real condition of the cases being studied.

2.5. Case Studies

In the design of this research, the case is an event of a memorable and specific situation⁷³. The situation here is the major change of the environment of the government system, from a 'centralised' system to a 'decentralised' system or 'regional autonomy'. Specifically, in the education sector, as the focus of this research, the case is the changes happening in managing VSE under the impact of the introduction of regional autonomy. This includes the programs and policies, the vertical and horizontal relationships or coordination of the institutions relevant to the VSE sector, in the central, the provinces and districts or cities, as well as in the changes at school level.

As an example, the vertical relationship between the DVSE in Jakarta and the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs) in the provinces, and with Local Education Offices (EODs) in districts and cities, or even with the schools (SMK) is a case study in how VSE is being managed. Similarly, the impacts on the horizontal relationships between the local, newly-empowered institutions, such as EOD, DPRD, BAPPEDA⁷⁴ and schools (SMKs) in districts and cities, as well as the management of VSE and school development are other cases. In this study, a case also contains various elements, for instance, school budgets, staffing, management and programs.

⁷³ Lichtman, Marilyn (2006), *Qualitative Research in Education: A user's Guide*, California, Sage Publications, Inc.

⁷⁴ EOD is the Local Education Office. DPRD is the local legislative office, and BAPPEDA is the Local Planning Bureau. All are located in Districts and Cities. Since the introduction of regional autonomy, their roles are now increasing, as most of sectors have been devolved to local governments.

“Case study designs are particularly suited to situations involving a small number of cases with a large number of variables. The approach is appropriate for the investigation of cases when it is necessary to understand part of cases within the context of the whole”⁷⁵.

With this design, the described cases and elements are explored and explained in much more detail, following the principles of the qualitative case study⁷⁶. By discussing, analysing and examining the experiences of the interviewees, as the primary source, and other, related, secondary sources, it is expected that the collective cases from this study are able to illustrate the issue being studied – namely, the impact of the regional autonomy on VSE development, especially in the transition stage in 2005, when this research was conducted - in a manner that is holistic, authentic and reliable.

2.6 Interviewees

In order to obtain relevant and qualified information, ‘purposive’ sampling was employed, to determine interviewees pertinent to the case being studied⁷⁷. As explained earlier, the case of this research is the impact of regional autonomy on the development of vocational secondary education in Indonesia, which is here investigated structurally through the relevant institutions at the central, provincial and district or city levels of government and - most importantly - in the vocational secondary schools (SMK) themselves. The interviewees were selected purposively from these three levels of governments - central, provincial and local (district or city) - including at the school level - in order to obtain a holistic picture of the case. Most importantly, the interviewees were chosen because of their involvement in the policy-making, design, implementation and administration of the VSE programs, thus making them relevant to this research topic.

2.6.1 Interviewees from Central Education Office (DVSE)

Interviewees were selected from the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education Office (DVSE) including:

⁷⁵ de Vaus, David (2001), *Research design in social research*, London : SAGE publication, p.231

⁷⁶ Denzin, Norman K., and Lincoln, Yvonna S. (1994), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (Eds), Sage Publication, Inc, California, p.7

⁷⁷ Silverman, D (2005), *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, Second Edition, Sage Publication Ltd, London, pp. 129-130

- The Director of the DVSE, who is responsible for VSE development nationally. This position is critical, especially in developing the VSE national policy into programs to be implemented, as well in achieving the government's policy objectives.
- The Deputy Director of the DVSE, in the Programs and Bilateral Cooperation Division, who is responsible primarily for coordinating the planning and programs for the VSE sector from other sub-directorates of the DVSE, as an effort to put national VSE policies into effect.
- The Deputy Director of the DVSE Schools' Division, who is responsible for managing support facilities for the schools themselves (SMK). Included in this Division is one of the section heads, who assists the Deputy in organizing support in the form of 'block grants' to the schools.
- The Deputy Director of the DVSE, in the Standards and Certification Division, who is responsible for establishing standardizations for schools, in such matters as building new schools. One of the section heads responsible for organizing these matters with the schools was also selected as an interviewee.
- One senior staff member from the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, who is responsible for development of the VSE curriculum.

2.6.2 Interviewees from Provincial Level

At provincial government level, as the role of managing VSE is now very limited, only one interviewee was chosen: the Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP), who is responsible for the education sector in general, including VSE.

2.6.3 Interviewees from Local Level

At local government level (in districts and cities), the interviewees were selected from six different districts and cities, within three provinces. Within each district or city, the interviewees were selected from:

- The Head of the Local Education Office (EOD), who is responsible for managing the education sector, including VSE.

- The Head of the Local Planning Bureau (BAPPEDA), who is responsible for planning at the local level, including from the EOD.
- The Member for the Local Parliament (DPRD), that is, the Member of Parliament in the education sector who is responsible for overseeing educational development.
- Senior industry representatives.

2.6.4 Interviewees from Schools

The interviewees at the school level were the principal and a senior teacher. The principal of the vocational secondary school (SMK) is the person responsible for the implementation of the VSE programs at school level. The senior teachers selected were the most experienced teachers at each school and ones who had been working prior to regional autonomy.

2.7 Locations

Selection of locations was carried out according to the 'purposive' technique. As the purpose of this research is focused on the impacts of regional autonomy on the ongoing development of VSE, and not on political issues, the considerations in choosing the locations of this research were mostly based on aspects which could influence VSE development, and not on the potential issues that might cause disintegration, that is the political impacts. In addition, these case study locations were selected by looking at the essential aspects which might differ from one location to another, in order to try to be as representative as possible of the rest of the provinces, districts and cities of Indonesia as a whole. Another goal in location selection was to make the research goals 'SMART', that is, small, measurable, attainable, reliable and timely. As discussed earlier, the structure of government bureaucracy is similar across every province, district and city of Indonesia, yet other aspects might be different, including their administrative history, budgeting, human resources, civil society, economy, education and geographical factors, thus reflecting the pattern of diversity in conditions throughout Indonesia. In addition, this case study is expected to be able to illustrate the issues nationally. Therefore, in order to obtain the desired reflective sample, from such a diversity of conditions, the research locations were selected by taking the above-mentioned aspects into consideration. This is discussed in much more detail in the following sections.

Table 2 below shows the list of the selected sample locations, covering the provinces, districts and cities plus the schools (SMK), reflecting the pattern found across most regions.

Table 2. List of Case Study Locations

No	Province	District or City	School
1	West Java	Bekasi District	SMK1 of Bekasi District SMK2 of Bekasi District
		Bekasi City	SMK1 of Bekasi City
2	Banten	Tangerang District	SMK1 of Tangerang District
		Tangerang City	SMK3 of Tangerang City SMK4 of Tangerang City
3	Bangka Belitung	Bangka District	SMK2 of Bangka District SMK3 of Bangka District
		Pangkalpinang City	SMK1 of Pangkalpinang City SMK2 of Pangkalpinang City

Source, Turijin, 2006

2.7.1 Administrative History

The introduction of regional autonomy in 2001 also encouraged the establishment of new provincial and local governments. The number of provinces increased from 26 in 1999, before Regional Autonomy, to 33 in 2005, after regional autonomy; the number of districts increased from 268 to 349; and the number of cities from 73 to 91⁷⁸. These are expected to continue to increase in the near future. Therefore, in an effort to support the illustration of both sides, the research location samples (provinces, districts and cities) were selected by taking their history into consideration. The differences will be used in the determination process, as to ascertain whether a certain issue, such as the programs and policies in VSE development, is influenced by the nature of the new or old bureaucratic environment.

Table 3. Administrative History

No	Province			
	Name	Status	Established	Background
1	West Java	Old Province	1950	Old Establishment
2	Banten	New Province	2000	Separated from West Java Province
3	Bangka Belitung	New Province	2000	Separated from South Sumatra Province

Source, Website Babel, Banten and West Java 2005

West Java was selected as one of the old provinces for study, having, as it does, an administrative heritage dating from pre-colonial times. It consists of 16 districts and nine cities, including the District of Bekasi and the City of Bekasi, included in this research. With the old governments, it might be predicted that the pattern of the management bureaucracy

⁷⁸ Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Indonesia (2006), "Statistical data on the provinces of Indonesia 2006", BPS

would be stable and similar. Yet, as autonomous governments, the related issues discussed in this research might be different. These two locations, Bekasi District and Bekasi City, are situated within the metropolitan area of DKI Jakarta, with good transportation and communications infrastructure, and surrounded by industries, in particular Tangerang City.

On the other hand, Banten Province and Bangka Belitung Province are new provinces, established during the implementation of regional autonomy, after campaigning from the local community. Banten Province contains four districts and two cities, two of which were involved in this research, namely, the District of Tangerang and the City of Tangerang. These are illustrative of the new pattern of managerial boundaries, moving the focus of the West Java government bureaucracy to the new autonomous provincial government, that is, the Province of Banten. These two locations, especially Tangerang City, are also situated within the metropolitan infrastructure of DKI Jakarta and in the centre of an industrial area.

Unlike West Java Province and Banten Province, which are both located in the island of Java, Bangka Belitung Province is located in offshore islands, near Sumatra's southeast coast, and comprises six districts and one city. Two of the local governments, the District of Bangka and the City of Pangkalpinang, were involved in this research. They also are illustrative of the new environment of hierarchical bureaucracy. The districts and the cities are also experiencing a changing focus, from the old, provincial government, to the newly-established autonomous provincial government, that is, the Province of Bangka Belitung.

2.7.2 *Financial Capability*

Following the introduction of regional autonomy, responsibilities transferred to regional level include the introduction of the new financial arrangements. Financial support for provincial and local governments for annual programs is now determined as local budgeting or APBD⁷⁹. This is made up of 'locally derived revenue' (PAD), the 'special allocation fund' (DAK) and the 'general allocation fund' (DAU). The local revenue is determined partly by the natural resources, the size of the area, geographical conditions and population. The DAK is determined by the responsible Ministers and used to support national programs. The DAU operates as balancing funds for each region and is centrally allocated, to support the PAD⁸⁰. Table 4 below shows the APBD of the research locations, which might intervene in the

⁷⁹ The APBD or *Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah* (Local Government Budgeting) is established annually by the provincial or local governments.

⁸⁰ Prihadiyoko, Imam (2001), "The cost of government schools in Indonesia", (original title "*Pembiayaan Pendidikan Sekolah Negeri di Indonesia*"), 1 May, 2001, available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0105/01/dikbud/pemb32.htm>

initiatives of each local government in VSE development locally. The budgets also illustrate the differences in the APBD across local governments (in districts and cities) in Indonesia.

Table 4. APBD in 2005

No	Province	District or City	2005 (USD)
1	West Java	Bekasi District	72,699.57
		Bekasi City	70,190.26
2	Banten	Tangerang District	106,457.02
		Tangerang City	63,218.60
3	Bangka Belitung	Bangka District	14,038.25
		Pangkalpinang City	15,396.96

Source, BPK, 2005

The APBD of Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City is lower than that of other local governments selected in this research, however, as illustrated in Table 5 below, the income-per-capita is higher. It is believed that such situations are also influencing the degree of community participation in supporting VSE development and that they become influential factors for local governments in deciding the focus of development. The income-per-capita can be used by local governments as an indicator to determine the degree of prosperity of a certain sector, such as the economy, rather than education.

Table 5. Income Per Capita

No	Province	2003 (USD)	2004 (USD)	2005 (USD)
1	Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam	1,146.68	1,231.50	1,267.92
2	Sumatera Utara	867.21	974.16	1,099.54
3	Sumatera Barat	740.11	823.70	978.39
4	R i a u	2,196.67	2,527.79	3,035.65
5	J a m b I	616.72	704.21	853.08
6	Sumatera Selatan	857.74	970.36	1,202.13
7	B e n g k u l u	475.49	523.18	646.01
8	L a m p u n g	464.72	509.74	559.77
9	Bangka Belitung	968.87	1,082.32	1,283.02
10	Kepulauan Riau	2,812.22	3,081.81	3,214.87
11	DKI Jakarta	3,869.49	4,292.24	4,923.61
12	Jawa Barat	716.29	779.60	994.09
13	Jawa Tengah	534.20	594.40	733.11
14	DI Yogyakarta	610.74	683.23	755.11
15	Jawa Timur	828.81	934.89	1,111.45
16	Banten	739.78	807.49	937.25
17	B a l i	778.15	853.23	1,003.27
18	Kalimantan Barat	656.65	735.51	832.96
19	Kalimantan Tengah	848.87	976.47	1,097.58
20	Kalimantan Selatan	733.30	799.30	885.89
21	Kalimantan Timur	3,913.72	4,834.44	6,140.70
22	Sulawesi Utara	643.62	710.07	836.87
23	Gorontalo	280.16	312.22	367.27
24	Sulawesi Tengah	585.98	650.70	744.70
25	Sulawesi Selatan	586.09	656.99	693.00
26	Sulawesi Tenggara	472.02	534.04	661.28
27	Sulawesi Barat	-	-	456.24
28	Nusa Tenggara Barat	434.79	541.60	615.14
29	Nusa Tenggara Timur	278.04	309.85	342.74
30	M a l u k u	301.34	325.44	365.20
31	Maluku Utara	253.48	271.37	291.92
32	Irian Jaya Barat	898.55	1,022.76	1,228.67
33	Papua	1,365.38	1,325.79	2,326.85

Source, BPS Indonesia, 2006

2.7.3 Civil Society

The power of the civil society in Bangka Belitung and Banten is similarly strong. Historically, the desire to be a province has been a matter of community initiative, long ago before the introduction of regional autonomy (in Banten Province, by the local elite, since 1963⁸¹ and in Bangka Belitung Province since 1956⁸²). As new provinces, the decentralised power of those

⁸¹ In the meeting at the Office of the Regent in 1963, the Regent of Serang District introduced, for the very first time, the idea to establish Banten Province. See Secretariat of the Provincial People's Representative (DPRD) of Banten Province [WWW Home Page of Provincial Government of Banten], Available [online], <http://www.banten.go.id>, [23 October 2006]

⁸² Rationalization of the Bangka Belitung establishment in Ihza, Yusron (2000), "Proposal for the establishment of Bangka-Belitung Province: for the sake of improvement and prosperity", (original title "*Usulan Pembentukan Propinsi Bangka-Belitung, Demi Kemajuan dan Kesejahteraan*"),

two provinces is underpinned by the influence of the local community and the religious leaders, as well as the role of NGOs. The bureaucratic elite had limited responsibility for the campaign that led to the establishment of these provinces. West Java, in contrast, has a strong bureaucratic elite and a civil society with a long history of social and political participation. This sort of environment might potentially influence the mindset of those governing, that is the governor, regent, mayor, and/or the members of the Local People's Representative (DPRD), the Local Planning Bureau (BAPPEDA) and the Local Education Office (EOD) in supporting VSE development locally. It might also distinguish the process of policy formulation for the VSE sector, as the principle of decentralization also includes the participation of the community, and not just the government-level bureaucratic and political elites.

2.7.4 Economy

In the economic sector, especially from the perspective of business and commerce, Bangka Belitung Province, as is the case with many other provinces outside of Java, is less developed compared with the provinces in Java (including Banten Province and West Java Province). Bangka Belitung Province confronts a different set of economic development and governance problems, which may influence the provincial governments when it comes to determining their development priorities. Table 6 below illustrates the number of small-scale businesses, the number of employees and the gross value output (for which Bangka Belitung Province is the lowest among all provinces studied). The economic structure in Bangka Belitung Province is dominated by the mining industry, including in the two local locations selected for this research, Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City. West Java Province and Banten Province, by contrast, have strong, diverse ranges of business, with a broad cross-section of small and large industries, particularly in the locations of this research, Tangerang District and Tangerang City, as well as Bekasi District and Bekasi City. Banten Province might be seen as a province with more potential, compared to others, as it is not only dominated by large and heavy industries, but also has other types of supporting business, such as the international airport, located in Tangerang City, and the inter-island harbour, connecting the islands of Java and Sumatra, in Serang, the capital city of the province. Bekasi District, as part of West Java Province, is also determined as a 'Bonded Zone' (*Kawasan Berikat*), a central government initiative to support community development in industrialization⁸³.

Kompas, [available online], <http://kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0003/06/daerah/demi24.htm>, [5 February 2007]

⁸³ Taken from Bekasi District archives, available online at <http://www.kab-bekasi.go.id/content.php?news=58>

Table 6. The Small Business Development

No	Province	Number Business	Employees	Gross Output (USD)
1	Nanggroe Aceh D	243,603	428,514	86,407,710
2	Sumatera Utara	741,879	1,330,476	250,062,900
3	Sumatera Barat	347,389	656,052	126,715,600
4	R i a u	211,349	468,876	112,099,450
5	J a m b I	153,735	271,167	70,361,080
6	Sumatera Selatan	258,685	514,997	93,281,700
7	Bengkulu	80,133	136,627	20,027,180
8	Lampung	430,143	765,009	110,153,760
9	Bangka Belitung	55,645	107,470	24,080,250
10	D.K.I. Jakarta	1,053,427	2,073,623	656,078,290
11	Jawa Barat	2,908,228	4,719,813	860,470,380
12	Jawa Tengah	3,508,577	6,251,797	911,766,280
13	D.I. Yogyakarta	409,814	802,597	110,382,290
14	Jawa Timur	3,551,777	6,156,908	1,020,789,580
15	Banten	513,523	836,310	146,043,720
16	B a l I	290,360	523,617	85,806,360
17	Nusa Tenggara Barat	308,940	559,588	60,463,980
18	Nusa Tenggara Timur	205,389	433,984	37,455,660
19	Kalimantan Barat	266,241	521,446	97,033,120
20	Kalimantan Tengah	151,795	277,532	50,008,650
21	Kalimantan Selatan	345,129	602,894	92,126,410
22	Kalimantan Timur	205,942	394,260	85,292,570
23	Sulawesi Utara	204,445	350,721	55,615,400
24	Sulawesi Tengah	99,714	184,704	27,321,690
25	Sulawesi Selatan	320,716	596,911	88,682,160
26	Sulawesi Tenggara	81,619	144,276	14,846,050
27	Gorontalo	38,522	63,424	8,577,880
28	Maluku	78,400	168,008	30,213,070
29	Maluku Utara	22,750	40,508	7,007,140
30	Papua	57,375	165,024	33,255,290

Source, BPS Indonesia, 2006

2.7.5 Education

Table 7 below illustrates that the number of public and private vocational secondary schools (SMK) in the Bangka Belitung Province and Banten Province is relatively small, compared to the number of the schools in West Java Province. As newly-established provinces, most of the SMK in Bangka Belitung Province and Banten Province had been established under the management of the old province, before the introduction of regional autonomy. In addition, in comparison with the old province, as the new provinces, the officials in the Provincial Education Office (EOP) (or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*) in Bangka-Belitung and Banten are recent appointments and are still becoming accustomed to their new tasks, as they have never before had to run this type of education, locally or provincially. Thus, these differences, both in the number of schools and in the management and environment of the new government, are

reflective of the situations of other provinces throughout Indonesia and intended to reflect something of Indonesia's administrative diversity.

Table 7. Number of the Vocational Secondary School (SMK)

No.	Province	Public		Private		Total	
		School	Student	School	Student	School	Student
1	DKI Jakarta	59	190,953	531	149,639	590	190,953
2	West Java	102	290,758	654	231,053	756	290,758
3	Banten	17	81,673	158	70,617	175	81,673
4	Middle Java	124	372,581	659	291,828	783	372,581
5	DI Yogyakarta	37	56,912	124	32,626	161	56,912
6	East Java	136	391,677	729	307,262	865	391,677
7	Aceh	35	22,921	26	5,232	61	22,921
8	North Sumatera	66	186,051	505	149,958	571	186,051
9	West Sumatera	45	53,312	113	26,368	158	53,312
10	R i a u	22	31,465	52	17,667	74	31,465
11	Riau Islands	6	9,583	22	6,001	28	9,583
12	J a m b I	24	19,648	41	10,687	65	19,648
13	South Sumatera	26	45,117	88	27,875	114	45,117
14	Bangka Belitung	11	12,313	28	7,763	39	12,313
15	Bengkulu	19	12,556	20	4,530	39	12,556
16	Lampung	31	60,975	166	47,182	197	60,975
17	West Kalimantan	25	27,927	76	16,156	101	27,927
18	Middle Kalimantan	21	9,491	20	2,323	41	9,491
19	South Kalimantan	28	19,249	24	6,535	52	19,249
20	East Kalimantan	32	37,297	76	20,072	108	37,297
21	North Sulawesi	24	19,991	34	7,770	58	19,991
22	Gorontalo	7	6,105	8	938	15	6,105
23	Middle Sulawesi	23	14,309	28	4,624	51	14,309
24	South Sulawesi	53	58,300	127	30,342	180	58,300
25	West Sulawesi	7	5,218	16	2,554	23	5,218
26	South East Sulawesi	19	12,158	14	2,137	33	12,158
27	M a l u k u	18	8,754	15	2,628	33	8,754
28	North Maluku	11	5,446	8	1,917	19	5,446
29	B a l I	29	31,699	59	18,524	88	31,699
30	West Nusa Tenggara	41	19,133	13	3,311	54	19,133
31	East Nusa Tenggara	32	30,286	48	15,051	80	30,286
32	Papua	20	13,050	18	5,643	38	13,050
33	West Irian Jaya	9	7,160	6	1,191	15	7,160
	T o t a l	1,159	2,164,068	4,506	1,528,004	5,665	2,164,068

Source, BPS Indonesia, 2006

Such differences also occur at the level of districts and cities, especially in the number of schools to maintain. Yet, those in the Local Education Office (EOD) (or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten/Kota*) have the same historical administrative background and have no experience

in managing the VSE schools (SMKs). This situation is also illustrative of the situation in other districts and cities throughout Indonesia.

Table 8. Number of SMK in 2005

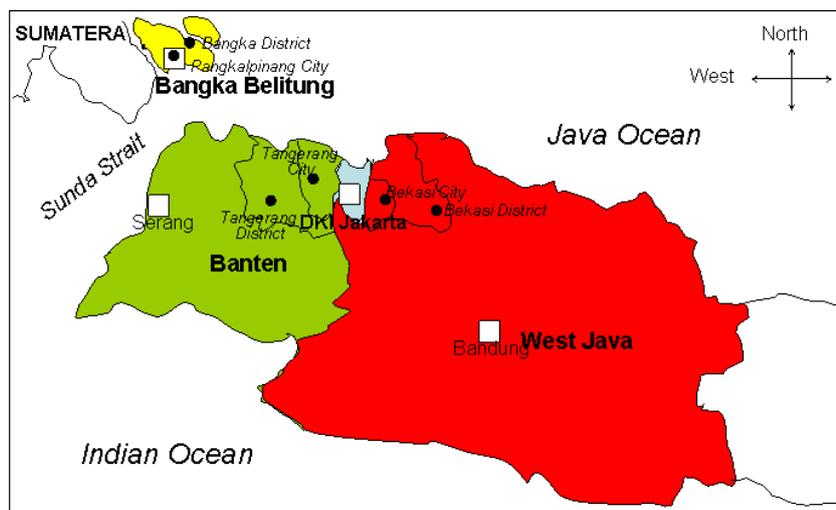
No	Province	District or City	School					
			SMU			SMK		
			Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total
1	West Java	Bekasi District	12	14	26	2	21	23
		Bekasi City	9	47	56	2	38	40
2	Banten	Tangerang District	NA	NA	NA	5	71	76
		Tangerang City	3	13	16	5	36	41
3	Bangka Belitung	Bangka District	6	12	18	4	6	10
		Pangkalpinang City	NA	NA	15	NA	NA	10

Source, School maps, 2007

2.7.6 Geographical Situation

The locations of the education offices and schools involved in this research are important when it comes to potential influences on the issues under investigation. Situations particular to each of the sample locations are expected to colour the cases and reveal other, embedded, issues, especially regarding the relationship between the entities or institutions and human interaction ‘vertically’, between central and local levels, or ‘horizontally’, between the institutions in districts and cities, as well as the schools, in managing the development of VSE programs. Map 2 below illustrates the case study locations.

Map 2. Case Study Locations



Source, Planology Board of the Forestry Department, 2002 (modification)

2.7.6.1 The Districts and Cities

As shown in Map 2 above, the capital city of Banten Province is Serang City, approximately 140 km from the Central Education Office (DVSE) in Jakarta. Geographically, the two local governments involved in this research, Tangerang District and Tangerang City, are closer to Jakarta (where the central government is located), rather than to their provincial government in Serang. In particular, Tangerang City is situated within the infrastructure area of metropolitan Jakarta, with good roads, telecommunications and transportation, in an industrial area and close to the Central Education Office (DVSE), rather than to the Provincial Education Office (EOP) in Serang.

Similarly, the geographical situation of West Java Province is almost identical. The capital City is in Bandung and the two local governments involved in this research are also physically closer to the central government in Jakarta. The District of Bekasi and the City of Bekasi are located within the boundaries of the Jakarta metropolitan area. The two local governments, Bekasi District and Bekasi City, are also situated within the Jakarta metropolitan area, with good infrastructure (roads, telecommunications and transportation), in an industrial area and closer to the Central Education Office (DVSE), rather than to the Provincial Education Office (EOP) in Bandung.

In contrast, Bangka Belitung Province is located in an island outside of Java. The locations of the provincial and local governments are quite close to each other, especially for the City of Pangkalpinang, while the District of Bangka is around one hour by car from the seat of the provincial government. Meanwhile, both provincial and local governments are similarly far away from the central government in Jakarta - approximately one hour by plane. These two local governments are geographically closer to the Provincial Education Office (EOP), rather than to the Central Office (DVSE) in Jakarta. The infrastructure is not as good as for Bekasi and Tangerang and they are not located in industrial areas. In summary, the background of the local governments involved in this research can be seen in Table 9 below.

These geographical conditions might promote different influences on the issues being investigated in this research. The industrial area, with its associated aspects, in both Tangerang and Bekasi Districts and Cities, will potentially influence the related institutions in determining policies, programs and priorities, to suit the needs of the community. This pattern might differ with other districts and cities, located far from the metropolitan area, although from a similar province (see Chapter 4.). Similarly, it might also influence the degree of vertical coordination or relationships between those in the Central Education Office (DVSE),

the Provincial Education Office (EOP) or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi* and the Local Education offices in district and cities (EOD) (See Chapter 5).

Table 9. Main Data re Case Study Locations

No	Province			District or City				
	Name	Status	Location	Name	From Central	From Province	Infra-structure	Industrial Area
1	West Java	Old	In Java Island	Bekasi District	Close	Far	Good	Yes
				Bekasi City	Close	Far	Good	Yes
2	Banten	New	In Java Island	Tangerang District	Far	Far	Fair	No
				Tangerang City	Close	Far	Good	Yes
3	Bangka Belitung	New	Out side of Java Island	Bangka District	Far	Close	Fair	No
				Pangkalpinang City	Far	Close	Good	No

Close = less than 20 km, Distance = more than 100 km, Infrastructure = roads, communications, transportation, etc.

2.7.6.2 The Schools

The location of the Vocational Schools (SMKs) may also be a factor that influences the issues being studied. In Tangerang District, the SMK involved in this research is located in a small village, in a relatively remote area, far from industry or business centres. The distances to the Local Education Office (*Dinas*) and the Provincial Education Office (*Kanwil*), in Serang, or to the Central Office (DVSE), in Jakarta, is similarly far, about two hours by car. It would appear that the interaction between those in the schools and those in these education offices, as well as with surrounding industries, are critical influences for the schools, as far as realizing the objectives of the VSE programs.

Meanwhile, in Tangerang City, the two SMKs involved in this research are situated in the middle of the city, surrounded by industrial and business activity, consisting of 2,353 companies, made up of 345 from large-sized industries, 351 from medium-sized industries and 1,304 from small-sized industries and 253 from other types of businesses suitable for school graduates seeking jobs.⁸⁴ The locations of these schools are, similarly, closer to the Local Education Office (*Dinas*) and to the Central Education Office (DVSE), in Jakarta, rather than to the Provincial Education Office (EOP) in Serang. Thus, interaction with the

⁸⁴ *Perspektif Kota* [home page of the Local Government of Tangerang City], available online at: http://www.tangerangkota.go.id/view.php?mode=2&sort_no=10, [13 October 2007]

Local Education Office, the Central Education Office and also with industry is easier, compared to interaction with the Provincial Education Office.

Similarly, in the District of Bekasi, the two schools in this research are located within industrial areas (manufacturing, textiles and other, such as spare parts for cars and motorcycles), yet are located far from any of the education offices, either local, provincial or central. Therefore, the issue of interaction is likely to be critical. While in Bekasi City, the schools are close to their Local Education Office, travel time in this densely-populated area, with narrow roads and busy traffic, is slow and travel time to the Central Office in Jakarta is almost similar (one hour). By comparison, travel to the Provincial Education Office in Bandung takes three hours by car.

Meanwhile, both Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City are not located within industrial areas. Mining exploration is a very important activity, however, as yet, not one of the SMKs are situated within mining areas. All of the schools involved in this research are located close to their Local Education Office (*Dinas*). Especially in Pangkalpinang City, the schools are located within the business area and are very close to both the local and provincial education offices, while the schools in Bangka District are about one hour by car from the Provincial Education Office. The only way to visit the Central Education Office in Jakarta is by air or sea, making direct, personal interaction difficult, when it comes to program coordination or other affairs.

Thus, the schools selected for this research are located in various different geographical situations and are, illustrative of vocational education schools throughout Indonesia as a whole. It is asserted that geographical considerations do play a part in influencing the issues under discussion.

2.8 Validity

As discussed above, the design of this case study is deliberately described in detail, aimed at not only focusing on the cases being studied but also on achieving internal and external validity.

“Case study designs are often seen to be deficient in all these areas. However, careful attention to these matters at the design stage can deal with many of these criticisms”⁸⁵.

⁸⁵ de Vaus, D., (2001), *Research design in social research*, London, SAGE publication, p.233

Internal validity of this case study is achieved by also basing this research on the technique of 'idiographic' explanation. For each case, in discussing the changing programs and policies, correlated and relevant issues (include the formulation process and the nature of the programs and their implementation) are also examined and explained in detail.

“Idiographic explanation focuses on particular events, or cases, and seeks to develop a complete explanation of each case”⁸⁶.

In this research, the case includes the sub-cases and their components and elements are explored and explained in complete understanding (see 2.5 Case). For example, in Chapter 4 of this research, a sub-case, that of the changing patterns in providing 'programs and policies' for developing VSE by the various education offices are investigated and explained in detail (that is, what the changes are and why they occurred). In addition, the trend is also supported with intensive discussion of its components and elements. Thus, “by developing a full, well-rounded, causal account, case studies can achieve high internal validity”⁸⁷.

Meanwhile, the 'external validity' of this research is achieved by being meticulous in selecting which cases are to be studied.

“The external validity of case studies is enhanced by the strategic selection of cases rather than by the statistical selection of the cases”⁸⁸.

The cases of this research were selected as illustrative of potential issues expected to arise due to implications of the introduction of regional autonomy on the management of the VSE sector, especially during the transition stage in 2005. Predicted implications for all cases, including changing programs and policies, vertical and horizontal relationships, management and the impact on the schools were investigated, in order to be holistic in approach in examining the impact of regional autonomy on the VSE sector.

2.9 Reliability

As also explained earlier, the design of this research is determined carefully and aimed, not only to focus the case being studied, but also to optimise the quality of the data collected. Unlike with a quantitative method, where reliability is achieved through measuring the

⁸⁶ de Vaus, D., (2001), p. 233

⁸⁷ de Vaus, D., (2001), p. 234

⁸⁸ de Vaus, D., (2001), p.238

responses statistically, in this case study, reliability is expected to be reached from the implementation of the 'in-depth interview' technique.

In this research, the researcher is the one and the only interviewer, therefore, the responses of the interviewees were expected to be influenced by just one person. In addition, a list of open-ended questions was developed, not to be given to the interviewees, but used to guide the researcher in focusing the responses of the interviewees in the cases being studied. Moreover, the 'purposive technique' in selecting the interviewees was expected to provide relevant voluntary interviewees for this research.

Prior to the interview time, a consent letter was sent to each of the interviewees, followed up with confirmation. The nature of the consent letter is to explain the scope of the cases being studied and to invite the nominees to participate in this research, on a voluntary basis, without pressure. Confirmation was carried out by contacting the interviewees by phone and explaining the study and the voluntary conditions, in much greater detail, with the aim of assuring accuracy of interviewee data. Measures will never be perfectly reliable and perfectly valid, yet, these all aspects of reliability measurement ensured that this research avoided issues of 'unreliability'⁸⁹.

2.10 Analysis

'Descriptive analysis'⁹⁰ has been employed, in order to achieve the aims and the design of the research. This research adopted a case study approach, aimed at explaining the how and the why of the cases studied. It has been predicted that the interaction between regional autonomy and the 'ongoing programs' of the Central Education Office (DVSE) will influence the management of the VSE sector. Thus, according to Yin, "pattern-matching"⁹¹ analysis also underpins the principle of the analysis of this research, as the potential issues of the introduction of regional autonomy have been defined prior to interview or data collection (See Chapter 1.)

⁸⁹ de Vaus, D., (2001), p. 331

⁹⁰ de Paus, D., (2001), p, 251

⁹¹ Yin, Robert K., (1994), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, (2nd ed.,) Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publication, Inc, p. 106

The issues or cases are:

- *the case of changing programs and policies* at all levels of government - central, provincial, local (district and city, as well as the schools);
- *the case of vertical relationships*, between the DVSE in the central and the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs) in the provinces, and with the Local Education Offices (EODs) in districts and cities, or even with the schools (SMK);
- *the case of horizontal relationships*, between the newly-empowered local institutions, such as EOD, DPRD, BAPPEDA⁹² and schools (SMKs) in districts and cities;
- *the case of organization strategy* of the relevant institutions involved in managing the VSE;
- *the case of development* of the schools (SMKs).

With the application of ‘descriptive’ analysis⁹³, the associated components of each case are analysed in greater detail. Each of those cases is analysed, not only with regard to how much they fit the expected phenomena (which have been described previously), but also to explain the cases as a holistic phenomenon. Any description of the case will be based on the facts and evidence, which is the nature of ‘qualitative’ research, and which will rely fully on what had been explained by the interviewees regarding these particular issues and/or other factual data, obtained from readily-available secondary sources.

In addition, the technique also insists that the researcher focus on proving the expected cases and not creating other issues. As an example, the prediction that implementation of regional autonomy would impact upon ‘vertical relationships’ has to be proved to be an issue that is evident in the field. Thus, the predicated cases are used as a guide to focus the investigation and discussion and to illustrate the actual case.

⁹² EOD is the Local Education Office; DPRD is the Local Legislative; BAPPEDA is the Local Planning Bureau. All are located in districts and cities. Since the introduction of regional autonomy, their functions have been increasing, as most government sectors have been transferred to local government.

⁹³ de Vaus, D., (2001), pp.249-266

“Using this approach we avoid description that simply describes whatever we happen to find out about the case or simply reports the features that catch our attention. Instead, the description is structured, planned and purposeful”⁹⁴.

In addition, as the study in analysing the cases is carried out in three different provinces, a ‘typology’ technique is also being performed. This is very useful to support the holistic picture of the cases. An example is the management of the schools in all research locations, that is, with regard to their programs, staffing and finances. The result can be used to illustrate the trends of a specific case within different environments. In many cases, time order description⁹⁵ is also used, particularly in explaining the history of an event, for example, the establishment of regional autonomy. Thus, all of the cases are analysed through these selected approaches to obtain research findings of maximum quality.

2.11 Human Research Ethics

This research obtained ethics approval from Victoria University on 10th January 2005, HRETH.046/04. Thus, this research has been informed by the values of (1) Respect for human beings, (2) Research merit and integrity, (3) Justice and (4) Beneficence as determined in the National Statements on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

2.12 Chapter Summary

The methodology of this research is designed to facilitate an examination of how or why patterns of developments have been changing in the field of VSE as a result of the introduction of regional autonomy. This research adopted a case study approach with a qualitative analysis by discussing, exploring and decrypting the knowledge and experiences of the respondents who were involved directly in the object being studied including senior officers in the vocational secondary education (VSE) sector.

⁹⁴ de Vaus, D., (2001), p. 251

⁹⁵ de Vaus, D., (2001), p. 252

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

As this research is focused on the implications of the introduction of regional autonomy in Indonesia on VSE (Vocational Secondary Education), particularly the influences on programs and policies being implemented, the vertical and horizontal relationships between the related institutions in Jakarta, the provinces and districts, with regard to managing VSE programs and policies, the management of VSE and the Vocational Secondary Schools (VSS). This chapter reviews the literature related to, firstly, the concept of ‘autonomy’, secondly the autonomy in practice, thirdly the impacts of ‘regional autonomy’, and, finally, the influence of regional autonomy on the education sector.

3.2 The Concept of Autonomy

Rondinelli defined ‘decentralization’ as “transfer of power, authority, or responsibility, for decision-making, planning, management or recourse allocation, from the central government to...the district...”⁹⁶. Lauglo suggested that there are many types of decentralization. Politically, decentralization can take many forms, including federalism, populist localism, participatory democracy and liberalism. Or, with regard to the questions of quality and efficiency, it can be pedagogic professionalism, management by objective, the market mechanism or ‘deconcentration’⁹⁷. In addition, Rondinelli⁹⁸ and also Carino⁹⁹ emphasized three types of decentralization. The first is ‘deconcentration’, in which some functions or responsibilities are devolved to a lower level, yet still under the direct control of central government. The second is ‘delegation’, that is, giving some decision-making power to lower-level government. The last is ‘devolution’, which is the transfer of power to the autonomous units.

Decentralization has become a popular idea, both in terms of concept and also in terms of its outcomes. According to Karslen, it has been the political agenda for almost three decades in

⁹⁶ Cited in Hope, Kempe Ronald Snr (2000), “Decentralization and local governance theory and the practice in Botswana”, *Development Southern Africa*, Vol. 17, No 4, October, p. 520

⁹⁷ Lauglo, Jon (1995), “Forms of Decentralization and Their Implication for Education”, *Comparative Education*, Vol. 31, May, pp. 5-29

⁹⁸ Cited in Derqui, Jorge M., Gorostiaga (2001), “Educational decentralization policies in Argentina and Brazil: exploring the new trends”, *Journal Education Policy*. Vol. 16, No. 6, pp. 561-583

⁹⁹ Carino, Ledevina V., “Decentralization in Southeast Asia”, (2007), in Evan M. Berman, (ed), *Encyclopedia of Public Administration and Public Policy*, 2nd edition, USA, Taylor and Francis,

both developed and developing countries¹⁰⁰. Ghai argued that the term ‘autonomy’ is interchangeable with that of ‘decentralization’. Ghai considered ‘autonomy’ to be a generic term used to achieve a specific goal and to be more flexible than federalism, which allocated specific powers to the regions and the central government¹⁰¹. Nesiiah defines ‘autonomy’ as “... the paradigm that is most invested in the new third tier of federalism, namely the institutions of local government”¹⁰². From another angle, Chadda clarified that the focus of autonomy is “on the distribution of power, offices, position, legislative dominance and control over political agenda”¹⁰³. These concepts, as Turner and Podger claimed, are a reasonable strategy to form an efficient, effective and responsive mode of government for countries like Indonesia¹⁰⁴. However, Hanson reminded us that such distribution of power, especially the improvement of the democratisation might also cause problems in the regions in implementing the devolved functions, which might result in the re-centralization of authority in order to secure the stability of the nation¹⁰⁵.

Aspinall and Fealy reported that, in the implementation phase, which, in Indonesia, has been referred to as ‘regional autonomy’, Indonesia “is experiencing an historic and dramatic shift in political and economic power from Jakarta to the local level”¹⁰⁶. As Rasyid explained, the central political elite failed to choose between the two options of federal centralization and modified centralization,

“The Habibie government had maintained from its inception that the period of extreme centralism was over, but it did not wish to be labelled federalist. The focus of

¹⁰⁰ Karlson, G.E (1999), “Decentralized Centralized-Governance in the field of education: Evident from Norway and British Columbia”, *Canadian Journal of Education and Policy*, Issue 13, December, p.1

¹⁰¹ A basic description of autonomy is in Ghai, Yash (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press

¹⁰² Autonomy as defined by Nesiiah, Vasuki (2000), “Federalism and Diversity in India” in Ghai, Yash. (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Muli-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press

¹⁰³ The focus of autonomy in Chadda, Maya (1997), *Ethnicity, Security, and Separatism in India*, New York, Columbia University Press

¹⁰⁴ Autonomy is considered suitable for Indonesia, see Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), *Decentralization in Indonesia: redesigning the state*, Canberra, Asia Pacific Press

¹⁰⁵ Hanson, E. Mark (2006), “Strategies of Educational Decentralization: Key questions and Core Issues, in Chistopher Bjork, (ed), *Educational Decentralization: Asian Experiences and Conceptual*, NY, U.S.A. Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, Springer

¹⁰⁶ Opening remark in discussion on decentralization and democratization by Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), *Decentralization in Indonesia: redesigning the state*, Canberra, Asia Pacific Press

regional autonomy was therefore on the districts and municipality (*kabupaten/kota*)¹⁰⁷ rather than provincial level of government”¹⁰⁸.

As a result, Turner discovered dynamic changes occurred in the districts, including the restructuring of organizations to meet the devolved tasks. In the education sector, “the dual structure has been replaced by one in which *Kandep* and *Dinas*¹⁰⁹ are amalgamated...”¹¹⁰. Meanwhile, Colongon claimed that all of these changes suggest that the implementation of Regional Autonomy is on the right track.¹¹¹ However, Sukma and Bella both consider that problems are also arising and, in particular, Sukma believed that:

“The breakdown of central authority and reduced state-capacity has, in turn, unleashed the potential for inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts long suppressed by authoritarian means”¹¹².

Specifically, in the sector of education in Indonesia, Baedhowie observed:

“...the increase of interest and political considerations in education, and the decline of performance standards in education. There are two main influential factors: the law of regional autonomy itself; and the incapacity of local governments to handle the burden of the devolved responsibilities and tasks from Jakarta”¹¹³.

3.3 Regional Autonomy in Practice

Whilst many countries have introduced regional autonomy, the success of its implementation is yet to be evaluated. Ghai argues that conflicts between states, groups or ethnicities are the most common issues and that not all practitioners end up with successful results (such as in

¹⁰⁷ *Kabupaten* is ‘regency’ and *kota* is ‘city’ (an Indonesian- English Dictionary, 1997).

¹⁰⁸ Rasyid, M. Ryaas (2003), “Regional Autonomy and Local Politics in Indonesia”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p.63

¹⁰⁹ *Kandep* and *Dinas* are the old versions of the Local Education Office and both are located within one District or City. The difference is that the *Kandep* was established through the provincial authority, while the *Dinas* was formed locally, by the District or City (DVSE History, 2002).

¹¹⁰ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003), p.25.

¹¹¹ Colongon, Arellano A., Jr. (2003) “What is happening on the ground? The progress of decentralization”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore: Institute of Southern Asian Studies

¹¹² Escalation of the conflicts in Indonesia post-Suharto in Sukma, Rizal (2003), “Conflict Management in post-authoritarian Indonesia” in Kingbury, Damien and Aveling, Harry (eds) *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, London and New York, Routledge Curzon, p. 152

¹¹³ Bella, Burhanuddin (2004), “It is compulsory for human to make an effort, but let God decide”, (original title “Manusia wajib berusaha, tapi Tuhan yang menentukan”), Available [online], <http://www.pdk.go.id/go.php?a=1&to=f749>, [16 August 2005]

the examples of Yugoslavia and Cyprus), while others have experienced solving problems of conflicts within states (such as in India and Canada), and others have (as in the cases of Spain and Indonesia), experienced pressure for regional autonomy from the grassroots level¹¹⁴. With the experience of Yugoslavia, argues Ghai, the federation depended on the Communist Party to preserve organic unity and also the central authorities used ethnic differences in opportunistic ways, calculated to not promote good inter-ethnic relations, and finally resulted in secession. However Malešević claimed:

“Yugoslavia has not disintegrated simply because it was a multi-ethnic federation with a long history of mutual animosities that were kept under control by the iron fist of communist government. ...Yugoslavia did not collapse because it was a multi-ethnic society of mutually antagonistic groups or it was organised in a federal way, but because it was not a genuinely democratic federal state”¹¹⁵.

Ghai noted that the dilemma in Cyprus was characterized by the strong different expectations of the two ethnic groups, Greeks and Turks, one pro-centralization and the other pro-regionalization; they ended up unable to reach a compromise. Coughlan supports this argument by suggesting that the program initiated by the United Nations Secretary-General to promote a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation for almost twenty years, resulted in failure.

“...Federalism is not an appropriate solution for Cyprus. The conditions which undermined the consociational experiment in the period 1960-63 are currently even less favourable to the establishment of territorially-based federation, because the socio-economic disparities between the two segments in the island have become much deeper”¹¹⁶.

It is quite noticeable that the commitment of central powers and elites can influence the implementation of autonomy. According to Ghai, Canada is a successful example of a state accommodating the need for autonomy of indigenous peoples (in this case, those of Manitoba

¹¹⁴ Experiences of the countries in implementing autonomy in Ghai, Yash (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p. 23 see also Autonomy in Indonesia in Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, (eds.) Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies

¹¹⁵ Malešević, Siniša (2000) “Ethnicity and Federalism in Communist Yugoslavia and its successor states”, in Ghai, Yash (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p. 49

¹¹⁶ Coughlan, Reed (2000), “Cyprus: from Corporate Autonomy to the search for territorial federalism”, in Ghai, Yash (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p. 220

Province and northern Quebec), without any substantial conflict or popular movements. Watts also argued that “Canada has developed an equalization scheme, under which the federal government makes unconditional financial transfers to less wealthy provinces to reduce the disparities among them”¹¹⁷. Watts added that “the commitment to the principles of equalisation payments and to promoting equal opportunities was embodied in the constitution”¹¹⁸.

Conversi claimed that such an experience also occurred in Spain¹¹⁹ and that Spain has been successful, due to the specific pattern of democratisation experienced since the late 1970s, which was finally enshrined in the new democratic constitution (1978)¹²⁰. The lengthy debating between the elites ended up with the mobilization of over one million people marching in the streets of Barcelona in 1977, demanding “freedom, amnesty and a statute of autonomy”¹²¹. The dictatorial regime was over and the democratisation process began, with the support of the minority aspirations but, once the new constitution was established, “seventeen autonomous communities emerged on the official map, some of which were entirely new creations”¹²². This is identical to the lesson learnt from Indonesia, where the formulation of regional autonomy was sparked by popular demand, followed by the resignation of President Suharto in 1998, and, finally by the introduction of the Regional Autonomy Law in 2001, which resulted in the establishment of several new provinces, districts and cities. In Asia, although secessions still have the potential to happen, the central governments still have the proficiency to resolve these. India, as Nesiah argued, has succeeded in accommodating acceptable popular commitment.

“...The constitution attempts to tailor mechanisms that enable an inclusive and dialogical relationship between minority communities and the states, as well as

¹¹⁷ Federalism in Canada by Watts, Ronald D. (2000), “Federalism and Diversity in Canada”, in Ghai, Yash (ed.), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p. 44

¹¹⁸ Watts, Ronald D. (2000), p. 44

¹¹⁹ Autonomy in Spain in Conversi, Daniele (2000), “Autonomous Community and Ethnic Settlement”, in Ghai, Yash. (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, pp. 123-127

¹²⁰ Conversi, Daniele (2000), “Autonomous Community and Ethnic Settlement”, in Ghai, Yash. (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, pp. 123-127

¹²¹ Conversi, Daniele, (2000), p. 24

¹²² Conversi, Daniele. (2000), p.127

encouraging the proactive intervention of the state in overcoming differences and their social and political consequences”¹²³.

Also, the constitution limits state powers and “safeguards a sphere of autonomy, so that differences can be protected and enhanced without threat of assimilation and subjugation”¹²⁴.

China’s experience is interesting. Ghai explains that various Leninist and Stalinist principles were employed in early attempts to deal with ethnic minorities. Lenin’s objectives were to promote self-determination, including “the right to secede if needed or with significant autonomy to pursue cultural, linguistic and other policies”¹²⁵. Stalin’s strategies, on the other hand, used four criteria to determine the autonomy for a certain ethnic group, namely: “common language, territory, economic and culture”¹²⁶. The central government was also faced with difficulties in containing minority movements (forty four nationality groups or ethnicities), particularly the interferences of the Han people in the regions. In fact, central government policy was for China to be a unitary state, a very large nation, with many different ethnic groups, adhering to “leadership obsession with state sovereignty”¹²⁷, as explained by Ghai. Although local leaders of the various ethnic groups were allowed to determine their own responsibilities, the way in which the central government was also still dominantly involved, influenced ‘autonomy’ in practice. These approaches were later improved upon by the introduction of special economic zones to provide a middle ground. The rationale was experimentation with new economic forms, providing a substantial role for foreign investment in the private economy, but within the framework of social modernization. Such zones were established in Shenzhen and Guangdong Provinces¹²⁸.

In Indonesia, the history, problems and issues related to the implementation of Regional Autonomy are similar to the experiences of India and China, yet the result is still controversy. The central government’s policy on regional autonomy is just being implemented, after lengthy experience with authoritarian regimes. As noted by Sukma:

¹²³ Nesiah, Vasuki (2000), “Federalism and Diversity in India” in Ghai, Yash. (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p.55

¹²⁴ Nesiah, Vasuki (2000), p.55

¹²⁵ Ghai, Yash (2000) “Autonomy Regimes in China: Coping with Ethnic and Economic Diversity”, in Ghai, Yash (2000), (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, p. 85

¹²⁶ Ghai, Yash (2000), p. 85.

¹²⁷ Ghai, Yash, (2000), p. 85.

¹²⁸ Ghai, Yash, (2000), p. 85.

“The final outcome of the current transition process remains uncertain, and the country still risks the return of authoritarianism, which might pose a serious threat to any genuine attempt to build democracy for many years to come”¹²⁹.

The compromising initiative of the central elite of the Habibie government in deciding to implement regional autonomy was timely. As mentioned previously by Rasyid in the introduction of this chapter, the politics of the elite failed to reach a compromise in promoting either Federalism, in which power is devolved to the provincial level, or Modified Centralism, which preserves the existing centralism with a little modification¹³⁰. Finally, Indonesia has been able to establish a legal framework for decentralization through Law 22/1999 on regional government and Law 25/1999 on the fiscal balance. These laws, as argued by Turner:

“decreed dramatic and rapid change to the prevailing dynamic of central and local government relations by devolving broad powers and responsibilities upon democratically elected regional government, large quantities of funds, personnel and assets were moved to local control”¹³¹.

Turner also argued that:

“...these laws are the most radical decentralization measures in Asia and the Pacific, as a wide range of function was transferred to regency (*kabupaten*) and city (*kota*) control, where elected councils acquired greatly enhanced legislative authority”¹³².

As has been illustrated earlier, the principle for most countries in implementing autonomy has been to concentrate on empowering their second level of government, yet, in Indonesia, provincial authority was absolutely abandoned. Furthermore, unlike in other countries, the time the Indonesian government spent in planning for regional autonomy was very short - just two years - after the collapse of the Suharto regime in 1998. There was a lack of preparation, as Turner again claimed, in that there was no clearly-stated rationale for decentralisation in the laws and there was little guidance for writing the regulations in detail. This obviously

¹²⁹ Sukma, Rizal, (2003), “Conflict Management in post-authoritarian Indonesia” in Kingbury, Damien and Aveling, Harry (eds.), *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, London and New York, Routledge Curzon, p. 64

¹³⁰ A discussion on the autonomy principle by Rasyid, M. Ryaas (2003), “Regional Autonomy and Local Politics in Indonesia”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds.), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, pp. 63-86

¹³¹ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), p. x

¹³² Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), p. x

caused difficulty for the implementers and uncertainty and frustration for the regional governments. Although hampered by many weaknesses, most scholars agree that the introduction of the regional autonomy, involving huge programs, has been conducted according to schedule.

Commitment from many people at all levels of government has promoted the success of the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia. Colongon suggested that in Indonesia “the sustainable and successful decentralisation is emerging, the fiscal balance arrangements are evolving to ensure that the fiscal powers and resources of local governments match with their responsibilities”¹³³. Also, the local governments have responded promptly to the central government’s initiatives on regional autonomy, through the reorganising of existing local institutions. Furthermore, community participation has supported smooth relationships between the local and central governments in facing the challenges of their changing roles and functions. However, Turner and Podger disagree, arguing that the success of regional autonomy is actually difficult to determine. They suggested that the progress of the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia has occurred according to the government’s schedule and yet “there is still an urgent need to resolve the issues of whether regional autonomy will be successful in reconfiguring the Indonesian state”¹³⁴. This might be acceptable, as in comparison with other countries, Sayed, argued, referring to the South African example, that the implementation of regional autonomy could be called a success if: politically, according to “the extent to which a state redistributes authority and power; in education, if the provision of educational services and goods is more efficient; from the pedagogical perspective, the teaching-learning process is improved”¹³⁵. Thus, Indonesia is challenged with a most difficult period in the future, with regard to achieving success according to these indicators.

There remain doubts as to the effectiveness of regional autonomy. Arghiros points to Thailand, where, even after the implementation of regional autonomy, elites in Bangkok have been able to maintain their authority through control of business enterprises. Rural interest groups in the regions have not been able to challenge Bangkok’s control¹³⁶. Moreover, the lessons from England and New Zealand, as discovered by Williams, were that reform in the

¹³³ Colongon, Arellano A., Jr. (2003) “What is happening on the ground? The progress of decentralization”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore: Institute of Southern Asian Studies

¹³⁴ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), p.145

¹³⁵ Sayed, Yusuf (2002), “Democratizing Education in a Decentralized System: South African policy and practice”, *Compare*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 35-46

¹³⁶ Arghiros, Daniel (2001), *Democracy, development and decentralization in provincial Thailand*, Richmon, Curzon

education sector was “more elusive than was initially envisioned by the designer”¹³⁷. They recommended that policy makers and program managers be aware of the many unanticipated issues that arise in the process of implementation. Hope highlighted, illustrating the case of Botswana, that regional autonomy is more than just simply transferring power; it also includes the private sector, civil society and social systems such as education and health. Beside the activities of local governments, it also includes other issues through which commands arise in the kind of goals framed, directives issued and policies pursued¹³⁸. In Indonesia, both Colongon¹³⁹ and Rasyid¹⁴⁰ argued that the central government was expected to transfer 11 policy sectors to more than 350 district governments - including the education sector - to meet local needs. Yet, as mentioned previously, the guidelines for transferring these tasks were not clearly defined, therefore Indonesia is now faced with the impacts of the complexity of the decentralization process, not only in the new political environment in the districts, but also with regard to the dynamic changes in responding to the implementation of regional autonomy.

Sukma anticipated that, although regional autonomy in Indonesia will bring about important transformations, it will also have substantial consequences¹⁴¹. Politically, by empowering the local governments in districts and cities, the local executives (regents or mayors) will be elected by the local parliament (DPRD). Consequently:

“... executive at district level (*kabupaten*) will be accountable only to their respective local parliament that put them in office, not to the central government and not to the provincial government as it used to be before”¹⁴².

It is also predicted that the local parliament (DPRD) will have greater power among local institutions. It will have the right to be involved in electing the senior officials, such as the head of the Local Education Office (EOD) (or *Dinas*) and the BAPPEDA. The DPRD also

¹³⁷ Williams, Richard, C. et al (2004), *Sweeping Decentralization of Educational Decision-Making Authority*, p.8

¹³⁸ Hope, Kempe Ronald Snr (2000), “Decentralization and local governance theory and the practice in Botswana”, *Development Southern Africa*, Vol 17, No 4, October, p. 1

¹³⁹ Colongon, Arellano A., Jr., (2003), “What is happening on the ground? The progress of decentralization”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies

¹⁴⁰ Rasyid, M. Ryaas, (2003), “Regional Autonomy and Local Politics in Indonesia”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, pp. 63-86

¹⁴¹ Regional Autonomy is conflict-generating or conflict-mitigating in Sukma, Rizal (2003), “Conflict Management in post-authoritarian Indonesia” in Kingbury, Damien and Aveling, Harry (eds.), *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, London and New York, Routledge Curzon

¹⁴² Sukma, Rizal (2003), p. 69

has the right to enact local government laws, including the APBD (local budget), in which the education programs, funding and policies are determined. Finally, Sukma addressed the lack of capacity and competency of the local governments, which could influence the achievement of good governance. Colongon agrees:

“Before decentralization was implemented in Indonesia, there was great concern about its prospects. Many doubted the capability of local governments to manage their own affairs.... Critics painted a grim scenario, predicting there would be deterioration in public services and ...”¹⁴³.

In addition, Ray and Goodpaster also wondered how such incapability and incompetency of local governments would impact on other issues.

“With far greater local government authority under decentralization, there is, however, an already realized danger that local interest, abetted by local governmental actions, will, if unchecked, act wholly in their own behalf, to the serious detriment of the national economy, interregional harmony, and equality of the citizenship”¹⁴⁴.

To conclude, regional autonomy is actually a very popular trend worldwide. Many developed and developing countries have been implementing decentralisation with the aim of maintaining stability, in the face of disputes between elites and different groups or ethnicities. The concept of autonomy is simple: distributing central powers and responsibilities to the lower level of government, in the regions, districts or cities. There is no golden rule; most of the practitioners have been maintaining successfully with their own strategies; some have ended up in failure. As the main objective is to improve conditions, it can start from the establishment of constitutions, followed by actions, but it also attainable through implementing smart programs directly. The readiness, clarity and detail of guidelines of the law are critical in avoidance of serious problems. It has been indicated that the potential impacts in implementing regional autonomy include issues concerning the vertical relationships between central government and local governments and horizontal relationships between local institutions and also the potential impacts on the sectors which have been transferred from the central government to the local governments to manage. This thesis will,

¹⁴³ Colongon, Arellano A. Jr. (2003) “What is happening on the ground?: The progress of decentralization”, in Aspinall and Fealy (eds.), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore: Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p.87

¹⁴⁴ Ray, David and Goodpaster, Gary (2003), “Indonesian Decentralization: Local autonomy, trade barriers and discrimination” in Kingsbury, Damien and Aveling, Harry (eds.), *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, London and New York, Routledge Curzon, p. 76

from Chapters 4 to 8, discuss, examine and analyse all of these impacts, before finally drawing conclusions from the research in Chapter 9.

3.4 The Impact of Regional Autonomy

Vertical tensions as an impact of the implementation of autonomy may be overwhelming and varied, according to the sector of government policy. Watts argued that even Canada, as the most successful country in implementing federalism, as explained previously, is still working on creating interdependence and faces competition between governments; there is much positive cooperation but conflict as well¹⁴⁵.

“The important factor affecting the operation of the Canadian federal system is the political culture that is expressed in the attitudes, beliefs and values that affect the political behaviour of politicians and citizens in Canada”¹⁴⁶.

This political culture factor Watts describes in the Canada example stems from, firstly, the economic bases of the provinces, such as the main products, industries and development, including interaction with other countries. Secondly, it is affected by the different ethnicities, cultures and traditions that promote the consciousness of the provinces. The geographical location of the provinces has influenced interaction patterns. For example, the eastern and western extremities have felt remote from central Canada; those residing near the Atlantic coast tend to interact with Europe; those near the Pacific look more to Asia for business. Yet the most tangible impact of these developments is the promotion of the empowered provincial identity, which obviously needs the central government’s political attention¹⁴⁷. Watts suggested that the central government elite seem to be worried about the dynamic changes occurring, which may threaten policy. The increasing evolution, based on pragmatic development of inter-governmental practices and collaboration, has influenced internal political, social and economic pressures, bringing about changing conditions and circumstances, resulting in many crises to manage. Also, the future of the Canadian federation is quite dependent on the structure, practices and political culture¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁵ Watts, Ronald D., (2000), “Federalism and Diversity in Canada”, in Ghai, Yash (eds), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic States*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, pp. 29-52

¹⁴⁶ Watts, R.D., (2000), p. 31

¹⁴⁷ Watts, R.D., (2000), p. 32

¹⁴⁸ Watts, R.D., (2000), p. 49

Most notable about the success of Canada is not just that it is the first country to introduce such 'autonomy' or federation (ie, in 1860) but also the specific case of Quebec. The two major populations, French and English, who were experiencing horizontal tensions between them, were given the authority from central government to manage their own affairs; this has resulted in a peaceful, harmonious situation. There was indeed a movement from the people in Quebec, however it was based on the demand for national self-determination and greater autonomy, combined with continued unity with (and not succession from) the rest of Canada, and not a referendum¹⁴⁹.

Based on the examples, referred to by Forsyth and Wiessner, and cited by Watts, it is argued that the impacts of federalism based on mono-ethnic groups can be maintained quite easily, while federalism incorporating multi-ethnic groups within each state or province can be difficult to manage. Yet these statements have been responded by Elazar (1993) in Watts, by arguing with regard to the historical formulation of the federal or autonomous government that:

“... mono-ethnic federations, such as the United States, Australia and Germany, have faced fewer difficulties. Nevertheless, the persistence of federal systems in Switzerland and Canada for over a century, in India for half a century and in Malaysia for over three decades suggests that, under certain conditions, multi-ethnic federations can be sustained”¹⁵⁰.

Similarly, vertical tensions have also occurred in China, between central and local governments, during the implementation of autonomy, resulting in crucial problems. In the case of Tibet, Ghai argued that, although, conceptually, the region was given the right to determine its own needs in politics, religion, customs, language and education, it was agreed that any reform in the region would be carried out locally, under their leader, the Dalai Lama, and that the central government would never interfere with the internal administration of Tibet. However, the reformation was described by most in Tibet as intervention by the central government, in particular, as an effort to introduce communist ideology and also to influence Tibetans' way of life. Although the central government declared no wrong had been done, the Tibetans held to their interpretation and formally rejected all of the agreement. War could not be avoided, which resulted in the escape of the Dalai Lama to India. According to Dreyer, the perspective of Beijing's central elite was that “giving Tibet real autonomy would surely

¹⁴⁹ Watts, R.D., (2000), p. 48

¹⁵⁰ Watts,R.D., (2000), p. 40

stimulate demands for comparable treatment from other areas”¹⁵¹. Therefore, the reforms dictated by Beijing were described in propaganda as being to improve the life of the Tibetans. Dreyer in fact asserted that recent reports on Tibet’s economic growth were actually due to contributions of foreign intervention.

Vertical relationships, between the central and local governments, can be impacted on by different perceptions and interpretations of what ‘autonomy’ means in practice. Sukma asserts that the Indonesian government is experiencing such impacts, both vertically, between the central and the local governments, and, also, horizontally, between the local governments. As the principle of ‘autonomy’ is to devolve powers to the districts, and not to the provinces (see Introduction), Sukma identified the vertical conflicts as between: “(a) the central government and the provinces; (b) provinces and districts (*kabupaten*); (c) the central government and the districts”¹⁵². He identified horizontal conflicts as being between: “(d) the districts and (e) the provinces”¹⁵³. Sukma supports this by describing points that can be influential conflict factors, such as the interpretation of the fiscal balance between central and regions, territorial borders between provinces and between districts or cities, resources, and other associated items which previously were managed jointly.

Fanany suggested that the potential triggers might not be just the different perceptions held by the central government and the regions regarding the vision and mission of regional autonomy, but also the inadvertency of the implementers¹⁵⁴. Hope argues that the readiness and capacity of the recipients of decentralised authority has militated against progress¹⁵⁵. In Botswana, as the most successful country in Africa in implementing regional autonomy, factors like local guidelines, laws and sources and quality of the manpower have influenced progress¹⁵⁶. These instruments were very useful for the local authorities in carrying out the new tasks and responsibilities given by the central government. In addition, Rhoten found that, in Argentina, the capability of local people to correctly interpret the vision and mission of regional autonomy, and to react properly, were believed to be the keys to achieving its

¹⁵¹ Dreyer, June Taufel, (2004), *China’s Political System: Modernization and Tradition, Fourth edition*, New York, Pearson Education, Inc., P.310

¹⁵² Sukma, Rizal (2003), P.70

¹⁵³ Sukma, Rizal (2003), P.70

¹⁵⁴ Fanany, Ismet (2003), “The first year of autonomy: The case of Sumatra”, in Kingbury, Damien and Aveling, Harry (2003), (eds) *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia*, London and New York, Routledge Curzon, p. 185

¹⁵⁵ Hope, Kempe Ronald Snr (2000), “Decentralization and local governance theory and the practice in Botswana”, *Development Southern Africa*, Vol. 17, No 4, October

¹⁵⁶ Hope, Kempe Ronald Snr (2000), p.530

goals¹⁵⁷. Sukma agreed, by stating that the impediment to the success of autonomy is lack of capacity of the local people to carry out the national policy and programs, such as is recently happening in Indonesia¹⁵⁸. Similarly, Bella also discovered that the officials' capability to understand and implement the autonomy law and its regulations is also a factor influencing the progress of autonomy, which in turn elevates the conflicts with the recipients of the services¹⁵⁹.

Ramage reported that, in Indonesia, the vertical relationship between the central and local governments is improving¹⁶⁰. It is obvious that there are some arguments about the responsibilities of each level of governments. For example, Law 25/2000 is considered to be unclear in differentiating between the authority of central and provincial governments. However, this law is useful in guiding all levels of government in implementing program developments. In the education sector, the curriculum-based competency (KBK) has been introduced nationally, by allowing local governments to formulate their own strategies for success, rather than being dictated to by the central government. This compromise strategy is considered as benefiting both sides as, on the one hand, it encourages the local governments to improve their capability and, on the other, the central government functions as the facilitator¹⁶¹.

With regard to VSE, the topic of this research, there are indications that the introduction of regional autonomy has stimulated local governments to provide good programs, other than just the 'nine years compulsory education', as per national policy. Ramage reported that, in Deli Serdang District, in North Sumatra Province, the local government, through the Local Education Office (EOD), introduced 'Community Learning Hours'. This program is aimed at making it compulsory for pupils to have at least two hours of study time per day. Teams were established to control the program. In Salatiga City, in Middle Java Province, 'Community Learning and Activity Centres' were created, while in other provinces, in Bandung City and Kebumen District, the local governments have been working cooperatively with the community, trying to re-evaluate the existing primary schools and rehabilitate their school

¹⁵⁷ Rhoten, Diana (2000), "Education decentralization in Argentina: a 'global-local conditions of possibility' approach to state, market, and society change", *Journal Education Policy*, Vol 15, No. 6, pp. 593-619, Available [online], <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>, [7 October, 2004]

¹⁵⁸ Sukma, Rizal, (2003), P.70

¹⁵⁹ Bella, Burhanuddin (2004), "It is compulsory for humans to make an effort, but let God decide", (original title "*Manusia wajib berusaha, tapi Tuhan yang menentukan*"), Available [online], <http://www.pdk.go.id/go.php?a=1&to=f749>, [16 August 2005]

¹⁶⁰ Ramage, Douglas E. (2002), "Indonesian Rapid Development Appraisal (IRDA)", The Asia Foundation, Second Edition, Jakarta, Available [online], <http://www.asiafoundation.com/resources/pdfs/1IRDA5english.pdf> [26 May 2011]

¹⁶¹ Ramage, Douglas E. (2002)

buildings¹⁶². Baedowie, as cited by Bella, asserted that regional autonomy has had some positive impacts on the education sector. However, the reality is that local governments and local communities also have concerns¹⁶³. This thesis will explore, discuss and analyse these issues, in the specific context of the development of VSE.

Besides the 'vertical' tensions, tensions have also been felt horizontally in various countries where regional autonomy has been introduced. Both Ghai and Dreyer are interested in analysing the intervention of the Han ethnic group in China, who hold dominant roles in most areas. As discussed earlier, China has some fifty four ethnic minorities and the one majority group, the Han. Ghai uses the term Han chauvinism to refer to Han arrogance towards and contempt for minorities, rooted in Confucian perception of them as barbarians; local chauvinism refers to minorities' assertion of self-determination. Geographically, the minorities have occupied a larger area (60%) and more prosperous areas, compared to the Han, who have lived in densely-populated areas. However, the Han were cleverer, invading the minorities' areas, which contained minerals and other resources.

“There is considerable resentment about this influx, which is aggravated by increasing economic disparities between them and the local people”¹⁶⁴.

While Sukma supported these opinions by describing some points from the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia that can be influential in horizontal conflicts, such as the interpretation of territorial borders between provinces, as well as between districts/cities, resources, and other items which previously were jointly managed. Sulekale identified that competition is arising between local governments in Indonesia to improve their local revenue and that this can stimulate serious problems. The local laws, which are rapidly being formulated by the local governments, reflect their responsiveness to positioning themselves as autonomous. However, some of them are considered to be over-reacting. An example is a local law created to determine their territory and authority by building portals at their borders and introducing retributions and tariffs for passing trucks carrying commodities from other locations¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶² Ramage, Douglas E. (2002)

¹⁶³ Bella, Burhanuddin (2004), “It is compulsory for human to make an effort, but let God decide”, (original title “Manusia wajib berusaha, tapi Tuhan yang menentukan”), Available [online], <http://www.pdk.go.id/go.php?a=1&to=f749>, [16 August 2005]

¹⁶⁴ Ghai, Yash, (2000), p. 79

¹⁶⁵ Sulekale, Dalle Daniel (2003), “The Urgency of Amendment for the Regional Autonomy Law”, (original title “*Urgensi Amandemen Undang-undang Otonomi Daerah*”), Available [online], <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/0203/03/teropong/parlementaria.htm>, [18 October 2007]

At a symposium in Kutai Barat District, East Kalimantan Province (one of the thirty three Provinces in Indonesia) it was identified that almost 250 cases of horizontal conflicts have occurred. However, success stories are also encountered. For example, in Wonosobo District, Middle Java Province, the harmony between the local communities, local legislative members and non profit organizations (NGOs) are reflected in their working cooperatively to formulate community-based local forestry management laws. In Gorontalo, Sulawesi, the people, NGOs and local government have re-aligned control over traditional fisheries¹⁶⁶.

In conclusion, the implementation of regional autonomy can influence the vertical and horizontal relationships of the bureaucracy. Vertical conflict is created by misinterpretation of the constitution or the guidelines for the foundation of regional autonomy (in Indonesia) or 'autonomy' or federation (in other countries) itself, but also by the strategies used by the initiators. Similarly, horizontal disputes between the recipients of regional autonomy are also caused by these issues, however the readiness of the recipients is also an influential factor. The key to success is proper preparation, including mutual understanding between the initiator or provider and recipients.

3.5 Regional Autonomy and Educational Programs

Regional Autonomy, as discussed formerly, aims to achieve peace in a nation, by accommodating local aspirations to independently manage and develop their own territory and authority. Most observers, such as Chadda (1997), Karlsen (1999), Ghai (2000), Nesiiah (2000), Turner and Podger (2003), Aspinall and Fealy (2003) have similarly articulated that the challenge is to develop a governmental strategy as a whole, rather than focusing on specific sectors, such as education. Karlsen stated that "Governments have used decentralization as a strategy in various institutions within the public sector, including education, where there is a prevalent belief that decentralization will bring about desired large-scale, education reform"¹⁶⁷, for example, Hungary, New Zealand, South Africa, England, Norway and British Columbia (in Canada). Both strategies either broad or specific, are the same, giving regions the authority and discretion to manage their educational matters independently, with the potential for programs and policies to be tailored to suit real local needs.

¹⁶⁶ Down to Earth (2001), "Regional Autonomy: Dark Future", (Original title "*Otonomi Daerah: Masa depan yang suram*"), Available [online], Down to earth, Nr. 51, November 2001, <http://dte.gn.apc.org/51idc.htm>, [10 October, 2007]

¹⁶⁷ Karlsen, G.E. (1999), "Decentralized Centralized-Governance in the field of education : Evident from Norway and British Columbia", *Canadian Journal of Education and Policy*, Issue 13, December

Broad 'autonomy' or 'decentralization' in education is where school programs and policies can be determined principally by the schools themselves. Gabor argued that, in Hungary, after experiencing educational reform, the government has deliberately formulated the education autonomy law, "to separate political, administrative, and professional control functions that had been combined"¹⁶⁸. The system formerly assigned the local government to provide all school needs, before finally being reformed to limited tasks in managing administrative matters. Schools have full authority to provide their own policy and programs, including their internal rules, activities, organizational structure and staff recruitment. According to this concept, the power belongs to the schools' teachers, who have the right to approve all policies and programs prior to implementation. As Gabor points out, teachers also decide the position of the school principal and "if more than fifty percent of an institution's staff refuse, the candidate can not be accepted..."¹⁶⁹. The role of the local government is just to ascertain that the authority given to the schools, to decide on matters such as programs, policies, curriculum, internal affairs, facilities and budgeting, has been implemented appropriately, according to the regulations. The local government also has to support and guide schools with planning for the future and with solving any disputes arising between the schools and other institutions or people.

Some countries have taken a practical approach to decentralizing the education sector. In New Zealand, Williams explained that the strategy has been to allow schools to administer themselves independently, deactivating the previous regional boards. The site council, consisting of parents, school principal, staff and students, took over the function of the former regional board. This policy was applied to accommodate growing community concerns that certain groups, such as Maori people and women, "were disadvantaged by the system"¹⁷⁰. In England, decentralization in Education is called 'Local Management of Schools' (LMS), and operates by giving individual schools their budget directly, for them to maintain independently. This concept is based on the trust of the central government of the school governing bodies to be accountable, similar to the New Zealand site council system. Richard refers to this as sweeping decentralization in education. In essence, Williams asserts, both countries have experienced the practice of formerly-centralised tasks moving to local authority level. The curriculum is still provided nationally, yet measurement of success is carried out differently. In New Zealand, the central government will review accountability

¹⁶⁸ Gabor, Halasz (1996), "School Autonomy and the Reform of Educational Administration in Hongaria", *European Education*, 10564934, Vol. 27, Issue 4, p. 390

¹⁶⁹ Gabor, Halasz (1996), p.390

¹⁷⁰ Williams, Richard C. and Harold, Barbara (1997). "Sweeping Decentralization of Educational Decision-Making Authority", *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 78, Issue 8, April, Available [online], <http://0-web30.epnet.com.library.vu.edu.au/citation.asp?tb=1&ug=sid+B8...>, [19 October, 2004]

every three years, while in England this is done by looking at the schools' results in the national examinations.

The decentralization of education can be distinguished from the technical and political approaches. Rhoten argues that the system by which education has been decentralized and where overall educational performance is determined by comparing national examination results is the 'technical' approach¹⁷¹. On the other hand, New Zealand employed the 'political approach', where progress is determined according to whether there is a decrease in the number of disputes in the field. Karslen compared the decentralization of Education across different countries according to the degree of transfer of powers from central to local authorities¹⁷². Karslen examines in the cases of Hungary, New Zealand and England, to what extent the central government has delegated or devolved tasks to the regions. Karslen argues that "delegation normally implies a transmission of tasks and administrative responsibilities..."¹⁷³. Karslen argues that, 'decentralisation' does not mean necessarily mean shifting the powers to local governments and that local governments may in some cases just execute central policy and programs, while with 'devolution', in the implementation of decentralization (or regional autonomy), authority and responsibilities actually move to local governments. The most interesting of Karslen's statements is that decentralization should be based on the bottom level initiative and result in the transfer of power to the local governments, which, in reality, he argues, rarely happens in practice. In Norway, decentralization in education was introduced in 1993, through the act provided by central government and popularly known as the 'lump-sum system'. Besides giving more local freedom and authority to the municipalities and schools, the most notable area of discretion is with the budgeting system:

"... the state gives a sum of money to the municipalities to cover the cost of schools, as well as the cost of other sectors such as culture and health services. In many municipalities, this lump-sum system is then employed to fund schools. The school principal then becomes responsible for the budget"¹⁷⁴.

A strategy of giving indirect autonomy to the education sector has been the experience of some countries. As happened in British Columbia, Canada (passing through three levels,

¹⁷¹ Rhoten, Diana (2000), "Education decentralization in Argentina: a 'global-local conditions of possibility' approach to state, market, and society change", *Journal Education Policy*, Vol 15, No. 6, pp. 593-619, Available [online], <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>, [7 October, 2004]

¹⁷² Karslen, G.E. (2000), p.530

¹⁷³ Karslen, G.E. (2000), p.530

¹⁷⁴ Karslen, G.E (2000), p.530

starting from the central government, to the education agencies at the lower levels), the regulations empowered the provinces to administer education independently¹⁷⁵. Besides the lump-sum system, the government also introduced a certified bargaining agent, the teachers' union, which has collective bargaining rights with the local school board. The school principal is not the part of the union or council, as in other countries, except for functioning as the administrative officer in the management of the school. Karslen argued that these types of top-down initiative, carried out through the local institutions and not directly touching the target schools, may be perceived by local people as just a strategy for strengthening the central power and determining the central tasks to be implemented in schools.

Preston claims that, whether autonomy in the education sector is full, sectoral, partial or indirect depends on the complexity of the programs¹⁷⁶. Preston argues (as do Fanany, Sukma, Ghai, Colongon, Arghiros, Hope and Sayed, referred to in Part 3.3 above) that a policy of decentralization is effected within a system depending not only on political will, competency, and resources, but on the capability of the providers or developers to provide activities that are 'SMART'. Williams and Johnson argue that a program should be 'SMART', that is, specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time-based and that this can be achieved by understanding the expected process and changes involved in implementation¹⁷⁷. Preston also addresses this issue through analysing the decentralization in vocational education in Papua New Guinea. In this country, vocational training centres have been established, aimed at solving problems caused by the failure of the central government management of vocational education. This has resulted in a more complex situation. The central government provided the syllabus and inspectors for these Centres, but this made "graduates ineligible for entry at any level into liberal arts secondary education; there was no mechanism through which they could compete in upper secondary technical colleges..."¹⁷⁸, argued Preston. In addition, the self-funding, through income generated by Centres, including their administrative committees, has not yet promoted members to undertake their own activities, as has been expected.

However, there is no golden rule, as Gershberg argues except "we still know too little about how to implement such reform successfully, given the intricate political contexts in which it

¹⁷⁵ Karslen, G.E. (2000), p. 532

¹⁷⁶ Preston, Rosemary (1993), "Gender and Relevance: Decentralized vocational education in Papua New Guinea", *Oxford Review of Education*, 03034985, March, Vol. 19, Issue 1, Available [online], <http://0-web18.epnet.com.library.vu.edu.au/citation.asp?tb=1& ug=sid+8d...>, [28 September, 2004]

¹⁷⁷ Williams, Kate and Johnson, Bob (2004), *Introducing Management: a Development Guide*, Second Edition, London, Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann, p. 148

¹⁷⁸ Preston, Rosemary (1993), p. 25

must occur”¹⁷⁹. However, from all these arguments, explanations and experiences, including associated problems or impacts, Gershberg identified two distinct trends. The first trend is that strategies are formed by making the law the basis of reform, followed by action. This strategy focuses on the “consistency, comprehensiveness and a clear sense of what the final outcomes should look like”¹⁸⁰, such as what is being implemented in Mexico and Colombia. The second trend is to reform, directly, those objects which are “emphasizing operational viability, local responsiveness and a sense that doing is the best way of learning”¹⁸¹, such as that which occurred in Nicaragua.

Unfortunately, neither of those trends is likely to be the situation in Indonesia. Decentralization of education in Indonesia is considered as just one of the consequences of the political changes made through the introduction of Regional Autonomy Law 22/1999 in 2001. The law on the National Education System (Law 20/2003), promulgated in 2003, is very ‘descriptive’, merely to accommodate the demands of the constitution (UUD 1945), and does not specifically determine how decentralization should be carried out in the education sector. However, the law does contain one fundamental principle which might be used to support the ‘action’ approach in decentralizing education: the obligation for governments in Jakarta, the provinces, districts and cities to allocate 20% of their annual budget (known as ‘APBN’ in the central government and ‘APBD’ in the provinces, districts and cities) to the education sector. (At the time of completion of the field work of this research, in July 2005, that figure had still not been achieved)¹⁸². However under the Regional Autonomy Law, it is definite that the education sector, including VSE, is one of the 11 sectors to be devolved to the local governments in districts and cities¹⁸³. Before regional autonomy, some of the above concepts were taken up as Central Education Office initiatives, in the education sector. For example, Hadiwaratama claims that the VSE curriculum was greatly improved, as far back as 1976, in order to support the development of the industrial sector, agriculture and services¹⁸⁴. Hadiwaratama’s opinion regarding the decentralization of education was:

¹⁷⁹ Gershberg, Alec Ian (1999), “Education ‘Decentralization’ Process in Mexico and Nicaragua: legislative versus ministry-led reform strategies”, *Comparative Education*, Volume 35, No. 1, pp. 63-80

¹⁸⁰ Gershberg, Alec Ian (1999), p. 64

¹⁸¹ Gershberg, Alec Ian (1999), p. 64

¹⁸² Republic of Indonesia (2003), “The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20, 2003 about the National Education System”, (original title “*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*”), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2000/pp020-2003.html, [23 September, 2005]

¹⁸³ The eleven sectors are Public Works, Health, Education, Agriculture, Transportation, Industry, Infestation, Environment, Land Reform, Cooperation and Workers.

¹⁸⁴ Hadiwaratama (2002a), “The Development of Vocational Education in Pelita III”, (original title “*Perkembangan Pendidikan Kejuruan Pada Pelita III*”), in Supriadi, (ed.), *History of the*

“Education should be synchronized with the needs of surrounding community. The resources and potencies of the local area could be improved by using technology to improve community welfare. The implication is that the vocational school in Ambon, as an example, should not be similar to the school in Jakarta, as the resources of each of these two locations are different”¹⁸⁵.

Also, Adiati et al noted that the VSE curriculum in Indonesia has been modified several times, starting in 1984, then again in 1994, 1996, 1999 and 2004, to match needs, especially in optimizing teaching and learning processes at school level¹⁸⁶. Each version of the curriculum is named, according to specific characteristics. For example, the 1994 reform was known as the ‘competency-based curriculum’, where the focus of the curriculum was on the competency of the graduates. The 1996 reform introduced a ‘broad-based curriculum’, with a focus on the teaching and learning process. Another government strategy to improve vocational education was, as Adiati also mentions, was the introduction of national programs and policies, particularly two prominent principles, ‘Link and Match’ and ‘Dual System’¹⁸⁷.

However, Slamet argues that such centralized initiatives have some weaknesses. The central government decision is considered to frequently not meet the real needs of the schools at local level. The multiple bureaucratic administrations (central and provincial government) have resulted in low responsiveness in solving problems and this has impacted on the schools’ performance in implementing programs and policies. Such a form of administration has also been perceived as limiting local creativity, forcing educational development to end up under-managed, and resulting in inefficiency and ineffectiveness¹⁸⁸. The most substantial argument from Slamet is:

“The state-driven approaches have placed schools in a marginal position. Schools become powerless, with no initiative, dependent, undemocratic, irresponsive in reading and articulating the problems, needs and aspirations of the community. The

Vocational Secondary Education in Indonesia: Developing Productive Manpower, Jakarta-Indonesia, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Dit-Jend. Dikdasmen, Dikmenjur

¹⁸⁵ Hadiwaratama (2002), p. 153

¹⁸⁶ Adiati, Achmad Sudrajat (2002), “Pendidikan Pertanian Dari Masa Ke Masa”, in Supriadi, (eds), *Sejarah Pendidikan Teknik dan Kejuruan di Indonesia: Membangun Manusia Produktif*, Jakarta-Indonesia, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Dit-Jend. Dikdasmen, Dikmenjur

¹⁸⁷ ‘Link and Match’ is a principle where the vocational schools have partnerships with industries, while the ‘Dual System’ is teaching and learning method where classroom teachings are implemented by the students in industry, see Adiati p.432.

¹⁸⁸ Slamet, PH (2000), “School Based Management” (original title “*Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah*”), Available [online], http://www.depdknas.go.id/Jurnal/27/manajemen_berbasis_sekolah.htm, [10 July, 2005], pp. 606 -632

management-based central government is not only reducing the creativity of the schools, but also the sense of belonging”¹⁸⁹.

Slamet believed that, with the implementation of regional autonomy, a logical consequence of decentralization of the education sector should be school autonomy, where schools would have the authority and responsibility to manage their own business (school-based management)¹⁹⁰. Tjahjono agreed, confident that giving full authority to local governments would improve the quality of planning and also of outcomes¹⁹¹. In addition, Mecca asserted that decentralization would encourage initiative and popular participation in the process of governing and developing their regions¹⁹². However, Baedowi argued that such a perception is a misconception and that it would contribute to widening the gap between central and local governments in managing education. Baedowi realized that the Regional Autonomy Law has, indeed, eliminated the hierarchical relationship between central, provincial and local governments. He asserts that the relationship between the three levels of governments has become unclear. He argues that, therefore, the National Education Law should establish what the responsibilities of the three levels of government should be¹⁹³. In this regard, Mecca and Riana consider the National Education Law is an indication that the central government intends to maintain control of education, as has been the experience of many other countries¹⁹⁴.

In broader terms, Saptono is sceptical about the outcomes of decentralization and states:

“Giving so much power to the regions and in such a fast manner and has created new problems in implementation...Sensitive issues are arising, such as the creation of small ‘kings’, impacts on the vertical and horizontal relationships and new mechanisms and forms of administration ...”¹⁹⁵.

¹⁸⁹ Slamet, PH., (2000), p.615

¹⁹⁰ Slamet, PH., (2000)

¹⁹¹ Tjahjono, S Indro (2000), “Autonomy Running as a Wild Ball”, (original title “*Otonomy berjalan seperti bola liar*”), Available [online], <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/2000.09/10/0085.html>, [29 September 2005]

¹⁹² Mecca, Antonny and Riana Refa (2005), “*Format Baru Otonomi Daerah*”, available [online], <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/2005/0105/03/teropong/utama01.htm>, p. 1

¹⁹³ Suara Pembaruan (2004), “The implementation of the Regional Autonomy in the Education sector is still weak”, (original title “*Pelaksanaan Otonomi Daerah Bidang Pendidikan Masih Lemah*”), Suara Pembaruan Daily, Available [online], <http://www.suarapembaruan.com/News/2004/08/04/Kesra/kes04.htm>, [9 February, 2006]

¹⁹⁴ Mecca, Antonny and Riana Refa (2005), “*Format Baru Otonomi Daerah*”, available [online], <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/2005/0105/03/teropong/utama01.htm>

¹⁹⁵ Saptono, Irawan (2002), “The Key To Understanding Regional Autonomy”, (original title “*Pintu Untuk Memahami Otonomi Daerah*”), Available [online], http://www.dadangsolihin.com/pan-otda_review3.asp, [12 July 2005]

Bjork claims that the early implementation of the ‘Local Content Curriculum’ (LCC) in the senior high schools (SMA) in Indonesia, part of the ‘action’ approach to education decentralization, has sparked tensions, both in the hierarchical relationships between the central and regional governments and horizontally, between institutions, particularly in the Districts¹⁹⁶. The different expectations of central and local governments were generating “a state of paralysis at all level of the education system”¹⁹⁷. The important members of the LCC in East Java, who were supposed to act autonomously, were always waiting instructions from the Central Government. In VSE, Priowirjanto and Suryatmana suggested that, for decentralization to be successful, the educational institutions, the Local Education Office (*Dinas*) and the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK) needed to establish relationships with the surrounding communities, the trades and industrial sectors and needed to consider the roles of other national and higher-level bodies¹⁹⁸. Finally, Lee suggested that, the neighbouring country, Malaysia, seems to have different experiences, as the decentralization process has been implemented smoothly and it has included the “devolution of decision-making, empowerment and enablement”¹⁹⁹. Yet, the only problem, as indicated by Lee, was the difficulty in formulating schools’ performance indicators²⁰⁰.

Thus, it is obvious that decentralization of education in Indonesia still has positives and negatives. Nevertheless, there is an indication that some distinguishing aspects can be identified. In many countries, the strategy in decentralizing education has mostly been conducted by formulating specific regulations or laws, introduced to develop the education sector. Nicaragua has succeeded in implementing decentralisation by following the models of America and Australia, “fostering as much as citizen participation and passing as much power, if not more, on to parents and other local actors”²⁰¹. In Malaysia, the success in education has been achieved by empowering the educational institutions²⁰². In Indonesia, the decentralization of education has been one of the implications of the new political arrangements and the Regional Autonomy Law has been more political in nature. The National Education System Law, introduced in 2003, does not determine the specifics of decentralization for the education sector, except mentioning that is intended to support the

¹⁹⁶ Bjork, Christopher (2003), “Local Responses to Decentralization Policy in Indonesia”, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp. 184-216

¹⁹⁷ Bjork, Christopher (2003), p. 199

¹⁹⁸ Priowirjanto, Gatot Hari and Suryatmana, Giri (2002), “Reposition of Vocational Education Toward 2020”, (original title “*Reposisi Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan Menjelang 2020*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (ed.) *History of Vocational Secondary Education in Indonesia: Developing Productive Manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp. 603-630

¹⁹⁹ Lee, N.N.M., (1999), “Education in Malaysia: toward vision 2020”, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 86-98

²⁰⁰ Lee, N.N.M., (1999), pp. 86-98

²⁰¹ Gershberg, (2003), p. 77

²⁰² Lee, N.N.M., (1999)

constitution (UUD 45). However, it seems that the approaches to decentralization of education in Indonesia, especially 'actions' than the 'official law', have been based on practices (eg LCC, CBC, 'Link and Match', 'Dual System') by the central government in the past, before regional autonomy was even introduced²⁰³.

With regard to regional autonomy itself, although it is very popular around the world and many different countries have experienced it, outcomes are not uniform. The principle or concept is almost the same, that is, the sharing of power and responsibilities between governments in Jakarta and the regions (provinces, districts or cities, and other lower levels of governments). However, some practitioners have successfully achieved their mission, while others have encountered serious problems. Most likely, there is no golden rule, as autonomy can start from the establishment of a constitution, followed by action, but it also attainable through direct implementation of 'SMART' programs. Nevertheless, the readiness of people at local level and the clarity of the law and the level of detail in its guidelines are valuable prerequisites for any country wishing to initiate such an ambitious mission, otherwise the result will be problems arising or even secessions, as some countries have experienced.

3.6 Chapter Summary

It seems that, based on the available literature, in Indonesia, regional autonomy has been implemented differently to other countries. Powers and responsibilities have been devolved to the districts and cities and not to the second level of government in the hierarchy, as in many countries. Although the implementation time frame has been met, the initiative to introduce autonomy for the regions was undertaken in very short period and the law focused solely on the political and administrative arrangements, leaving economic and other guidelines unclear. As in many other countries, these problems have also arisen. In Indonesia, the strategy for improving the education sector has been to establish programs and policies centrally, which has been the practice for many years, before the introduction of regional autonomy, particularly for the development of VSE. Although the literature drawn upon does not specifically discuss the implications of regional autonomy on VSE, some points made in the literature do, however, suggest key issues for analysing, examining, exploring and evaluating in this research.

²⁰³ LCC (Local Content Curriculum) in general secondary schools (SMA) and CBC (Competency-Based Curriculum) in vocational secondary schools (SMK)

CHAPTER 4

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS OF VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the devolution of VSE programs and policy from a centrally-based management to the regions. The principles of regional autonomy, through the devolution of the power of the central government to the local governments in districts and cities, as discussed by many scholars such as Lauglo (1995), Chadda (1997), Ghai (2000), Karslen (2000), Nesiah (2000), Rondinelli (2001), Turner and Podger (2003), Bjork (2004 and 2006), Hanson (2006") and Carino (2007)", have facilitated the decentralization of the education sector. VSE programs and policies are now under local government authority to decide and determine. The central government has less power, which is a political impact of regional autonomy. With no specific law to manage and regulate the VSE program in the regions, the approach to devolution in Indonesia follows the second trend identified by Gershberg (1999) that regional autonomy has not been based on a specific law for the decentralisation of education, rather local governments were given the authority to manage the education locally²⁰⁴.

This chapter addresses this decentralization, exploring the formulation of program and policy across every level of government. In this discussion, programs are activities or projects provided as a means of implementing 'policies', while, 'policy' or 'public policy' refers to a government institution's priority or focus for activities²⁰⁵. This chapter also demonstrates that, at the provincial level, the power of the governor influences the focus of the provincial programs and that, for the most part, programs provided are now 'supportive' and not 'instructive', as was the case in the past. Meanwhile, at district or city level, newly-empowered local governments²⁰⁶ have started to independently determine and implement their VSE programs. The power of the regent or mayor as local leader appears to have an influence on VSE programs. Finally, it will be argued that central government, through the programs and policies provided by its Central Education Office (DVSE), in the form of 'block grants', still exercise significant power over schools (SMKs) and Local Education Offices

²⁰⁴ Gershberg, Alec Ian (1999), p. 64

²⁰⁵ The discussion in the definition of policy which finally will be depended on the researcher see Hill, Michael and Hupe, Peter (2002), *Implementing Public Policy*, London, Sage Publications Ltd.

²⁰⁶ The local governments are the recipient of the transferred power from central, and not the provincial government

(EODs), but that the means of exerting control is no longer a function of administrative control, exercised through a centralized hierarchy.

4.2 Policies and Programs of the Central Government in VSE

The Director of the DVSE stated that, in principle, the programs for developing VSE are based on the mission and vision of the Indonesian Government, as determined by the elected President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and Vice-President, M. Yusuf Kalla²⁰⁷. It is part of the political policy of the elected president and stated in their book on “developing the Indonesia peacefully, fairly and prosperously”²⁰⁸.

The President’s policy provides a general policy context, which has then been adapted at the next level down in the bureaucracy. The Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE), one of directorates under the DGPSE, assigned to manage the VSE sector, has formulated its policy, in turn, focusing on ‘technical’ and ‘operational’ aspects.

The DVSE is trying to operationalise the policies of the President, Minister and Director General, through the development programs. The DVSE is also trying to achieve improvement in access. It aims to:

“..develop small SMK programs in primary schools (SMP); develop distance-mode small SMK classes in Islamic Boarding Schools (*Pesantren*) and other institutions; empower the private SMK; establish new SMK and small SMKs in the border areas; provide other programs, including scholarships”²⁰⁹.

Policies are promulgated at the highest level of the government, from the President then throughout the bureaucracy - a hierarchical process. It starts with the Government’s objectives, then public policy and programs, from top to bottom of the central government administration. This is, in fact, the same process as before regional autonomy, and, thus, the mindset of those at central government level is unchanged.

²⁰⁷ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

²⁰⁸ The Vision, Mission and Program of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono – M. Yusuf Kalla, President and the Vice President of the Republic Indonesia (DVSE Programs Outline, 2005).

²⁰⁹ Dikmenjur (2004), Outline of Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2004, (original title: *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004*), Jakarta-Indonesia, *Dikmenjur*, p.1

“.. This kind of definition of public policy is about means and ends, which necessitates a relationship. Where the political functionaries provide the objectives, it is the tasks of administrators to develop the appropriate instruments”²¹⁰.

To implement the policies, the DVSE personnel have developed a set of pragmatic strategies.

- The first strategy was ‘Skill Toward 2020’, a Grand Design or White paper for developing the VSE sector, which provided a framework for developing VSE, which was expected to be understood by the stakeholders in the VSE sector. This paper forms the conceptual basis for the empirical challenges in developing VSE, especially dealing with the global market.
- The second strategy is that of re-adjustment, which has been formulated to guide the actual implementation of regional autonomy with regard to VSE. This focuses on encouraging local governments to develop their own initiatives for improvements in the VSE system, in order to meet their needs at a local level.
- Lastly, the ‘block grants’ strategy has been introduced in order to financially support these policy developments.

The following is a detailed discussion of the DVSE’s policies.

4.2.1 Skill Toward 2020

‘Skill Toward 2020’ is a series of policies on how to improve and develop VSE, as described in Chapter 1. It acknowledges that this type of education is faced with multiple challenges. Prior to the establishment of the ‘Skill Toward 2020’ concept, the VSE system informed by various conceptual developments, mostly based on a supply-driven system. Chronologically, in PELITA I, between 1969 and 1974, “the policy in developing VSE was not clear and the VSE output was not matching workplaces available”²¹¹. In PELITA II, between 1974 and 1979, VSE development was adjusted according to National Development Planning, particularly to meet the needs of the “agriculture industries and the equality of access and development between regions”²¹². In PELITA III and IV, development was directed more

²¹⁰ Hill, Michael and Hupe, Peter (2002), *Implementing Public Policy*, London, Sage Publications Ltd, p. 5

²¹¹ Soenaryo in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, (original title *Sejarah Pendidikan Kejuruan di Indonesia*), Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, p. 91

²¹² Soenaryo in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p.94

towards education relevant to the needs of industry, through the activities of the School Production Units (SPU)²¹³. Meanwhile, during the PELITA V (1988 – 1992), schools integrated development, similar to Germany’s dual system, was introduced by restructuring the teaching processes, especially via the introduction of practical industry placements for students²¹⁴. Finally, in PELITA VI (1993-1998), the ‘link and match’ concept was introduced, by insisting that vocational schools operate their schools programs in conjunction with the surrounding industries²¹⁵. These concepts implemented as centralized-based policies and the regions were defined as recipients only, not initiators. It has been discussed in Chapter 3, that such a centralized system often failed to meet local needs²¹⁶.

The ‘Skill Toward 2020’ or *Buku Putih* (White Book in Indonesian) accommodated all these policies and was expected to establish the principles for reforming vocational secondary education and vocational training in Indonesia²¹⁷. This policy framework was determined after comparative studies were conducted in Germany, The Netherlands, England, Australia, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Thailand. “This concept contains high and valuable thoughts, which have been proven through various validation processes, such as in the discussion forums with industry communities, as well as in seminars, both locally and internationally”²¹⁸. Included in the concept are strategies for developing human resources and policy recommendations for developing VSE programs and the role of the current Director of the DVSE in establishing the programs and policies stemming from these policies²¹⁹. These principles are intended to align with the vision and mission of the current president, and also meet with the policy of the Ministry, Directorate General and also with the vision and mission of the DVSE, to ‘increase access; improve teacher competency and school management and increase community participation’²²⁰. Until regional autonomy was implemented in 2001, it had never been introduced officially to stakeholders in provincial and local governments²²¹.

²¹³ Achmad Suwarna in Supriadi, Dedy (2002)

²¹⁴ Brotosiswojo, Beny Suprpto (2002), “The Development of the Vocational Secondary Education in PELITA VI”, (original title “*Perkembangan Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan pada PELITA V*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (ed.), *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp.199-220

²¹⁵ Brotosiswojo, Beny Suprpto (2002)

²¹⁶ Pakpahan in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 239

²¹⁷ Pakpahan in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 243

²¹⁸ Pakpahan in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 257

²¹⁹ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005.

²²⁰ Part of the mission of the elected president as cited by Priowirjanto in Dikmenjur (2004), *Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2004*, (original title *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004*), Jakarta-Indonesia, *Dikmenjur*

²²¹ “Skill Toward 2020 for the Global Era” in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, (original title *Sejarah Pendidikan Kejuruan di Indonesia*), Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp. 273-328 and see also further discussion by Priowirjanto, pp. 603-630

Following are the main principles that form 'Skill Toward 2020':

4.2.1.1 Demand-Driven Orientation

VSE development will be based on industry demand. In approaching 2020, the economy of Indonesia will develop and move to a more global economy, in which industries and companies are forced to compete in not only the local, but also the global market²²². In order to anticipate this change, Indonesia should be capable of developing its human resources, through the improvement of skills and expertise, keeping up with existing technological developments, as well as market changes²²³. In addition, the involvement of the industrial world has to be increased, particularly in determining various skills standards, curriculum development and in establishing the policies for the vocational education system, and to ensure that the output of vocational education meets the actual workplace needs²²⁴. Thus, insights in to the future local and global economy, as well as industry potential, have been fundamental behind developing the strategies to drive VSE developments.

4.2.1.2 Decentralized Management

These policies are also aimed at empowering the schools themselves. They include the introduction of a school 'Performance Agreement', set out by the school, to be implemented the following year²²⁵. This agreement also has to be approved by the relevant local institutions, such as the School Committee and the Local Education Office (EOD). The targets to be achieved are detailed and take into account the national mission, including such concepts as 'dual system'²²⁶. The agreements are also to specify what new courses are to be introduced, what quality improvements are intended to be made, industrial links to be established; and other relevant programs. In addition, the schools are expected to adopt the techniques of 'total performance management', for monitoring purposes²²⁷. In fact, before the

²²² Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 285

²²³ MOEC, (1997), *Skill Toward 2020*, Jakarta, Indonesia, Department of Education of the Republic Indonesia

²²⁴ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), pp. 285-290

²²⁵ The 'Task Force' is a team of people established by the Minister of Education (MOEC) in 1995 to provide recommendations for "reforming Vocational Secondary Education", see also MOEC, (1997), *Skill Toward 2020*, p. iii

²²⁶ 'Dual system' is the concept of implementing VSE programs by sending students out to the workplace to improve their skills and readiness for work. See also Pakpahan in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 240

²²⁷ The PPPG (Teacher Training Centre) is a centre for upgrading the qualifications of VSE teachers. Several PPPGs have been established to accommodate the VSE teachers from various course areas. PPPG include PPPGs of Technology in Bandung (West Java), Malang (East Java) and Medan

introduction of regional autonomy, this idea had been in practice in the schools (SMKs), and was known as ‘*Program Kerja*’ (Work Plan) and was controlled by the Provincial Education Office (*Kanwil*), in its capacity as the right hand of the Central Education Office (DVSE). As one of the implications of regional autonomy, ‘total performance management’ became a part of local government planning for school development, known as ‘RIPS’, before finally being changed to ‘PKS’ (School Activities Plan). The DVSE and the *Kanwil* are no longer in control. The mechanism of centralized management, in the form of block grants, discussed below, has been the part of the development of school management development. The schools began implementing these programs before regional autonomy. These programs were managed by the DVSE in Jakarta and the Provincial Education Offices (*Kanwil*), in the provinces. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

4.2.1.3 Competency-Based Training (CBT)

Schools’ teaching and training methods are focused on producing graduates with skills relevant to the job market. As the new approach to VSE development is to fulfill industry need, the industrial standards competencies are used to reform the curriculum²²⁸. Standard competencies consist of several types, namely:

- ‘international standards’, to meet industry needs where business is competing in an international context;
- ‘national standards’, to support the needs of industry workplaces on a national level; and
- ‘regional standards’, to meet the needs of a particular region or company; general skills, being those skills needed to work in small-scale industries, especially for improving prosperity of people in remote areas²²⁹.

This principle of competencies is embedded in the ‘re-adjustment’ strategy, introduced by the DVSE, in anticipation of the changing roles and functions of local governments under regional autonomy. The DVSE provides financial support, in the form of block grants, for which both local governments and schools (SMK) may apply.

(North Sumatra) and the PPPG of Arts in Yogyakarta (DIY) the PPPG of Business in Jakarta and the PPPG of Agriculture in Cianjur (West Java) (DVSE History, 2002).

²²⁸ MOEC, (1997), “Skill Toward 2020”, Jakarta, Indonesia, Department of Education of the Republic Indonesia

²²⁹ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), pp. 289

4.2.1.4 Flexible and Permeable Systems

This policy aims to increase the role and functions of schools, to be more than just institutions delivering education. The idea was for SMK to become “vocational education and training centers that are flexible, short-term and offering multi entry and exit options”²³⁰. In addition, the SMK would be expected to market their schools’ products and services, as well as provide advanced education and training programs at the diploma level. The DVSE has not been able to support the implementation of this policy in practice under regional autonomy. The SMK system still runs on a three-year, full-time, continuous duration basis. This is a legacy of the National Education Law, introduced in 2003, which prescribed the Indonesian national education system, introducing this to all local governments throughout the country.

However, the ‘Skill Toward 2020’ is a policy framework that successive ministers and governments have been able to support and develop. This policy takes into account the need to compete in the global market and is in line with the spirit of the regional autonomy, whereby responsibility for VSE has been devolved to the local governments. The ‘Skill Toward 2020’ policy was formulated in 1995 suggesting that the central government had, in fact, been giving consideration to decentralizing the management of VSE before regional autonomy was introduced.

4.2.2 The Strategy of ‘Re-adjustment’

The strategy of ‘re-adjustment’ (*Reposisi*) was an endeavour of the DVSE to re-align VSE planning systems and program implementation to meet market trends in human resources - locally, regionally and internationally²³¹. The ‘re-adjustment’ strategy was implemented by ‘re-engineering’ existing training methods and programs. The school system was re-aligned, in order to be more ‘flexible’ and ‘permeable’, via teaching based on ‘competency-based training’ (CBT) principles. Courses or programs offered by schools were improved, as part of the local effort in developing human resources²³².

The ‘re-adjustment’ strategy seeks to clarify the new roles and functions of the central and regional governments in the VSE sector (ie, who does what). The DVSE in Jakarta is

²³⁰ MOEC, (1997), “Skill Toward 2020”, p. 3

²³¹ Priowirjanto, Gatot Hari and Suryatmana, Giri (2002), “The Re-positioning of Vocational Education Towards 2020”, (original title “*Reposisi Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan Menjelang 2020*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp. 603-630

²³² Priowirjanto in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 605

expected to formulate the concepts with which to guide the regional stakeholders. The central government also has the responsibility of providing the support to ensure success of these concepts in practice, including the establishment of the institutions responsible for implementation as well as setting regional, national and even international standards²³³. The regions are expected to encourage the commitment of local stakeholders to implement ‘re-adjustment’ and ‘re-engineering’ as well as provide counterpart finance and abide by local regulations²³⁴.

4.2.3 Block grants

The ‘block grant’ is a new form of support for local governments and schools (SMK) to develop VSE programs. In this transitional stage of regional autonomy, the DVSE has established various block grants to support the implementation of its policies. By analyzing the available planning documents, especially the block grants listed in the DVSE Program Outline 2004, as shown in Table 10 below, it appears evident that the DVSE is very committed to the ‘block grants’ as a means of realizing its policies and programs. In 2004, the DVSE provided ‘block grants’ of USD 49,431,271.74 increased to USD 65,309,782.61 in 2005²³⁵. It can be seen that all block grants had the objective of supporting central government policies and programs. However, the number of ‘block grants’ is relatively small compared to the almost 6000 state and private schools (SMKs).

²³³ Priowirjanto in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), pp. 625-626

²³⁴ Priowirjanto in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p. 626

²³⁵ Dikmenjur (2004), “DVSE Program Outline 2004” (original title: “*Garis Besar Program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004*”), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur Dikmenjur, “DVSE ”:and see also Dikmenjur (2005), “DVSE Program Outline 2005”

Table 10. Block Grants in 2004

No.	Name of Programs	Target	Unit cost (USD)	Sub Total (USD)
1	Development of long distance vocational education in Islamic schools	600 schools	10,869.57	6,521,739.13
2	Development of Small Vocational School in SMP	140 schools	27,173.91	3,804,347.83
3	Development of Private SMK	900 schools	10,869.57	9,782,608.70
4	Re-engineering	500 locations	10,869.57	5,434,782.61
5	ICT Center Developments	38 locations	27,173.91	1,032,608.70
6	Books	17,435 exemplars	NA	NA
7	Apprentice for Teacher	290 teachers	NA	NA
8	School Mapping and Strategic Planning	416 locations	1,086.96	452,173.91
9	Employing Additional Teachers	340 teachers	NA	NA
10	Quality Assurance	1 province	NA	NA
11	Teacher Training	NA NA	NA	NA
12	Mobil Training Unit	7 schools	38,043.48	266,304.35
13	IT/JIS Training	47 locations	2,717.39	127,717.39
14	Radio Program in Education	10 schools	6,521.74	65,217.39
15	Entrepreneur Development	10 institutions	2,717.39	27,173.91
16	Business Center Development	3 institutions	10,869.57	32,608.70
17	Monitoring and Evaluation of BBE (Broad Base Education) in district or city	416 Cities /districts	2,717.39	1,130,434.78
18	Education Management in East Indonesia	16 locations	1,902.17	30,434.78
19	SMK Innovation	31 locations	5,434.78	168,478.26
20	SMK Appreciation	22 schools	1,086.96	23,913.04
21	Industrial Certification	2,280 peoples	27.17	61,956.52
22	TOEIC Certification for student	3000 students	14.13	42,391.30
23	TOEIC Certification for teachers	120 peoples	27.17	3,260.87
24	Industrial Certification for students	3,000 students	27.17	81,521.74
25	Industrial Certification for Teachers	120 teachers	32.61	3,913.04
26	The Implementation of BBE SMK	150 locations	13,586.96	2,038,043.48
27	The Implementation of Teacher	30 packages	27,173.91	815,217.39
28	Production Based Training (PBT)	45 schools	2,173.91	97,826.09
29	Small SMK in SMP	140 locations	27,173.91	3,804,347.83
30	Re-Engineering of SLTP – PKK to SMK	18 schools	13,586.96	244,565.22
31	Scholarships for Women	100 peoples	163.04	16,304.35
32	International Standard of Potential SMK	25 schools	16,304.35	407,608.70
33	National Standard of Potential SMK	170 schools	8,152.17	1,385,869.57
34	Entrepreneurship Class	15 institutions	5,434.78	81,521.74
35	Micro hydro and TIKM (adv)	13 peoples	2,445.65	31,793.48
36	Post Grade Education (S2)	12 peoples	2,021.74	24,260.87

Source, DVSE, 2005

Several ‘block grants’ have been provided to support access to schools, such as developing ‘Small SMK’ within the primary schools and Islamic Boarding Schools, empowerment of private SMKs, establishing new SMKs, establishing ‘Small SMKs’ and granting

scholarships²³⁶. ‘Block grants’ to improve the quality of the VSE included setting ‘national’ and ‘international’ standards; the (new) ‘Curriculum of 2004’; introduction of assessment and certification standards; development of IT and development of human resources (See Appendices 1 and 2.).

However, none of the ‘block grants’ supported standardizations. The Head of the Accreditation Section of the DVSE complained that “we are really not concerned with how needed or not our function is ... the programs we have created are very ambitious”²³⁷. He was very surprised by the decision of the DVSE Director to provide a large number of ‘block grants’ distributed to the schools, not just to the vocational schools but also to other types of schools. He said: “we are behaving like *Sinterklas* (Santa Claus)”²³⁸. Our main intention should be to establish standards to guide the development of VSE and to measure the achievement of the programs²³⁹. The principles of the Block Grand Schemes are discussed below.

4.2.3.1 The Nature of the Block Grants

The ‘block grant’ schemes were created by the DVSE to financially support the implementation of policies and programs in a variety of forms:

- *Competitive*

These ‘block grants’ were originally a central government strategy to give direct assistance to poor schools, following the economic crisis of 1997²⁴⁰. The distribution of the block grants focused on particular poor schools or even families. The current DVSE block grants are designed to support selected schools on a competitive basis. This block grant program comes in a grant that is packaged in the form of cash or budget²⁴¹ and certain conditions have to be met by schools. Thus, it differs from the initial programs existing before regional autonomy, in which the schools (SMKs) functioned merely as the recipient, fiscally. The DVSE used to send equipment, tools and other school necessities to the schools directly. In order to ensure the success of this new grants scheme, the DVSE informs the EOP in the provinces, the EOD

²³⁶ Dikmenjur (2004) and Dikmenjuur (2005) “DVSE ”

²³⁷ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Section, interviewed 18 January 2005.

²³⁸ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Section, interviewed 18 January 2005.

²³⁹ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Section, interviewed 18 January 2005.

²⁴⁰ Haryadi, Yadi (2001a), “Targeting and Rapid Assessment for Social Programs”, Indonesia: National Development Planning Agency

²⁴¹ Dikmenjur (2004), “DVSE Program Outline” (original title: “*Garis-Garis Besar Program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan Tahun 2004*”) and Dikmenjur (2005), DVSE

in districts and cities and other local institutions via the DVSE official website. Monitoring and evaluation teams have also been established in each district and city to assist in supervising with implementation, to solve problems and make recommendations. The DVSE also tried to maintain cooperation with the EOP, EOD and other local institutions in the districts or cities, in order to foster mutual understanding, strengthen the commitment of local governments to the VSE sector and encourage local governments to come up with their share of the VSE budget in their own districts²⁴².

It is pointed out that the block grants are not exclusively for vocational secondary education or SMK but are designed for most school types and levels. There was some disquiet amongst the DVSE officials interviewed for this research. The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Section complained that “the program is not focused”²⁴³. Similarly, the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision stressed that “it is too hard for the regions to understand what the central office wants and to interpret the message behind the block grants”²⁴⁴. The Head of the Planning Subdivision argued that the block grants should be considered as being the central government’s share of funding for schools. However, local officials have been interpreting these grants as the main source of funding and resources for the local SMK. This was not the DVSE’s intention²⁴⁵. However, the block grants scheme will remain a key DVSE’ strategy to ensure its policies and programs are implemented in schools, regional autonomy notwithstanding. This might not have been the original intention of DVSE officials or they may not have been initially aware of the impact on the schools. This will be discussed further.

- Incentive Scheme

The block grants, as described by the Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, function as an incentive to encourage the local governments and the schools to support VSE programs in the spirit of the Regional Autonomy Law²⁴⁶. Most of DVSE interviewees believed that, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, local governments have not yet responded to their new roles, especially with regard to the development of VSE. The Head of the Accreditation Subdivision, noted that the new local governments have not yet understood their new roles and functions and, therefore, “now, educational development in the regions has become stuck”²⁴⁷. In addition, he observes that “district and city heads are less concerned with the

²⁴² Dikmenjur (2004) and Dikmenjur (2005).

²⁴³ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Section, interviewed 18 January 2005

²⁴⁴ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

²⁴⁵ Head of the DVSE Planning Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

²⁴⁶ Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

²⁴⁷ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

development of education as they don't see how it will improve local revenue. They prefer to give priority to programs that will be immediately appreciated by their constituents²⁴⁸. These opinions are also supported by some officials in the districts and cities, especially those from BAPPEDA²⁴⁹ offices, such as in Tangerang District and Tangerang City, Bekasi District and Bekasi City and Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City.²⁵⁰ The Head of BAPPEDA, Tangerang city argues that "the new local government policy is primarily focused on improving the existing infrastructure"²⁵¹. The block grants given by the DVSE, with conditions attached, most likely do not attract the enthusiasm and intentions of local governments with regard to developing the VSE.

The views of the central office staff may be correct and, in fact, incentive programs may be really needed, in order to draw local government attention to the needs of the VSE sector. Yet, in the context of 'decentralization', it could be argued that this is just a tactic of the central government to keep on dictating to the regions, via tied funding of centrally-developed programs.

- Developmental

The DVSE programs are intended to be developmental in nature. The aims are to develop or increase aspects of education in accordance with central government policy²⁵², such as improved access to education, improved educational quality and, improved management. Therefore, the DVSE has opened up its 'operational' programs to local governments. One reason for local governments not focusing on the long-term development of the VSE sector might be that local governments have not yet shown themselves capable of handling all of the new responsibilities devolved to them from Jakarta. These new responsibilities include running 'operational' programs, which are impeded by the weaknesses of human resources and budget limitations, as mentioned by most of the interviewees from the regions, particularly from BAPPEDA and the DPRD²⁵³. However, failing to focus on VSE

²⁴⁸ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

²⁴⁹ BAPPEDA is the Local Planning Board, located in each district or city, assigned to coordinate the local institutions' planning, including that of the EOD.

²⁵⁰ Heads of the Local Education Offices (EOD) of: Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005; Tangerang District, 5 March 2005; Bekasi City, 14 April 2005; Bekasi District, 5 May 2005; Pangkalpinang City, 7 June 2005; Bangka District, 20 July 2005

²⁵¹ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

²⁵² The current policy of the Central Education Office (DVSE) is to improve the "the access, quality, relevancy and the efficiency of the educational management", as stated in Dikmenjur (2004), DVSE Program Outline" and also in Dikmenjur, 2005.

²⁵³ DPRD is the Local People's Representative Assembly, located in districts and cities, which has the discretionary rights with regard to local government budget, as stated in Law 22/1999. See also

development could be argued to contradict the purpose of regional autonomy, that is, that the local governments are required to assume full responsibility for managing the education sector²⁵⁴.

- Grant limitations

The block grants are limited, in that they will not be automatically distributed to the SMK. The central office programs target most types of schools, including primary and secondary, private and state, as well as tertiary education. There are conditions attached to obtaining a block grant, which include readiness of existing school resources, approval from the Local Education Office (EOD); and (sometimes) the commitment of the local government to provide counterpart funding from their own local budget. Although some interviewees in the schools complained that the procedures to obtain the block grants are complicated, it appears they are very pleased with the fact that at least such funding support is available to allow them to implement programs²⁵⁵. In addition, most of the schools in this research have experienced success in obtaining block grants from the central government (DVSE) or from the provincial government (EOP) to fund their activities.

- Self-Implementation

As the DVSE block grants are in the form of cash, recipients have to determine themselves how it is spent. This method might be regarded as fundamental concept of decentralization and in keeping with the dynamic change occurring in the regions. Previously, before regional autonomy, programs were managed centrally, by the DVSE. As the Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision states: “it has been the practice in the past that school needs were obtained from the DVSE, with schools acting just as recipients”²⁵⁶. Officials in the central office managed out all procurement processes, including for building construction, equipment, furniture, tools and other school facilities. The Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision agrees that all programs were managed by the DVSE, from the early New Order Era (1966), centrally, and distributed directly to the schools, in the form of packages of goods,

Rasyid (2003), p.67. BAPPEDA (Local Planning Board) is a local government institution assigned to maintain local planning.

²⁵⁴ The Law 22/1999 on Regional Autonomy: tasks and responsibilities of the regional governments. PP 84/2000 is the government decision to support the Regional Autonomy Law with regard to the roles and the functions of local institutions, including the Local Education Office (EOD) (UU 22/1999 and PP 84/2000)

²⁵⁵ Principal of SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005; Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005; Principal of SMK2 Bangka District, interviewed 18 July 2005

²⁵⁶ Head of DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

supplies or services²⁵⁷. Currently, the central office's assistance was packaged in a 'block grant', in the form of funding or cash is transferred directly to the schools for them to manage. Schools are now allowed to – and, in fact, expected to - apply for the block grants by themselves and, as a consequence, appear very active, not only with maintaining 'routine' educational operations (as per their main function), but with also carrying out a number of 'developmental' activities like planning, procuring and implementing. As evident in the interviewees at the school level, most teachers and staff find themselves involved in implementing developmental programs for which DVSE funding has been obtained, such as ICT, school mapping, re-engineering, computer labs, and MTU²⁵⁸.

4.2.3.2 Conditions for Obtaining Block Grants

Support from the DVSE in the form of block grants can be obtained only after the applicant has shown they fulfill the criteria or conditions determined by the DVSE. Most of the block grants require matched funding, as well as cumulative commitment from schools and the local government²⁵⁹. Table 11 below illustrates the composition or the percentage of the counterpart of the budget required for some of the block grants offered by the DVSE, as summarized in the DVSE Program Guidelines of 2005 and 2006.

Table 11. Percentage Contribution by Schools

No	Name of Block Grant	Value (USD)	Share %
1	School Mapping	3,888.89	NA
2	Hotel Training	27,777.78	50 %
3	Re-engineering	11,111.11	30 %
5	Community College	13,888.89	30 %
6	MTU (Mobil Training Unit)	27,777.78	20 %
7	Language Laboratory	8,333.33	20 %
8	International School	16,666.66	50 %
9	BBE (Broad-Based Education)	13,888.89	20 %
10	Entrepreneurship/Life Skills	2,777.77	NA
11	National School	13,888.89	50 %
12	ICT (Information and Communication Technology)	22,222.22	20 %
13	WAN (Wide Area Network)	2,777.77	NA

Source: Programs Guidelines of DVSE 2004 and 2005

²⁵⁷ Head of DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

²⁵⁸ Teachers from: SMK3 and SMK4, Tangerang City, interviewed 8 and 9 February 2005; SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005; SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005; SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May 2005; SMK1 and SMK2, Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 and 27 June 2005

²⁵⁹ Dikmenjur (2004), "Outline of Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2004", (original title: "Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004"), Jakarta, Dikmenjur, and also Dikmenjur (2005 and 2006)

In some circumstances, grants for certain programs are only offered to schools that can demonstrate they meet specific pre-requisites, such as capacity with regard to the schools already having the necessary supporting equipment, human resources and other facilities. Table 12 below lists some of the requirements. Some block grant might require all five. Some requirements might be in the form of an official letter, signed by the person in charge.

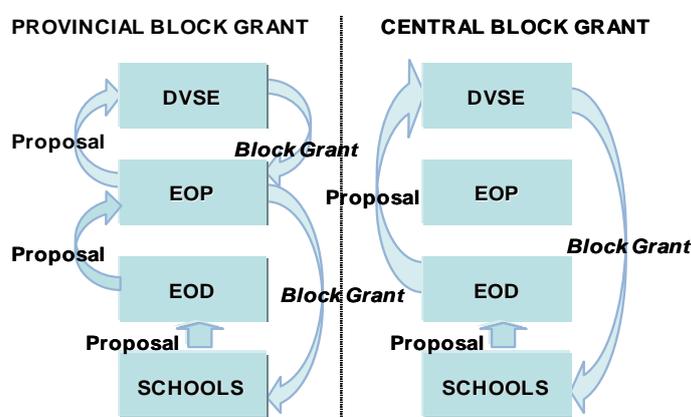
Table 12. List of Requirements

No	Requirements
1	Share of the Budget (needs the Regent or Mayor’s agreement and then the Local Peoples Representative endorsement)
2	Regent or Mayor’s agreement
3	School Facilities (schools must have specific equipment before a grant will be given)
4	School Committee agreement
5	Local Education Office (EOD) agreement

Source Dit. Dikmenjur, 2005

In addition, there are two sources of block grants’ funding: central government and provincial government. The central block grants are managed and delivered by the DVSE in Jakarta and the provincial block grants by the Provincial Education Office (EOD) in the provinces. However, both central and provincial block grants are formulated and determined by the Central Education Office (DVSE). The difference between the two is in the budget allocation. Central block grants are funded from the central government’s budget; provincial block grants come from ‘de-concentrated’ funds, from the budget allocation given by the central government to the provincial governments to be used to support the delivery of central government programs. In this case, the provincial governments function in an assistant capacity. The flow chart at Figure 8 shows the mechanism for how schools (SMK) go about obtaining block grants.

Figure 8. Mechanisms for Obtaining Block Grants



Source: summarised from the interviews, illustrated by Turijin

The DVSE is implementing the national policy of ‘improving access and quality’ in education. This policy has been translated into various programs of a ‘supportive’ rather than ‘instructive’ nature, as happened in the past. The developmental concept of ‘Skill Toward 2020’, which builds on concepts developed by previous ministers, co-incidentally happens to align with anticipated conditions under regional autonomy, especially those of decentralized management and industrial development. Meanwhile, the ‘readjustment’ strategy is important for stakeholders and institutions related to VSE, especially in realizing their new roles and functions as a result of regional autonomy.

It is argued here that the programs provided by the DVSE as the instruments for implementing their policies in practice, are suited to this transition stage of regional autonomy. However, from the perspective of achieving ‘decentralization’, the DVSE is still managing a centralised system, as in past practice. The ‘block grants’ system is, unintentionally, acting as another strategy for the central government to keep control over schools. In this transition stage of regional autonomy, it might be argued as acceptable, however not for the future. Regional autonomy, in its ideal has as a mission that education is to be managed by the local governments.

4.3 Policies and Programs of the Provincial Governments in VSE

At the provincial level, local government authorities have been seen to be influencing VSE policies and programs, although in a limited way. Since the Regional Autonomy Law was introduced in 2001, “the role of the provinces is confined to such areas as mediating disputes between districts, facilitating cross-district development and representing the central government within the region”²⁶⁰. In addition, the “national government’s local administrative offices (*Kanwil*)”²⁶¹ have been transferred to the districts and cities²⁶². In the past, these *Kanwils* acted as the branch office of the Ministry of Education in the implementation of the central government’s policies and programs. Meanwhile, the Provincial Education Offices (EOP) are the product of the restructuring of the old *Kanwil* and old *Dinas*²⁶³, and the staff are

²⁶⁰ Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), “Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization”, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p. 4

²⁶¹ *Kanwil* and *Dinas (DinProp)* are the old versions of the provincial education offices. Both were located within the one province. The *Kanwil* were established via the central authority, while *DinProp* was formed regionally, by the provincial government (DVSE History, 2002)

²⁶² Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), p. 109

²⁶³ *Dinas (DinProp)* and *Kanwil* are the old versions of the provincial education offices both were located within the one province. The *Kanwil* was established via central authority, while *DinProp* was formed regionally, by the provincial government (DVSE History, 2002)

also recruited mainly from those two former education offices²⁶⁴. As the head of the EOP, West Java Province mentioned, the current *Dinas* or Provincial Education Offices (EOP) are basically the same as the old *Dinas*, and that, structurally, they still fall under the authority of the governor. Thus, hierarchically, they should focus on upper level management policy.

The scope of tasks of the EOPs has declined. The EOPs merely have the role of coordinating development of primary and secondary education (both private and public schools) in districts and cities²⁶⁵. In the past, most school needs were met by the provincial offices, acting as the representative of the central office, with regard to the selection of school principals. Just as with the central office, most of the provincial responsibilities for the VSE sector, have been transferred to local offices in the districts and cities. The focus of the EOP is more on provincial policies, rather than on central office policies, as happened in the past. The Head the EOP, West Java explained: “priority is given to the policies of the governor and then to others after that”²⁶⁶. He added “In practice, this means I would re-schedule any meetings related to external programs if, at the same time, the governor suddenly invited me to attend one of his meeting”²⁶⁷. Below, the trends concerning policies and programs in the three different provinces involved in this research are discussed.

4.3.1 Provincial Education Policy

The policies of the provincial governments in all three provinces involved in this research - West Java, Banten and Bangka Belitung - focus mostly on improving and developing primary and secondary education²⁶⁸. It could be argued that, during this transitional stage of regional autonomy, while the provinces are becoming accustomed to their new functions, it is logical that they focus on education at primary and lower secondary levels, rather than the more complicated vocational secondary education sector.

4.3.1.1 Education Policy in West Java Province

In West Java, as explained by the Head of the EOP West Java, his office has been giving priority to following the policies of the governor, in trying to improve primary and secondary education. The governor’s principal ambition with regard to education is to implement the

²⁶⁴ Head of EOP West Java, interviewed 12 July 2005

²⁶⁵ Head of EOPs, West Java Province, Banten Province and Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 12, 20 and 27 July 2005

²⁶⁶ Head of EOP West Java, interviewed 12 July 2005

²⁶⁷ Head of EOP West Java, interviewed 12 July 2005

²⁶⁸ Heads of EOPs, West Java Province, Banten Province and Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 12, 20 and 27 July 2005

‘WAJAR’²⁶⁹ - nine-years of compulsory education - that was expected to be achieved by 2008²⁷⁰. In order to ensure the success of the policies, the provincial government, through the EOP, has provided a special program, called ‘KBBS’²⁷¹ (Fee-Free School Card). This policy is being followed by the Bekasi District and Bekasi City local governments in West Java Province. Local policies in these two local governments are in line with those of the provincial government, in that they, similarly, prioritise educational development at the primary and secondary levels. “Local government finances are limited...and this year will be used to renovate and rehabilitate the primary and secondary school buildings...”²⁷², reported the Head of BAPPEDA, Bekasi District. A member of the Local Peoples’ Representative Assembly (DPRD), Bekasi City also stated that: “...the senior high schools (SMA) and the vocational secondary schools (SMK) are still in relatively very good condition; therefore programs need to concentrate on improvements to the primary schools”²⁷³.

To some extent, this supports the opinion of some DVSE interviewees, who assert that the VSE has not been a priority of the regions. The Head of the Curriculum Subdivision stated that, since regional autonomy, the regions have not been concerned with VSE development²⁷⁴. It might also fair to justify that, regardless of its centralist nature, the strategies of the DVSE to continuously provide centrally-originating programs and grants has been an important stimulant for the regional governments and for the vocational secondary schools themselves²⁷⁵.

The ‘KBBS’ or the fee-free school card system for children of poorer families resembles a grant. The holder of the card is eligible to enter any primary school, with no exceptions, and rejection by any school should be reported to the government²⁷⁶. These cards are distributed to the local government administrations, via the Local Education Offices (EOD), and the EOD delivers to them to the sub-districts, to be given to the students²⁷⁷. The Governor of West Java Province also expects the local governments in districts and cities to provide similar grants to enable access to primary schools. However, local governments have not fully responded to

²⁶⁹ ‘WAJAR’ stands for ‘*wajib belajar*’ or nine years of compulsory education, which was targeted for six years primary education and three years junior education

²⁷⁰ Head of EOP West Java, interviewed 12 July 2005

²⁷¹ KBBS stands for the Indonesian term for ‘Fee-Free School Card’. This was introduced by West Java Province, and distributed to the ‘poor’, to encourage access to education. All schools in West Java are ‘obligated’, to receive the card ‘holder’, ‘without conditions. The provincial government pays the school fees for the received student (33333, July, 2005)

²⁷² Head of BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

²⁷³ Head of BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

²⁷⁴ Head of DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

²⁷⁵ Head of DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

²⁷⁶ Head of EOP West Java, interviewed 12 July 2005

²⁷⁷ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

this expectation as, most likely, they have their own agenda with regards to developing their regions. This issue is discussed in more detail in section 4.4.

4.3.1.2 Education Policy in Banten Province

In the Province of Banten, although the governor's policies have not been specifically formulated to include special programs, like the fee-free school card, as in West Java, according to the Head of the EOP, programs and policies in Banten are, similarly, influenced by the governor's policies. He mentioned that the provincial programs in Banten focus on the infrastructure and human resources of primary and secondary schools²⁷⁸ and that the tendency of local government policy in Banten's districts and cities is to support whatever is the provincial policy. In both Tangerang District and Tangerang City, the educational priority areas are the same, namely primary and secondary education. The Head of BAPPEDA in Tangerang City claims: "...after city infrastructure, the second priority is the education sector – but renovating and rehabilitating the 221 primary schools..."²⁷⁹. Similarly, the Head of BAPPEDA in Tangerang District states: "...in education, the first priority is to improve the primary schools which have been categorized as badly damaged or totally run-down; other targets come after that in priority ..." ²⁸⁰. In other words, none of the provinces examined in this study are making VSE development a priority – and with some understandable reason - given that VSE school facilities are still in - relatively - good condition. In addition, according to the Head of BAPPEDA Tangerang City, "the vocational school sector is quite complicated, requiring a huge budget to develop and so, therefore, planning for future development needs longer and deeper consideration"²⁸¹.

4.3.1.3 Education Policy in Bangka Belitung Province

The Head of the EOP in Babel explained that his governor is really concerned at present with the condition of school buildings of the primary and secondary schools. Therefore, he has been providing these schools support in the form of rehabilitation funds²⁸². This provincial policy is also being followed at district level. As the Head of the Education Commission of the DPRD²⁸³ of Bangka District told the Commission members²⁸⁴, local government policy

²⁷⁸ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

²⁷⁹ Head of BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

²⁸⁰ Head of BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

²⁸¹ Head of BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

²⁸² Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

²⁸³ DPRD is the Local People's Representative Assembly, located in districts or cities, which has discretionary rights with regards to local government budget (UU 22/1999 and Rasyid, p.67, 2003)

basically echoes the provincial policy, which is to focus on the ‘WAJAR’²⁸⁵ (nine-years of compulsory education)²⁸⁶. The Head of BAPPEDA agrees that “local government is indeed prioritizing the education sector, however, in particular, the primary and secondary levels, in accordance with national objectives of the ‘WAJAR’ program”²⁸⁷.

Thus, the governors have started to significantly influence the direction of educational policy, however their policies have focused, to date, on the primary and secondary levels. There are also strong indications that the provincial policies are being followed and supported by the local governments in districts and cities. One of the implications has been that the VSE sector has not been a priority for the three provincial governments studied.

4.3.2 Provincial Programs in VSE

In terms of the VSE sector, the provincial governments studied have limited their involvement to supporting administratively the central office’s programs. The governors appear not to have interfered in administrative processes. This responsibility rests with the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs). In addition, the complexity of VSE may also be a reason for the governors not to focus on in the VSE sector at this stage, as mentioned by the Head of the EOP Banten²⁸⁸. As subordinates of the governors, the EOPs have merely managed the block grants allocated by the central office.

4.3.2.1 VSE Programs in Banten Province

Banten Province has endeavoured to implement the DVSE policies²⁸⁹. The Head of the EOP Banten Province stated that, although only administering the programs created by others, he is facing difficulties in coordinating with the local governments: “With the autonomy...the programs delivered to the districts and cities are a not suitable...and the programs of the local government are not always linked with the next year’s programs”²⁹⁰. In his opinion “...as the local government leaders change, the policies and programs change also and most local

²⁸⁴ The interviewee, as the Head of the DPRD’s Education Commission in Bangka District, invited the members (4 people) of the Commission to participate in the interview process, so that in fact became a ‘focus-group discussion’

²⁸⁵ ‘WAJAR’ stands for *wajib belajar* or the nine years of compulsory education, targeted as six years basic and three years primary.

²⁸⁶ Head of the Education Commission on Local Legislation, Bangka District focus group, conducted 27 July 2005

²⁸⁷ Head of BAPPEDA Bangka District, interviewed 20 February 2005

²⁸⁸ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 March 2005

²⁸⁹ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 March 2005

²⁹⁰ Head of EOP Banten, interviewed 20 March 2005

governments are not yet familiar with VSE”²⁹¹. The Head of the EOD Tangerang City stated that “decisions regarding which local development programs are to take priority are made during the *musrenbang*²⁹² community consultation attended by all relevant institutions...chaired by the mayor”²⁹³. What happens with regard to VSE programs in the local governments potentially depends on what agendas local leaders may have. Thus, there is the issue of synchronising what is considered important at provincial level with that considered so at local level.

4.3.2.2 VSE Programs in Bangka Belitung Province

In Bangka Belitung Province, the Head of the EOP is aware that at provincial level, the focus is still on “assisting with distributing the ‘*DEKON*’ (de-concentrated funds)²⁹⁴, which come from the central office, by directing this funding to the eligible schools in districts and cities; the EOP is the ‘assistant’ only and not the ‘implementer’”²⁹⁵. However, unlike the experience of the Head of the EOP Banten Province, in Bangka Belitung Province, local government institutions, including the DPRD, BAPPEDA and the EODs are relatively supportive.²⁹⁶ The Head of BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City states: “the programs and policies of the EOP are fairly good; they have obtained the mayor’s support and therefore we can only support that”²⁹⁷. In principle, the Head of EOP stated: “equality of access to education is improving, as is the quality of the education”²⁹⁸. Thus, it is most likely that Bangka Belitung Province, as a new province, has been able to manage the VSE programs it has received from the central office (DVSE) quite smoothly.

4.3.2.3 VSE Programs in West Java Province

Meanwhile, the Head of the EOP West Java Province strongly stated that their VSE policies also support the DVSE mission to improve the “access to and quality of the vocational secondary schools”²⁹⁹. Similar to the case of the other provinces studied, they are, with their programs, purely implementing DVSE initiatives, such as promoting distance education,

²⁹¹ Head of EOP Banten, interviewed 20 March 2005

²⁹² *Musrenbang* is a Development Planning forum aimed at accommodating community aspirations and democratically deciding which programs are to be given priority

²⁹³ Head of EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

²⁹⁴ *DEKON* is a new financial arrangement under the Regional Autonomy Law. It is government funding for which the governor, as the representative of the province, is responsible for administering (UU 25/1999)

²⁹⁵ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

²⁹⁶ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

²⁹⁷ Head of BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 20 July 2005

²⁹⁸ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

²⁹⁹ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 March 2005

small vocational schools and the introduction of the competency-based curriculum. The Head of the EOP West Java Province agreed with the Head of the EOP Banten Province that they also face problems trying to coordinate with local governments to implement programs. Yet, he is still very confident of his ability to control the local governments – including those of Bekasi District and Bekasi City, two of the local governments included in this study. He claims: “they still depend on me and follow what I say and their VSE programs are still in line with the provincial programs”³⁰⁰. As explained earlier, West Java Province is one of the old provinces, the staff of the EOP, including the head, have been recruited from the former education offices - *Kanwil* and *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*³⁰¹. Similarly, in the EOD, most of the staff for the District and City of Bekasi local governments were selected from the former local education offices - *Kandep* and *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten*³⁰². Therefore, a number of the officials were familiar with the VSE programs and, most importantly, have experience working jointly with the provincial government. The Director of the DVSE asserted that, with this new local government environment, he is really confident that VSE development in West Java Province will be successful, as most of the staff, especially top-level management, of both the EOP and the EODs were recruited from the former structures³⁰³.

Thus in the old province studied - West Java – it appears easier to manage VSE programs than in the new provinces of Banten and Bangka Belitung. The experience and the seniority of the Head of the EOP West Java Province had allowed him to significantly influence policy direction. Although he realizes that policies advocated by the governor take priority, it is suggested that his past knowledge and experience of the VSE sector was most helpful, especially in the implementation stage at district and city level. In the new provinces, the EOP heads are facing multiples problems, including the influence of the local government policies, lack of human resources with the required knowledge and experience as well as a new, unfamiliar working environment, in local government in districts and cities. In Banten Province, the Head of the EOP is still struggling with synchronizing their policies and programs with those of the local government. However, in Bangka Belitung Province, although a relatively new province, the Head of the EOP is very confident and has managed to obtain the full support of local governments. Surprisingly, although, structurally, the EOP

³⁰⁰ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 March 2005

³⁰¹ *Kanwil* and *Dinas Pendidikan Propinsi (DinProp)* is the old version of education offices in the provinces. Both were located within the one province. The *Kanwil* were established by central authority, while *DinProp* is formed regionally by the provincial government (DVSE History, 2002)

³⁰² *Kandep* and *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten* is old version of local education office and both are located in one district or city. The different is that the *Kandep* was established through the provincial authority, while *Dinas Kabupaten* was formed locally either by district or city executive government (DVSE History, 2002)

³⁰³ Director of DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

now falls directly under the governor in the hierarchy, EOP functions - especially in the case of the VSE sector- are more limited than under the old system, that is, merely assisting the central office to deliver the programs.

It can be concluded that, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, at provincial level, educational development policies have been influenced by the power of authority of the governors. In the three provinces of this research, the policy trend is a focus on improving the primary and lower secondary sector, and not vocational. Developing VSE has not been on the agenda of these provincial governments. Furthermore, those educational programs provided, which concentrate on primary and secondary education, including special assistance to children from poor families, are a means to ensure the success of the governors' policies and also an expression of the support for the nine years compulsory education or 'WAJAR' policy of the national government.

In addition, the VSE programs basically belong to the central office (DVSE) and the provincial offices are merely assisting with program delivery to the 'recipients' - the vocational secondary schools (SMK). The heads of the Provincial Education Offices (EOP) find themselves challenged by the dramatic changes that have taken place within local government. They are finding it hard to synchronize changeable programs, caused by changes in local government leadership. The EOP heads in the old provinces are finding it relatively easier to work with the local governments to manage VSE programs as the environment of the institutions involved with VSE - including the Local Education Offices (EOD) and the schools (SMK) - is still the same. This suggests that, in the transition stage of regional autonomy, educational policies and programs for the three provinces studied have basically been following the direction established by the central government. Thus, it is argued that there have still been no real improvements and that conditions are essentially the same as prior to regional autonomy.

4.4 Policies and Programs of the Local Governments in VSE

Similar to the trend in the provinces, education policies and programs at local government level have also started to be influenced by the particular policy priorities of local leaders. Regional autonomy gave local governments authority to manage most sectors³⁰⁴. As one

³⁰⁴ UU 22/1999 is the Autonomy Law which outlines the tasks and responsibilities of the regional governments. PP 84/2000 is the Government Decision issued to support the Autonomy Law by outlining the role and functions of the local institutions, including the Local Education Office (EOD) (UU 22/1999 and PP 84/2000)

observer expressed it in 2003: “the district-level governments, whose powers were previously strictly circumscribed, are now to take on full responsibility for such important areas as education ...”³⁰⁵. He further remarked that: “the current Local Education Offices (EOD) almost the same as the Provincial Education Offices were reconstructed from the old Local Education Offices (*Kandep* or Department Office and *Dinas Kabupaten*) or Local Education Office) in districts and cities”³⁰⁶. Structurally, the EODs come under the local governments and have been created as the instruments for implementing local government policies and programs. However, unlike at provincial level, the EODs had never been involved in managing the VSE. Issues related to the VSE sector at the local government level are discussed here.

4.4.1 Policy Formulation

This research suggests that policy formulation at local government level has been carried out ‘locally’ and in a democratic manner, true to the spirit of the principles of regional autonomy. In Tangerang City, for example, the researcher was told when interviewing the Head of the EOD, that the heads of local institutions sub-districts were invited to meet with the mayor, in order to gain an understanding of community aspirations³⁰⁷. In Tangerang District, as explained by the Head of BAPPEDA Tangerang District, community opinion was instead gauged by examining aspirations according to electoral zones, which reflected the views of the majority of the party members at a certain location during election time. Thus, there is more political involvement³⁰⁸. Policy formulation follows a bottom-up planning process, taking into account the needs expressed at grassroots level.

The local government policy was formalized in the Local Strategic Plan (*Renstra*) and used as the guide for the next five years of program development. Most of the local leaders in the local government regions covered by this research articulated their policies in the form of ‘vision and mission’ statements, which they expected all stakeholders to follow. It is the responsibility of all local institutions to develop their programs, on an annual basis, in keeping with the vision and mission statements and Local Strategic Plan. In the education

³⁰⁵ Aspinall, Edward. and Fealy, Greg (2003), *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies, p. 4

³⁰⁶ *Kandep* and *Dinas Kabupaten* were the old versions of the local education office. Both were located within the one district or city. The difference between them is that the *Kandep* were established by the provincial authority, whereas the *Dinas Kabupaten* were formed locally, by either district or city executive governments (DVSE History, 2002)

³⁰⁷ Head of EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁰⁸ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

sector, the EODs are required to interpret these and incorporate the mayors or regents' policies into the programs they implement.

In the political context, the local governments' vision and mission statements have been typically used as instruments for local leaders to show their commitment to education, in order to attract community support. For example, the vision statement for Bekasi City proclaimed that: 'Bekasi is a leading city in commerce and services' and the Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi City has declared this to mean that his government is committed to "providing infrastructure to support the commercial sector"³⁰⁹. The vision statement for Bekasi District reads: "Leadership based on religious principles, giving support to agribusiness and industry"³¹⁰. Programs provided by the Mayor of Pangkalpinang City are claimed to be in accordance with the vision statement: "Pangkalpinang is a city dedicated to regional commerce, industry and services, with the power to compete in 2014"³¹¹.

Although it may be claimed that the process of policy formulation has been carried out in a proper and democratic manner, the outcome in reality has been that the process is still being influenced by leaders at the local level. This means that, as a result, political mission statements are becoming incorporated into administrative or management level and it is expected that there will follow synthesis and synergy between political will and institutional or organizational objectives. This is identical to what has been observed to occur at central government level, where the political policies of the president and ministers have been embedded into the strategic mission of the government ministries and agencies. Thus, the trend occurring in the changed local government environment is for local policies and practices to inform programs in much the same manner as occurs in the central government.

4.4.2 Education Programs

It has been found that most local governments have been giving priority to programs for the primary and secondary education sectors. Most have followed national policy, particularly with regard to the 'nine-years of compulsory education' (*WAJAR*). This has also been the tendency, as discussed earlier, in the case of the provincial governments. As well, this concentration on primary and secondary education has generally been supported by the local institutions, such as the DPRD and the BAPPEDA. For example, the Head of the BAPPEDA

³⁰⁹ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi City, interviewed 14 April 2005

³¹⁰ Local Government of Bekasi District (2004), "Strategic Plan of Bekasi District", Bappeda of Bekasi District, p. 2

³¹¹ Local Government of Pangkalpinang City (2004), "Strategic Plan of Pangkalpinang City", Bappeda of Pangkalpinang City, p. 3

Bekasi District argued that, as local government finances are limited, what funds they have need to be used primarily to renovate and rehabilitate the buildings of the primary and secondary schools³¹². In Bekasi City, a member of the DPRD considered that the vocational secondary school buildings were still in relatively good condition compared to those of the primary schools and the concentration on programs to improve the primary schools is justified³¹³. In Bangka District, a member of DPRD claimed that local government policy there echoes the policy of giving priority to compulsory education³¹⁴. This opinion is shared by the Head of the BAPPEDA Bangka District, who reported that his local government was indeed giving priority to the education sector, although with a focus on primary and secondary education in particular at this stage, in line with the national mission statement on the 'WAJAR' program³¹⁵.

Aside from the issue of the local leaders' power and influence, giving priority to the primary and secondary schools when it comes to programs for improvement actually reflects 'popular' wishes. It has long been the concern that conditions in Indonesian primary and secondary schools are regrettable, if not downright dangerous for the children. This issue has received widespread national news coverage. It was reported that, in Tangerang City alone, an estimated 171 schools were in very bad condition³¹⁶. Similar problems were reported in other locations. In 2005, the central government allocated USD 136,842.10 to rehabilitate run-down buildings in the primary and secondary schools³¹⁷. Most local governments seem to be responding to this specific issue. In Bekasi City, a member of the DPRD Education Commission related that 108 primary schools built between 1973 and 1976 have almost collapsed and the Bekasi City local government only has sufficient budget for rebuilding 21 of them³¹⁸. In Bekasi District, the Regent instructed the Head of the EOD that all damaged schools must be repaired by the end of 2005³¹⁹. In Tangerang District, the Head of the BAPPEDA responded to media reports on bad conditions of school building by attempting to give priority to programs for repairing them³²⁰.

³¹² Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

³¹³ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

³¹⁴ Head of the Education Commission on Local Legislation Bangka District focus group, conducted 27 July 2005

³¹⁵ Head of the BAPPEDA Bangka District, interviewed 20 February 2005

³¹⁶ Tri and Nas, (2005), 'Education has Become a Priority', (original title '*Pendidikan Menjadi Prioritas*'), Kompas 26 February, p.10

³¹⁷ Irawan, Ade, (2005), 'Corruption is the cause of the collapse of school buildings', (original title '*Korupsi penyebab robohnya sekolah*'), Kompas, 9 May, p. 41

³¹⁸ A member of the DPRD Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005

³¹⁹ Head of the EOD Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

³²⁰ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

Thus, since the introduction of regional autonomy, local leaders have given priority to programs that reflect ‘national policy’, which also happen to be the approach which ones that satisfy their local constituents and as it is reflected in pressure from the grassroots level. It can also be argued that such priorities also support the ‘nine years of compulsory education’ (‘WAJAR’) policy.

4.4.3 VSE Programs

VSE development has not been the focus of the local governments. The Local Education Offices (EODs) are still struggling to get used to their new role of managing the VSE programs. Unlike the role of the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs), which merely administer the distribution of central government funding and programs, the EODs are supposed to be responsible for not just administering or passively receiving, but actually determining, creating and implementing VSE policies and programs themselves. As used to occur at central or provincial government level, the EODs are supposed to translate local policies, outlined in the ‘Local Strategic Plan’ or ‘*RENSTRA*’, into operational programs. This is a critical issue, as the current EODs are relatively new to VSE and have little management experience in the sector. An earlier observer, Baedowie, found that the local governments are faced with problems that include lack of qualified human resources and conflict of interest throughout the decision-making process³²¹. Following is a description of the various programs and activities the EODs are expected to manage.

4.4.3.1 Operational Programs

Programs for supporting the vocational secondary school (SMK) operations are the responsibility of the Local Education Offices (EOD). On an annual basis, the EOD have to provide the schools with the necessary funding to pay for school operational expenses, including materials and supplies. As explained by the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, the central office used to directly provide the operational budget for all school running costs and teaching activities, including electricity, material for students to do practicum, equipment, tools and maintenance³²². Under Regional Autonomy, as the central office responsibilities have been transferred to the local governments (that is, the Local Education Offices (EOD) in districts and cities), schools now have to discuss their needs with

³²¹ Baedowie in Bella, B (2004), “Human Effort is Compulsory but it is up to God to Decide”, (original title “*Manusia wajib berusaha, tapi Tuhan yang menentukan*”), Available [online], <http://www.pdk.go.id/go.php?a=1&to=f749>, [16 August 2005]

³²² Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

the relevant local institutions newly assigned to manage them. Thus, as the Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision stated, success is very dependent on the expertise and experience of the particular EOD personnel.³²³ This includes, as the Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District³²⁴ pointed out, their ability to “lobby the important local institutions (the BAPPEDA and the DPRD) during the planning stage”³²⁵.

At the time of this research, most of the Local Education Offices (EODs) were not capable of providing all the support schools needed to operate efficiently. In one of the research locations, Tangerang City, the Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City complained that the EOD only provided his school with approximately 10 percent of its total operational needs.³²⁶ The Principal of SMK1 in Tangerang District similarly complained that “local support is very limited: it provides only 10-15 percent of our total needs...and lobbying and discussing our needs with the EOD is difficult as EOD are short-staffed and always very busy”³²⁷. He criticized that the EOD staff were generally not familiar with the vocational education sector and its operational costs to run. Last year, for example, he reported, the EOD provided an operational budget similar to that for an ordinary school whereas, in fact, just the electricity bill alone of a vocational school is almost triple that of any other type of school, let alone the budget required for practicum, equipment and other expenses associated with student activities³²⁸. Thus the SMKs have been experiencing budgeting problems, as budget allocations are insufficient and the new management of the EOD is not familiar with the needs of the SMKs.

4.4.3.2 Administrative Programs

Another program the EOD are now responsible for is to assist the schools in the administrative process of obtaining further funding, in the form of block grants for programs, from the central office (DVSE). As explained earlier, the conditions attached to block grant eligibility involve the EODs. The document outlining what block grants are available and for what type of programs (for examples, see Appendix I - List of Block grants 2004 and Appendix II - List of Block grants 2005), states that most require EOD endorsement - generally in the form of a official ‘letter of agreement’. In certain circumstances, the EODs may also have to provide schools with material support, in the form of procurement of

³²³ Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

³²⁴ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

³²⁵ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

³²⁶ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

³²⁷ Principal SMK1 Tangerang district, interviewed 4 March 2005

³²⁸ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

equipment to support a school in its application for a block grant³²⁹, as occurred in the Bekasi District example³³⁰. In addition, the EODs also have to assist schools with the complicated administrative procedures for obtaining the necessary endorsement from the regent or mayor.

It can be asserted that, in as much as carrying out this particular administrative role, the EODs have been successful in helping schools, based on the fact that most of the schools involved in this research have managed to obtain block grants of various types.

At local government level, policy and program formulation has been influenced by the local leaders. Their political mission statements have been institutionalized within their organizations, in order to direct educational development. This is similar to what occurred at central and provincial government level. The bottom-up style of policy formulation has been employed to accommodate community grassroots aspirations. Thus, it can be asserted that 'democracy' in practice is reflected in the way community representatives have been included in the decision-making process. However, it has been found that local leaders are exerting a dominant influence. The focus on primary and secondary education has resulted in 'populist' programs which, undoubtedly, reflect conditions in the regions, especially with regard to resource limitations. This focus is also consistent with the fact that this level of education has also been the priority of the Indonesian government's policy at national level.

It has been found that the EODs examined in this study are not yet capable of managing the vocational education sector by themselves. This is due to lack of knowledge and experience of EOD personnel and their limited ability to effectively cooperate with other local institutions, such as the DPRD and the BAPPEDA³³¹. Under regional autonomy, these institutions are important in shaping programs and support the EODs are able to provide to the schools. Overall, the EODs have failed to provide schools with sufficient operational budget. On a positive note, they have been found to be helpful in assisting schools in an administrative capacity, with the application process for central government's block grant funding for programs.

³²⁹ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi District

³³⁰ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi District

³³¹ BAPPEDA is the Local Planning Board located in district or cities assigned to coordinate the local government's planning including that of the Local Education Office (EOD). While DPRD is the local people's representative assembly, located in districts or cities, which has the authority to approve and amend the local government budget (UU 22, 1999 and Rasyid, 2003, p.67).

4.5 Policies and Programs in the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMKs)

Since their establishment, until regional autonomy, the SMKs were dependent on the central government – in particular, the Central Education Office (DVSE) – for programs development, managerial support and funding³³². In 1900, management of vocational education was transferred from the Dutch government to the Indies government in Batavia (Jakarta)³³³. Since then, especially after 1950, the vocational education sector expanded. However, the quality was decreasing as the Indonesian government was unable to continue providing sufficient resources as the same level as the Dutch government. As an example, teachers were required to have special qualifications, not only in teaching, but also at least five years relevant industry experience³³⁴. Early in the New Order (1966), the policy was changed and the provincial governments became eligible to establish new vocational schools³³⁵. However, in many cases schools were set up which lacked qualified teachers and proper facilities, which saw a corresponding drop in the quality of graduates³³⁶. This was the starting point for the central government to re-centralize the system and the Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) was given the responsibility to develop the VSE sector, including management, curriculum, staffing, facilities and infrastructure. Until the New Order ended in 1998, the vocational schools were managed by the DVSE.

The pattern of VSE policies and programs emerging in the VSE schools (SMK) examined in this research appear to be influenced by the changed role and functions of the upper level government institutions. Significant movement has been found to be taking place in school management arrangements. School policy formulation is based on modern management principles³³⁷ of transparency, accountability and ‘democratic’ decision-making. In addition, school activities seem to be increasing. Besides their ‘routine’ activities, schools conduct

³³² Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, (original title *Sejarah Pendidikan Kejuruan di Indonesia*), Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education

³³³ Supriadi, Dedy (2002), p.9

³³⁴ Siregar, K.S, (2002), “Education in Indonesia from the Japan Era to pre-Pelita”, (original title “*Pendidikan di Indonesia dari zaman Jepang hingga sebelum Pelita*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, p. 77

³³⁵ Jokosumbogo, Bagiono et al (2002), “The Development of Vocational Secondary Education during PELITA V”, (original title “*Perkembangan Pendidikan menengah Kejuruan selama PELITA V*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp.175-272

³³⁶ Jokosumbogo, Bagiono et al (2002)

³³⁷ Hayid, Mohammad Nur, (2007), “The Maftuh’s friend in the team: the catering investigation was not effective”, (original title “*Sohib Maftuh masuk tim, usut catering haji tidak efektif*”), Detikcom, [availableonline], <http://www.detiknews.com/index.php/detik.read/tahun/2007/bulan/01/tgl/05/time/120745/id...5/01/2007>, [5^h January 2007]

‘developmental’ programs. This was never their role previously. As discussed earlier in sections 4.4.2 and 4.4.3, VSE development was not the priority of the EODs. However, the availability of program funding in the form of block grants from the central government has stimulated schools to improve their management capacity in order to increase their chances of obtaining and completing such programs. School level issues raised during the introduction of regional autonomy in Indonesia are discussed below.

4.5.1 School Policy Formulation

In this transition stage of regional autonomy, schools have started to respond to the changing environment. Their capacity to formulate programs has been improving especially in the managerial aspect. The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang city stated: “our programs are responding to grassroots level demands and are not the decision of the principal...and the school’s success is not dependent on just the principal, but is a result of team work”³³⁸. Another principal asserted that: “we have to be open with the community, so that they will put their trust in us; our transparency or open management should be outstanding”³³⁹. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District believes that, in his school, management has been transparent and shared among the vice principals. He stated: “the key is human resources and on solving problems together, once the program committees have been established”³⁴⁰.

School programs, whether ‘routine’ or ‘developmental’, have been distributed to the teaching staff responsible for managing them. A senior teacher of SMK1 Bekasi City mentioned that he is still struggling to fulfil all his responsibilities as manager of a Mobile Training Unit (MTU) program, one of the most prestigious programs funded by a block grant from the central government³⁴¹. It would appear that the powers of authority are no longer the sole preserve of the principals and that school policies and programs are being decided and implemented jointly by members of staff.

The role of the school committee³⁴² is also influencing management. Having a committee is one of the principles of ‘school-based management’ (MBS), which is defined in much of the literature as being about ‘school autonomy’, established to fundamentally improve school management. It means that instead of domination by the principal, as in the past, the principal

³³⁸ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

³³⁹ Principal SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005

³⁴⁰ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 7 May 2005

³⁴¹ Senior teacher SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005

³⁴² School Committees have been designed to reflect community aspirations and ensure that policies and programs fit with local needs (Ditjen. Dikdasmen, 2003).

works in partnership with the committee to manage the school. The committee is a separate structure from the school and consists of volunteers, who represent the school community. Both principals and teachers tend to be supportive of this new style of school management. One senior teacher in SMK2 Pangkalpinang City claims that, although there are difficulties selecting members, the committee has been useful in “working jointly with the principal to accommodate community aspirations in school programs”³⁴³. A senior teacher from SMK1 Pangkalpinang City sees it as a positive that: “now, the principal is accountable and all programs have to be approved by the school committee, as the representative of the community, before implementation”³⁴⁴. In addition, the central government’s block grants’ strategy has also encouraged the establishment of school committees as the existence of committees is a pre-condition in grant applications³⁴⁵.

In summary, school management arrangements are improving. Schools have more independence in determining policy direction and policy is formulated more democratically, by involving the school community. The existence of ‘school committees’ distinguishes new management arrangements from the old. ‘Power of authority’ is no longer centred on the school principal but shared. This is illustrative of the shift of political and economic power to the local level as discussed earlier with reference to Aspinall and Fealy (2003).

4.5.2 Routine Programs

Unlike ordinary secondary schools, ‘routine’ programs for vocational schools are not just the main tasks of teaching, curriculum management, staffing and student administration, but also the additional activities of building and maintaining relationships with industry and running the production units³⁴⁶ as explained below. Teaching processes, as the main SMK activity, is in the transition stage of the implementation of new (2004) curriculum. As per the nature and purpose of vocational schooling, industry partnerships have also been routine, so that students can complete practical workplace training. In order to be partly income generating, schools have been developing their ‘school production units’, by optimizing existing school resources.

³⁴³ Senior Teacher SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23rd June 2005

³⁴⁴ Senior Teacher SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18th July 2005

³⁴⁵ Dikmenjur (2004), *Program Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs 2004*, (original title *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004*), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur

³⁴⁶ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District

4.5.2.1 Teaching Programs

As vocational schools, teaching activities can only be carried out with sufficient materials, tools and electricity supply. In the past, all these components were managed by the central office but are now the responsibility of the Local Education Offices (EOD). Schools are experiencing problems carrying out their principle function - teaching - as their EOD budget allocation is insufficient. The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City reported that: “by our calculations, the budget provided by local government only covers ten percent of our operating costs”³⁴⁷. The Principal of SMK4 Tangerang City agrees: “autonomy is indeed affecting schools’ operating ability, especially the shortage of funds allocated. However, fortunately, the Mayor’s guiding principle is to allow schools to obtain funding from the community, so that the implementation of the programs can go ahead”³⁴⁸. Most of the schools in this study have sought approval of their school committee (see 4.5.1 School Policy Formulation above) to ask for and collect student contributions, in order to get enough funds to operate. However, as schools are aware, this strategy results in vocational schools being expensive for students and their families and, thus, runs counter to the mission of most local governments to make vocational schooling ‘high-quality’ but also ‘cheap’. As the Head of the Education Commission of the Peoples’ Local Representative Assembly (DPRD), Bekasi City expressed it: “part of education policy is to change the image of vocational education as being expensive and poor-quality”³⁴⁹.

With regards to teaching, most schools are getting used to the new, ‘competency-based curriculum’ of 2004. The ‘competency-based curriculum’ focuses on improving the practical component and introduces specialization in the first rather than the second or third grade. In SMK4 Tangerang city, the principal established a workshop for teachers to improve their knowledge of the new curriculum³⁵⁰ and another one for non-teaching staff to help them improve administration processes. These workshops were conducted in a location far away from the school. Other schools, such as SMK2 Bekasi District, SMK1 Bekasi City and SMK1 Pangkalpinang City have, for efficiency reasons, run train the trainer (TOT) sessions internally to introduce the new curriculum. The Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District mentioned that the revised curriculum is now a clichéd issue, but that his school has still not been able to implement it in full, due to difficulty obtaining relevant support³⁵¹. It seems that schools are facing some difficulty encouraging teachers to move away from the old

³⁴⁷ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

³⁴⁸ Principal SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 May 2005

³⁴⁹ Head of the Education Commission of the local parliament, Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005

³⁵⁰ Principal SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 May 2005

³⁵¹ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

curriculum and focus on improving specific competencies of their students. As one senior teacher, from SMK2 Bekasi District expressed it:

“...it’s too complicated to manage; the modules are difficult to establish; students prefer just using worksheets - the old system”³⁵².

Thus the SMKs are still struggling with the introduction of the new curriculum and associated new activities.

4.5.2.2 Industry Partnerships

Industry partnerships have been managed by schools ‘independently’ for a long time and appear to not be influenced by the changed administrative arrangements. Most of the schools of this study were involved in relationships with surrounding companies as their partners in implementing the ‘dual system’ or ‘PSG’³⁵³. Some schools, particularly in industrial areas, such as in Tangerang and Bekasi, have as their mission not just to send their students out to industry for the training component of their courses, but also to encourage those local industries to commit to employing the students when they graduate. A senior teacher from SMK2 Bekasi District advised: “the world of industry has trusted the schools, even during examination time; companies have even come to school to pick up the students...”³⁵⁴. The principal of SMK4 Tangerang stated: “...up until now, SMK graduates have been able to get jobs related to their skills in local companies; many companies even approach the school, before the students have sat their final tests ...”³⁵⁵. In non-industrial areas, such as Pangkalpinang City and Bangka District outside of Java, as in the past, the schools arrange training placements for their students. Most schools appear confident and successful with performing these ‘routine’ activities. In addition, as none of them mentioned the influence of the changed bureaucracy at central, provincial or local levels, this indicates they have been able to continue on with their industry training programs, without interference from the education bureaucracy.

³⁵² Teachers SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 16 May 2005

³⁵³ ‘Dual system’ or *PSG (program sistem ganda)* is the part of the vocational curriculum which involves sending the student to industry for practical, on-the-job training, similar to the ‘apprenticeship’ program in Australia.

³⁵⁴ Senior teachers, SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 16 May 2005

³⁵⁵ Principal SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

4.5.2.3 School Production Units

The SMKs have long been running their own ‘production units’, a program aimed at helping them raise funds for materials for the students’ practical training. Teachers are allowed to use the school’s equipment to produce any kind of goods or services to sell³⁵⁶. At the same time, as the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District suggested, the units also help to improve the students’ competency. Students gain skill development in technical areas of study, the students are involved in producing doors, windows, fences, table, and chairs as ordered by the market. While in non technical areas such as tourism and business schools, they make cakes, provide catering, manage a mini market or hotel for the school according to the skills and competencies being studied. Since the implementation of regional autonomy support from the central government for school operations such as paying the electricity bill and workshop materials have been terminated and the new local governments have not yet provided such supports. The limited income from the sale of student-produced items is used not only for supporting school operational needs, but also the teachers’ income³⁵⁷.

However, these ‘production units’ are not improving. Initially, the progress made by the production units was quite good; but now there are so many competitors in the marketplace. “We are defeated by Chinese products; We don’t know whether it’s just that our marketing is bad; The reality is that we are failing out there in the market”³⁵⁸, advised the Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City. The Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District claims that: “in fact, the schools are capable of producing various machinery components, however the quality might not been acknowledged by industry or the user...and will require government policy to encourage industry to place their trust in the schools”³⁵⁹. Lack of success may just be due to the impact of the global market. However, in this specific case, this school has considered what influence local government could have over local industry under the Regional Autonomy Law.

Thus, the ‘routine programs’ have not changed. Except for administration, the schools have continued to implement independently the teaching programs, industrial relationships and the production unit programs by optimizing the schools’ existing resources.

³⁵⁶ Pakpahan, Jorlin (2002), “The Development of Vocational Secondary Education in PELITA VI”, (original title “*Perkembangan Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan Pada Pelita VI*”), in Supriadi, Dedy (2002), (eds) *History of vocational secondary education in Indonesia: developing productive manpower*, Jakarta, Indonesia Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education, pp. 255

³⁵⁷ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

³⁵⁸ Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005

³⁵⁹ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

4.5.3 Developmental Programs

As discussed previously, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the Central Education Office (DVSE) and the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs) have delivered support to the schools in the form of block grants. The grants have been packaged into various programs, for school advancement or development. Schools compete with each other to obtain this funding for 'ad hoc' programs. Schools believe it is important for them to do so as it is a means of developing to the next stage. "I feel that these central office programs do match our needs"³⁶⁰, mentioned one senior teacher, from SMK1 Bangka District. As the schools are allowed to and expected to manage the programs by themselves, most of the school interviewees stated that they are implementing the programs for which they have received central office funding. For example, in SMK1 Bekasi District, the administrative staff and teachers are involved with the Mobile Training Unit (MTU) program, SMK1 Pangkalpinang City with the Information Technology (IT) program, SMK2 Pangkalpinang City with the National School Standards Program and SMK1 Bangka District with the Computer Laboratory program.

From a regional autonomy aspect, the block grant scheme may be seen as the catalyst for relationship-building between schools and institutions at central, provincial and local level. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, a condition of applying for the block grants for developmental programs is approval of local government. To obtain any block grant, schools have to fulfill one or more of the DVSE requirements. In order to get agreement, schools are obliged to initiate discussion with the relevant education offices at each level of government. As a result, for the first time there is intensive interaction between schools and these education offices. Thus, the central office's developmental programs not only meet the schools' needs to develop, but also promote relationship-building between the schools and local government institutions, which may be an unintended positive outcome of regional autonomy.

In conclusion, the schools (SMKs) have been independently developing policy and running programs on their own. School policy is formulated and implemented more democratically, involving school staff as well as school committees and not just the principal. Schools now manage both their 'routine' programs, as well as 'developmental' programs. Although their 'routine programs' remain much the same, the schools' ability to operate is affected by the ability or otherwise of local governments to provide financial support. However, the various types of support available to schools, such as block grants from the DVSE and EOP,

³⁶⁰ Senior teacher SMK1 Bangka district, interviewed in 4th July 2005

‘operational’ support from the EODs and ‘support’ programs from other local institutions, such as building additional classrooms, mean that schools are strongly dependent on other institutions and underlines the importance of successful implementation of school-based-management (MBS).

4.6 Chapter Summary

In this transition stage, VSE policies and programs have been influenced by the radical changes taking place due to the impact of regional autonomy. The DVSE has sought to improve the ‘access, quality and relevancy of management’, in line with the overall national education mission of improving ‘access’ and ‘quality’. The ‘Skill Toward 2020’ and ‘re-adjustment’ strategies have enabled the DVSE to make their national mission relevant to the regions. Although, the DVSE still, indirectly, controls the schools through the block grant programs, these grants have been welcomed by most schools and encouraged the schools to initiate their own activities and relationship-building with local stakeholders³⁶¹.

At provincial level, the policies and programs of the EOPs have been influenced by the policy agenda of the governor, as the most powerful figure in provincial government. Most provincial governments have supported the national policy of 9 years compulsory education, ‘WAJAR’³⁶² and none of the provincial governments have given priority to the vocational secondary schools (SMK).

Similarly, local governments have not prioritized the SMK. The EODs’ lack of knowledge and experience has resulted in insufficient funding of the schools’ operational needs. However, the EODs have proved helpful, in assisting schools in applying for block grants from the central office.

At school level, schools have become more autonomous in creating their own policies and running their own programs. Management of the schools in this research has improved significantly and is now more modern and democratic. Responsibilities are shared among the school staff and the ‘school committees’, which has improved accountability. However, from the financial perspective, the schools rely on the education offices at the central, provincial

³⁶¹ DVSE is the Central Education Office assigned to develop Vocational Secondary Education, through providing national policy, developmental concepts and standardization for the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK) to implement (10103, January, 2005)

³⁶² ‘WAJAR’ stands for *wajib belajar* or nine years compulsory education program: six years basic and three years primary. (33333, July, 2005)

and local levels of government for developmental and operational budgets. Overall, this demonstrates that the management of schools is still being driven by the external powers of authority. This is significantly different from Gabor (1995) and Slamet's (2000) expectations in regard to the concept of full school autonomy where both stated that school programs, policies, internal rules, activities, organizational structure and staff recruitment should be determined by the school it self. The DVSE should only act as the facilitator to support local government needs and not determine the programs for schools. Programs should be created by the local authorities, with the DVSE restricted to giving guidelines to direct development focus.

CHAPTER 5

THE VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AND REGIONAL EDUCATION OFFICES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter argues that regional autonomy has significantly influenced the relationship between the central and regional education offices in achieving the Indonesian Government's objectives for the VSE sector as has happened in most other countries which have introduced this mode of operation as asserted by Ghai (2000), Conversi (2000), Coughlan (2000), Daniele (2000), Watt (2000), Ramage (2002), Sukma (2003), Fanany (2003), Bella (2004) and Bjork (2004 and 2006). Before regional autonomy, the Central Office for Vocational Secondary Education (DVSE) controlled the Provincial Education Offices (*Kanwil*). The Local Education Offices (*Dinas Kabupaten/Kota*) were never involved. Thus, for decades, the relationship was hierarchical, policy and programs were initiated by the DVSE in Jakarta. The *Kanwil* and the VSE schools (SMKs) were involved, but not the *Dinas Kabupaten/Kota*³⁶³. This hierarchical relationship was 'centralised' and 'undemocratic' in nature.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy in 2001, the roles and functions of the central government in the education sector have changed. Under the autonomy laws, there is no hierarchical link between the DVSE in Jakarta and the regional offices in the provinces, districts and cities, or even with the schools. In the regions, both the provincial and local governments became 'autonomous'. With regards to education, the government has restructured the education offices to match with their new responsibilities. "The dual structure is replaced by one in which *Kandep* and *Dinas*³⁶⁴ were amalgamated under one integrated structure of regional executive government"³⁶⁵. The 'centralised' basis of coordination has developed into one more 'democratic' in nature, in which the central (DVSE), provincial (EOP) and local education offices (EOD), and even the schools (SMKs), have the same opportunities to build relationships to achieve their policy objectives. In some circumstances, the new bureaucratic relationships have encountered many difficulties and problems. In many

³⁶³ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005 and Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP) West Java province, interviewed 12 July 2005

³⁶⁴ *Kandep* and *Dinas* were the old versions of the Local Education Offices and both were located in one district or city. The difference was that the *Kandep* were established through the provincial authority, while the *Dinas* were formed locally, either by district or city government (DVSE History, 2002)

³⁶⁵ Turner, Mark and Podger, Owen (2003) (eds), *Decentralization in Indonesia: redesigning the state*, Canberra, Asia Pacific Press, p.25

cases, emotional or individual factors have played an important role in shaping relationships between individuals in different offices. This, in turn, affected outcomes for VSE development.

5.2 Central and Provincial Education Offices

This research found that the relationship between the Central Education Office (DVSE) and the Provincial Education Offices (EOP) was not hierarchic, as was the case prior to regional autonomy. The quality of the relationship is determined by the administrative history of province. The provinces involved in this research included the old and the new and it was expected that different types of relationships would be illustrated for each, especially with regard to 'vertical' relationships, between the central and regional education offices. In old provinces, such as West Java Province, the staff of the Provincial Education Office (EOD), especially the official in charge of administrating VSE, had worked in the former Provincial Education Office (*Kanwil*). They had experience of working cooperatively with the DVSE, before regional autonomy. In Banten Province and Bangka-Belitung Province, as new provinces, the staffs are relatively inexperienced. In the following discussions, this thesis demonstrates that the experience and the knowledge of EOP personnel in working with the DVSE influenced the degree of cooperation achieved. Other contributing factors are the decreasing authority of the DVSE in the management of the VSE sector, the commencement of new financial arrangements and the changing status of the provinces as autonomous governments. As noted by Ramage (2002) the vertical relationship between central and local governments is improving.

5.2.1 DVSE and the EOPs in Old Provinces

The relationship between the DVSE and the EOPs of old provinces, like West Java appear well-maintained and, as in the past, based on mutual understanding. The staff of the DVSE, especially the director and some of his assistants feel that the experience of the Head of the EOP of West Java Province in collaborating with the central office, prior to regional autonomy, has served to build a commitment for continued support for VSE development. As discussed previously, the organizational structure of the EOP is new and formed out of the old education offices (*Kanwil* and *Dinas*), as the Head of the EOP related, the office staff, including himself, were familiar with the VSE, as they had worked in the *Kanwil*³⁶⁶. The Director of the DVSE agrees:

³⁶⁶ Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

“...the head of the West Java Province EOP has experience in running VSE programs. He has worked with us in the past, and therefore I have every confidence in him”³⁶⁷.

This opinion is supported by one of his assistants, who is responsible for establishing the accreditation of schools. Although coordination meetings with the regions, which act as part of the formal forum for relationship-building are less frequent now, by knowing the staff of the West Java Province EOP, he is confident that the relationship can be well maintained. This optimism derived from their experience of prior collaboration and the regard for the ability of the EOP staff, especially the head.

According to the Director of the DVSE, the Head of the EOP West Java Province communicates smoothly the DVSE and also delivers VSE programs to districts and cities³⁶⁸. The current role of the DVSE is limited to establishing national policies, standards and certifications, while the provincial offices are limited to formulating policy regionally, especially for regulating new student enrolments. However in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the DVSE has also been offering block grants to the schools. The EOP West Java Province, under the DVSE director’s leadership, is assisting with delivery of some of the programs³⁶⁹. Interviewees from Bekasi District, one of the districts of West Java province in this research, the head of the EOD confirms that the head of EOP is cooperative, especially in facilitating cooperation with surrounding industry³⁷⁰. At the school level, the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District believes the commitment of the head of the EOP with regard to VSE remains the same as before regional autonomy. He discusses VSE issues with the schools directly, bypassing the local government bureaucracy³⁷¹. It appears that their relationship has not been influenced by their changing role and functions and that the VSE programs are running cooperatively as in the past.

The head of the EOP West Java Province is confident that the relationship with officials in the DVSE is no different before and after the introduction of regional autonomy. He enthuses:

³⁶⁷ Director of the DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

³⁶⁸ Director of the DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

³⁶⁹ Dikmenjur (2004), Program Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education 2004, (original title *Garis besar program Pendidikan Menengah Kejuruan 2004*), Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur

³⁷⁰ Head of the EOD Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

³⁷¹ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

“...I am indeed from West Java yet, for me, the provincial government office is not my ‘home’. I feel as much ‘at home’ in the central office (DVSE)”³⁷².

This illustrates that the Head of the EOP West Java is facing a new and different working environment in the provincial government administration, than the one to which he is accustomed. He identifies with the DVSE environment, which he believed really matched with his profession. The provincial government is very bureaucratic.

Thus, this demonstrates that bureaucratic relationships also function at a personal level, built up from working together with Central Education Office colleagues, and have made him feel very close to and familiar with the DVSE environment. To conclude, the history they share is contributing positively to the relationship between the DVSE and the Provincial Education Office (EOP) of West Java and serves to enhance VSE program implementation.

5.2.2 DVSE and the EOPs in New Provinces

The relationship between the DVSE and the EOPs in the new provinces is still at an early stage of development. Unlike the EOP in West Java, restructured from the old education offices (*Kanwil* and *Dinas*), the EOP in the new provinces are new institutions, established by the new provincial governments. The EOP staff, including the head, have little or no experience in liaising with the DVSE in the management of vocational secondary education. The Head of the EOP Bangka Belitung Province at least had experience working in the education field at district level, but not in VSE³⁷³. However, the Head of the EOP Banten Province has no experience at all in administering education either locally or provincially. This study has found that these different backgrounds have influenced relationship building with the DVSE and it is suggested that the performance of the head of the EOP is a significant factor in developing such relationships.

5.2.2.1 DVSE and the EOP Bangka Belitung Province

Developing a cooperative vertical relationship between the DVSE and the EOP Bangka Belitung Province is part of the new agenda, however internal problems within the EOP have hampered progress to date. Historically, this new province was established due to dissatisfaction with the way South Sumatra Province conducted its administration. There had

³⁷² Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP) West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

³⁷³ Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP) Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

been attempts to form a new province in 1956 and again in 1970³⁷⁴, but the central government did not accept the proposals. Finally, in 2000, in keeping with the spirit of regional autonomy, Bangka Belitung became a new province reflecting the characteristics and behaviour of the local community. The Head of the EOP Bangka Belitung Province, who was interviewed for this study, is a recent appointment. Although he has experience in education, communication with the DVSE is relatively new to him.

The relationship between the EOP and the DVSE is conducted purely at an 'institutional' level. As the newcomer, the Head of the EOP Bangka Belitung Province has no experience working with the DVSE and thus there is an absence of any informal and personal relationships, based on shared beliefs and trust, as with the EOP West Java Province. In addition, geographically, this province is located in another island to that of Java and so personal interaction through work visits is difficult. The only stimulus to encourage any sort of relationship is the management of 'block grants', as the EOPs are responsible for delivering some of the programs provided by DVSE.

It is obvious that the intentions of both sides is similarly reasonable, the director of the central office (DVSE) is looking for the success of the central office programs while the EOP is focused on achieving the objectives of the provincial program. Thus, at the time of this study, these issues are still hampering the relationship between the DVSE and the EOP Bangka Belitung Province. However, it is expected this will improve as the EOP personnel grow in knowledge and experience. The EOP of Bangka Belitung Province is seemingly still focusing on internal consolidation and optimizing the capacity of the province to advance education development. For the DVSE, as mentioned by the Director, besides the influence of a recently appointed EOP head, the failure with regard to block grant implementation interfered with relationship-building: "When the EOP head was in power, most of the programs for developing VSE didn't get properly implemented"³⁷⁵. One of the block grants was financially mismanaged and ended up being a financial loss for the government, even though it did not actually affect the students themselves or the programs given to the schools.

³⁷⁴ Ihza, Yusron (2000), "The Proposal for the Establishment of the Bangka Belitung Province: For the Sake of Improvement and Prosperity", (original title "*Usulan Pembentukan Propinsi Bangka-Belitung, Demi Kemajuan dan Kesejahteraan*"), *Kompas*, [online], <http://kompas.com/kompas - cetak/0003/06/daerah/demi24.htm>, [5 February 2007]

³⁷⁵ Director of the DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

5.2.2.2 DVSE and the EOP Banten Province

The relationship between the DVSE and the EOP of Banten Province is, likewise, still in the early stages of development. The head of this EOP, as the person with the greatest responsibility for the education sector in Banten Province, is new to the position. However, the particular mindset he has demonstrated in dealing with his new challenges in running VSE, echoing the DVSE's policies, has been helpful with regards to establishing a good working relationship with DVSE personnel. He claims that they do liaise with the DVSE, however, being new to his role, recognises it is difficult to coordinate educational development³⁷⁶. In his opinion, under regional autonomy, the central government's programs for regions are not a match for the human resources problems they are experiencing. He suggests that, in order to ensure the commitment of local government and the sustainability of the programs in districts and cities, that an 'umbrella law' is needed. This could be in the form of the 'free fee school card', as implemented in West Java Province, with the official support of the governor, mayors and regents. The success of the working relationship between the DVSE and the EOP Banten Province can be measured by looking at the number of programs that have so far been implemented, such as improvements to vocational secondary infrastructure and teaching quality. As the Head of the EOP Banten Province noted: "Policy originates from the DVSE, but we develop it in accordance with our local needs"³⁷⁷. Thus, unlike in Bangka Belitung Province, the relationship the EOP Banten Province has with the DVSE appears more sustainable.

Regional autonomy has undoubtedly influenced the vertical relationship between the DVSE and the EOPs in the provinces in both in the new and the old provinces. In this transition stage of regional autonomy, the quality of these relationships is influenced by the 'administrative history' of the particular EOP concerned. Prior experience of working together has allowed relationships at a personal level to develop, which has been of assistance under the new system, in aiding successful cooperation. The relationship between the DVSE and the EOP in the 'old' province of West Java Province is similar to the way it was before regional autonomy and is both institutional as well as personal in nature. The personal contact, shared beliefs, sense of trust and past experiences have an influence on the quality of working relationships. The relationship between the 'new provinces' of Banten and Bangka Belitung is more formal and institutional in nature and has only developed with the need to jointly administer the block grants. The nature of the leadership of the different EOPs and their

³⁷⁶ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

³⁷⁷ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

particular internal bureaucracy appear to strongly influence the nature of the relationship between province and central government. Geographical factors, ie location of the provinces, whether close or far from Jakarta, is another possible factor, although one that is difficult to measure and which needs further study to investigate.

5.3 Perceptions of Central and Local Relationship

The relationship between the DVSE and the EODs in both the old and the new provinces is still in an early stage. The development of these relationships is one of the objectives of the regional autonomy policy. Regional autonomy in Indonesia has been focused on local governments, in districts and cities, and not on the second level of governments, in the provinces. Local governments have become more autonomous and empowered. The new Local Education Offices (EODs) have been restructured from the earlier local education offices (*Kandep* and *Dinas*). The management of the EODs in both the old and the new provinces comes under the administrative control of local government. Some of the EOD heads are recently appointed and not familiar with VSE and not accustomed to working with the DVSE. This section will investigate the nature of the relationship between the DVSE and the EODs and will analyse the perceptions of both the DVSE and EOD personnel.

5.3.1 The Perspectives of DVSE officials

It was found that most DVSE interviewees considered that the heads of local governments were not interested in developing VSE. The Head of the DVSE Programs Subdivision, the official responsible for coordinating programs for vocational schools, argues: "...local government doesn't care..."³⁷⁸. He indicates that most Local Education Offices (EODs) were established without a specific division to manage VSE. The Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision claimed that the EOD heads have been selected among local people with no understanding of the vocational secondary sector³⁷⁹. In his opinion, this contributed to their lack of willingness to build a strong relationship with the DVSE. He thought that current VSE programs are only what they want, did not relate to local needs and were not based on in-depth needs' analysis. The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision has a different opinion: "Now that we're under the MBS (school-based management) system, why do we still have central office programs?"³⁸⁰. He asserts that the proper role and function of the DVSE should be just to establish national policy and guidelines and to give counselling and

³⁷⁸ Head of DVSE Planning Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

³⁷⁹ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

³⁸⁰ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

advice, whereas the actual running of VSE programs should be the responsibility of the provinces. The block grants' system has become schools' main source of resources, which is an indication of how much the central government still remains in control of the schools. The DVSE, he claims, have not properly carried out what he sees to be its role and there has been no guidance for either side on how to build an effective working relationship when it comes to VSE development programs.

It has also been asserted that local governments are not yet totally supportive of the central government VSE development initiatives. The Head of the DVSE Planning Subdivision argued: "The mayors and regents are not at all concerned with education. Even though a huge budget has been allocated to local governments for education, via the 'deconcentration' scheme, they're failing to use it"³⁸¹. This might be due in part to some local governments being incapable of coming up with their share of funding, as required. This is what they must commit to, in order to apply for the central government's block grants. In SMK1 Bekasi District, the principal advised that their local government did not provide its share of the budget for implementing the DVSE's mobile training unit (MTU) program³⁸². The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision agrees: "EOD organisations vary in structure. In fact, some of them have created a special division devoted to vocational secondary education, however, usually, its members do not have an education background"³⁸³. The Head of the DVSE Curriculum Subdivision also supports this view: "The new managers in local government have no idea about vocational secondary schools (SMK) and familiarization programs undertaken by the DVSE are too limited"³⁸⁴. The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision related a similar experience: "Liaison with the districts and cities, which has been planned to occur two to three times a year, is not accompanied by real guidance. There is no real follow-up or documentation; just talking, saying what we think..."³⁸⁵.

These views illustrate the difficulties the DVSE has had since the introduction of regional autonomy in trying to approach the local governments, who are the new stakeholders in running VSE. They also reflect the fact that DVSE officials have little idea about actual conditions of the new bureaucratic environment of local governments. They may be aware of the weaknesses of EOD staff, however, it has been generally difficult for those in the DVSE to make informal approaches to them, as used to happen with the provincial education office (EOP) in the old province, the Province of West Java. Before regional autonomy, the DVSE

³⁸¹ Head of DVSE Planning Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

³⁸² Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

³⁸³ Head of Accreditation Sub-Division of DVSE, interviewed 14 January 2005

³⁸⁴ Head section of DVSE Curriculum Subdivision, interviewed 18 January 2005

³⁸⁵ Head of DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

never had to involve the EODs in running VSE. The block grants application process appears to serve as a useful stimulus to developing working relationships. However, the DVSE now has no power to control the implementation directly, so they are not aware of its implications, especially on local government budgeting, planning and administrative affairs which could be barriers to effective EOD/DVSE cooperation.

5.3.2 Local Perspectives

At district and city level, the understandings about cooperation with the DVSE were found to be quite different. Under regional autonomy, there is no longer a hierarchical management structure between the central and local education offices and all have new functions and responsibilities. In the central government, the Central Education Office (DVSE) has been given full mandate to develop vocational secondary education nationally. The Local Education Offices (EODs) are local government institutions and focused on local policy priorities. Their role is limited to the local and their activities are managed through the local government bureaucracy. Most EODs are still struggling to get used to local government bureaucracy, including accommodating hierarchical relationships with upper-level management and horizontally, with other local institutions. The working relationship between the DVSE and the EODS is typically initiated by the DVSE. The degree of effectiveness of these relationships have been found to be influenced by the amount of experience particular EOD heads happen to have, both in the education sector and in prior dealings with the central government.

The arguments advanced by DVSE officials have been countered by many local officials. For example, the Head of the EOD Tangerang City asserted: “The approach of the DVSE to local governments has not been comprehensive and therefore we have not been properly prepared for the handover in tasks and responsibilities”³⁸⁶. He criticizes the DVSE for poor strategy in communicating with local governments: “It would be good if they introduced and explained their programs properly, so that the local government officials could understand and appreciate them”³⁸⁷. Another official, from the EOD Tangerang District, referred to the difficulties in understanding the DVSE’s initiatives: “Now with autonomy, we’re still busy trying to standardize procedures. For me, the DVSE programs are not easy to understand”³⁸⁸.

³⁸⁶ Head of EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁸⁷ Head of EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁸⁸ Head of EOD Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

The way the programs have been explained, either in large group settings or small group meetings, have been criticised as being one-way communication only and not sufficiently interactive. It is also claimed that the suggestions of local officials do not get followed up by the DVSE. In fact, some DVSE officials are aware of this issue, particularly Heads of the Curriculum and Accreditation Subdivisions. Thus, both sides can see the barriers to establishing more effective cooperation, however, they seem to have no specific strategies for solving it.

Some EODs are confident that the objective of improving working relations with the DVSE is at least on the agenda. The Head of the EOD Pangkalpinang City thought that their relationship with the DVSE is just fine³⁸⁹. The Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City reports that he always initiates discussion of any education issue with the DVSE, rather than with the Provincial Education Office (EOP). This indicates that a relationship with the DVSE is developing positively. Similarly, the Head of the EOD Tangerang City, in his second term in this position, asserts: "...cooperation with the central and provincial education office is still good"³⁹⁰. However, he regrets that the block grants' program will run only for two or three more years and he has asked the local government to continue the program after that. This demonstrates that the experience of EOD heads also colours the nature of the relationship. He personally considers that the Director of the DVSE is outstanding when it comes to ideas, but that efforts to build strong relationships with the EODs have been weak. This impression is also supported by the Head of the EOD Bekasi District: "The relationship with the provincial and central education office is the same as usual"³⁹¹. He asserts that the DVSE, particularly the director, is really interested in local education programs and that he even attended the opening of the new school in Bekasi³⁹². This Head of the EOD Bekasi District had worked in provincial education office (*Kanwil*) and this experience was undoubtedly a factor in developing strong relationships between the DVSE and the EOD in Bekasi³⁹³. It seemed that the initiatives coming from EOD officials are increasing.

However, as in the case of the DVSE's relationship with the EOPs, the DVSE has failed to identify what actually happens at local government level, which is what should be the focus of their relationship. The Head of the EOD Bekasi City explains that all of the development programs still originate from Jakarta and none from the regions³⁹⁴. He adds that these do not

³⁸⁹ Head of EOD Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 27 June 2005

³⁹⁰ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁹¹ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi District, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁹² Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

³⁹³ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi District, interviewed 7 February 2005

³⁹⁴ Head of Local education Office (EOD) Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

always match local needs and that the role of the local government should be to design programs that meet local VSE needs. An example might be the case of the re-location of an automotive course in a state school to a private one, whether this was considered more suitable for the local situation. The Head of EOD Pangkalpinang City agrees that VSE programs are still dominantly determined by the central government³⁹⁵. However, the support shown by local governments to implement these programs suggests that the DVSE's intentions have been positively received by the local authorities. Unless there is good cooperation and communication, the DVSE will be unaware of the effects – positive or negative - of its policies and programs on VSE development.

It is obvious that these perceptions, from DVSE, EOD and also school personnel illustrate that the relationship between the DVSE and the EODs is still facing problems, yet is slowly improving. DVSE officials appear quite committed in trying to engage with staff in the local governments, especially with the EODs. However, as there is not yet any hierarchical link with local governments in a structural, functional sense. The DVSE's objective of building a good relationship, coordinating, synchronizing and evaluating policies and programs, particularly with regard to the block grants as well as solving problems is still difficult to realize. It appears it is not easy to persuade those in the new 'empowered' and 'autonomous' local government bureaucracies to start paying attention to VSE development. Furthermore, EOD attempts at relationship-building with the central government is hampered by internal bureaucratic limitations. Any activity involving another level of government should be conducted through the bureaucratic hierarchy, in particular via the Local Secretary (*Sekda*). In the relationship with the DVSE, the head of the EOD is supposed to officially report to the *Sekda*, who acts as the representative of the regent or mayor.

5.4 Central Education Office and the Schools (SMKs)

Although immense changes have occurred at local government level, it is asserted that maintaining a relationship between the DVSE and the schools (SMK) should be achievable. The centralized system of managing education, which for decades was the practice, has come to an end. Similar to the case with the EOPs at provincial government level, the DVSE in Jakarta no longer has direct hierarchical control over the schools and any relationship or communication with them is now meant to occur according to local government procedure. Since regional autonomy, local governments have full responsibility for schools, yet, for many reasons, they are still not capable of assuming the roles and tasks transferred to them from the central government, particularly when it comes to providing support to schools.

³⁹⁵ Head of Local education Office (EOD) Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 27 June 2005

Until recently, the staff of the DVSE have struggled to liaise with local governments in an official capacity. It has been found that the DVSE believes that the initiatives which spring from the schools themselves are the most important key to success of the VSE programs. It is fortunate that, at least in the case of the old provinces, a shared ‘history’ of working together administratively has aided the continuation of informal working relationships. The intensive use of information technology by the DVSE and the schools facilitates ease in communication and is enabling the DVSE to control and monitor the block grants applied for and given to schools and the schools’ resources needs.

5.4.1 The Roles of the Experienced School Principals and Staff

With regard to the relationship between the DVSE and the schools (SMKs), the experienced principals and staff have been found to play an important role. Most of the school staff involved in this research are categorized as ‘senior’, not only because of their length of time of service with a school but also their previous experience working with the DVSE. The principal and teachers, in particular, were recruited as civil servants by the central government before regional autonomy. ‘Administratively’ schools came under the local governments however, ‘hierarchically’, the management of the schools was under the command of the DVSE. For decades, the DVSE met the resources needs of the schools (SMKs) directly, including the provision of school programs and courses, building construction, equipment, materials, staffing and operating budget and there was much interaction between the DVSE and the schools, especially with the principals (see Chapters 1 and 4). Direct interaction would happen during coordination or the process of managing the schools’ needs. Indirect interaction would happen in the preparation stage or in communicating any issue via the available methods, such as letter, telephone or fax, on a formal basis, involving mainly the principals. It is asserted that personal and informal relationships as well as mutual understanding developed at this time have not deteriorated from the impact of regional autonomy.

In Bangka District and City, almost all school principals in this study are senior staff. The Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City states:

“The relationship with the Central Education Office is the same as it was before; however, we had problems at the beginning with the staff in our Provincial Education

office as they didn't understand the needs of vocational schools or how they work...³⁹⁶.

He was appointed as principal through the DVSE's 'talent scouting' recruitment program³⁹⁷, conducted before regional autonomy was introduced. Similarly, the principal of SMK3 Pangkalpinang City had eight years as principal prior to regional autonomy and believes that such continuity will help his school to keep improving³⁹⁸. Both principals have been successful in their applications for block grants: six out of eight programs have been completed by SMK1; SMK3 has completed five. In order to receive these grants, the SMKs themselves must put forward a proposal, then get agreement from their EOD, followed by further negotiation with the DVSE. In Bangka District, the Principal of SMK1 also has a lot of prior experience dealing with the DVSE. This has, he asserts, aided him to successfully obtain eight block grants, including one to establish an international school program³⁹⁹. By contrast, the Principal of SMK2 Bangka District is relatively new, with no experience working with the central office, in a school established by local government initiative only in 2003, during the early stages of regional autonomy and he has not managed to obtain any block grants. He is struggling with insufficient budget and staff to meet his school's operational needs as well as developing cooperation with the DVSE in order to solicit support and advice. Thus, the experience of a principal is a significant factor in being able to develop and maintain relationships and receive support.

In Tangerang and Bekasi City and District, the situation is similar. One school in Tangerang District was only just new when regional autonomy came in and is also facing communication problems with the DVSE. Principals in the other Tangerang schools are senior and confident that their relationship with the DVSE is stable and sustainable. All have successfully implemented a number of DVSE block grants. The Principal of SMK3 related: "Our school communicates directly with the DVSE in Jakarta. We only report to our local government as an administrative formality"⁴⁰⁰.

All of the Bekasi District and City SMK principals involved in this research are newly-appointed by their local governments. However, while new as principals, they all happen to be senior as teachers and thus, in this capacity, have experience working with the DVSE. The

³⁹⁶ Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang city, interviewed in 10th June 2005

³⁹⁷ Talent scouting program aimed at providing good school principal candidates by selecting from the potential staff through special testing and training introduced before the regional autonomy

³⁹⁸ Principal SMK3 Tangerang city, interviewed in 8th February 2005

³⁹⁹ Principal SMK1 Bangka district, interviewed in 4th July 2005

⁴⁰⁰ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

Principal of SMK2 Bekasi District noted: “As a new principal at the time of regional autonomy’s introduction, my focus has so far been just on implementing the policies and programs originating from the central government”⁴⁰¹.

The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District explains that he entered the school in 2001, just as regional autonomy was being introduced, however his school, which initially had just 12 classes, now, with the assistance of the DVSE, has to 30 classes and 1030 students⁴⁰². They have obtained and implemented six DVSE block grants, from the very simple to very complex. They had to go through their local government, following its procedures, especially with regards to contributing to the shared funding. Such success stories support the proposition that experience, knowledge and history of relationship-building of particular school principals plays an important role in achieving schools’ objectives.

5.4.2 The Use of Information and Communication Technology

The use of the information and communication technology (ICT) availability has been found to contribute to the close direct relationship between the DVSE and the schools. The DVSE Director advises that most of his staff have been trained and encouraged to use the readily-available ICT resources such as computers, internet, e-mail and mobile phones, for their daily activities⁴⁰³. Similarly, schools are encouraged to take advantage of ICT especially, the internet and mobile phone technology, as much information and documentation regarding VSE development has been uploaded to the DVSE website and, increasingly, schools are developing their own websites too⁴⁰⁴. Conceptually, this use of technology enables people to interact unhampered by the limitations of distance⁴⁰⁵.

Communications between the DVSE and the schools can now be managed easily. Most of the DVSE interviewees claim they find it easy to communicate with schools regarding any issue. As the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision related: “At any time, we can contact the school staff, to ask about any issue or seek any information we want regarding the implementation of programs in the schools”⁴⁰⁶.

⁴⁰¹ Principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed in 17 May 2005

⁴⁰² Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed in 4 April 2005

⁴⁰³ Director of DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

⁴⁰⁴ Head of DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁴⁰⁵ ICT Development Program: a document published by the DVSE, explaining the rationale of optimizing the use of ICT-based programs in implementing developments in vocational secondary education.

⁴⁰⁶ Head of DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

Schools are finding they can maintain communication with the DVSE as easily, or better than, previously, before regional autonomy. The principal of SMK1 Bekasi District explains: “To discuss standardization issues with the central office, we mostly use email”⁴⁰⁷. The same principal advises that, even to raise complaints or enquire as to the progress of their grant applications or proposals, they are tending to use email, SMS or phone calls now, to communicate directly with the appropriate person in charge⁴⁰⁸. Interviewees from schools in Tangerang District and Bangka District also agree as to the benefits of using the available information technology to build and maintain an informal and effective relationship with the DVSE. ICT use is not so far a priority of provincial and local administrations, including the EOPs and EODs, and the DVSE is similarly not using ICT to communicate with these offices. The DVSE personnel interviewed were aware that the use of the ICT is just as important a factor as the block grants’ system in fostering a relationship and communication with schools (SMKs) and in problem-solving when trying to penetrate local bureaucracy administration. However, without involving the Local Education Offices (EODs) in the process and in the ICT loop, it might be perceived that the central authorities are still trying to prevent the provincial and local government officials from participating in the process of decentralization in education and that the DVSE still wishes to directly control the schools (SMKs), as before.

5.4.3 Geographical Influences

Geographical proximity influences the amount and quality of interaction between staff in the DVSE and the schools. Bekasi District, Bekasi City, Tangerang District and Tangerang City are located on the island of Java and are geographically closer to the Central Education Office (DVSE) in Jakarta than to their own Provincial Education Office (EOP). Bekasi City and Tangerang City are situated within the boundaries of metropolitan Jakarta. Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City are on a small island, outside of Java and it is time-consuming to physically visit the DVSE office in Jakarta. Although in the context of this study, the factors of geography and access are important, in the broader Indonesian context, there are many regions that are more isolated than Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City. In Tangerang City, SMK4 was selected by DVSE as the pilot for competency-based training (CBT)⁴⁰⁹. The project team involves experts from Australia as well as a team from the DVSE⁴¹⁰. Although not staying on location in Tangerang City for the whole duration of the project, they are still

⁴⁰⁷ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁴⁰⁸ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁴⁰⁹The experts guided teachers in teaching and learning processes, based on standards, synchronized with and by involvement of surrounding industry, including competency standards, programs, curriculum, learning materials, assessment, operations, testing and certification standards: Principal SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed February, 2005

⁴¹⁰ Director of DVSE, interviewed 27 January 2005

able to maintain project-related activities until the project's completion. The Director of the DVSE attended the inauguration ceremony of a new education building in Bekasi District. This visit contributed to establishing direct communications yet did not go far enough to improve the quality of the relationship. The Principal of SMK 1 Bekasi City reports, with disappointment, that even though his school is geographically close to the DVSE, there still exists discrimination, evidenced by the fact that his proposals for his school have been overlooked.

Thus, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, although the DVSE no longer has any official direct link with the schools, cooperation between the DVSE and the schools still continues and is, in fact, strengthening, in spite of the changes brought about by regional autonomy. Long experience of working together has built strong personal and informal relationships and mutual understanding between the DVSE in Jakarta and the schools (SMKs) in the regions. In addition, ICT is, unintentionally, contributing to the strengthening of direct school-DVSE communications and meaning bureaucratic hindrances with local government authorities can be bypassed. Schools fortunate enough to be geographically close to the DVSE do benefit from increased physical interaction, however this alone does not guarantee an effective relationship and understanding between them and the DVSE. The most influential factor appears to be the block grants' scheme, which has become schools' most important source of funding and programs, as their respective local governments are to date not sufficiently resourced to provide this type of support. Therefore, DVSE still maintains great control over the schools, just as it did before regional autonomy.

5.5 Provincial and Local Government Education Offices

The provincial and local governments are now similar to each other in status and each are autonomous governments, with no hierarchical link between them. The Provincial Education offices (EOPs) are structurally part of the provincial government. Similarly, in the districts and cities, the Local Education offices (EODs) form part of the local government bureaucracy. However, in the old provinces, the EOPs have been formed from the amalgamation of the former provincial education offices, *Kanwil* and *Dinas*, while in the new provinces, the EOPs are purely new structures. The EODs, both in the old and new provinces, are the same, merged from the former *Kandep* and local *Dinas*, the old education offices in districts and city.

5.5.1 Old Provinces

In the old province of West Java the relationship between the EOP and the EODs is still similar to the way it was before regional autonomy. As the EOP Head notes: “My relationship with the districts and city authorities is very good and they respect me...”⁴¹¹. He reports that autonomy certainly has been given to districts and cities, but just that they are not yet ready to undertake the responsibilities transferred to them. He believes the EODs still depend on him and follow and obey all his comments and ideas. He finds it is easy and efficient to communicate with the EOD heads by mobile phone, especially SMS⁴¹². His views are also supported by EOD personnel interviewed. The Head of EOD Bekasi District agreed that it is easy to maintain a strong relationship with the province⁴¹³. In his opinion, the EOP is very supportive and gives full attention to educational development in Bekasi District, especially with regards to support for the new industry partnership school program. The Head of the EOD of Bekasi City similarly stresses: “Our relationship with the provincial authorities is still well-maintained...and the bureaucracy of the EOP is simple”⁴¹⁴.

This good relationship is also illustrated by the number of program initiatives from both sides. The provincial programs, especially the *KBBS*⁴¹⁵ or ‘Fee-Free School Card’ are fully supported by local governments in Bekasi City and District⁴¹⁶. The program, as explained in Chapter 4, is aimed at making the national policy of WAJAR⁴¹⁷ or compulsory education achievable. The Governor of West Java Province and all majors and regents in the province exchanged letters to confirm their commitments to this program. The Head of the EOP West Java states: “In West Java, our commitment is firm...Up until 2008, 82% of the total budget has been allocated to support the program”⁴¹⁸.

At local level, in Bekasi City, as described by one DPRD member⁴¹⁹, educational programs are clearly following the provincial government’s lead by introducing the *KBBS* and the

⁴¹¹ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴¹² Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴¹³ Head of EOD Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

⁴¹⁴ Head of EOD Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

⁴¹⁵ KBBS is the acronym for ‘Fee-Free School Card’ in Indonesian, introduced by the Province of West Java and distributed to the ‘poor’ to enable their children to attend school without paying fees. All schools in West Java are ‘obligated’ to receive the ‘card-holder’, without conditions. The provincial government pays the school fees on the student’s behalf.

⁴¹⁶ Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴¹⁷ WAJAR stands for *wajib belajar* or nine years’ compulsory education program, with the target of six years primary and three years’ secondary education.

⁴¹⁸ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴¹⁹ The DPRD is the Local People’s Representative Assembly in districts and cities and has the discretion to approve the local government’s budget (UU22/1999 and Rasyid, p.67, 2003).

student commencement fee and test fee has been abolished⁴²⁰. The Head of the BAPPEDA in Bekasi City stressed that the focus of WAJAR is to synchronize with the national policy. This has also been the aim of the regional programs of the provincial authorities of West Java Province⁴²¹. The Head of the EOD Bekasi District reported that his government is also committed to the WAJAR policy and that cooperating with provincial authorities has been straight-forward⁴²².

Thus, in West Java Province the relationship between the EOP and the EODs with regard to running VSE has been functioning in much the same manner as before regional autonomy. It has been found that a shared history of working together in an administrative capacity and their individual experience in working in the education sector and in dealing with the central government authorities significantly influences the quality of relationships. Such working relationships are replicated at EOP-EOD level, in the cooperation taking place to develop and implement programs which synchronise, as illustrated with cooperation to implement national policy on compulsory education at primary and secondary level (WAJAR). However, there is also a tendency for official arrangements and liaisons regarding supporting programs reflect the altered nature of the bureaucratic hierarchy between these two levels of governments. Both provincial and local governments now have the power to act autonomously and independently with regard to managing the education sector and, therefore, any joint programs they run need to be written up formally in an official agreement.

5.5.2 New Provinces

Although Babel Province is a new province, the relationship between the provincial and local education offices appears to be as good as that of the EOP of West Java Province with the EODS. The Head of the EOP Babel Province claims: “Our relationship with the EODs is good. In the past, I was in charge of the former local education office”⁴²³. He suggested that, as most of the EOD staff knew him previously on a personal level, communication is easy to maintain. With regard to the principles of regional autonomy, the policy of the EOP, he asserts, is basically to assist and support the local governments⁴²⁴. These views are supported by local government staff in Bangka District and City and are reflected in the fact VSE programs have actually been jointly implemented. The Head of the BAPPEDA

⁴²⁰ Head of the Education Commission of the Local People’s Representative Assembly (DPRD) Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005

⁴²¹ Head of BAPPEDA Bekasi City, interviewed 14 April 2005

⁴²² Head of EOD Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

⁴²³ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

⁴²⁴ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

Pangkalpinang City argues that the EOP's education policy is good, especially with regard to WAJAR, and the Mayor of Pangkalpinang City intends to expand the nine-years compulsory education program to twelve years⁴²⁵. A member of the DPRD claims: "There are good intentions on both sides, the EOP and the EODs, to develop education"⁴²⁶.

Although still not extended to all types of schools, at least the fee-free program has been introduced. In addition, in many instances, the EOP has provided support to schools, prior to the agreement of the EOD. Thus, it can be argued the EOP is indeed aware of local government procedures and working mechanisms⁴²⁷. All of these opinions, from interviewees at different levels of government, suggest that, although the EOP and the EODs in Babel Province are relatively new, the cooperation between them can be regarded as a good one.

In Banten Province, another new province examined in this study, the EOP appears to be struggling to develop its relationships with the EODs. The Head of the EOP Banten Province claims that they have attempted to liaise but, as yet, they are finding it difficult to co-ordinate their programs with those of the EODs⁴²⁸. He complains: "With autonomy, we face problems because the programs delivered to the districts and cities do not match what we actually need. We need the law to address this"⁴³⁵.

In fact, the education policies of the EOP and the EODs in Banten Province are similar. Both are prioritizing the development of infrastructure and human resources. Yet, seemingly, the EOP has failed to provide sufficient support to the local governments, other than assisting administratively with delivering the block grants' scheme to the schools. The Head of the EOD Tangerang City claims that: "Program implementation is much faster under regional autonomy. In the past we complained and waited for the governor to listen to our needs and the central government was very slow"⁴²⁹. The Head of the EOD Tangerang District criticizes that, in function EOP just reflects the old system, strictly follow set standards and dependent on the central government for direction⁴³⁰.

Clearly, in the new provinces, the experience and seniority the head of an EOP has plays an important role in forming effective relationships with the EODs. In Bangka Belitung Province, the Head of the EOP is experienced in managing the education sector and is more

⁴²⁵ Head of BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005

⁴²⁶ Head of Education Commission of DPRD Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 27 June 2005

⁴²⁷ Head of EOP Bangka Belitung province, interviewed 27 July 2005

⁴²⁸ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

⁴²⁹ Head of EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴³⁰ Head of EOD Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

senior to the current EOD heads in the district and cities of his province. This facilitates the maintenance of effective cooperation and communications, on institutional, formal and personal levels. However, it can be seen that the initiative for relationship-building is coming from the Head of the EOP, rather than from the EODs. Also, the relationship between them is mainly limited to cooperating with regard to implementing the WAJAR, the nine year compulsory education policy, which the governor is supporting, in accordance with national educational priorities. In Banten Province, the relationship is not as good as in Bangka Belitung Province. The EOP Head is relatively new and has no experience working with the EODs to assist with the establishment of personal relationships. The new institutions are autonomous and independent, with neither higher than the other in the bureaucratic hierarchy and initiatives of the EOP Head to work together on programs has been ignored by the staff in the EODs.

It can be concluded that the relationships between provincial and local governments with regards to managing the education sector depends on the degree of shared administrative experience as well as the education background of key members of staff. In essence, the introduction of regional autonomy appears to be influencing the pattern of relationships. Under the old, centralised system, relationships were hierarchical with the provincial governments exercising authority over the local governments. Under regional autonomy inter-government relationships are based on similar levels of power and authority vested in provincial and local governments.

5.6 Provinces and Schools

Relationships between the EOPs and the schools are also differentiated by whether the EOPs are those of 'new' or 'old' provinces. Before regional autonomy, the authority of the provincial government over schools was significant. The EOP was the right hand of the DVSE in controlling schools but also with regard to managing aspects such as school staffing⁴³¹. Since regional autonomy, the role of the EOP with regard to schools is limited to granting permission for new schools and assisting students to acquire school books⁴³². The responsibility to the actual running of the schools has been passed on to local governments, via the Local Education Offices (EODs).

⁴³¹ Head of EOP Provincial Education Office West Java province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴³² PP/25, 2000 is the government regulation setting out the "rights of provincial governments as autonomous regional bodies".

5.6.1 Old Provinces

In West Java Province, although the former hierarchical link with the schools has ended, the relationship between the EOP and the schools is the same as before regional autonomy. The Head of the EOP is confident that their relationship with the schools has been well-maintained, as most of the EOP staff originate from the old education office and have much experience working with the schools: “I believe there is no difference before and after autonomy...The EOP no longer has authority to appoint principals, and has no direct link with schools, with everything now going through the Local Education Office, however, our personal working relationships have not been broken”⁴³³. He also believes he has maintained good communications with the schools and that the schools still require support from the EOP. However, as most responsibilities have been transferred from provincial to local government level, the EOP no longer manages and resources the schools (SMK), except in the limited capacity of distributing the block grant funding from the Central Education Office (DVSE). In addition, any initiative for giving support to schools is now supposed to proceed first through bureaucracy at local level.

These views are shared at school level. For example, the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City claims: “...cooperation and communication with the local government, including the EOD, can be well-maintained”⁴³⁴. He suggests that the quality of his school’s relationship with the EOP is better than with their EOD and that this is causing certain problems, including with regard to achieving improvements to school facilities. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District states: “...the behaviour of the EOP people is still the same; we enjoy a very close and informal relationship, however sometimes this is impaired by the bureaucracy of the Local Education Office”⁴³⁵. It appears he also has had difficulty establishing an effective working relationship with his Local Education Office, especially with regard to getting the support and resources his school needs. Other SMK principals also agreed that the EOP is the same as before. This is reflected in the continuation of regular coordination meetings to discuss the national examinations and in the program of school monitoring, by way of frequent school visits, and, most importantly, in the amount of personal communication carried out via mobile phone⁴³⁶. These arguments from both sides - the Provincial Education Office (EOP) and the schools - describe how in West Java, as the ‘old’ province investigated in this study, the

⁴³³ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁴³⁴ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁴³⁵ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁴³⁶ Principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May 2005

relationship between the EOP and the schools can be determined to be 'good', but that the nature of the relationship is more informal and personal, rather than official.

5.6.2 New Provinces

The relationships between the EOP and the schools in Banten Province and Bangka Belitung Province are at an early stage of development. The EOPs in both provinces have been restructured from the old education offices. The Head of the EOP Bangka Belitung Province has worked in the education field prior to regional autonomy and his seniority has been useful in maintaining a relationship with the EODs. On the other hand, the Head of the EOP Banten Province is a recent appointment and has no prior experience working with schools. He has difficulties trying to establish a good working relationship with the EODs. Both the EOPs of Banten Province and Bangka Belitung Province are similarly struggling to establish effective working relationships with the schools.

5.6.2.1 Banten Province

The Head of the EOP argues that cooperation with schools has been well maintained, however he also faces some problems⁴³⁷. According to him, although there are some schools who are genuinely eager to build a relationship with the EOP, in many cases, schools are showing their cooperativeness only to obtain support. In this transition stage of regional autonomy, both the central and provincial education offices are still providing block grants directly to selected schools. This scheme is often the only means for the EOP to cultivate any direct relationship with the schools, since, under regional autonomy, most of its former responsibilities have been transferred to the local governments. In addition, the Head of the EOP Banten Province claims that cooperation and communication relies on individual school principals to initiate communications. He complains: "Schools are still passively waiting instead of being proactive....Cooperation is occurring as usual, but with different methods and, nevertheless, it is very hard to achieve proper cooperation and coordination with regard to educational development"⁴³⁸.

At school level, the problem of establishing effective cooperation with the EOP is still an issue. One senior teacher from SMK4 Tangerang City claims that the EOP head and staff rarely visit the schools, except during the handover of the block grants to the schools⁴³⁹. The

⁴³⁷ Head of EOP Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

⁴³⁸ Head of EOP Banten province, interviewed 20 July 2005

⁴³⁹ Senior Teacher SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 9 February 2005

Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City suggests that the staff in the education offices, both in province and in the local government, do not have experience in vocational education⁴⁴⁰. They are, however, he adds “really enthusiastic to learn and therefore the schools are eager to take the time to explain things to them”⁴⁴¹. He expresses confidence that the knowledge of the EOP staff, regarding vocational education is improving, especially after attending national-level meetings and workshops. Thus, it is argued, there is a need for further catalysts of this nature to enable cooperation between the EOP of Banten Province and the schools to be strengthened.

5.6.2.2 Bangka Belitung Province

Similar developments are also occurring in Bangka Belitung Province, another of the new provinces in this study. The EOP there is totally new, with the personnel recruited from district and city level, and none of them with VSE experience⁴⁴². Although the Head of the EOP is a senior government official, he has no experience managing schools and is facing many problems. His approach in promoting an effective working relationship with schools is visiting schools and meeting with all stakeholders, including teachers, school administrative staff, committees and boards, during the time of handover of block grants to explain the financial management of these grants. Schools claim this is not appropriate as contact is supposed to be through the Local Education Office (EOD). A teacher from SMK1 Pangkalpinang City states that, at the beginning of autonomy, most school staff started to focus on the EOP and to discuss issues with them but that, as yet, the EOP has not been capable of satisfying school needs. He says: “...only now are principals able to effectively cooperate with the EOP re our programs”⁴⁴³. The Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City agrees, stating: “... the relationship with the EOP people is now going quite well, even though it was very hard in the beginning, as they didn’t have any understanding of vocational schools...”⁴⁴⁴. He further noted the ease he has experienced in communicating with the EOP about block grants shows that a relationship with the EOP is able to be maintained. It appears that, in Bangka-Belitung Province, the relationships between EOP and the EODs are limited in nature and that the block grants’ scheme is the only stimulus for the EOP and the schools to cooperate. Other functions, such as monitoring and control have disappeared totally.

⁴⁴⁰ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁴⁴¹ Principal SMK3 Tangerang city, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁴⁴² Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP) Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

⁴⁴³ Senior Teacher SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18 June 2005

⁴⁴⁴ Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005

Based on the above findings, regional autonomy has clearly influenced the nature of the working relationships between the EOPs and the schools. In old provinces like West Java, even though most of responsibilities have been transferred to local government, the experience of working jointly in the past has helped maintain a working relationship. Their shared administrative history has served to build strong personal connections among those in the provinces (EOPs) and the schools. In addition, the knowledge and the experience of the Head of the EOP West Java and also of the school staff regarding vocational secondary schools has been a key to their successful cooperation.

By contrast, in the new provinces, such as Bangka Belitung and Banten, cooperation has been difficult to establish. The cause is mainly the changed role and functions of the provincial authorities since regional autonomy, with most former responsibilities for schools being lost. There is no longer any hierarchical link between the educational offices in the provinces and the schools. Schools have thus started to focus on the new boss, their Local Education Office (EOD). In addition, the block grants' scheme, as the only stimulus for them to establish a relationship, has been hindered by the inability of the EOPs to satisfy the needs of the schools.

5.7 Local Education Offices and the Schools

Since regional autonomy, the management of the schools has moved from central to local authority. Schools and their development are now the responsibility of the Local Education Office (EOD). However, local governments are independent and the restructuring of the EODs has been based on local government decisions, without involving central or provincial authorities, as used to happen. One Senior Teacher from SMK1 Bekasi District reports: "The head of the EOD is appointed, not based on professional ability, but more on seniority, and the most senior person does not always mean the best person for the job"⁴⁴⁵. The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision indicates that the EODs have not been formed with any section created to specifically manage VSE⁴⁴⁶. In the research locations, only one EOD head has any experience in the VSE sector and the rest of the staff were newly appointed. By contrast, most current school staff, including principals, are very experienced with VSE programs. However, the authority to manage the schools and plan for their future development rests officially in the hands of the EODs.

⁴⁴⁵ Senior Teacher SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005

⁴⁴⁶ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

5.7.1 Coordinating School Resources

Schools' needs for resources have been the stimulus for the EODs and the schools to establish a working relationship. At the outset, both similarly struggled with this as they have never worked together. Most of the EODs have expressed surprise at just how much the vocational secondary schools (SMKs) need in the way of resources. As the Head of the EOD Tangerang City states: "...we were not aware that the SMKs need a huge budget...and we know it is very hard to persuade the DPRD and the BAPPEDA to provide such an amount of funding"⁴⁴⁷. The Head of the EOD Tangerang City argues that operating costs for SMKs are triple that of ordinary schools. He stresses that, without community participation and operational funding from the government, it is impossible to run the SMKs⁴⁴⁸. At school level, it is realized that the EODs are not familiar with VSE programs or school operational needs. The Principal of SMK4 Tangerang City advises: "...our allocated electricity budget for our SMK is the same as for other types of schools and this is obviously far from sufficient..."⁴⁴⁹.

As explained by the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, in SMKs, electricity is not only needed for lighting, as in other schools, but also for operating all the equipment, such as the lathes, welding machines and other machinery, which students need to use for their practical work, and which consume a huge amount of power⁴⁵⁰. In addition, in the past, the funding for this was planned and distributed by the DVSE through the EOPs in the provinces. Today, the EODs, who have responsibility for VSE, are focussing on local government policy, in which VSE does not happen to be a priority.

It appears that most of the EODs are not happy with the existence of VSE. The Head of the EOD Tangerang District criticizes that the VSE system is inefficient and suggested that dichotomy between VSE and GSE (General Secondary Education) should be reviewed⁴⁵¹. In his opinion, to be, for example, a good mechanic, instead of enrolling in a VSE school, a student can simply take one of the informal short courses, available everywhere in districts and cities. He also claims that investment in SMKs is very expensive and not worthwhile and that, in many cases, offering VSE programs have merely become political promises. The sceptical visions of this EOD head have been countered by interviewees from schools. One, the Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District asserts: "...the EOD is too busy with lots of new

⁴⁴⁷ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁴⁸ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁴⁹ Principal SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁴⁵⁰ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision DVSE, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁴⁵¹ Head of the EOD Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

tasks and their human resources are very limited...⁴⁵². One of his teachers expects that, in the future, the mission and the vision of the EODs and other local institutions with regard to educational development will be able to be synchronized with national policies and programs⁴⁵³. This is critical for schools as, presently, their operational needs to run routine programs are being hampered by the inability of the local governments to meet these. Seemingly, there is no way other than by patiently and pro-actively developing relationships with the EOD in order to make schools' needs known and to attain their much-needed resources.

5.7.2 Coordinating the Block Grants

A stimulus for establishing relationships and communications between the EODs and the schools is the existence of the block grants' scheme. Except for the new school in Bangka District, most of the schools studied, either those located on the island of Java, close to the capital, or in Bangka Belitung Province, outside of Java have managed to apply for and obtain funding this way, from the central and/or provincial government. This demonstrates that EODs and schools have been interacting, as any school proposal for a block grant has to be endorsed by the local government or at least by the EOD. A senior teacher from SMK4 Tangerang City relates: "Although with lots of discussions, nevertheless, schools programs, including competency- based training, have started to be funded by the EODs"⁴⁵⁴. However, the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision wonders if the nature of their relationship is not always genuine, unless it is just communication for the sake of getting a signed letter of agreement from the EOD⁴⁵⁵.

In addition, many EOD interviewees indicated that they are not happy with the eligibility of schools to implement the programs made possible by the block grants. The Head of the EOD Tangerang District criticizes that any coordination taking place is not actually corresponding to what should be the real mission, that, finally schools will be carrying out their own programs⁴⁵⁶. However, the head of the EOD Tangerang City acknowledges that the school personnel are more professional in that, technically, they are more expert, but that, however, administratively it is the EOD personnel who are more proficient and experienced⁴⁵⁷. The bureaucracy of the EODs is an issue which is hampering relationship-building efforts. Since

⁴⁵² Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁴⁵³ Senior Teacher SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁴⁵⁴ Senior Teacher SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 9 February 2005

⁴⁵⁵ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁴⁵⁶ Head of the EOD Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

⁴⁵⁷ Head of the EOD Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

regional autonomy, as occurred in the Bekasi City, as a senior teacher from SMK1 asserts: “The EOD is supposed to discuss every program proposal with the schools, prior to implementation, however, in many cases, decisions made end up not meeting the schools’ needs”⁴⁵⁸. This teacher adds that all official letters to schools should be administered by the EOD, however he points out that not all letters coming from the DVSE or other offices are delivered to the schools.

The most discouraging factor in establishing a successful working relationship building is arguably the failure to reach agreement. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City reports that their expectation of obtaining EOD support has not been fulfilled, explaining: “In the past, we were very close with the head of the EOD, but maybe now it’s different he’s in the position of manager”⁴⁵⁹. It would appear that, in this case, the personal relationship is not working in the school’s favour, helping the school to obtain its needs. As the Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City points out, the result is that schools are now often interacting more closely with the Central Education Office (DVSE) rather than with their Local Education Office (EOD)⁴⁶⁰.

Undoubtedly, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the relationship and communications between the EODs and the schools still face many problems. The EODs, although being the institutions with the greatest responsibility for the education sector, are still not familiar with VSE in general and have been surprised with the cost of operating the vocational schools. The schools themselves, besides having difficulty communicating with the new and inexperienced staff of the EODs, are finding their efforts to build relationships are blocked also by the incoherent policy priorities of local governments. For reasons discussed previously, VSE is not a development priority for local governments, who are concentrated more on infrastructure development. Cooperation has been stimulated by the schools’ needs to obtain support and funding to operate, rather as a result of an official policy stemming from the roles and functions of the new local government administrative arrangements.

5.8 Chapter Summary

In the transition stage of regional autonomy, the nature and the pattern of the vertical relationships between central, provincial and local governments and schools has changed. As

⁴⁵⁸ Senior teacher of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁴⁵⁹ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁴⁶⁰ Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005

the power of Central Education Office (DVSE) in deciding and implementing VSE developments has declined, the nature of the relationship is more 'cooperative', rather than being one of imposing its policy and program wishes on the schools. Shared administrative experience, where this exists, influences the nature of the relationship. Except for the relationship between the EODs and the schools, most of the vertical relationships are informal and based on the individual and personal prior experience of joint cooperation. Geographic and other considerations, such as economic and social conditions and the nature of the local community appear to have little impact, compared to aspects of power and influence exercised by particular authorities. The key actors' interpretations or misinterpretations of the principles of regional autonomy are very influential, as has been discussed by earlier researchers especially Ramage (2002), Fanany (2003) and Sukma (2003).

In the old provinces, the pattern, degree of effectiveness and nature of the vertical relationships between central, provincial and local education offices and the schools have been found to be stable and sustainable. Past experiences have served to build strong personal bonds, which is very useful for establishing informal communications and interaction, without the need of always going through the formal bureaucratic processes. The only problem is that the relationship between the EODs and the schools requires the proper functioning of bureaucratic processes in order that the schools' needs are met.

In the new provinces, the vertical relationships are still in an early stage of development. As new organizations in the education structure, the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs) and Local Education Offices (EOD) are becoming accustomed to all their new tasks and responsibilities. Having prior experience or not in managing VSE clearly has a very strong influence on the pattern, degree of effectiveness and the nature of vertical relationships. In the cases, in the new provinces, where there is no shared history of working jointly, strong personal relationships have not had a chance to develop, as in the old provinces and this is effecting the establishment of effective cooperation.

The interviews with the central and provincial officials emphasise the importance of the block grants in stimulating cooperation between the education offices at the three levels of government. Without these grants, it is likely that each of the education offices would be become preoccupied with their own internal priorities. As Aspinall and Fealy⁴⁶¹ indicated the shift in political and economic power to local level is both dramatic and historic. The

⁴⁶¹ Aspinall, Edward and Fealy, Greg (2003), (eds.) *Local power and politics in Indonesia: decentralization and democratization*, Singapore, Institute of Southern Asian Studies

interviewees in this study present a range of interpretations of their experiences of the shift from central to local autonomy.

CHAPTER 6

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF VSE PROGRAMS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the issue of relationships between local institutions with regard to the management of vocational secondary education, thereby making a contribution to the literature emerging in the field. With the introduction of regional autonomy, all local governments at district and city level became responsible for education. The role of the Central Education Office (DVSE) is limited to providing national VSE development policy, in the form of broad guidelines. The local district and city education offices (EOD) are expected to provide financial and program support. However, the EOD is part of the local government system so, therefore, VSE programs and budgets are determined by local government institutions, especially the BAPPEDA (Local Planning Board) and DPRD (Peoples' Local Representative Assembly). The BAPPEDA is responsible for coordinating the program plans of all local government institutions, while the DPRD is responsible for endorsing all proposed planning for budgeting purposes.

It is argued that continued development of VSE at district and city level is highly influenced by the working relationships between the key institutions of local government. The nature of the relationship between the DPRD and BAPPEDA and EOD, is akin to that between the legislative and the executive, with each party having its own perspective and interests with regard to VSE development, which, in many cases, affects the support for vocational schools (SMKs). Internally, the hierarchy of power relationships between the institutions of local government influences the management of local VSE programs.

6.2 The Nature of Relationships

6.2.1 Political Relationships

In the local government system, with the exception of the head and vice head of the local government, the DPRD members are directly elected politicians. DPRD members are nominated by the political parties and elected in national elections, along with parliamentarians at national and provincial levels. They perform the legislative functions of local government, including the enactment of laws and regulations and determining the

budget (APBD). The DPRD is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of local regulations (APBD), as well as formulating local policies on VSE development. Under certain circumstances, the DPRD also has the right to propose the dismissal of the head and vice head of local government – two figures whose roles include overseeing VSE development.

At the time of this research, the local government head and vice heads were still appointed according to the previous law, in which they were selected by the DPRD, whereas under the new law (Law 32/2004) they are elected directly by the people. Thus, they were accountable to the DPRD. They were also nominated by political parties and described as the Chief of Executive, as stated in Law 22/ 1999, in Article 44:

“(1). The head of the local government leads the implementation of local government programs, based on policy determined jointly with the DPRD. (2). In carrying out the tasks, the head of the local government is responsible to the DPRD”⁴⁶².

According to the new law, (Law 32/2004), their relationship is stated as a partnership in the management of local government. However, if the head and vice head are considered to be breaking the law, the DPRD still has the authority to propose their dismissal. As stated in Article 29 of this law, the authorities and rights of the DPRD include:

“The dismissal of the head and the vice head of the local government...is announced in the DPRD ...in the plenary meeting initiated by the head of the DPRD”⁴⁶³ and:

“The dismissal of the head and the vice head of the local government are proposed to the president, based on the decision of the Supreme Court, following the opinion of the DPRD that the head and vice head of the local government are considered to have broken their oath of office ...”⁴⁶⁴.

⁴⁶² Republic of Indonesia (1999), “The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 22/1999 regarding Local Governments”, (original title “*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 22 tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*”), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_99/uu1999/uu-22-99.htm, [3 September, 2004], Article 44, Points 1 and 2.

⁴⁶³ Republic of Indonesia (2003), “The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 32/2004 regarding Local Governments”, (original title “*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*”), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2004/pp032-2004.html, [3 September 2006], Article 29, Point 3

⁴⁶⁴ Republic of Indonesia (2003), “The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 32/2004 regarding Local Government”, (original title “*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 32 tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah*”), Available [online], http://www.ri.go.id/produk_uu/isi/pp2004/pp032-2004.html, [3 September, 2006], Article 29, Point 4a

Thus, the nature of the relationship between them is that of legislature and executive and more of a political arrangement than an organizational/bureaucratic one.

The relationship is a vulnerable one and, in many cases, has resulted in a local government head losing their position. This has occurred, for example, during LPJ reporting forums on program implementation, including VSE development, which takes place at the end of each fiscal year. The Governor of Middle Java Province, whilst not involved in this research, made a relevant comment when interviewed for an Indonesian national newspaper: “The regent and mayor... must be ready to face reality if the accountability report (LPJ) is not accepted”⁴⁶⁵.

Another issue is the potential for the relationship to deteriorate. In Bekasi District, one of the locations of this research, the head and vice-head of the local government have been dismissed. The online newspaper, *Tempo*, reported that the DPRD proposed to dismiss the elected head and vice-head of the local government, alleging miscalculation during ballot tabulation⁴⁶⁶. *Kompas* reported that the head of the Election Committee of the DPRD cancelled the plenary meeting to endorse the local government head and vice head, due to the intervention of various DPRD factions that claimed corruption was involved. With the new law, Law 32/2004, the role and function of the DPRD in the election has been replaced by the Local Electorate Commission or KPUD⁴⁶⁷. As reported also by *Kompas*, in September 2003, a group of people rallied in front of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (DEPDAGRI), asking the minister to cancel the result of the election of the head and vice-head of the Bekasi District local government. It was also reported that six political parties met with the Minister with an aim to prevent the inauguration of the head and vice-head. Finally, a Supreme Court decision found their election to be illegitimate, as the head of the local government had allegedly not obtained permission from his superior. As related by the Governor of West Java Province, who received the letter from the Minister of Internal Affairs (DEPDAGRI) regarding the dismissal, before delivering it to the Bekasi District: “There was no problem with their performance while holding the positions of Head and the Vice-Head in the Bekasi District

⁴⁶⁵ Nugroho, Chandra Adhie (2001), “The Era of Inflexible Relationship Executive-Legislative”, (original title “*Era Hubungan Kaku Eksekutif – Legislatif*”), Available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0106/29/daerah/erah41.htm>, [29 June 2001]

⁴⁶⁶ Setiawan, Yudha and Siswanto (2006), “The Dismissal Letter of the Regent of Bekasi is Illegal”, (original title “*Surat Keputusan Pemberhentian Bupati Bekasi Cacat Hukum*”), Available [online], <http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/jakarta/2006/02/20/brk,20060220-74233.id.html>, [17 May 2006]

⁴⁶⁷ Ant and Ima (2003), “The coalition of six political parties call for the election process of the Head of Local Government of Bekasi District to be repeated.”, (original title “*Koalisi Enam Parpol Minta Pemilihan Ulang Pilkada Bekasi*”), Available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/metro/news/0311/17/151841.htm>, [17 May 2006]

since 21 January, 2004. However, this decision was for the sake of the supremacy of the law⁴⁶⁸.

Such political changes in the executive branch of local government can impact on the development of VSE programs and policies. Immediately following appointment, the head of the local government has the right to decide the mission of his or her government, as well as deciding which VSE programs will be given priority. The DPRD has the power to endorse or otherwise the VSE programs proposed by the BAPPEDA or EOD. As discussed in Chapter 4, most of the local governments involved in this research are primarily concentrating on development of the local economy while, in the education sector, the focus is on primary and secondary education. Effective cooperation between the local government and the DPRD is essential, as every year, VSE programs need to be discussed by them, in their executive capacity and the DPRD in its legislative capacity, in order to achieve agreement, especially when it comes to determining the APBD (the annual programs and budget) to be implemented. The rejection on the part of the DPRD of the local government's annual report will obviously affect the output of discussions on VSE planning proposals. Similarly, the changing of local government heads and vice-heads in the middle of their terms of office, such as in the above-mentioned Bekasi District case, will undoubtedly impact upon VSE programs, as new leaders will likely have their own, different, missions to those currently being implemented.

6.2.2 Organizational Relationships

VSE development is also influenced by the power of the internal bureaucracy arrangement of the local government. In the local government organizational structure, the divisions below the head and vice-head, such as secretary or SEKDA or Dinas (Local Education Office or EOD), Board (BAPPEDA), Office and Assistants, as illustrated in Figure 7 above, are known as the 'Instruments' of the local government. This structure also reflects the different positions within the hierarchy, from the top, down to the lower managerial positions – each of which has a potential influence on the focus of VSE development programs.

The role of the regent secretary or *Sekda* (*Sekretaris Daerah*), as stated by law, is to act as a 'supporting element' to the local government head and vice-head. He or she is directly

⁴⁶⁸ Sugeng (2006), "The dismissal of the Head and the Vice Head of Bekasi District", (original title "*Bupati dan Wakil Bupati Kabupaten Bekasi Diberhentikan*"), Available [online], <http://www.media-indonesia.com/berita.asp?id=87630>, [17 May, 2006]

responsible to the head or vice-head in assisting with implementing the local government's mission, plus providing managerial and administrative services to all local government 'instruments'. The Secretary is appointed by the local government head, selected from amongst existing local government staff and approved by the governor, while positions below the secretary, such as the head of the Education Office (EOD), are decided by the secretary and endorsed by the head of the local government. The head and vice-head of the local government are elected political positions and are not civil servants in status, while the District Secretary (*Sekda*) is the senior government official at district administration level. Their relationship represents a critical point of interaction between the local political elite and the local civil servants.

The development of VSE programs is influenced by the policy making processes of local government. The *Sekda* acts as 'mediator' and also as 'director' of the local institutions beneath him/her. By focusing on the head of the local government's mission, the *Sekda* drives the BAPPEDA in determining priorities and budget allocations for the EOD and other local institutions. In the same manner, the *Sekda* also guides the EOD to establish and implement the programs and activities to meet the local government's mission in education. Unfortunately, as discussed in Chapter 4, the VSE has not been a priority of the local governments. This has necessitated EOD staff obtaining the support of the *Sekda* to secure the local government's contribution to the shared funding of 'block grants', as part of the budget planned by BAPPEDA. It would seem that the position of *Sekda* is highly strategic in determining the priority given to VSE programs.

In many local governments, the interaction between the regent or mayor and the *Sekda* is critical, as each occupy powerful positions but have different backgrounds. Nurhandoko has suggested: "The *Sekda* is in the top local government management position and, therefore, he or she should be responsible for maintaining a highly-effective relationship"⁴⁶⁹. While Chandra Adhie Nugroho commented: "... the status of positions such as that of local government Secretary (*Sekda*), occupying the highest echelon under the regent/mayor position...has of late become a hot issue in some regions, as many regents/mayors have replaced the *Sekda*"⁴⁷⁰. The position of *Sekda* is sometimes considered 'redundant' in view of the existence of the vice-head position. The *Sekda* and vice-head functions, in

⁴⁶⁹ Nurhandoko, (2005), "Differentiating Political Problems from the Management of Government", (original title "*Bedakan Masalah Politik dengan Manajemen Pemerintahan*"), <http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/cetak/2005/0105/17/teropong/wawancara.htm>, Available [online], [15 March 2007]

⁴⁷⁰ Nugroho, Chandra Adhie (2001), "The Era of Inflexible Relationship Executive-Legislative", (original title "*Era Hubungan Kaku Eksekutif – Legislatif*"), Available [online], <http://www.kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0106/29/daerah/erah41.htm>, [29 June 2001]

assisting the head, are almost the same. In many cases, as reported in the national newspaper, ‘*PELITA*’, this has caused confusion for local government heads and the relationship between vice-head and *Sekda* can be one of conflict and cause a serious dilemma for the head. According to one newspaper report:

“In such a situation, usually the head prefers to protect the vice-head, as the head is aware that his appointment is dependent on the vice-head’s support. Thus, it is not surprising that, recently, many *Sekdas*’ positions have been replaced,a recent case including that of the Secretary of Bekasi District ...”⁴⁷¹.

However, operationally-speaking, the *Sekda* is seemingly more powerful than the vice-head. As the most senior civil servant, the *Sekda* has the right to select the heads of local institutions, including that of the Local Education Office (EOD). Unless an EOD head has sufficient experience and knowledge in the educational field and is capable of convincing the head and vice-head of the local government, future educational developments will face some difficulties. In this matter, as illustrated in Table 13 below, most of the EODs involved in this research have been led by recently appointed officials. Only one official - the EOD Head, Tangerang District - had a long-established background in education. As discussed earlier, the majority of EOD heads are still struggling with their new responsibilities, especially with regard to providing support for the VSE schools.

Table 13. EOD Heads

No	Province	District or City	Background	Appointment
1	West Java	Bekasi District	Education	New
		Bekasi City	Religion	New
2	Banten	Tangerang District	Economy	Incumbent
		Tangerang City	Social	New
3	Bangka Belitung	Bangka District	Education	New
		Pangkalpinang City	Education	New

Source, interview 2005

Another intra-organizational relationship is that between the BAPPEDA and the EOD. The functions of the local government institutions below the *Sekda*, such as the EOD and the BAPPEDA, are determined by law, (Law 22/1999). As stated in PP Number 8/2003

⁴⁷¹ Turatno, Arief (2005), “Regional Autonomy, the Vice Head and the Secretary of the Local Government”, (original title “*Otda, Wakil Bupati dan Sekda*”), Available [online], <http://www.pelita.or.id/baca.php?id=484>, [15 March 2007]

(Indonesian Government Regulation clarifying the content of Law 22/1999), the EOD is responsible for the implementation of decentralization in the education sector, including VSE, the formulation of technical policy regarding education and grant authorizations, such as for the opening of new schools⁴⁷². BAPPEDA, as the ‘technical element’ of local governments, is responsible for planning, including formulating the technical policy of planning at local level, maintaining the coordination and cooperation of the establishment, local development planning, in which the VSE is also part of the scope of responsibilities. Thus, cooperation between the BAPPEDA and the EOD has significant influence on the development of VSE policies and programs in local governments.

The nature of the interaction between the various local institutions politically and organizationally is sensitive, as far as development of VSE programs is concerned. The political nature of the interaction between the DPRD and other local government institutions function-wise is that of legislative versus executive. The authority of the DPRD, as a legislature, is superior to that of the executive, when it comes to controlling programs and budgeting as well as in appointing and replacing local government heads. The status of the position of officials in the local government hierarchy determines the degree of influence wielded with regard to the VSE programs. The powers of top management (mayor or regent) to appoint the *Sekda* is similarly critical as is the power of the *Sekda* to appoint the head of the Local Education Office (EOD). Thus, VSE program operations are influenced by the local government hierarchy and the political relations between executive and legislature. The change of local leaders substantially affects the formation of this local government bureaucracy, including the EOD, as well as impacting on the working environment and the relationships between the institutions that coordinate and manage the VSE.

6.3 The EOD and the BAPPEDA

6.3.1 Degree of Relationship

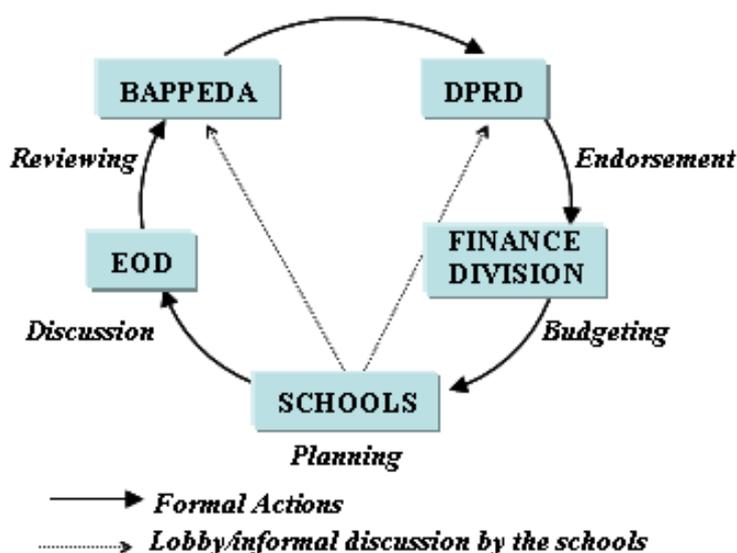
The relationship between the Local Education Office (EOD) and the Local Planning Board (BAPPEDA) in districts and cities involved in this research still appears very formal, considering their role and functions. Functionally, the BAPPEDA has greater influence over the development of the VSE development programs than the EOD does. The BAPPEDA is

⁴⁷² Republic of Indonesia, (2003), “Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 8, 2003 regarding Guidelines for Regional Organization”, original title “*Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 8 Tahun 2003 tentang Pedoman Organisasi Perangkat Daerah*”, Available [online], http://www.indonesia.go.id/produk_uu/produk2003/pp2003/pp8'03.htm, [10 October 2006]

involved in providing the planning for priority programs and budget allocation for all sectors, including that of education. These are discussed with the DPRD before final approval. The EOD is responsible only for the implementation of local government education policy, including that of the VSE sector. The EOD has to work jointly with the BAPPEDA to ensure the planning programs meet the focus of the given policy and the budget allocation. Thus, the relationship is a hierarchical one.

However, both the BAPPEDA and the EODs are engaged in struggles regarding their respective roles, particularly in formulating annual local government programs. The mechanism for formulating the annual programs, as illustrated in Figure 9 below, encourages them to interact with each other in a formal environment, especially when it comes to discussing and coordinating planning programs for the development of VSE.

Figure 9. Local Programs/Budgeting Formulation



Source: summarised analysis of interview data from the interviewees, illustrated by Turijin

The Head of the BAPPEDA of Pangkalpinang City relates that: "...The BAPPEDA acts as coordinator of all planning, whether this be for education or other sectors ...but the initial planning is actually carried out by the Local Education Office (EOD)..."⁴⁷³. However, as explained by the Head of the BAPPEDA of the Tangerang District, the BAPPEDA also reviews all local planning, including that done by the Local Education Office (EOD). He argues: "Special reviews are carried out regarding school-building plans ... The Local Education Office (EOD) is required to provide the technical specifications ... but we give

⁴⁷³ Head of BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005

them the formulas and standards as to how the vocational secondary schools (SMK) must be built...The technical review must be outstanding...⁴⁷⁴. He adds: “In the review, activities, budgeting for students, teachers and the like are evaluated. There is a budget ceiling...and standard budget indicators, given by the DPR (Local People’s Representative) and, together with us, (the BAPPEDA)...⁴⁷⁵.

Other BAPPEDA heads involved in this research have similar perceptions, asserting that, in the local programs’ planning process, the responsibility of the BAPPEDA in carrying out review is to ensure compliance with RENSTRA (Strategic Planning). The DPRD’s most significant role is to review the proposed budgeting. The Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City stated: “...the responsibility of evaluating the programs is the BAPPEDA’s”.⁴⁷⁶ The Head of the Bekasi District BAPPEDA stated that “...the BAPPEDA deals with all planning issues...⁴⁷⁷. The Head of the Bangka District BAPPEDA added that, further along in the process, the planning is socialized⁴⁷⁸, by being submitted to the DPRD for comments and suggestions⁴⁷⁹. Thus, it could be argued that evaluation of proposed planning is a BAPPEDA function.

Each year, after compiling the proposals from the schools, the EOD has to meet with the BAPPEDA to discuss planning and budgets, in a session known as *pembahasan* or evaluation. The schools (SMKs) have to plan annually for their routine expenditure and also for obtaining specific funding through block grants and developmental programs from the central or provincial governments. Routine expenditure is for school operational needs, which have been standardized for all Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK), such as maintenance and repairs, teaching materials and staff salaries. ‘Developmental programs’ refers to activities used to support the current national educational development policy and is funded by the Central Office (DVSE), in the form of block grants, assisted by the Provincial Education Offices (EOP). Examples are listed in Appendix 1 and 2 and include teacher professional development programs, curriculum and new course development. Some block grants require budget contributions from the local government⁴⁸⁰.

⁴⁷⁴ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

⁴⁷⁵ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

⁴⁷⁶ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁷⁷ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

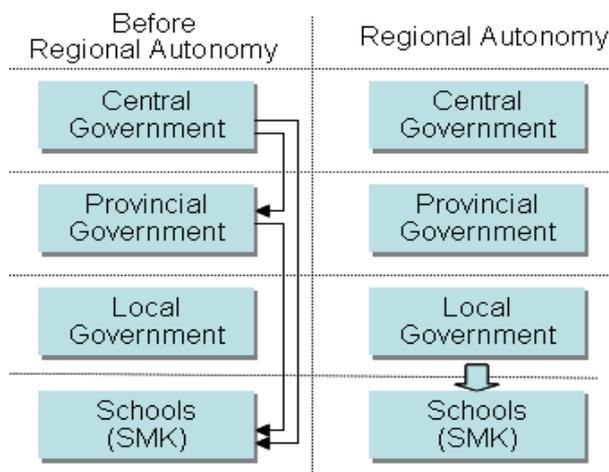
⁴⁷⁸ The word of ‘socialization’ is very popular among the state officials and is generally formed as an activity to introduce a new concept or policy

⁴⁷⁹ The Head of the BAPPEDA Bangka District, interviewed 20 July 2005

⁴⁸⁰ Dikmenjur (2004), *Program Outline of the Vocational Secondary Education Programs*, Jakarta-Indonesia, Dikmenjur

Before regional autonomy, both routine and developmental programs were decided at central office and the data used in the decision-making process was collected directly, by visiting the schools⁴⁸¹. Currently, as illustrated in Figure 10 below, these programs have been decentralized to local government. Both routine and developmental programs are managed by the local governments, through the Local Education Office.

Figure 10. School Budgets: before and after Regional Autonomy



Source: summarised from the interviews, illustrated by Turijin

In the evaluation session, as indicated by the school personnel above, the BAPPEDA has the right to examine the proposed planning. The Head of the Tangerang City BAPPEDA suggested that the EOD is not yet capable of implementing the proposed VSE programs, maintaining that, until now, information on education issues and problems is still coming from outside of the EOD, such as from newspapers⁴⁸². He also suggested that the EOD is only capable of handling routine programs, and is not yet looking ahead as to what should be achieved in the future. The Head of the Bekasi District BAPPEDA criticized the EOD office in his district: “When it comes to planning issues, the problem with the Local Education Offices (EODs) is cultural; our bureaucrats are not eager to start planning on a systematic, continuous long-term basis. They just want instant programs”⁴⁸³.

However, he is also aware that, in reviewing EOD proposals, the BAPPEDA is still struggling with the changed guidelines. When Regional Autonomy was first introduced, the assessment of the local government offices’ proposals was informed by the RENSTRA (Strategic

⁴⁸¹ In my previous research in 1995 for my Master degree, the data and information of the vocational secondary schools in Indonesia were gathered directly by the Central Education Office (DVSE), assisted by the Provincial Education Office (*Kanwil*)

⁴⁸² Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁸³ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

Planning Guidelines) of the local government. RENSTRA was based on the top-down central planning and national priorities (PROPENAS)⁴⁸⁴. Currently, as he mentioned, the BAPPEDA has to become accustomed to the new regulations which, in many cases, differ from the views of the EOD officials. As stated in new planning law, Law 25/2004, planning for local government programs is to involve the local institutions and the participation of the communities, in a bottom-up approach. There is no link with the central, or even provincial, planning processes. At this stage, the EOD is likely to be not only committed to proposing the priority programs, as guided by local government policy via the RENSTRA, but also to central government policy objectives, especially with regard to developmental programs. The BAPPEDA typically finds itself in the middle, as a result of the change in regulations, moving from the RENSTRA to the financial allocation distribution basis. The Head of BAPPEDA, Tangerang District, stated that he is still trying to learn how to establish the best formula for allocating finances for each sector, including education⁴⁸⁵:

“In determining the ceiling indicator for each Local Education Office, we still struggling with the suitable formula to be applied; we need to scientifically review this, so as to be able to give an example to the education sector as to what percentage they might receive... We are still trying analyse how much should go to human resource development, how much to employment, agriculture, industry etc., and what percentage of funding for these areas should come from the APBD (Local Government Budget)”⁴⁸⁶.

By contrast, most of the EOD heads principally focus on the RENSTRA system, which is based on the priority programs determined by their local leaders (mayor or regent). The planning proposed to the BAPPEDA for evaluation is based on the decisions resulting from the ‘*musrengbang*’ (meeting established by local governments and attended by most of the local community, including the DPRD and the EOD, to decide the local priority programs in a district or city). As discussed earlier, the programs of the EOD are focused on the development of primary education, whereas in the case of VSE, the EOD merely follows central government policy. The Bekasi City EOD Head observed: “All of the developmental programs still come from the central office (DVSE) and none of it is created locally. Some of it matches with the local policy and some of it doesn’t. The EOD, as the local government’s education office, has to re-arrange local program priorities to suit central government policy.

⁴⁸⁴ PROPENAS stands for *Program Pembangunan Nasional* or National Development Programs, established centrally, based on Law 25/2000.

⁴⁸⁵ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

⁴⁸⁶ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

For example, policy originating from the central office might be to run an automotive course, which might be inconsistent with local policy ...⁴⁸⁷.

It is likely that the requirement to review the VSE planning programs is the only stimulus for even establishing a relationship at all. Relationships between these bodies, when it comes to developing VSE programs, are still in the beginning phase and are stimulated by their institutional functions. Officials interviewed for this research, whether from the BAPPEDA or the EOD, appear to be not very familiar with the VSE programs and to be still confused with the new RENSTRA and PROPENAS planning processes. The objective of cooperation between the BAPPEDA and the EOD is to get the VSE program plans to the stage where they are ready to be discussed in the DPRD and, hopefully, receive official approval. Thus, the initiative of the EOD to maintain a good working relationship with the BAPPEDA is important, not only to obtain guidance and assistance in establishing planning, but also to persuade the BAPPEDA officials to increase future budget allocations for VSE development.

6.3.2 Outcomes of the Relationships

The BAPPEDA review session is similarly important for both the BAPPEDA and the EOD, in order to ensure planning proposals are accepted and endorsed by the DPRD. As BAPPEDA is responsible for coordinating planning and discussing this with the DPRD at the next stage of local government policy making, the EOD's explanations about the proposals are very important, especially for anticipating questions DPRD members will ask. The head of the EOD is, however, also invited to explain the proposed programs directly to the DPRD. In addition, as the coordinator, the BAPPEDA is also responsible for reviewing the proposed planning programs from the EOD. Thus the outcome of discussions is becoming critical for the EOD. Most of the BAPPEDA heads involved in this research assert that it is impossible for the existing local government budget to finance all proposed programs requested by local institutions. This is an indication that the proposed programs and their financial planning exceed the budget allocated by the BAPPEDA or, as perceived by local institutions (the EOD included), this budget is insufficient to meet real needs. As noted earlier, many schools are complaining about this situation. Most BAPPEDA Heads involved in this research have echoed similar thoughts about the insufficiency of budget allocations, as per the following remarks by leaders of BAPPEDA in various local governments:

⁴⁸⁷ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

“We have tried to increase the education sector budget allocation from the local budget to 20% however, with this current condition, it is impossible and, therefore, the education budget is only 12 %”⁴⁸⁸.

“The budget allocation for the education sector is still under 10%”⁴⁸⁹.

“The local government is aware of the budget limitations...thus, at this time the local government is incapable of solving all problems and so has to establish a scale of priority”⁴⁹⁰.

“Local government finances are limited...In the education sector, the allocated budget’s first priority is funding for renovating and rehabilitating the SD (Primary Schools) and the SMP (Secondary Schools)...”⁴⁹¹.

“It is impossible for the local government to provide the entire the budget; funds should also come from the schools and the community”⁴⁹².

In addition, in the BAPPEDA review session, some programs proposed by the EOD have the potential to be rejected as they are inconsistent with local policy, regulations and standards. ‘Compromise’ as suggested by the Head of the BEKASI District, is considered to be a suitable strategy for measuring the outcome of this evaluation, ie, a program will be accepted or rejected, based on a shared agreement.⁴⁹³. In this manner, a plan or program which is considered to be consistent with both national and local policy, as well as being considered a priority need, is likely to be accepted and will advance to the next stage – that of proposal to the DPRD⁴⁹⁴. Meanwhile, as explained by the Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, a proposed plan or program that is not clearly explained or has insufficient supporting documents gets dropped from the list or cancelled with regards to compiling additional data.

Similarly, a proposed program is also rejected if the school has failed in implementing such a program in the past⁴⁹⁵. Seemingly, both the EOD and the BAPPEDA are less concerned about the outcome of the meeting as the review is not about discussing or evaluating the substance

⁴⁸⁸ Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005

⁴⁸⁹ Head of the BAPPEDA Bangka District, interviewed 20 July 2005

⁴⁹⁰ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi City, interviewed in 14 April 2005

⁴⁹¹ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

⁴⁹² Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁹³ Head of the BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

⁴⁹⁴ Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005

⁴⁹⁵ Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City interviewed 7 June 2005

of the proposed programs but more about government policy and budgetary concerns. It is apparent that such meetings improve the quality of planning and, from the perspective of management, such reviews provide at least some means for interaction and cooperation between the EOD and the BAPPEDA, even if limited and only on a formal basis.

Both the BAPPEDA and the EOD interviewees agree that the relationship between the two bodies is improving. They are aware that, in many cases, they hold different views and that, in BAPPEDA review sessions, as explained previously by the Head of the Bekasi District BAPPEDA, compromise is the only solution for reaching agreement⁴⁹⁶. The final decision is not based on arguments or explanations from just one side, but on both sides agreeing on the acceptance or rejection of any proposed programs that will be sent to the DPRD for endorsement. Most of the BAPPEDA heads involved in this research, such as the one for Tangerang City, are aware that the BAPPEDA is not expert on the issues facing every sector - including education. BAPPEDA's responsibility only extends to the scope of its authority to review while, technically, it is up to the EOD to explain⁴⁹⁷. Although, in many cases, the EOD has failed to provide adequate explanations of certain proposed programs, one BAPPEDA head stated: "BAPPEDA is very cooperative... and really supportive of the EOD"⁴⁹⁸. Other BAPPEDA heads, such as that from Tangerang District agree, asserting that the BAPPEDA really supports planning proposals from the bottom up (ie the EOD)⁴⁹⁹. Furthermore, the Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City stated that the relationship with the EOD is quite good and sometimes carried out informally⁵⁰⁰. Meanwhile, most of the EOD heads involved in this research are aware of their limitations. As discussed in previous chapters (especially chapters 4 and 5), EOD personnel do indeed have poor knowledge of VSE and also lack experience in managing the vocational schools (SMK) programs. The Tangerang City EOD Head states: "The problem in developing the VSE schools (SMKs) lies with local government budgets. It might also be caused by communication problems between myself (of the EOD) and the decision-maker (BAPPEDA) about budgeting matters"⁵⁰¹. Similarly, the Tangerang District EOD head comments: "Coordination with other local institutions is difficult and the way of thinking of the officials in the local government is different...Cooperation only takes place at meetings and not when it actually comes to implementing the programs, even though the intention might be to cooperate; but if each

⁴⁹⁶ Head of BAPPEDA Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

⁴⁹⁷ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁹⁸ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁴⁹⁹ Head of the BAPPEDA Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005

⁵⁰⁰ Head of the BAPPEDA Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005

⁵⁰¹ Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

institution is still standing behind its own program, it means true cooperation cannot take place⁵⁰².

At school level, cooperation between the two bodies is an important aspect however, as both BAPPEDA and EOD personnel are not yet familiar with VSE, schools are generally asserting that the outcome is not a satisfactory one for them. As mentioned previously, in the early stages of planning, the proposed programs from schools are discussed with the EOD personnel. Yet, in many cases, schools' proposals, even when detailed clearly, have not satisfied the EOD and have been refused. As illustrated in the table 14 below, the budget allocated to some schools (SMKs) involved in this research have fluctuated and not increased substantially over a period when local government revenues have grown as a result of regional autonomy. This pattern of budget allocation is a reflection of the relationships between EODs and BAPPEDAs.

Table 14. School Budget from Local Government (in thousand USD)

No	District or City	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1	SMK 4 Tangerang City	1,529	1,470	1,063	1,450	1,595	1,600	2,160	2,160
2	SMK2 Pangkalpinang City	1,305	1,333	950	1,153	1,610	1,506	NA,	NA
3	SMK2 Bekasi District	733	713	502	653	703	703	729	729

Sources, SMK4 Tangerang City, SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, SMK2 Bekasi District 2005

The principal of SMK1, Bekasi District, explained that the school program planning and bid for a budget allocation is referred, firstly, to the EOD, then sent to the BAPPEDA and the DPRD. The principal of SMK1, Bekasi City, recalled that in the past the budget allocation was transferred directly from the Central Office, but that now it must be negotiated with the Local Education Office (EOD). He says:

“Unfortunately, the EOD has not yet understood the real needs of the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMKs) and, therefore, the proposed RAPBS (Planning Budget for School Programs and Expenditure) is always being cut. The proposal is submitted to the EOD and then to the BAPPEDA and then, finally to the DPRD, who makes the

⁵⁰² Head of Local Education Office (EOD) Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

final decision. In essence, DPRD members will examine the rationale of the proposed budget”⁵⁰³.

As a result, he asserts that his school has had an inadequate operational budget. He stated that, in addition, even though the EOD has approved the programs they have proposed, implementation is not immediate: it might be this year; it might be next year. Almost all other interviewees at school level made similar statements and declared that they have experienced planning problems. The principal of SMK1, Tangerang District, stated that in 2004, the EOD had allocated his school only the same operational budget as other, ordinary, schools⁵⁰⁴. He complained that, in fact, the vocational component makes schools such as his far more complex than the ordinary schools, from the material required for students to do their practicum, to machinery and equipment operation costs, as well as the greatly increased electrical power needs. Even one of the teachers from SMK1, Bekasi City, noted:

“Since regional autonomy, there has been a policy stipulating that, before implementing any programs, we should be cooperating fully with the local government or the Local Education Office (EOD)... but sometimes it is just not practical, as we have been used to dealing with the provinces directly for decades”⁵⁰⁵.

The schools (SMK) are required to submit plans and budgets to the EOD for its determination. The EOD sometimes rejects parts of the schools’ proposals. As the Principal of SMK3, Tangerang City explained it, the EOD does receive input from the schools, but if a school’s proposed program does not match local education policy, it will be suspended⁵⁰⁶. Naturally, the EOD will only take those schools’ program plans it accepts forward to the next stage in the process at BAPPEDA. The schools have to wait for the results. It would appear that this issue is not only occurring with the Vocational School (SMK) sector, but also in other school sectors as well, such as the Senior High Schools (SMA), as another observer has stated: “There has been a tendency, ever since the local government has taken over the control of budgets, that sufficient operating funds for schools is becoming difficult to obtain. As one example, the SMU of Unaaha, before regional autonomy was implemented, received an operating budget of Rp 60 million; after Regional Autonomy, their budget has been reduced

⁵⁰³ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁵⁰⁴ Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁵⁰⁵ Senior Teacher, SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁵⁰⁶ Principal of SMK3, Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

to RP 50 million”⁵⁰⁷. In order to obtain higher funding, struggling schools are now attempting to lobby EOD personnel – something which they have never experienced before. The Principal of SMK1, Bekasi City states: “Our budget funding which, previously, was sent to us from the Central Office or from the Provincial Education Office, we now have to lobby the EOD for. Unfortunately, the EOD does not really understand the needs of Vocational Schools (SMKs)...”⁵⁰⁸. The Principal of SMK1, Bekasi District explains: “...They might, in fact, be interested in the VSE programs, but the problem is in establishing a relationship...Each party has their own strategy and their plans end up not matching. In addition, there is no routine coordination ...”⁵⁰⁹.

The Principal of SMK1, Tangerang District, suggested that, as both the BAPPEDA and the EOD are equally unfamiliar with the VSE’s programs, that it would be worthwhile if they could cooperate together on program coordination, especially in the review sessions, and to involve school staff as well⁵¹⁰. Other interviewees from the schools involved in this research agree that the amount of budget funding a school receives is influenced by the quality of the relationship with the EOD and BAPPEDA. As mentioned by the Principal of SMK2, Pangkalpinang City, funding is the real issue: if funding is sufficient, he is confident that both of the EOD and the BAPPEDA will always support the VSE programs⁵¹¹. The principal of SMK3, Tangerang City argues that the local government does not have enough funding to support the programs originating from the Central Office (DVSE) and only just limited funding to support increases in school staff salaries⁵¹². He estimated that the budget allocation for the education sector for his city has already reach 20% of the total local government budget. However, as also been discussed previously, the programs to which the Mayor gives priority for developing and improving are those of primary and lower secondary education ; at this stage, the VSE programs are not the priority.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy, the local government budget has been following the new fiscal arrangements. Local government budget resources, as regulated by Law 25/1999, come from the fiscal balance allocated by the central government and PAD (Local Revenue). The fiscal balance is made up of three types, namely, taxes and natural resources,

⁵⁰⁷ Nara, Nasrullah (2002), “When “Small Kings” Reigned at the School”, (original title “*Ketika "Raja-raja Kecil" Bertakhta di Sekolah*”), Available [online], Kompas <http://www.kompas.com/kompas-cetak/0211/06/dikbud/keti08.htm>, [5 July, 2007]

⁵⁰⁸ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁵⁰⁹ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁵¹⁰ Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁵¹¹ Principal SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed in 23 June 2005

⁵¹² Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

the General Allocated Funds (DAU) and the Special Allocated Fund (DAK) - as listed in the following table.

Table 15. DAU (in thousand USD)

No	District or City	Type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1	Bangka District	DAU	13,444	16,557	18,139	8,042	9,511
		DAK	15		860	860	1,160
2	Pangkalpinang City	DAU	5,007	8,131	9,085	9,588	10,872
		DAK	8		647	647	829
3	Bekasi District	DAU	19,861	23,088	23,124	24,816	28,495
		DAK					
4	Bekasi City	DAU	19,444	20,944	25,649	27,576	31,359
		DAK			500	500	400
5	Tangerang District	DAU	25,947	30,660	36,701	40,116	44,877
		DAK			650	650	400
6	Tangerang City	DAU	14,654	15,811	18,610	20,102	21,411
		DAK					

Source, <http://www.Setneg.go.id>, 2005,

The DAU is allocated with the aim to create equality between the different districts/cities, taking into consideration local government strength, geographical factors, population and the GDB. In 2003, three new districts have been established in Bangka namely, South Bangka district, Middle Bangka district and West Bangka district. As seen in the table above, in 2004, the DAU of Bangka district decreased as revenue was shared with the three new districts. The amount of funding from DAK is determined by the relevant ministry (so, for example, in the education sector, this would be the Ministry of Education). The DAK is provided in order to assist with a local government's specific needs for supporting national policy in relation to foreign aid, forestry cultivation and humanitarian projects aimed at meeting basic needs. It is argued that local government budget allocations, based on such a formula, do not meet the needs of the education sector. The Head of Education Commission of the Local Peoples' Representative Assembly (DPRD), Bekasi City explained states: "The PAD is USD 12,421,052.63; the fiscal balance is around USD 73,684,210.52; while the real need is almost USD 176,470,588.23. So, finally, a scale of priorities is made..."⁵¹³. The Head of the Bekasi District BAPPEDA complained that the formula for determining funding under the current system is unfair. Bekasi District, he asserts, has no natural resources, yet its industrial area of around 10,000 hectares, is the largest in Indonesia. He believes that factors other than natural resources should be considered by the central government in determining funding.

⁵¹³ Head of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly or DPRD Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005

Based on the above analysis, the relationship between the EOD and the BAPPEDA when it comes to cooperating over VSE program planning, is a very formal one. The current working mechanism, particularly the program-generating process, does encourage them to at least have a relationship. On the one hand, the EOD is responsible for developing local education program plans (that have originally been prepared by the schools); while the BAPPEDA's role is to coordinate the proposed planning from all local institutions (including from the EOD), to oversee the priority programs, according to the availability of the local government's budget. The '*pembahasan*' or review meeting is likely to be the only medium for them to interact with each other to screen programs and to select those to be given highest priority, in accordance with local government policy, and forward these to the next stage in the process, ie, to the DPRD for approval. The new fiscal arrangement (DAU and DAK), as determined by the Regional Autonomy law, on the surface appears to have substantially increased the local government's allocation of funding, yet these increases do not appear to be reflected in greater allocations to the schools. This is a clear indication that, regardless of increased funding capacity, as yet, VSE development is not the main priority of most local governments.

6.4 The EOD and the DPRD

As discussed previously, the VSE programs and budgets are ultimately determined by the District People's Representative Assembly (DPRD). After arguing for the proposed programs in the BAPPEDA review meeting, it is still the responsibility of the Local Education Office (EOD) to advocate for the proposed programs in front of the DPRD members. As stated in Law 23/2003, it is the task of the DPRD to review all the program plans before they can officially be announced as the local programs to be implemented⁵¹⁴. This forum functions as a formal meeting between the 'legislative' (DPRD) and the 'executive' (local government), in order to reach agreement on planning and on the budget amount to be allocated to supporting the proposed programs of all local institutions - including those from the EOD. Prior to the final decision, the DPRD has the right to ask the local administration to explain and justify their plans. Therefore this forum is critical for VSE development and it is important for the EODs to maintain a positive relationship with the members of the DPRD, in order to secure support.

⁵¹⁴ Republic of Indonesia (2003), "Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 8, 2003 regarding the Guidelines of the Regional Organization", original title "*Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 8 Tahun 2003 Tentang Pedoman Organisasi Perangkat Daerah*", Available [online], http://www.indonesia.go.id/produk_uu/produk2003/pp2003/pp8'03.htm, [10 October, 2006], Article 41.

The *'Dengar Pendapat'*⁵¹⁵ or hearing is also popular among the interviewees in this research, as is the *'pembahasan'* or review in the BAPPEDA. The meeting is conducted in the DPRD and attended by all of the local institutions, boards and offices, such as the EOD or any sections of the local government administration, except the schools. Each of them has to explain their proposed programs. In the education sector, it is the responsibility of the Head of the EOD to explain the proposed programs which have already been reviewed in the BAPPEDA. The DPRD's approval is the key to securing the funding allocation from the local government, and it also becomes valuable information for the schools and the EOD to obtain the distribution of the funds from the Financial Division of the local government for the approved programs⁵¹⁶. In addition, it is also useful for schools (SMKs) as part of the prerequisite condition in attaining the block grant⁵¹⁷ from the Central Office (DVSE) in Jakarta.

The *'Dengar Pendapat'* forum does, however, reflect the interaction between the legislature and executive - 'politicians' and 'professionals' - in local government, who have different interests and responsibilities. The Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP) (or *Dinas Provinsi Bangka Belitung*) commented to the DPRD, Pangkalpinang City: "...The DPRD sometimes doesn't really understand the issues being discussed and is reluctant to accept suggestions"⁵¹⁸. A member of the DPRD, Bekasi City, is also aware of the problem, noting: "Some members of the DPRD are less educated, compared to the 'executive' (local government) staff, most of whom are university graduates. It's easy to see this in meetings; in debating, DPRD members typically lack correct, strong arguments ..."⁵¹⁹.

It seems as though the nature of the outcome from the 'hearing' is the same as that of the BAPPEDA 'review'. As mentioned by the Head of the LPMP (Education Quality Assurance Board) of Bangka Belitung, the proposed programs can be approved or rejected and, sometimes, is accepted, but with certain conditions⁵²⁰. The Head of the EOD, Pasir District, said that, in many cases, the DPRD has suggested to the EOD to allocate funds to other schools, different from the original proposal⁵²¹. The meeting in the DPRD is just to assess

⁵¹⁵ The *Dengar Pendapat* or 'hearing' is a special meeting between the DPRD and other local institutions to explain to proposed programs for which approval is sought.

⁵¹⁶ Head of LPMP (The Education Quality Assurance Board), Bangka Belitung Province, voluntary interviewees, interviewed 5 March 2005

⁵¹⁷ Program *Kerja Dikmenjur* 2005

⁵¹⁸ Head of EOP of Babel Province, interviewed July 2005

⁵¹⁹ Head of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly or DPRD Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005

⁵²⁰ Head of LPMP (Education Quality Assurance Board) of Bangka Belitung, interviewed 1 August 2005

⁵²¹ Head of EOD of Pasir District, interviewed 18 June 2008

whether the proposed program suits the local government's existing priorities and accepting those program plans that match and rejecting or modifying those that do not. The DPRD's agreement to the proposed program reflects the success of the EOD in supporting VSE development. Conversely, the rejection and any other requests from the DPRD to amend, revise or improve the proposed programs reflect the failure of the EOD to support VSE development.

At school level, such formal meetings between bureaucrats of the EOD and members of the DPRD are another milestone in program development and lobbying is becoming popular. As discussed previously, most of the interviewees agreed that VSE is new for most of the officials in the local government, including in the EOD and BAPPEDA as well as politicians in the DPRD. However, the meeting in DPRD is the final stage in the process to determine how school programs will be funded, and the key decision is in the hands of the DPRD members who, very often, have limited knowledge of VSE, yet who influence the decisions made, thus affecting how VSE programs are supported by local government. The Principal, SMK1, Bekasi City expressed concern that the meeting would not likely examine the substance of the programs being proposed but, instead, just focus on the budget being sought: "The proposal passes from the management of the EOD, then to the BAPPEDA and then, finally, to the DPRD. Principally, the members of DPRD will ask for clarification regarding the budget for the proposed programs"⁵²².

As described previously, the EOD, the only office responsible for explaining the program proposals to the DPRD, has been accused of lacking in understanding of VSE. For this reason, schools involved in this research have taken the initiative to lobby or informally explain the proposed programs to the DPRD members directly, such as in the experience of the Principal of SMK 1 Bekasi District. This is becoming the trend for school principals to try to achieve their mission. Lobbying is a useful strategy for schools to pursue as it encourages the members of the DPRD to be supportive towards the EOD's proposed programs. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District reported that: "...We lobbied the members of the DPRD until 2am. There were two issues: firstly, industry experience; secondly, materials needed by students to do their training. ...Finally, the members approved USD 21,052.63, up from originally only USD 2,105.26; this has not yet been realised but at least the budget has been approved"⁵²³.

⁵²² Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed April 2005

⁵²³ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

As discussed earlier, the Financial Division of local government is responsible for distributing the approved budget to the schools. There is an internal arrangement in the local government, in which the schools and EODs are unable to intervene in the process, except by following applied mechanisms and procedures, including providing the requirements requested by the Financial Division or by informal lobbying. Yet, this is also another issue hampering the implementation stage of VSE programs, as communication and coordination between the schools and the Financial Division is required, in order to ensure the transfer of the agreed budget can occur smoothly.

In order to improve coordination, the members of the DPRD require effective communication with the EOD, in order to jointly manage the development of VSE on a local level. One member of the DPRD Tangerang District claims that Education in the regions is still in crisis: "...On the one hand, schools need adequate facilities and to be able to offer their teachers sufficient incentives, as staff well-being should also be a priority, yet on the other hand, we have to consider to our resourcing capability. Therefore, it's a dilemma for us"⁵²⁴. In the meantime, she is still waiting for the relevant institutions - either schools or the Local Education Office (EOD) - to start thinking about these issues and discuss them with the DPRD, in order to obtain support. The members of the DPRD, Bekasi City suggest that proactive action on the part of the local government officials can improve communication between the DPRD and the EOD and that the EOD should be the initiator⁵²⁵. In fact, the intentions of the DPRD members towards educational development are actually positive. One example is in Bekasi District, where the members have made frequent visits to the schools' developments; one member has even become a member of the School Committee⁵²⁶.

It is clear that the relationship between the EOD and the DPRD is very important to the development of VSE programs. The nature of the personnel of the EOD is a potential factor contributing to the sometimes unexpected decisions of the members of the DPRD.

The Head of the EOP West Java Province argued that in his experience of working with around 75 EODs in his province, the heads of these EODs are still dependent on him and obey all of his suggestions. As also suggested by the Principal of SMK1 Bangka District, the members of the EOD are likely to be not yet capable of building smooth relationships and their roles are not as powerful as the members of the DPRD⁵²⁷. It is also a strong indication

⁵²⁴ Member of DPRD Tangerang District, interviewed in March 2005

⁵²⁵ Member of DPRD Bekasi City, interviewed in April 2005

⁵²⁶ Head of Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly or DPRD Bekasi District, interviewed 25 May 2005

⁵²⁷ Principal of SMK1 Bangka District, interviewed 4 July 2005

that, in defending the schools' programs, EOD members are like mediators only, as the programs are not their responsibility to implement and the impacts will not be on the EODs, but on the schools. Thus, the outcome of their relationship is critical for the development of VSE programs, especially for the schools, as the proposed programs could end up being moved to other schools.

Meanwhile, the outcome of the relationship between the EOD and the BAPPEDA is merely that of improving the program plans, to enable them to be discussed in the DPRD. The BAPPEDA plays an important role in guiding and coordinating the proposed planning, in order to comply with applicable regulations. However, the information from the 'review' meeting is also important for the BAPPEDA in providing the draft of the budget for the EOD. In this regard, the lack of knowledge and experience of EOD members is still an issue that contributes to the outcome of their relationship. As well as the DPRD, the EODs have to face another powerful body - the BAPPEDA. The BAPPEDA is responsible for arranging the allocation of the Local Government budget to all Local Government offices, including the EOD. This is another challenge for the members of the EOD. With less power compared to the BAPPEDA and the DPRD, the ability of the EOD to encourage the BAPPEDA officials to support their proposed programs has become crucial to their success.

6.5 Chapter Summary

It is unavoidable that the development of VSE has been influenced by the nature of local government administration and arrangements. These findings enrich the literature produced by earlier researchers, who mostly discussed the principle and the implementation of the regional autonomy in the regions". As predicted by Sukma (2003), regional autonomy in Indonesia has facilitated important transformations and has had substantial consequences. The political struggles between legislature (DPRD) and executive, especially with the local government heads, are critical for policy development in VSE. Changes in the political leadership of local government potentially change the policy on VSE development. Furthermore, inharmonious relationships make it difficult to accommodate separate interests and functions of the executive and legislature.

In addition, the implementation of the political mission of the local leaders in developing education, including that of VSE sector, is influenced by the role of the local government Secretary (*Sekda*) and the relationship with political leadership of the local government as both tend to have different professional backgrounds. The outcome of this interaction will determine local government policy, which programs will be given priority and budget

allocation for VSE development. In this transition stage of the regional autonomy, VSE has not been priority for most local governments despite the fact that the local budget (APBD), especially the DAU component, has increased quite substantially.

The structural organization of the local government is also reflected in the hierarchy, with the *Sekda* performing as top management, driving and influencing the lower levels, especially in selecting and appointing the head of the EOD. Organizationally, the EOD and the BAPPEDA are on the same level in the management strata however, functionally, the BAPPEDA is more important to VSE development, especially when it comes to getting the proposed program plans ready to be discussed in the DPRD.

The establishment of official meetings, such as those for evaluation, in the BAPPEDA, and also the DPRD 'hearings', which form part of the series of processes for formulating programs for local schools, illustrate the principles of Regional Autonomy, namely 'decentralization' and 'democratization'. However, the capacity of the personnel at local level is likely to become the primary challenge for VSE development. The EOD, as the new local institution created under the Regional Autonomy Law to manage the VSE sector, has been hampered by the inexperience and limited knowledge of its officials, especially in the case of VSE. This is the main reason why the programs and budget allocation for the VSE schools, is still considered by the schools as being inadequate for their needs and further development.

Regardless of the personnel issue, structurally and functionally, the EOD is less powerful than the DPRD and the BAPPEDA within the local government. The final decisions about VSE programs and budget allocation are largely beyond the EOD's influence. Undoubtedly, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, there is a need for schools, as the institutions most familiar with the development and implementation of VSE programs, to be involved in every part of the decision-making process, such as in the BAPPEDA and DPRD. This would help improve the quality of the local planning. The lobbying carried out by the schools has been effective in influencing the decision making within local government, but informal lobbying and individual initiatives are very difficult for many heads of schools. Decentralisation and delegation of power to the local level and to schools as claimed by Rondinelli (2000) and Carino (2007) presents challenges. Equalization, as achieved in Canada as revealed by Watts (2000) is yet to be achieved.

CHAPTER 7

THE INFLUENCE OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY ON MANAGING THE VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION (VSE)

7.1 Introduction

The introduction of regional autonomy in Indonesia has changed the roles and functions of the Central, Provincial and Local Education Offices in the development of VSE. VSE has been decentralized, from Central Office (DVSE) in Jakarta, to local government control, through the Local Education Office (EOD), as determined in Regional Autonomy Law 22/1999 of 2001⁵²⁸. The DVSE, as stated by its Director, no longer has authority to directly manage the vocational secondary schools (SMKs)⁵²⁹. Similarly, in the provincial governments, as been discussed in previous chapters, the role of the Provincial Education Offices (EOP) has also changed and their focus is on implementing their provincial education policies, as autonomous governments. At local government level, the role of the Local Education Offices (EODs) has been elevated from the least important to the most important, when it comes to responsibility for managing VSE.

The objective of this chapter is to reflect on the changing management of VSE development as a whole, as a result of these changes, especially during the transition stage of regional autonomy, by investigating how the Central, Provincial and Local Education Offices are administered and to observe which agency and levels of government exerts the most influence. The chapter will argue that the strategic management of the Central Education Office remains a powerful influence in the development of VSE, despite the devolution of authority to District administrations. The Central Office, in fact, still retains the ability to implement its national policy objectives.

7.2 Management of the Central Education Office (DVSE)

Since the commencement of regional autonomy, the management strategy of the DVSE has shifted from a 'centralist' to a 'decentralized' approach. As explained by Head of the DVSE

⁵²⁸ Autonomy Law 22/1999, an official document explaining the new regional government authorities, was introduced in January 2001.(Rasyid, 2003).

⁵²⁹ VSS or Vocational Secondary School is a type of school established especially for producing mid-level workers. The schools are complete with the relevant facilities, reflecting the workplace, and run based on Curriculum-Based Training (CBT). (CC Version, 2005)

Facilities Subdivision⁵³⁰, the DVSE used to function as the source of guidance for the SMKs and they relied on their support for their operational and developmental needs⁵³¹. In addition, DVSE personnel had decades of experience directing the SMK, issuing instructions and designing programs, without involving the local government bureaucracy or even the Local Education Office (EOD). The Head of the Office of Provincial Education (EOP) in West Java, the most experienced of the three EOP heads involved in this research, observed: "...Both people in the DVSE and the schools (SMK) have experience in working jointly to ensure the success of the programs and a firm mutual understanding has also been established"⁵³². These functions have been officially devolved to the local government and the DVSE has become merely the national policy maker for vocational education⁵³³. In theory, the DVSE no longer has direct contact with the schools (SMK) and all matters associated with VSE are supposed to be managed locally, by the Local Education Offices.

However, the strategies employed to underpin DVSE management reflect the principle of coordination and also illustrate the DVSE's availability to drive VSE development at school level. As well as the DVSE's block grants being the main means by which it is able to exert influence over school programs (as discussed in Chapter 4), strategies also include the concept of 're-positioning' and the use of ICT, and the approach of 'self-implementation', which allow the schools to carry out activities, made possible by their block grants, on their own. All of these strategies accompanied the introduction of the block grants which, in this transition stage, have become the main source of funding for school programs, as well as for local governments to establish new schools. However, all of this support can only be gained by following the application processes established by the DVSE and with the DVSE making the final decision.

In reality, in spite of these new strategies, the direction and focus of VSE development is still the same as the policy existing before regional autonomy, that is, to improve the quality of and access to VSE education. These strategies, although this was not mentioned specifically by most of the DVSE informants, reflect a systematic approach towards anticipating the changing environment of the local governments and the schools (SMK) themselves, as a result of regional autonomy. The 'block grants' and 'self-implementation' obviously help

⁵³⁰ The Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, as explained by a staff member, assists the DVSE Director in establishing draft standards for school facilities, including size, buildings, laboratories, classrooms, equipment, furniture etc.

⁵³¹ The Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005.

⁵³² The Head of the EOP), West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005.

⁵³³ The President's Decision (UU) 109/2001 outlined the tasks and responsibilities of the central organizations or departments. On Page 25 it is clearly mentioned that the DVSE's tasks are to formulate and implement educational policy and ensure standardization.

support the DVSE's policy implementation in a local government environment where resource allocation and especially the budget are critical issues. The policy to improve access is also assisted by the 're-positioning' concept, as the schools have been eligible to expand their range of courses offered. Similarly, the use of ICT is an effective way to direct, monitor and control the schools in an informal manner, bypassing the local bureaucracy. The Director of the DVSE, being the person most responsible for VSE development on a national basis argues:

“...The focus of the policy is on the quality and quantity improvement of VSE. ...The policy is in the form of strategic planning, listing the main programs. These policies and programs are based on the 2020 grand design for VSE improvement, which was established in 1995. Thus, there is no difference in policy before and after regional autonomy...”⁵³⁴.

The decision to introduce these strategies has been supported by senior management. However, the block grants, a key component in the DVSE's strategy, have been controversial amongst senior officials. The block grants scheme was first introduced by the government in 1997 to assist poor schools survive the impact of the economic crisis and it was considered very successful⁵³⁵. Nowadays, however, it operates in a totally different manner. The Central Office (DVSE) introduced the block grants as an incentive and stimulant to the vocational schools and the EOD to start paying attention to the development of VSE. The schools have to provide not only the proposal for the block grant but also obtain from the district government a 10 to 50% contribution for the budget of their proposed programs⁵³⁶. As an incentive, successful schools will be given a second grant. As a stimulant, the grant will be terminated after it has been provided for three funding periods, thereafter the recipients are expected to continue to fund their programs from their own resources.

The block grants, given mostly in the form of budget support, rather than the physical resources the Central Office provided schools before regional autonomy, may be counter-productive if the Central Office's objective is to make local governments fully autonomous. However, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, these strategies, including the distribution of the grants, are the most suitable way to encourage local governments to start becoming involved in managing VSE. With regard to management principles, such a strategy may be considered strategic management, that is, encouraging an organization to deal with

⁵³⁴ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

⁵³⁵ Haryadi, Yadi (2001b)

⁵³⁶ Dikmenjur (2004), Dikmenjur (2005) and Dikmenjur (2006)

certain situations, by performing specific maneuvers and structured actions, to mediate with their environment and focus improvement, in order to achieve better results⁵³⁷. The Head of the DVSE Planning Subdivision is a supporter of this strategy:

“...Since the commencement of the Autonomy Law, the regions have been idle and no substantial activities have been created by the local governments to develop schools...In many cases, local government policy was not seriously aimed at actually improving education; it was, rather, focused on infrastructure development, such as roads, markets and construction”⁵³⁸.

He asserts that the block grants for new programs in existing schools, as well as to build new vocational secondary schools (SMK) are really needed to encourage the district governments, as well as the schools themselves, to actively develop and implement programs by themselves. This is also consistent with what has been discussed previously, in Chapter 4, that the local governments involved in this research are not yet giving their attention to the development of VSE and only to the primary (SD), junior (SMP) and senior high schools (SMA). The Head of the Facilities Subdivision agrees with the direct provision of continued support to the schools, he explained: “...The knowledge and the experience of local government personnel is very limited...Local governments, especially the EODs, still have difficulty interpreting the policies and intensions of the DVSE”⁵³⁹. He did, however, acknowledge that giving block grants to the schools directly had caused some problems: “...The block grant is not just one source of local government income, but has become the main source...Not all local governments are making it a priority to provide their share of budget allocation...At times, school principals and EOD heads do not lobby effectively their local governments, in that they fail to explain the local governments’ responsibility to fund their share of the grant, merely informing the local government that, in order to get USD 52,631.57, the reference letter must be signed...”⁵⁴⁰.

This central government official would appear to be suspicious that a conspiracy strategy is emerging at district and city level, in seeking block grants and local governments are concerned only about the money, rather than the programs. He also states: “... Some schools are eligible to receive seven different types of block grants, as they are able to provide the counterpart funding ...The schools which are not able to obtain any grants are complaining

⁵³⁷ Bovaird, Tony and Löffler, Elke (2003)

⁵³⁸ Head of the DVSE Planning Sub-Division, interviewed 14 January 2005

⁵³⁹ Head of DVSE Facilities Sub-Division, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁵⁴⁰ Head of DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

and feel it is because certain schools happen to be close to officials in the central government”

⁵⁴¹

These opinions reflect some confusion: on one hand, this senior official is skeptical of the success of the strategy; on the other he is confident that it has been a support for the schools. Another Deputy, the Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, criticizes the strategies as being contrary to the spirit of regional autonomy, that is, to decentralize authority from the central to the local governments. He suggests these strategies reflect the reluctance of the DVSE to properly devolve rights and responsibilities to the regional governments as well as to adjust to its new role as the policy-maker and not the program manager.⁵⁴²

Without doubt, all of these concerns show that DVSE program managers are aware of the potential impacts of the new strategies adopted since the commencement of regional autonomy. It also illustrates that they are still committed to the future development of VSE, even though it is now officially under the responsibility of local governments. Although the merits of the new strategies are still being debated, it is asserted that, from a strategic management point of view, they are useful to employ during the transition stage of regional autonomy.

7.2.1 Re-positioning Strategy

‘Re-positioning’, as stated by the Director of the DVSE, is the basic strategy behind the ‘Skill Toward 2020’ initiative in developing VSE⁵⁴³. This concept was established in 1995, before the introduction of the Regional Autonomy Law, based on the central government’s intention to guide future development of VSE programs, particularly in anticipation of the global era⁵⁴⁴. Although he was not actually involved in formulating ‘Skill Toward 2020’, as Director of the DVSE, the position most responsible for VSE development, he was very supportive of it. He believes that, in order to make centrally - based concepts a success in the changing environment of districts and cities, they need to be adjusted in their actual implementation, through the strategy of ‘re-positioning’. This adjustment or ‘re-positioning’ is aimed at

⁵⁴¹ Head of DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁵⁴² Head of DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

⁵⁴³ “Skill Toward 2020” is a policy concept established in 1995 by a “high level national taskforce”, aimed at reforming the Vocational Secondary Education system. Two key policies are related very closely to this research topic: the “Decentralization System of Management” and “Self-Supporting and Self-Managing Institutions” (Skill Toward 2020, p.10, 1997)

⁵⁴⁴ Priowirjanto, Gatot Hari and Suryatmana, Giri (2002), pp. 603-630

realigning the original concept or plan for VSE development with whatever the current labor market trends are - locally, nationally or even internationally⁵⁴⁵.

In the regions, the immediate response of this 're-positioning' strategy by the local governments involved in this research has been to open new schools or to support existing schools (SMK) to run new courses, to meet local labor market needs. This represents a "fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed"⁵⁴⁶. It is also undoubtedly timely, in that local governments, for whom the area of VSE is relatively new, are still inexperienced and limited, both financially and in human resource expertise. In one of the research locations, Bekasi City, West Java Province, the concept of 're-engineering' has been implemented. The local government, through the Local Education Office (EOD), has started to decide locally the types of new schools to be opened and courses to be run, without depending on the central government to take the initiative, as happened in the past. The Head of the EOD states: "...With regard to development or 're-engineering', in creating new study programs, permission is now obtained from the Local Education Office (EOD)...For a new schools to be opened, the proposal passes from the RT/RW (Neighbourhood Association, the lowest administrative unit in an urban or rural village), to the head of the village, sub-district or city; after obtaining the recommendation of the mayor, permission is sought from the EOD...There is a special team from BMPS (Board for the Opening of New Schools) who check the preparation in the field..."⁵⁴⁷.

The principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, a school which has successfully employed the 're-engineering' strategy by introducing new courses, recalls: "The creation of three new study programs was purely our own initiative; we added tourism, fashion and management to the already-existing program in industrial technology..."⁵⁴⁸. His local superintendent, however, did not agree with this initiative, suggesting a business course instead of a management one. He was reported to the DPRD (Local Peoples' Representative Assembly) and threatened with dismissal. However, he stood firm with his proposal and eventually received the approval of the Local Education Office (EOD), as well as the DVSE for the block grant. This bottom-up proposal mechanism illustrates that the 're-engineering' scenario, which allows the schools

⁵⁴⁵ Priowirjanto, Gatot Hari and Suryatmana, Giri (2002), p. 625

⁵⁴⁶ Michael Hammer and James Champy as cited by William, Chuck (2003), p. 416

⁵⁴⁷ Head of EOD) Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

⁵⁴⁸ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

(SMKs) to design new courses, based on their existing resources, has empowered school principals and attracted the attention of the EOD to VSE developmental needs.

This phenomenon is also occurring in other locations, as reported, for example, by the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, whose local government has established some new private vocational secondary schools (SMK). These emerging policies of developing education locally, without central government involvement, has also encouraged surrounding industries to pay attention and to contribute. The Head of the EOD observed: "...Industries have become foster fathers⁵⁴⁹ to the schools (SMK). These partnerships are not only helping with building and equipment, but also with providing trainers and the opportunity for schools to send their students to do industry-based training. Some local companies have started to assist with school building construction and scholarships..."⁵⁵⁰. He adds: "The Director of the DVSE was present at the inaugural ceremony of the new building, along with the Foster Father and the Minister of Internal Affairs..."⁵⁵¹.

These examples all indicate the growing awareness of local officials in Bekasi District and Bekasi City to the existence and value of the vocational secondary schools (SMK), as the central office's strategy of 're-positioning'. It is also helping to address the concerns held by schools involved in this research, as discussed earlier, that local governments (especially the Local Education Office) have very limited knowledge of VSE. 'Re-positioning', as a development strategy, has encouraged local education stakeholders to analyze the suitability of existing vocational programs offered by schools, especially with regard to local demand.

In other provinces discussed in this research, Bangka Belitung and Banten, responses to 're-positioning' have been the same. Most schools in these provinces have designed new programs, based on their own initiative, after obtaining the permission and support of their local governments. In Bangka Belitung Province, the local government of Bangka District and Pangkalpinang City has encouraged all existing SMK to undergo the 're-engineering' process. For example, in anticipating the changes in information technology in industry, two schools involved in this research in Pangkalpinang City have created new IT-related programs: SMK1 has a new IT program; SMK2 now offers a program in multimedia. The Principal of SMK1 observed: "With regard to IT, this program would not exist without the assistance of our local government, as we have to provide a share of the budget...The mayor has given his attention to this issue and, therefore, every time we receive central office

⁵⁴⁹The 'Foster Father' (*Bapak Angkat*) system is a system of cooperation between a school and a company, imitating the relationship between a father and son.

⁵⁵⁰ Head of Local education Office (EOD) Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

⁵⁵¹ Head of Local education Office (EOD) Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005

support, we always get support from the local government as well”⁵⁵². The Principal of SMK2 agrees with his colleague’s statement: “The provincial and local governments have been very supportive of our two new programs: national standards and multimedia; their management has been improved, in anticipation of these new programs”⁵⁵³.

In Bangka District, as reported by the Principal of SMK1, the local government has decided to run a tourism program in the private vocational secondary school and an IT one in the public school, SMK1⁵⁵⁴. This arrangement is a reflection of the increasing authority of local governments to determine what courses should be offered in schools, according to their local needs on the courses to open in the schools without being dictated to by the central government, as in the past. These two programs are, as explained by the Principal of SMK1, aimed at supporting the vision and mission of the local government in developing Bangka District as a tourism and education centre⁵⁵⁵. In Banten Province, especially in the City of Tangerang, the vocational schools have also experienced success in convincing their local government to support them in the ‘re-positioning’ strategy. The two vocational schools in this city involved in this research, SMK4 and SMK3, have, as noted by their principals, similarly re-engineered their existing courses, with local government approval, and have also taken the initiative to design new courses in IT and multimedia.

Thus, undoubtedly, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, ‘re-positioning’, especially ‘re-engineering’, has enabled local governments to re-arrange schools’ existing courses and/or establish new schools to suit actual needs. In addition, these bottom-up proposals, which start at school level, passing through local government management, before reaching central government (DVSE) management, is undeniably bringing about a coordinated management approach, replacing the centralist practice of the past. Politically, this strategy also reflects the realization of decentralization of authority, from Jakarta to the local governments, as part of the principle of the regional autonomy, especially in the case of VSE. By the rules, local governments now have the right to freely decide their courses or to establish new schools (something which rarely occurred before regional autonomy). However, in reality, such initiatives can only be realized with the DVSE’s support, so it is a combined effort.

From the central government perspective, this situation is illustrated by the changed way the DVSE is now managing VSE, that is, with a more cooperative approach. Proposals initiated by schools, and then approved by the relevant local government, also pass through the central

⁵⁵² Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005

⁵⁵³ Principal of SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed in 23 June 2005

⁵⁵⁴ Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang District, interviewed 4 July 2005

⁵⁵⁵ Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang District, interviewed 4 July 2005

office's review, in order to obtain support, in the form of funding or block grants. Thus, administratively, the 're-engineering' basically occurs by coordination between the school, its local government and the DVSE.

At the school level, it is obvious that the 're-positioning' has also encouraged school managements to evolve from merely receiving already-designed programs and following instructions, to taking the initiative in deciding their own needs. In the process of re-positioning, the schools themselves propose new or redesigned courses, after analyzing their own needs and what courses best meet those needs. In the past, courses were imposed from above by the DVSE in Jakarta. Unintentionally, the process of 're-engineering' also reflects the implementation of school-based management (MBS).

7.2.2 The Use of Information and Communication Technology

The DVSE has decided to optimize information technology managing the development of VSE. The Director of the DVSE advised that his key staff, the deputies, have all been instructed to customize the use of readily-available ICT, such as computer programs, the internet, e-mail and mobile phone technology, to assist them with their daily tasks⁵⁵⁶. He related: "We are using ICT to network and communicate with all relevant people, especially the school principals...discussing any issue..."⁵⁵⁷.

The DVSE office has been equipped with ICT facilities and services - computers, printers, servers, LAN, other peripherals and software, as well as a website - and ICT experts have been employed. As mentioned by one of the DVSE deputies, the Head of the Curriculum Subdivision, all information and documentation relevant to VSE development has been uploaded to the website, which schools are able to access at any time⁵⁵⁸. DVSE management, as outlined in its ICT Program concept, allows school personnel to use mobile phone technology, including SMS, to communicate easily and discuss any education-related issues with DVSE staff⁵⁵⁹. Most of the principals involved in this research report that such use of ICT allows the schools to promptly obtain the latest information updates from the DVSE, especially regarding block grants or other assistance offered. Such information would never have got through quickly via formal, official letters to the schools. In addition, at any time, school staff are able to contact staff in the DVSE to enquire about any issue. Similarly, the

⁵⁵⁶ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

⁵⁵⁷ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

⁵⁵⁸ Head of the DVSE Facilities Sub-Division, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁵⁵⁹ 'The DVSE ICT program' is a document produced by the DVSE, explaining the rationale for optimizing the use of ICT in implementing VSE development.

DVSE is easily able to monitor the programs being implemented in the schools. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District observed: “We are in frequent communication with the Central Education Office regarding standardization ...mostly, by e-mail service and internet...We are interested in the standardization issue, in order to choose a winner in the LKS (Student Skills Competition)”⁵⁶⁰. He adds: “There is no routine pattern to our communication, but it is good that we are able to take the initiative. It is very important for us to be able to receive timely information and ICT is a vital tool in that regard ...”⁵⁶¹. A teacher from SMK1 Bekasi City agrees: “It is very useful to be able to use the telephone or internet to communicate with the Central Office (DVSE) and also with the Provincial Office...”⁵⁶².

Thus, such employment of ICT at the school level further indicates that the DVSE management style has changed. In managing the VSE programs, this style has changed, especially with regards to communication, from the conventional (and very formal) style of official letters to the informal way, which optimizes the available ICT. The direct interaction with the schools which was carried out by way of setting up formal, routine meetings has now expanded due to the use of efficient and effective ICT tools.

In addition, the Director of the DVSE has stipulated that it is now policy that all information relevant to VSE development be provided mainly through the website⁵⁶³. In the document VSE Program Guidelines, distributed annually to institutions involved in VSE development, especially the schools, the use of information systems management, based on ICT is stressed as a strategic means of achieving the vision and mission for VSE development. It states: “The optimization of information systems management in maintaining subsidies and self-supporting funds is expected to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of management...”⁵⁶⁴. On the website home page, the Director stresses:

“The introduction of a website for the DVSE is expected to ease information-sharing between the Central Education Office (DVSE), the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs), the Local Education Offices (EODs), schools (SMKs) and other relevant institutions. Since its launch in August 1999...more than 1500 e-mail addresses of

⁵⁶⁰ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁵⁶¹ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁵⁶² Senior teacher SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁵⁶³ Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005

⁵⁶⁴ Dikmenjur (2004), p. 7

schools and teachers have joined... Many benefits can be obtained...Information on education policy can be accessed easily...⁵⁶⁵.

This DVSE initiative has encouraged the schools (SMK) to improve their own ICT facilities and also optimize the use of e-mail to communicate, not just with the DVSE, but also with other schools. As discovered during the field research, except for the new school in Bangka District, all schools (SMK) involved in this study have been provided with a special IT room. In addition, some principals, such those from SMK1 Bekasi District, SMK3 Tangerang City and SMK2 Pangkalpinang City report that they sometimes use a laptop computer to access the DVSE website and to communicate with their own and other schools. Now both the DVSE staff and school staff are familiar with sending and receiving information. The following is a sample of the type of direct discussion between the Director of the DVSE, in Jakarta, and a teacher, via e-mail. The teacher states:

“...I hope you will not be too troubled by what I wish to inform you...The development of the new and innovative curriculum for SMK is not yet reaching all school areas equally, one of these being the school guidance counselors (BP). The BPs should be given more roles, including communicating with students. In my perception, this is necessary, especially after the introduction of a new and innovative curriculum...⁵⁶⁶.

The Director of the DVSE responds:

“...I think your input is excellent. Please discuss with your principal and have one teacher appointed to be trained next year, using the 2005 school grant budget, which we will give to your school directly. Check details in the DVSE Program Guidelines 2005, under ‘School Grants’...Good luck⁵⁶⁷.

It seems that the use of the ICT as the information medium is more than just as a communication tool. The DVSE and the schools can directly discuss and communicate any issue in an efficient and effective manner. In addition, the use of the ICT is timely. As revealed earlier, in the transition stage of regional autonomy, the Local Education Offices (EODs) have found themselves having to deal with VSE programs, with which they were not

⁵⁶⁵ Dikmenjur [www home page of Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education], 1999, Available [online], <http://www.dikmenjur.go.id>, [7 October 2005].

⁵⁶⁶ Tadjab, Muhammad (mustadjab2004@yahoo.com)

⁵⁶⁷ Priowirjanto, Gatot Hari (gatothp@ict.dikmenjur.net) (25 December 2004)

yet familiar, as a consequence of decentralization. By using the available ICT, communication between the central government and the schools can be maintained at the same level (or better) as before regional autonomy. The DVSE is also still able to give direct guidance and instructions and help solve problems. ICT is very useful tool for the DVSE to monitor the development of schools especially, the implementation of programs and the administration of the block grants. Following are the examples of how schools are reporting their progress regarding the block grants they have obtained. The first e-mail is from SMK3 Tangerang City, the school closest to the DVSE and one of the schools included in this research. Being reported is the progress and problems regarding the implementation of the school mapping project in Banten Province. The sender is the teacher appointed to carry out the implementation of this project on behalf of the school principal.

“Dear...

The school mapping project in Banten Province is still being implemented and is at the stage of school data gathering and data entry. We are continuing to communicate and coordinate with the Local Education Office (EOD). The implementation in each district and city is under the coordination of the EOD. The school mapping is not yet running in Tangerang District and Cilegon City. All of the districts and cities are having problems with funding, so not all of the data has been able to be gathered. Meetings will take place in Tangerang City to help schools complete the forms as follows: primary schools - 18 August 2004; SMK/SMU – 20 August; primary schools - 21 August. The Tangerang City EOD team will work jointly with them. This concludes the report on the implementation of the school mapping project in Banten Province. Regards, Euis, SMK3 Tangerang City”⁵⁶⁸.

The next email is from a teacher in SMK1 Sentani, located in the Province of Papua, the furthest in distance from the Central Office in Jakarta. It reports on the progress of programs being implemented in his school and also on budgeting issues:

“Dear ...

Firstly, my apologies for never sending the reports on the progress of the District of Jayapura via SMS or email... Currently, the WAN and ICT programs are running but are very slow. (1) Re the WAN: we installed as a LAN, in keeping with local infrastructure, where our internet provider speed is 17-30 kbps, but can be accessed for 20 minutes..., (2) Re the teaching process: our Grade 3 TIK (Technology,

⁵⁶⁸ Fatonah, Euis Siti (f_euis@yahoo.com) (16 August 2004)

Industry and Communication) Students have undergone competency-based assessment...During the last school break, many students assisted with IT development in Local Government offices and health centers..., (3) Re assessors: our college has obtained Assessor certificates, so the Sentani ICT area now has two assessors...however, I'm sorry to report that, we are still relying on the funding allocated to ICT, (4) re the School Mapping project and funding (monitoring and evaluation): the School Mapping project is still running... Myself and other staff also helped the regions of Nabire, Serui, Merauke and Manokwari with this...That concludes my report. Our support is always behind the DVSE, even if we're still not operating as well as some other regions"⁵⁶⁹.

This illustrates how the DVSE is obtaining optimum benefits from the use of ICT, to discuss all manner of issues, overcoming limits of distance and time of day. Almost instantaneously, they are able to assess the progress of any school at any time, directly, by examining emails received and, in return, make comments, suggestions or convey decisions needed by the schools. This strategy is also inline with the assertions of several scholars that ICT use by managers leads to improved services. As Edwin Lau argues: "Advances in information and communication technology are reshaping the economy and driving social changes. Technological advances represent an opportunity for government to improve services and to better meet the needs of diverse constituents"⁵⁷⁰.

However, from the perspective of the principles and policies of regional autonomy, it could be argued that such use of ICT allows local government administration to be bypassed, thus functioning as a means for the DVSE to retain direct control of schools from Jakarta. One of the deputy directors of the DVSE, the Head of the Facilities Subdivision, in commenting on this situation, claims "the central government is still dominant"⁵⁷¹. The Head of the Accreditation Subdivision agrees: "...Supposedly, the central government should be ready to give and the local regions to receive, but it is not happening because the central government is not ready... Unless we provide everything, we are afraid we will be forgotten; we are not confident"⁵⁷².

As been discussed previously, although the role of the DVSE has changed since the introduction of regional autonomy, policies and programs for VSE development are still being

⁵⁶⁹ Dewobroto, Aris, S (ariesstm1@yahoo.com) (14 July 2005)

⁵⁷⁰ Lau, Edwin (2000), p. 21

⁵⁷¹ Head of the DVSE Facilities Sub-Division, interviewed 12 January 2005

⁵⁷² Head of the DVSE Accreditation Sub-Division, interviewed 14 January 2005

established by the DVSE and this is actually written into the 2004 and 2005 strategic planning documents. These documents (see Appendix 1 and 2) stipulate that, except for operational needs, schools are to have their developmental needs met via the DVSE.⁵⁷³ Improved IT communications have had the effect of meaning local bureaucracy tends to get bypassed. The Director of DVSE explained that, in the implementation stage, the main aim has been to discuss programs, issues or problems with school development (as per the above examples). The administrative procedure is still supposedly to follow the local bureaucracy. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District stated that he has to seek approval from the Local Education Office (EOD) for any programs. The Principal of SMK2 Bekasi District stressed that: "...usually, we meet with the Head of the EOD directly, as to meet with the staff is sometimes useless as they do not have the authority to make decisions"⁵⁷⁴. Other principals involved in this research agree, especially the Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City:

"The procedure is that we make the proposals and get them endorsed by the Head of the EOD. Then, they go, via the school committee, to the province. For programs for which we have to share the funding costs, we negotiate with the local government, directly with the mayor, as proposals need to be signed by the mayor. If we want to obtain the mayor's signature we have to see the secretary initially and then we have to wait"⁵⁷⁵.

This further supports the argument that that ICT has been used strategically by central management to develop VSE, without consulting local level bureaucracy. Although, during this transition phase of regional autonomy, any school program plans are supposed to proceed officially through the local administrative management, ICT improvements in the DVSE and in the schools have helped not just for communication but also in the decision-making process, as illustrated in the above statements by principals and teachers and emails between the DVSE and the schools. ICT has proved a useful tool for the DVSE to guide schools in program implementation and to control and monitor progress. Also, the use of ICT has been an effective way for schools to share knowledge and experiences with other schools, regarding school operations and to discuss technical problems.

However, from the perspective of the principles of regional autonomy and decentralization, the use of ICT by the DVSE reflects, if not controlling, then, at least intervening in the

⁵⁷³ In the document of DVSE Programs 2004 and 2005, the specification of each incentive program is explained in detail including the conditions to obtain that should be fulfilled by the obtainer (DVSE Programs 2004 and 2005).

⁵⁷⁴ Principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed in 17 May 2005

⁵⁷⁵ Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

management of the SMKs. All actions taken by the schools do eventually get reported to the local authorities and do follow local bureaucracy procedures. Nevertheless, such direct communication, without involving the Local Education Offices (EODs), which are meant to be the bodies with the most responsibility for the schools, can be perceived as the central government using a trick to maintain control and to interfere in the running of the schools. In addition, an alliance has also been developed, between the DVSE and the schools (SMKs), against the local governments. The communication loop, using ICT, does not yet include the local governments, especially the EOD. In addition, ICT development is not yet a priority of the local governments, nor do the EODs use ICT as a management tool. Therefore, intense ICT use is limited to the DVSE and the schools. This enables the management of vocational schools to be dominated by the DVSE, in alliance with the schools, even though the objective of regional autonomy was to devolve authority regarding education to the regions. In this regard, development of ICT networks between the DVSE and the schools has not supported the transfer of the DVSE's role and functions to the Local Education Offices (EOD), in keeping with the principles of regional autonomy.

7.2.3 Self-Implementation

'Self-implementation', that is, allowing the schools to manage the block grants they receive by themselves, has undoubtedly empowered school management. This strategy is in line with the principles of regional autonomy, especially that which stipulates that the DVSE is to be the policy-maker with regard to VSE while, in the regions, the schools (SMK) themselves are to be the implementers. From the schools' point of view, such a strategy appears to empower school management, ensuring a school-based management (MBS) approach. Before regional autonomy, the schools were merely recipients; all school needs were delivered centrally by the DVSE. Currently, as stated in the DVSE Program Guidelines, which are provided annually to all schools, all block grant programs have been designed to be implemented and managed locally, either by the schools or by the local or provincial education offices (EOD and EOP). On this issue, the principal of SMK2 Bekasi District claimed: "...Programs which have been planned for Bekasi are introduced by the DVSE are introduced beforehand, and then the programs are managed at provincial level (EOP) and also by the DVSE ..." ⁵⁷⁶. The principal of SMK3 Tangerang City found: "Some central government programs are managed by the provinces and some directly by the central government...For example, the hotel training course is run by the DVSE directly ..." ⁵⁷⁷. While the principal of SMK1 Bekasi District asserts: "Having the DVSE give the block grants out to the schools directly is much

⁵⁷⁶ Principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May 2005

⁵⁷⁷ Principal SMK3 Tangerang city, interviewed 8 February 2005

more useful. Support from the local government is not yet efficient⁵⁷⁸. We are just recipients⁵⁷⁹. The principal of SMK3 Tangerang City also reports that the schools have been implementing their programs independently: “Central Government is dealing with schools directly. Any communication with the local governments is just a formality; just to let them know...”⁵⁸⁰.

This is an indication that the DVSE has transferred its role of providing for the needs of the schools to the Provincial and Local Education Offices (EOP and EOD) and, most importantly, to the schools which, in the past, were merely recipients. Although described by certain interviewees from schools as being not yet efficient, the transfer of tasks from the central government (DVSE) to the Provincial and Local Education Offices is, it is argued, part of the decentralization process, as established by the regional autonomy laws. There is no doubt that, by encouraging the schools to apply for and implement the block grants themselves, the school-based management concept is being practiced. Thus, the schools are occupied, not just with teaching and managing their operations, as in the past, but also with all the activities associated with applying for and managing the DVSE block grants. This has been the experience of most of the schools in this study. As stated by a teacher from SMK2 Bekasi District:

“The budget for developing the SMK nationally is only USD 7,894.73; can you imagine? This budget is mainly for creating study modules, English-teacher training (that is, to cover the cost of guest English teachers). Funds for improving facilities come from the DVSE ... Problems in developing the schools to a national standard are due to the teachers and the students. It is difficult to find teachers capable of teaching English...”⁵⁸¹.

The Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City mentions problems with implementing the programs, especially on the school committee, and problems with the students: “Under the school-based management system (MBS), school committees are being set up but it is a hard job to develop and improve the schools. The problem is that the student entering the SMK schools are generally from the poorer class and their main aim is just to get themselves a job when they finish their studies; in many cases, NEM (examination) scores are quite low. So, this makes it a challenge to interest them in programs aimed at developing them as human

⁵⁷⁸ Cipta Karya is a government body responsible for construction and maintenance of state office buildings

⁵⁷⁹ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁵⁸⁰ Principal of SMK3 Tangerang Cty, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁵⁸¹ Senior Teacher SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 16 May 2005

beings”⁵⁸². One of the teachers of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City made the following comments about the school committee: “School Committees (SC) have now become the trend. A lot of people are nominating themselves now, whereas in the past it was difficult to get appointed as the Head of the BP3 (the old version of SCs). The BP3 was under the control of the school principal; nowadays, the SC and the principal are of comparable status”⁵⁸³. In addition, the Principal of SMK2 Bekasi District stresses that staffing is not the only problem with trying to make the programs a success: “We’ve always had staffing problems but, after the establishment of the committee, our programs are running well. Getting our share of local government funding has become the most significant issue. The final decision is still up to the school principal; if the principal says go ahead, it goes ahead; if not, it won’t. In 2005, we had many new programs ...”⁵⁸⁴.

As mentioned earlier, while this research was being conducted in 2005, 9 out of 11 SMK involved in this study obtained at least five block grants from the DVSE. This means that these schools must have been successful in obtaining block grants because, as stated in the DVSE Programs Guidelines 2005, obtaining further grants is dependent on being successful the first time. Thus it also illustrates that these schools have been capable of solving issues arising during the implementation stage. Most importantly, all of these activities occurring at school level indicate that the DVSE’s management strategy to improve schools’ ability to manage themselves has improved, from schools being initially very passive to being very active and responsive. The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City states: “The DVSE throws us the programs; we should compete for them and go after them. We need to be proactive and if we keep quiet, we won’t get anything. News of these programs are disseminated via the internet, seminars, workshops, booklets, etc...”⁵⁸⁵.

The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District (as advised by one of his teachers, also interviewed in this research), by his own initiative, met with the regent directly to explain his school’s needs of a share of the available funding. As explained earlier, he also proactively lobbies the members of the DPRD (Local People’s Representative) about his school’s operating budget needs, especially for materials for students doing practical subjects. The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City has also met with the mayor, to explain his school’s needs for a share of the funding. Thus, this ‘self-implementation’ strategy of the central government (via block grants) is in keeping with the principles of regional autonomy. This is so with regard to the

⁵⁸² Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed in 10 June 2005

⁵⁸³ Senior Teacher SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18 June 2005

⁵⁸⁴ Principal of SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May 2005

⁵⁸⁵ Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

changing role and functions of government at each level and, most importantly, in that it has supported the schools to start developing and improving themselves independently and to set up their own school committees, in keeping with the school-based management approach.

In summary, from the schools' perspective, the DVSE's role in managing and developing vocational secondary education has changed from being centralist, directive and dominating to being more sharing, with government at other levels and with the schools themselves, thus reflecting regional autonomy principles. The DVSE has started to devolve some of its tasks and responsibilities to the regions, especially program implementation, and now focuses on policy-making and preparation of national guidelines for VSE development. Exit or transfer strategies employed by the DVSE still show obvious signs of central intervention, however, in anticipation of the changes taking place in the regions, especially during the transition stage of regional autonomy, it is probable that a combination of strategies such as 're-positioning', the use of ICT and 'self-implementation' are the potential ways to ensure that VSE programs are implemented successfully. In the regions, especially at school level, such strategies have proved to support school-based management (MBS), that is, improving school management from being passive to proactive and independent.

7.3 Provincial Education Office (EOP) Management

With the introduction of regional autonomy, most of the responsibilities and tasks of the provincial governments have been transferred to the local governments. In the education sector, the main responsibility of the provincial government is only to provide policy on the commencement of new students and to assist the schools with books and modules⁵⁸⁶. However, the Regional Autonomy Law also stipulates that the provincial government assist the central government in implementing some of the central government's programs, in the format of 'de-concentration'⁵⁸⁷. Yet, the Provincial Education Office's (EOP) tasks and responsibilities have diminished.

Before regional autonomy, the EOPs' role in educational development was very dominant over the schools (SMKs). Management of VSE development was centered around the *Kanwil* (regional education offices), under the Minister of Education. The *Kanwil* functioned like a branch of the Department of Education, and helped provide most school needs, including procurement of resources, facilities, buildings, equipment, infrastructure and practicum

⁵⁸⁶ Republic of Indonesia (2000)

⁵⁸⁷ Republic of Indonesia (1999)

materials⁵⁸⁸. The *Kanwil* also monitored and controlled the implementation of programs, by visiting schools directly. Most importantly, the *Kanwil* were also involved in the appointment and selection of school principals, teachers and non-teaching staff. As previously discussed, since the introduction of regional autonomy, the *Kanwil* have been abolished. Since, the management of VSE development has been carried out in the *Dinas Provinsi* (Provincial Education Offices (EOP), which comes under the authority and is part of the bureaucracy of the provincial governments. This means that the provincial governments no longer come under the influence of the central government and have their own authority to determine policy and programs for the education sector.

Currently, the EOPs' role in managing VSE is somewhat complicated and unclear, especially in the transition stage of regional autonomy. They not only have limits placed on their roles but also have been influenced by the changed administrative environment and procedures of the DVSE in Jakarta and of the Local Education Offices (EOD) in the district and cities. With the current emphasis on 'de-concentration', besides having to manage province-specific tasks, EOPs now are required to assist the DVSE with managing the programs and with distribution of block grants. Thus, the EOPs have replaced the role of the (former) *Kanwil*. In order to succeed, the EOP have to follow the management strategies employed by the DVSE, such as 're-positioning', the use of ICT and the encouragement of 'self-implementation', to promote school-based management.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy, the schools (SMK) have come under the authority of their local government. However, in order to successfully play their part in VSE development, the EOPs need to be familiar with the way the local governments are administered. Structurally, the EOPs come under the provincial government and their main task is to assist the governor to implement policies and programs. It is likely that the way the EOP manages VSE development depends on the official in charge of the EOP.

In West Java Province, the Head of the EOP, as discussed earlier, was involved in managing VSE development before regional autonomy. This province is an old province, compared with the two other provinces examined in this study - Bangka Belitung and Banten. He contends: "I feel there is no difference between before and after regional autonomy. The only difference is that I do not have the authority to appoint school principals: they are now appointed by the regent or mayor. I can not support schools directly; I must go through the

⁵⁸⁸ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

Subdivision head in EOD. However, the link between myself and the schools has not been broken and does still continue...⁵⁸⁹.

This shows his awareness that the power and authority of the EOP to manage VSE have substantially declined with the impact of regional autonomy. The EOPs no longer hold the right to select the key person in the schools, that is, the principal; this authority has been transferred to the local governments. The Head of the EOP, West Java Province, strongly believes that the local officials in the district and city administrations are still loyal and respect his leadership and experience. He suggests that, although districts and cities have become autonomous governments, their personnel are not yet ready to tackle the tasks. In his Province of West Java, the Local Education Offices (EOD) are still dependent on him. He states:

“I believe they still need me...therefore, I am confident I can still influence policies and programs, even though I no longer have the authority to appoint school principals...but feel we have a mutual respect: it is my expectation that, under Regional Autonomy, local Governments now have the authority but that we in the provinces still have a useful role and that the local governments still have a need to maintain a relationship with the provincial government...⁵⁹⁰.

It is likely that he is not happy at losing control over the development of VSE programs in the regions and that he believes the local government personnel should respect his experience. He considers it important to maintain a strong personal relationship with those in charge of the Local Education Offices. He reports that he knows most of the EOD heads in districts and cities well, particularly in Bekasi District and Bekasi City, two of the locations of this study:

“The Head of the Bekasi District EOD is good; he was previously a head of a subdivision. The only problematic one is the Head of the *Sub-Dinas* (Sub-EOD), as he was originally just a teacher from a primary school (SD). The relationship with industry is good and the local government’s intentions are quite good...⁵⁹¹. Regarding the EOD Bekasi City he says:

“...The Head of the EOD Bekasi City is better; the head of *Sub-Dinas* (Sub-EOD) has been recruited from the old *Dinas* office...⁵⁹². In addition, the Head of the EOD Bekasi City is really familiar with the performance of VSE development in his province overall...To improve vocational prospects, a firm priority of VSE is to

⁵⁸⁹ The Head of the EOP, West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁵⁹⁰ Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁵⁹¹ Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁵⁹² Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

improve access to education...The number of the SMK is 856 (public and private). This means that from 2003 to 2005 they increased by 12% and student numbers increased by 8%...A very good development is the establishment of distance education-based SMK. This has very great potential; I would like to see a focus on Agriculture in the Islamic boarding schools in rural areas”⁵⁹³.

This opinion is supported at district and city level. The only current coordination role of the EOP is to assist DVSE with the regional distribution of block grants for the development of VSE. As described earlier, this task is relatively small compared to the responsibilities before regional autonomy. There are no specific management strategies for making such a simple assignment a success, except for mirroring what the DVSE does, in the way of optimizing ICT, mostly mobile phones, and ‘re-positioning’. The Head of the EOD Bekasi District maintains that the EOP management is good, as does the Head of the EOD Bekasi City: “Our relationship with the provincial government and with the schools (SMK) are still well-maintained, through using ICT. DVSE funding, via ‘de-concentration’, managed by the EOP, for running the schools is flowing efficiently and the bureaucracy is simple”⁵⁹⁴.

At school level, the Provincial Education Office (EOP) administration is perceived as being the same as that of the Central Education Office (DVSE), with regard to VSE. A teacher from SMK1 Bekasi City suggests that the EOP is very open and flexible and that communications with the EOP have been made easier with the use of internet and telephone.⁵⁹⁵ The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District speaks positively of the EOP: “The EOP is very keen to maintain direct links with us, as in the past, before regional autonomy. However, it appears that the EOP is also aware that if they deal directly with the school, many in the local government will complain. Sometimes, we really just want to quickly go to the EOP directly, but the locally-employed bureaucracy force us to obtain local government approval”⁵⁹⁶.

A teacher from SMK1 Bekasi District agrees. He reports that his school’s proposal for a language laboratory was sent to the EOP, but that the approval got held up at the local (EOD) level; he has no idea to whom he has to report⁵⁹⁷. He adds that, although communication can be established electronically, administration at provincial level still often follows old, less efficient procedures: “Still, just like in the past, the EOP typically communicates with the

⁵⁹³ Head of the EOP West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005

⁵⁹⁴ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD) Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

⁵⁹⁵ Senior Teacher SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁵⁹⁶ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁵⁹⁷ Senior Teacher of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005

EOD and KS3K (Association of Vocational Schools) by letter. However, often the letters going via the EOD end up not getting delivered to the school principal”⁵⁹⁸.

Regarding this issue, the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District considers that the involvement of the local government in managing VSE just creates another layer of bureaucracy, as he is unable to act directly and has to go through his local government for everything. Therefore, he claims, it is now impossible to get anything done quickly. All of the above discussions demonstrate that, at least in West Java Province, the EOP is regarded in a similar way to the DVSE with regard to administering VSE and is, similarly, accepted at the regional level of the EOD and the schools.

In Banten, a new Province on the island of Java, the Provincial Education Office (EOP) administration seems to be struggling to follow the Central Education Office (DVSE) strategies. Unlike with the EOP in West Java Province, the organizational structure of the EOP in Banten has been newly-formed, following the establishment of this Province in 2000, and not as the result of amalgamation between the former *Kanwil* and *Dinas Provinsi*, as happened in West Java Province. It would appear that the Head of the EOP is still learning how to manage VSE development. He claims that, currently, he is only trying to simplify any administrative processes requested by the local government, such as endorsement for the opening of new schools and giving administrative support for schools, especially in the process of applying for block grants, via the ‘de-concentration’ scheme maintained by the EOP: “Central government policy does not yet match with local government policy. The local government has to be lobbied to secure agreement; if not, we will fail. The EOP simplifies the procedures for opening new schools, especially vocational secondary schools, according to local needs...Equipment for vocational schools is expensive. The DVSE is not yet capable of giving guidance”⁵⁹⁹.

The Head of the EOP Banten Province’s initiative to lobby the Local Education Offices is an indication that he is running a different management strategy to that employed by, for example, the Head of the EOP West Java Province, which, as an old provincial administration, relied on the respect of the officials in the district and cities, who had cooperated with him in the past. They are still very supportive of the programs of their Provincial Education Office programs and, most importantly, the EOP is still the focus for the schools, when discussing issues related to school development. By contrast, the EOP in Banten Province is relatively new and has never worked with the local government

⁵⁹⁸ Principal of SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May 2005

⁵⁹⁹ Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP) Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005

previously. Therefore, the existence of the EOP is not yet well recognized by the education management at district and city level.

Meanwhile, at school level, the management of the EOP is likely to be popular only as the distributor of the block grant and not yet as a significant contributor to VSE development at school level. As discussed in previous chapters, the block grants are established by the Central Education Office (DVSE) and all schools (SMKs) are eligible, subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions. The Provincial Education Office (EOP) merely assists in the implementation of the grants. Most of the school principals in Tangerang City and Tangerang District involved in this research hold this view. As the Principal of SMK1 Tangerang district asserts: "...Actually, the province is managing only the 'de-concentrated' packages of programs, including the Community Colleges, MonEv (Monitoring and Evaluation) and books and scholarships for the students"⁶⁰⁰. The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City also shares the perception that the EOP is limited to just assisting the DVSE with grant distribution, via the 'de-concentration' program, stating:

"...Although not the original attention, the province has assisted with equipment and furniture, such as tables and chairs, that have been delivered directly to schools in the form of goods...The province does have some budget (de-concentrated funds) and is involved in some programs, such as Small SMK, BBE (Broad-Based Education), MonEv (Monitoring and Evaluation). The province also delivers programs to the Local Education Office (EOD) for implementation... By attending national level meetings, the Head of the EOP, who in the past was involved in managing primary education, is now becoming familiar with the needs of the vocational secondary schools (SMK)"⁶⁰¹.

However, one of the teachers from SMK4 criticized the management performance of the EOP for not being as good as that of the EOD of Tangerang City: "...The quality of facilities built by the city (local) government is better than that of the province. The province doesn't care and rarely monitors the building process, except in the handing over of the buildings to the school. School building development policy is carried out by the EOP or EOD (not self-implementation); the school is just the recipient; programs for improving school facilities have not been the initiative of the EOP"⁶⁰².

⁶⁰⁰ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁶⁰¹ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶⁰² Senior Teacher SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 9 February 2005

Based on such statements, it is obvious that, as the newcomer in managing VSE, the EOP in the Province of Banten is not yet capable of contributing advice and guidance regarding VSE programs in the districts and cities, in particular in the two locations examined: Tangerang City and Tangerang District. It would seem that, as the EOP has no history of administrative cooperation with the districts and cities, as well as with the schools themselves, the personal approaches in managing programs are difficult to build. However, analysis of the experiences of the schools which have received the 'de-concentrated' block grants, indicates that the EOP Banten has been successful administratively in delivering the central office programs.

In Bangka Belitung Province, another new province, the management performance of the EOP is arguably better than that of Banten Province. The EOP there is indeed new and the Head of the EOP is also a new appointment. However, unlike the case of the Head of the EOP in Banten Province, the Head the EOP in Bangka Belitung Province is already well-known by most of the personnel at district and city level and schools involved in this research. He has past experience with the education offices and, therefore, seems familiar with the role, as well as with the local government environment. He related: "Almost all the EODs know me closely already...Communication is no problem and I am their senior; I was the ex head of a division in the local government and also of a Local Education Office (EOD)"⁶⁰³.

In addition, as a result of regional autonomy, he is fully aware that the local governments have been empowered, especially to manage the education sector. It can be summarised from the above discussions that, with regard to VSE development, the role of the EOPs has been mainly that of assistant to the DVSE in program implementation. The Head the EOP in Bangka Belitung Province argued:

"Regarding the nature of regional autonomy, basically, this Provincial Education Office (EOP) assists and supports the implementation of the education programs and policies of the local governments, as these are indeed their authorities. We assist with implementation of the 'de-concentrated' budget, some funding being delivered directly by the DVSE to the schools for 'self-implementation' and some by the EOP. But the emphasis is on assisting, not managing"⁶⁰⁴.

⁶⁰³ Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP), Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

⁶⁰⁴ Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP), Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

He further states:

“The procedure employed in the case of the block grants is to visit the school, inviting all relevant personnel, such as teachers, committee and school board members, and explaining the block grants. This is in order to be transparent. Yet, sometimes transparency can be carried too far; even tiny problems have sometimes been reported everywhere, including to the President and to the KPK (Commission for Combating Corruption). Persuasiveness and always thinking positive are very helpful, with the Education Board as well”⁶⁰⁵.

The initiative to visit the schools directly is possibly part of his management strategies to build trust within the schools regarding the role of the EOP in the implementation of VSE at school level. As the newcomer, such strategies also anticipate the expected reactions of people at grass-roots level, especially in the schools, level to the changing the nature and behavior of the EOP in this new era of regional autonomy. In fact, this strategy is the same as past management strategy in directly controlling and monitoring the implemented programs at school level. However, the strategy is likely to be fruitful for the EOP, especially for improving their understanding of VSE programs. On this issue, the Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City claims: “... At first time, the people from the Provincial Education Office really had no idea about the SMK, as none of the EOP personnel had experience in the Vocational Education area before, so they didn’t know the vocational curriculum or additional activities of the programs...”⁶⁰⁶.

The strategy of the EOP in Banten Province has been a pro-active approach, lobbying the local governments to discuss the synchronization of programs. However, in the status quo province, the Province of West Java, as discovered previously, such a strategy is likely not being employed, as both the offices at provincial (EOP) and local (EOD) level, as well as the schools, have known each other well from the experience of working jointly in the past. The Head of the EOP is very confident that the local governments, especially the Local Education Office (EOD) officials still need him. Most importantly, ICT developments allow him to maintain effective communication with the schools. Thus, the management strategy of the EOP is the same, that is, to proactively maintain close communication with program recipients - either the EODs or the schools (SMK) - in order to successfully carry out the grant-related tasks delegated from the DVSE. It is apparent that the EOP management are limited in their powers to merely assisting the DVSE in delivering the block grants, while

⁶⁰⁵ Head of Provincial Education Office (EOP), Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005

⁶⁰⁶ Principal, SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005

other important tasks, such as appointing school principals, have disappeared. As a consequence, the EOP is not so important for the schools (SMK) and the schools have started to turn more to the local government, rather than the EOP. One teacher gave this perspective: “Previously, our focus was the *Kanwil* (old provincial office), and now it is the Local Education Office (EOD)...Except for the school principal, we do not have much to do with the Provincial Education Office. This is very different to the past, when teachers used to coordinate with *Kanwil* people. You could say that we don’t really need the province. They are also aware that we are not their troops anymore; previously we were their subordinates and they, including the Secretary, Head of Division, School Superintendents and staff were very dominant”⁶⁰⁷.

To conclude this section, since the introduction of regional autonomy, the provincial administration (EOP) has been challenged by its changed role and functions. The EOP’s responsibility in VSE development has been extremely limited and mainly consisted of assisting the DVSE with distributing the block grants. The EOP administrations in the new provinces are facing more problems than in the established provinces. They not only have to struggle to proactively communicate with the recipients (either the EODs or the schools (SMK)), but they are in a powerless position status over them, especially the EODs, who perceive the EOP to be less important. One interviewee, the Head of the BAPPEDA, Bekasi District, went so far as to suggest that, as everything has been transferred to the local government the Provincial Education Offices (EOP) should just be liquidated⁶⁰⁸.

7.4 The administration of VSE in the Local Education Offices (EODs)

In this transition stage of regional autonomy, it would appear the Local Education Offices (EOD) are not yet ready to assume all the tasks and responsibilities transferred to them. Their organizational structure is very general and not yet equipped with a division or section to specifically for the vocational secondary schools (SMK). In addition, as discussed previously, only a few of the EOD are led by people with experience in managing the VSE. The EOD not only has to implement programs and policies at a local level, but also the central and provincial missions for developing VSE in the districts and cities. On this issue, the Head of the EOD, Tangerang District states: “The policies which I am implementing are...firstly, to improve the competency of the teachers...from SD (primary schools), SMP (junior high

⁶⁰⁷ Senior Teacher, SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18 June 2005

⁶⁰⁸ Head of the BAPEEDA, Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005

schools) and SMA (senior high schools), both state and private. The second is improving teacher career opportunities... and thirdly empowering the school management ...⁶⁰⁹.

This shows that the tasks of the EOD administration have changed from administrative in function to more operational. The Head of the EOD, Tangerang District explained his strategies for operational success of programs, such as the establishment of small committees in the villages to coordinate and be responsible for the performance of some primary schools (SD). VSE is not yet part of his concern and there is no specific strategy to anticipate the tasks of running VSE programs, formerly performed by the DVSE and the EOPs. Most EOD heads in other locations of this research agree. The Head of the EOD, Tangerang City, noted: "The focus is on local government education sector programs and policies, which consist of: in 2005, all of the school building will be renovated and 217 schools will be built; the improvement in teacher salaries and conditions, both state and private ..."⁶¹⁰.

Thus, the EOD is primarily concerned with local programs and developing strategies to administer these, including trying to develop local regulations, such in Pangkalpinang City and Bekasi District, intended to be more operational in nature, as in Tangerang District. With regard to the administration of VSE programs, however, the majority of the EOD have not developed VSE-specific strategies for development, other than merely administratively supporting any proposed programs. The EOD management is arguably not as responsive as that of the EOPs. This situation is of concern to the Central Education Office (DVSE), especially the managers involved in this research, that currently the focus of the Local Education Offices (EOD) is still only on how to give administrative support with financial matters and not on being the initiators in the development of programs, as was the aim of decentralization. The Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision argued: "All the EODs are doing is administering the block grants offered by the DVSE; just the minimum ..."⁶¹¹. The Head of the DVSE Planning Subdivision comments: "We have given the local governments so many programs, but the EODs are not initiating anything. It can be said that the VSE development is decreasing; they don't care anymore"⁶¹². Similarly, the Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision has the same perception of the EOD: "Currently the focus is just money: it is difficult for the local management to interpret the DVSE's mission, including the message behind the block grants; that these are meant to be a stimulant only. It has been perceived differently, that the grant is to be the main resource"⁶¹³.

⁶⁰⁹ Head of the Local Education Office (EOD), Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005

⁶¹⁰ Head of Local Education Office, (EOD) Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005

⁶¹¹ Head of the DVSE Accreditation Subdivision, interviewed 14 January 2005

⁶¹² Head of the DVSE Planning Subdivision interviewed 14 January 2005

⁶¹³ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

These perceptions are likely to have been influenced by reports received from the schools (SMK), which have been facing many problems during the implementation stage of the block grants. As discussed previously, any grant application requires at least an approval letter from the EOD or, sometimes from the mayor or regent, if a contribution to the budget is needed. The EODs often fail to carry out this responsibility⁶¹⁴. In Bekasi District, the Principal of SMK1 says: "...To support the DVSE's MTU (mobile training unit) program in our school, the local government has not delivered us our share of the budget, as expected..."⁶¹⁵.

A teacher from this school agreed, complaining that the EOD is inconsistent in its support for the school. As the coordinator of the MTU program, he advised that his school's share of funding for completing the program is stuck. He mentioned that this is happening to other programs as well, such the BBE (broad-based education), for which the school only received 10 percent of the expected budget, and the industrial relations program, for which no funding at all was delivered, just talk⁶¹⁶.

The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District also believes that the EOD has no system of delegation. In his experience, administrative processes can only run well if the EOD head makes himself available; without his presence, office operations have been very slow as the staff have not been able to cope. The teachers at this SMK claim this situation has occurred because there is no one in the EOD office with the necessary experience and knowledge in Vocational Education and the EOD has also has no solution to the problems faced by the schools (SMK)⁶¹⁷. These views are supported by other school principals, such as those in Bekasi City. Commenting on the EOD personnel, the Principal of SMK1 argues:

"Although they have an education background, they are not really experts. It is just that they happen to be top managers...In fact, their knowledge of VSE is very limited...and explaining to them is not easy; their resistance is very strong. We ask the members of the DPRD (Local People's Representative Assembly) for help explain our needs. The top level of bureaucracy is not proactive, therefore we must act...but sometimes it becomes a problem as they think we are trying to teach them to do their job"⁶¹⁸.

⁶¹⁴ Dikmenjur (2004)

⁶¹⁵ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁶¹⁶ Senior Teacher, SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005

⁶¹⁷ Senior Teacher, SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005

⁶¹⁸ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

In Tangerang city, the Principal of SMK1 has experienced similar problems. However, he suggests that, in his city, tasks and responsibilities of the EOD are extremely heavy and are too greater a burden for the capability of its staff⁶¹⁹. His strategy to address the problem is to meet with the most knowledgeable person in the EOD and to always take one of the teachers from his school or another school principal along to the meeting; in his experience, this is more successful than going alone. He suggests that, as the EOD, is not familiar with the VSE programs, it would be better invite representatives from schools every time meetings are held with relevant local institutions, such as the BAPPEDA and the DPRD, so they can be included in discussions about budget⁶²⁰.

It has also been asserted that the EOD administration is too bureaucratic and inflexible. Procedures follow a strict hierarchy, starting at the bottom. The EOD has not optimized the use of technology, still doing tasks manually. As one teacher in Bekasi City claims:

“Since the introduction of regional autonomy, there has been a policy that, before implementing any programs, everything must be discussed with the local government or the EOD, and so sometimes our needs in the field don’t get met. All correspondence between our school to the DVSE and the EOP is supposed to be sent via the EOD; sometimes letters from the DVSE arrive late or don’t reach us at all...”⁶²¹.

From these comments, it would appear difficult to deny that, during this transition stage of regional autonomy, the EODs involved in this research have not been ready with the necessary strategies to properly manage VSE programs. The EODs vary in size, scope and organizational structure, according to the needs of each local government and, in particular, according to the mission of each particular mayor or regent. This non-standardization of EOD structure is still being debated among scholars as to whether they should be realigned, to match their roles and responsibilities, either by downsizing, privatization, re-engineering or re-invention⁶²². Most local governments in this research appear to be implementing both downsizing and ‘re-engineering’ concepts. Their Local Education Offices (EODs) have been formed by amalgamation of the former *Kandep* (which came under central authority) and the *Dinas Kabupaten* (which fell under local government authority), in order to meet the new role of local governments, with their greater autonomy. On the other hand, it has been argued that local government administrations have, in fact, collaborated appropriately. Musgrave (2003)

⁶¹⁹ Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁶²⁰ Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁶²¹ Senior Teacher, SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁶²² Bovaird, Tony and Löffler, Elke (2003)

asserts that the management of a government organization should be: “An association of individuals engaged in co-operative venture, formed to resolve the problems of social co-existence and to do so in a democratic and fair fashion”⁶²³.

However, from analyzing some of the issues discussed above, especially the alleged lack of suitably-qualified staff at top-management level and insufficient number and type of divisions to handle the workload, it could be argued that the organizational design structure of the EOD is not best practice. An efficient organization should accommodate particular requirements, including promotion of the right people in the right place with the right skills, being provided with the right equipment, having a structure with adequate resources and works units and building open communication channels⁶²⁴.

As a consequence, and as also reflected in the experiences of the DVSE and schools reported in this study, the performance of the EODs in districts and cities involved in this research have not yet shown satisfactory outcomes. Examining the EODs in light of description of performance indicators defined by one scholar, the complaints from the DVSE and schools (SMK), regarding waiting time for approvals, program cancellation and general failure to provide a suitable level of support, all indicate that the EODs have failed to reach the performance levels expected of a government organization, especially with regards to effectiveness and the efficiency⁶²⁵. Most schools in this study face problems of responsiveness, accessibility and communication with EOD management. These factors also contribute to forming the view that the EOD management is not qualified⁶²⁶.

However, it is also obvious that, from the perspective of regional autonomy, the increasing number and variety of programs and activities being carried out by EODs is a strong indication that the transfer of roles and responsibilities from central to local level is actually occurring. Except for developmental programs, almost all education components have started to be administered locally which, in fact, was never the practice before regional autonomy. Although the EODs examined in this study have been found, during the transition stage of regional autonomy, to be not yet managing the VSE sector, it has, however, been found that the process of decentralization of roles and responsibilities is underway.

⁶²³ Musgrave, as cited by Jackson, Peter, M., in Bovaird, Tony and Löffler, Elke (2003), p. 26

⁶²⁴ Newell, Charldean (2004), p.113

⁶²⁵ Bouckaert, Geert and Dooren, Wouter in Bovaird, Tony and Löffler, Elke (2003), pp. 127-136

⁶²⁶ Bovaird, Tony in Bovaird, Tony and Löffler, Elke (2003), pp. 137-148

7.5 Chapter Summary

In the transitional stage of regional autonomy, the management of the VSE sector has changed from a centralised to a devolved approach. There is no longer a direct management hierarchy between the DVSE in Jakarta and the schools (SMK). However, it has been found that, through employing such strategies as ‘repositioning’, use of ICT, and ‘self-implementation’, the DVSE is still able to control the direction of VSE development in schools (SMKs). In the context of regional autonomy, this could be perceived as a hidden agenda to retain control of education in the regions, or as indicated by other scholars, particularly Watt (2000) and Ghai (2000) that occasionally the central government has been reluctant to implement programs and policies which contradict with the principles of the Regional Autonomy”. “No golden rule”, as coined by Gershberg (1999) suggests that there is no one approach or strategy that assures the success of decentralisation policies. However it could be contended that this is just a strategic, practical way of devolving roles and responsibilities to the regions. The ‘re-positioning’ strategy, in particular, has certainly been a useful tool for local governments to re-align their existing SMK programs with anticipated local needs and, thus, has served to encourage local governments to start paying more attention to this specific type of education, namely VSE. The use of ICT has really helped schools (SMK) to communicate with the DVSE, without having to involve local government bureaucracy, as well as to network with other schools on relevant issues, such as the programs being implemented and problems. The ‘self-implementation’ measure has been found to have empowered the SMK to implement school-based management and this is also one of the expected outcomes of regional autonomy. This increased communication directly between schools and the DVSE however does weaken the policy initiative for increased local management.

Regarding development of the VSE sector, the EOPs in the provinces are functioning merely as the ‘long-arm’ of the DVSE, and mainly just for distributing the block grants to the schools (SMK). Their real powers have disappeared with the commencement of regional autonomy and, unlike in the case of the DVSE, there is no strategy for devolving their former responsibilities to the local governments. Their new role in the education sector is not as dominant as in the past. Their involvement in the development of VSE is limited to their part in distributing the block grants, according to the new ‘de-concentrated’ fiscal arrangements in place. The actual management of and determination of which schools obtain what grants is the role of the DVSE. Regarding the EOPs in the new provinces, it is very difficult to access the boundaries of these newly-empowered local government bodies. By contrast, in the old established provinces, the EOP personnel and EOD personnel there are administratively-

experienced and enjoy a history of personal relationships between them, which has assisted them in overcoming the disintegration of formal administrative links.

The EODs have been found to be not yet ready to manage the responsibilities devolved to them under regional autonomy. At management level, the EODs find themselves overloaded by the expectations of the local governments as well as those of the DVSE in Jakarta and the EOPs in the provinces. They are facing multiple problems, including lack of experience and knowledge on the part of their personnel and the complexity of VSE. Administratively, the EODs are still incapable of being efficient and effective. Technically, none of the technical aspects are yet able to be maintained by EOD personnel. This is significant as VSE is, by nature, education that is based on technical and vocational knowledge. Although, in the context of the ideals of regional autonomy, the transfer of processes and responsibilities from Jakarta to the regions may be happening, this is as yet to be supported by the transfer of the expertise and experience required for VSE to be successfully managed and developed long term.

CHAPTER 8

THE IMPACT OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY ON THE VOCATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS (SMKs)

8.1 Introduction

An implication of regional autonomy has been that the central, provincial and local governments each have their own authority and schools, including vocational secondary schools (SMKs), which are the shared responsibility of all three levels of government. Before regional autonomy, the DVSE, assisted by the *Kanwil*⁶²⁷ in the provinces, monopolized the management of schools. All school needs, from facilities and building construction, equipment, tools and software, through to programs, courses, staffing, training and funding were determined centrally. School culture was characterised by passive management, that is, they would just wait for instructions and deliveries from the DVSE in Jakarta. Under the Regional Autonomy Laws, there has been a decentralization of responsibilities to the local government level. Accordingly, the schools (SMKs) are faced with a totally different environment, due to the sudden, diminished regular support from and different treatment by from the DVSE and, most importantly, the incapability of local governments, particularly their education arm, the Local Education Offices (EOD), to adequately take over the functions previously carried out by the DVSE.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that such a difficult environment has, unintentionally, had the positive effect of empowering the schools in their capability and improving school performance. In so doing schools, have been found to be reflecting the implementation, in practice, of the popular concepts of school-based management, self-managing schools and decentralized education. In addition, this study builds on earlier research, which found that, in Indonesian primary education, the teachers, in particular, are choosing not to adopt the role of autonomous educators that government officials have designed⁶²⁸. This current study has found that the majority of SMK principals and teachers are, in fact, interested in and committed to the programs and policies initiated by the DVSE in Jakarta.

⁶²⁷ Since the introduction of Regional Autonomy, the *Kanwil* (the right hand of the Central Education Office in the provinces no longer exist. They have been replaced by the Provincial Education Offices (*Dinas Propinsi* or EOP), as part of the organizational restructure in the provinces.

⁶²⁸ Bjork, Christopher (2003), p.216

8.2 New School Environment

Impacts of regional autonomy on the schools include the formulation of ‘de-concentrated’ systems, or delegation, as per the typology of decentralization⁶²⁹. “De-concentration typically involves the transfer of tasks and work, but not authority, to other units in the organization”⁶³⁰. Similarly, delegation means just transferring some of the tasks, but not actually the legal transfer of authority to the school level⁶³¹. This unintentional ‘de-concentration’ or delegation is the same in the case of the financial arrangements, in which the central government delegates some of its responsibilities to provincial governments, especially those of delivering support for the block grants. Activities associated with these grants are now to be handled by the recipients, either the Local Education Offices (EOD) or the schools (SMKs).

Initially, the vocational secondary schools (SMKs) had to act independently to achieve the goals expected of them by the DVSE through such programs as Link and Match⁶³², Dual Systems⁶³³ and Unit Production⁶³⁴, by conducting some of the activities associated with these programs. “...Centralization reflects a pyramid-like concept: the Ministry of Education determines what is best for the common good and each school is a unit, which executes orders from the top”⁶³⁵.

Currently, however, schools are required to carry out more activities of a ‘de-concentrated’ or those resulting from a school-based management approach. Despite responsibility for their own activities, as an educational institution, schools now also handle most of the activities associated with the block grants managed by the DVSE and EOP. These include preparations in the school, discussions with and lobbying of the Local Education Office (EOD), Local Planning Board (BAPPEDA), Local People’s Representative (DPRD) and the mayor/regent). These (unofficial) activities were never the practice in the past. Thus, much of the initiative is with the school.

⁶²⁹ Lauglo, Jon (1995), p. 23

⁶³⁰ Mook, Ka-ho (2002), p350

⁶³¹ Gamage, David (2006), p. 4

⁶³² ‘Link and Match’ is a strategy to match school output with the needs of industry (History of the DVSE, 2002)

⁶³³ “Dual System” or PSG is a school program for students to improve their skills and knowledge by completing relevant industry training during their course (History of the DVSE, 2002).

⁶³⁴ The principle of ‘Unit Production’ in a school allows schools to undertake business by optimizing and maintaining their own school resources, as well as increasing school earnings. ‘Unit Production’ also assists the government to improve national revenue and the welfare of the school staff. See Pakpahan (2002), p. 255

⁶³⁵ Derouet, Jean-Louis (2000), p. 61

8.2.1 Activities

The activities of the SMK involved in this study are increasing considerably. As illustrated in Table 16 below, most SMK have successfully obtained some block grants, especially from the DVSE. The table also shows that the block grant program, especially with regard to the self-implementation strategy, supports the process of decentralization in education, towards a schools-based management model. However, it seems that the block grants are dominated by those schools that have the resources, personnel, facilities, finances and - in particular - the know-how to mobilise the support of the local government, one requirements for obtaining a grant. New schools and schools with inexperienced principals and staff, have often failed to obtain many grants. This happened with SMK2, Bangka District and SMK1, Tangerang District.

Table 16. Block Grants obtained from Central Government: 2005

No.	Purpose of Block grant	Allocated	Obtained by:									
			SMK1 Bekasi Cty	SMK1 Bekasi Dist	SMK2 Bekasi Dist	SMK3 Tangerang Cty	SMK4 Tangerang Cty	SMK1 Tanerang Dist	SMK1 P. Pinang Cty	SMK2 P. Pinang Cty	SMK1 Bangka Dist	SMK2 Bangka Dist
A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	School Mapping	416	y	y	y	y	y	-	y	y	y	-
2	Hotel Training	10	y	-	-	-	y	-	-	y	-	-
3	Re-engineering	139	y	y	y	y	-	-	y	y	y	-
5	Community College	50	y	-	-	-	-	y	y	-	y	-
6	MTU (Mobil Training Unit)	5	-	y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Language Laboratory	40	y	y	y	y	y	-	-	y	y	-
8	International School	25	-	-	y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	BBE (Broad-Based Education)	150	-	-	y	-	y	y	y	y	-	-
10	Entrepreneurship/Life-Skills Classes	50	-	-	y	y	-	-	-	y	y	-
11	National School	40	-	-	-	-	y	-	-	y	y	-
12	ICT	30	-	-	-	y	-	-	-	y	y	-
13	WAN (Wide Area Network)	38	-	-	-	-	y	-	y	-	-	-
	Total per School		5	4	6	5	6	2	5	8	7	0

Source: Program Guidelines 2004 and 2005 and principals and teachers of the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMKs) involved in this research in 2005.

Notes: Block grants (column C) were allocated to approximately only 6000 SMK (1000 state and 5000 private), thus it is very competitive.

The Principal of SMK4, Tangerang City explained that his school is busy with implementing a number of grants for various programs (as illustrated in the table above). In the implementation stage, each program is coordinated by one teacher, with others assisting, while other teachers and several students have managed the activities associated with the programs themselves. Such block grants are not easy to obtain. A school has to have staff

experienced and qualified enough to complete the application and has to follow all the detailed procedures correctly. This principal explained: “The proposal to the DVSE, don’t delete here, has to be endorsed by the head of the EOD; afterwards, the school committee has to agree to it; a copy then has to be sent to the EOP, for acknowledgement”⁶³⁶. He further states: “...The DVSE offers the programs and the accompanying grants. We seize the opportunity and compete with other schools. We need to be proactive; if we are passive, we will not get them...”⁶³⁷.

A school has to come up with a solid proposal, which has been discussed internally amongst staff and which should be endorsed by the school committee. The principal or teacher responsible then has to discuss it with the EOD and obtain their approval, before approaching the next level of local bureaucracy, such as the Local People’s Representatives (DPRD) or the Local Planning Board (BAPPEDA) or even the mayor/regent for endorsement if the proposed program is one that is required to have the local government contribute to the budget. The number of block grants being implemented, as well as the number of programs being proposed indicates that schools are involved with many activities associated with the block grants, which they never had to undertake before the introduction of regional autonomy.

Thus, for school staff, especially those involved with the programs, the workload and type of tasks undertaken have increased substantially. They not only have to cope with their routine tasks, but also have to take on tasks related to grant applications. They are required to be very disciplined time managers, in order to cope with their usual teaching and administrative activities, plus those resulting from the block grants scheme, especially seeking endorsement from internal school management and local government. Most importantly, it indicates that their non-teaching capabilities are improving, if the block grants are successful. Williams and Harold have argued: “Decentralization increases the workloads of principals, administrators, and school trustees. The complexity of the new tasks has taken more time than anyone initially envisioned. These are: financial planning and management; the volume of paperwork; the number of consultations required”⁶³⁸. Such is the situation in most of the schools (SMKs) involved in this research. The Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision claims that some have successfully obtained as many as seven block grants and only two schools are still struggling to obtain even one⁶³⁹. Thus, obviously, it is an indication that decentralization in education (de-concentration and delegation) is actually taking place at

⁶³⁶ Principal, SMK4, Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶³⁷ Principal SMK4, Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶³⁸ Williams, Richard C. and Harold, Barbara (1997), p. 4

⁶³⁹ Head of the DVSE Facilities Subdivision, interviewed 12 January 2005

school level as claimed by Williams ⁶⁴⁰ that “Decentralization increases the workloads of principals, administrators, and school trustees. The complexity of the new tasks has taken more time than anyone initially envisioned. These are: financial planning and management; the volume of paperwork; the number of consultations required”⁶⁴¹.

8.2.2 *Self-Reliance*

Self-reliance as an aspect of school independence is reflected by initiatives taken by schools to participate in the new environment. For example, the principal of SMK3 Tangerang City has provided a program to improve the knowledge and skills of teaching and administrative staff, in order to successfully implement the competency-based curriculum. This is a central government strategy for implementing new teaching methods, designed to improve the competency of graduates in specific skills which match the needs of industry⁶⁴². Using their own funds, a three-day seminar was organised, conducted out of school, in Cipayung-Puncak, a popular location for government officials to conduct meetings⁶⁴³. All staff were invited to participate in this training, and the school shut for the duration of the seminar.

Other types of self-reliance which reflect schools’ independence can be detected by looking at their initiatives to come up with their share of the budget for programs. Most schools involved in this research have successfully obtained several block grants, either from the DVSE or EOP, as listed in the Figure 16 above. One of the requirements for obtaining support is the ability of the school to provide its share of the budget, which means these schools have had to use their initiative and make decisions in order to come up with their own resources to support the programs. For example, as stated in the guideline book provided by the DVSE, for a school to obtain a grant to bring themselves up to national standards (and as discussed in Chapter 4), they have to provide at least match the value of the grant. This was the case with SMK2 Bekasi District.

8.2.3 *Self-Confidence*

The self-confidence many schools have shown in introducing their own ideas has been remarkable. Most schools (SMKs) in this study have been encouraged by the localization of

⁶⁴⁰ Williams, Richard C. and Harold, Barbara (1997). “Sweeping Decentralization of Educational Decision-Making Authority”, *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 78, Issue 8, April, Available [online], <http://0-web30.epnet.com.library.vu.edu.au/citation.asp?tb=1&ug=sid+B8...>, [19 October, 2004]

⁶⁴¹ Williams, Richard C. and Harold, Barbara (1997), p. 4

⁶⁴² Principal, SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶⁴³ Cipayung-Puncak is a popular venue for meetings, seminars and workshops, located in the hills, around 100 km east of Jakarta, used by many government offices, not just the education sector.

the education administration, brought about by regional autonomy. They have introduced their own approaches to try to improve their schools and have participated in the development of vocational education locally. In West Java Province, SMK1 Bekasi City introduced an ambitious plan for improving the school, in line with the central office's programs and policies but also accommodating local needs, especially with regard to greater access and improving education levels. The teachers responsible worked with private consultants to design the blueprint for new buildings and discussed the plans with officials from the lowest level of municipal administration in Bekasi, seeking their financial support⁶⁴⁴. That such activity is happening at sub-district level is another illustration of decentralization in education.

In the case of SMK1 Bekasi City, as the principal explained, once the plans received approval from the Head of the sub-district of Bekasi, they would be discussed in the upper level of the local government, in particular in the District Legislative People's Assembly (DPRD)⁶⁴⁵. This planning mechanism is an alternative approach to the normal, to be used if the EOD initially rejects the plans. Reasons for non-approval could include local budget limitations, a school area being considered too small or the existence already of a similar school in the areas. However, this school principal asserts that this is the time when the schools have equal rights to democratically determine their own plans and that those who best understand a school's developmental needs are the school staff themselves. Such disputes support Yusuf Sayed's argument that: "At the level of democracy, understood as devolved school governance, a number of conflicts have emerged, which include issues relating to the setting of school fees, racial conflicts and the appointment of teachers"⁶⁴⁶.

In the political context, such populist policies involving the *kecamatan* in supporting the education interests of the surrounding population represents democratization as well as decentralization. *Kecamatan* leaders, as assistants to the mayor or regent in running the sub-district, obviously get support from the neighbourhood - those who are his or her potential constituents in the next local government elections. The direct election system for the local leader (mayor or regent) enables the local communities to choose their candidate directly, thus opening up a new realm of electoral competition. Candidates have to mobilise support and make themselves known beyond just their neighbourhood, providing support for improving schools and developing education, such as in the case of SMK1 Bekasi City, will

⁶⁴⁴ The officials were from the sub-district (*kecamatan*) that is the lowest level of administration above the voluntary-based community bodies, such as the administrative units (*RW*) and the neighborhood associations (*RT*).

⁶⁴⁵ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁶⁴⁶ Sayed, Yusuf (2002), p.43

be a source of pride for the entire community in a district and a means to broaden political support for those who seek or who have a political position.

8.2.4 Working Environment

Harmonious might be a word to describe improvements in the working environment in schools as schools have become more autonomous, independent and involved in activities beyond their routine functions, such as applying for and implementing grants and programs – a process involving most of the school staff. This suggests that schools, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, have a greatly enhanced role in the implementation of policies and programs. This is the principle of ‘deconcentration’ and delegation in practice. The schools also have been responsive to the labor market by ‘re-engineering’ their courses. Thus, the number and type of activities schools are involved in and interaction between staff and the principal and with relevant stakeholders outside of the schools has increased. As Michael Pennella argues: “Because of major shifts in the work environment, a corresponding change in perspective and attitude must occur within all current and future workers. This change must enable workers to feel that they can become active, successful, optimistic participants...”⁶⁴⁷.

The principal of SMK3 Tangerang City illustrates just how intense the interaction has become at his school, reporting that there are frequent meetings attended by the vice- principal, head of programs and selected staff to review program achievements⁶⁴⁸. He advised that the strategy for managing programs is “to give full mandate to the program coordinators, not just concentrating on one staff member, with reports to be provided monthly”⁶⁴⁹. Be mindful of one another are his words of wisdom, to encourage staff to work together in a cooperative and harmonious manner. Other schools in this study were found to be concentrating on similar programs and activities and it has been reported that they have been conducting similar meetings and employing the same approach and objectives, inviting most of the staff - in particular those responsible for program implementation – to be involved. A teacher from SMK1 Pangkalpinang City states: “The relationship between teachers is very harmonious and tolerant, with no divisions and all of us helping each other”⁶⁵⁰.

Such improvements stem from the creativity and responsiveness of school personnel to the new administrative system, as they go beyond just what they are traditionally supposed to be

⁶⁴⁷ Pennella, Michael in Costa, Arthur L., and Liebmann, Rosemarie M. (1997), p. 55

⁶⁴⁸ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶⁴⁹ Principal SMK3 Tangerang city, interviewed 8 February 2005.

⁶⁵⁰ Senior Teacher SMK1 Pangkalpinang city, interviewed 18 June 2005

doing, ie, teachers should just be teaching and school administrators just administrating. They have become involved with new tasks that differ from their original job description, including procuring equipment and furniture and developing new courses and ‘re-engineering’ existing ones. Additional professional skills and expertise are now prerequisites. Thus, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, a new work environment has been created in schools. The more complex and demanding work environment in schools is reflected in Michael Pennella’s contention that: “The new work environment no longer routinely responds to the rules. A major shift is under way in how workers are perceived. New skills or competencies...will be built on the types of skills associated with the entrepreneur or enterprising person”⁶⁵¹.

8.2.5 Leadership

It could be argued that the school principals stand to be the ones most challenged by the changes in the internal and external environment. From interviews with principals for this study, it is apparent that most are aware that the spirit of regional autonomy has penetrated to all levels of staff – teachers, administrators and other support personnel. The notion of school principals exercising leadership in an authoritarian manner is off the agenda. Issues of school policies and programs are expected to be discussed in an open and democratic manner. Patrick Duignan’s observation describes the changes in the schools. “Leaders can not do it all by themselves. They have to work with and through others to achieve their organization’s vision and goals. This refers mainly to internal relationships but leaders also have to develop and maintain strong external relationships and networks”⁶⁵².

This is an appropriate philosophy for school principals to adopt to handle the dynamic changes. However, it appears this is still not the trend among local political leaders involved in this research. As described earlier, in many cases, local government officials are forced to follow to the particular personal political agendas of the local government’s political leadership. There are tensions between the schools, inspired by the spirit of regional autonomy and local government leaders who are sometimes reluctant to adapt to this spirit. In this transition stage of regional autonomy, one of the best indicators of the success of schools in adapting to the new system is the number of grants they have managed to obtain and programs they have been able to implement. This is also a good measure of efficiency of school leadership. As most of the schools (SMK) in this study have been very successful in this regard, this indicates that the leadership provided by the principals has been outstanding.

⁶⁵¹ Pennella, Michael in Costa, Arthur L., and Liebmann, Rosemarie M. (1997), p. 55

⁶⁵² Duignan, Patrick (2006), p. 22

The Principal of SMK3 Tangerang City claims: “The success of the school is not due to the principal alone but to teamwork of all the staff. Proposals or initiatives come from the teachers and are not decided by the principal. The strategy is to distribute responsibility among teachers and principal, not just to centre everything on one person”⁶⁵³.

It was discovered in this research that principals have appointed particular teachers to be responsible for the implementation of at least one block grant. This means the selected teachers are required to carry out associated activities, including liaising with the upper levels of government bureaucracy - the local office (EOD), provincial office (EOP) or central office (DVSE) as well as with parties outside the education and government structures, such as companies, vendors, suppliers and consultants.

With such an open management and delegation strategy and with potentially several block grant programs in operation, it means several teachers within a school are appointed to manage them. In spite of this, it would appear that, in some cases, certain principals are still given to exercising a more controlling style of leadership. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District observed: “Support from colleagues is strong; our power is the teachers; but I am capable of maintaining control over them and persuading them, while still being transparent”⁶⁵⁴.

Not all teachers are happy with these conditions and in many cases principals are being challenged by teachers dissatisfied with their leadership. One teacher, from the recently established SMK1 Tangerang District argued that, “the school is still centered on the will of the principal”⁶⁵⁵. A teacher from SMK2 Bekasi District strongly criticized the leadership of the principal: “The problem is that we don’t have the freedom to speak. I hate the bureaucracy the most; it is too hierarchical... Things go from teachers to the program head, then to the vice-principal and, finally, to the principal. There is no way for teachers to go directly to the principal. This discourages me from doing anything ... Believe me - if we were given more freedom, all the programs would be outstanding”⁶⁵⁶.

Besides the issue of teacher dissatisfaction, the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District has found that giving more freedom to and sharing more responsibility with teachers has sometimes caused a ‘boomerang’ effect. He claims:

⁶⁵³ Principal SMK3 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005

⁶⁵⁴ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁶⁵⁵ Junior teacher of SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

⁶⁵⁶ Senior teacher of SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed May 2005

“The most difficult problem is getting the commitment of colleagues who have been successfully running their own businesses. With the School Production Units, teachers are learning how to make their own businesses a success. In return, they are not concentrating on their primary task of teaching. Those very occupied with this have been arranging their teaching schedule around the interests of their business”⁶⁵⁷.

These issues illustrate the internal improvements and challenges of Indonesian vocational secondary schools in dealing with the tensions of a new environment resulting from the impact of regional autonomy. Other challenges, discussed earlier, are external tensions, particularly in trying to approach the Local Education Offices (EOD), the BAPPEDA, the DPRD and local leaders (mayor or regent) for their support in getting VSE programs implemented. This is a critical issue for principals as they do not have a background in administration nor in working with local governments. This touches on political boundaries, especially when it comes to dealing with the DPRD; this is a completely new world for them. Success requires specific leadership skills, including: inspiring and motivating; making people feel good about themselves, their work and their organization; encouraging participation and involvement; helping staff to grow and develop⁶⁵⁸.

Although leadership styles vary from one principal to another, it is asserted that the leadership qualities listed above are the ideal ones for a principal to have. Principals should also reflect their own individuality, adapting their leadership style according to the different situations they face.

8.2.6 Experiences

It is suggested that the seniority of the school principals involved in this research is a factor in how well they have been able to anticipate and manage problems arising from the introduction of regional autonomy. Seniority refers not just to age but also to length of service as principal. Most schools in this study with principals in this category presented as relatively stable and with positive working environments. Schools such as SMK3 and 4 in Tangerang City, SMK1 and 2 in Pangkalpinang City and SMK2 Bekasi District are headed by very senior and experienced principals. The Principal of SMK 2 Bekasi District argued: “...Historically, from the very beginning, the principal in this school (SMK2) has always

⁶⁵⁷ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005

⁶⁵⁸ Williams, Kate and Johnson, Bob (2004), p. 69

been senior. Until now, everything has run smoothly, unlike in SMK1, where the teachers have protested against the principal”⁶⁵⁹.

Although difficult to prove, it is suggested that cultural aspects may be involved. In Indonesia, the loyalty of junior to senior is great. Showing respect and appreciation to one’s elders and seniors is a norm of daily life. This phenomenon was discussed in the interviews with teachers in these schools. Most were very polite with the principals and they even hesitated to be interviewed without their principal’s approval or they would request to be interviewed after the principal. Such loyalty also could reflect the success of the central government’s tight selection process for school principals, including talent-scouting, which was implemented before the introduction of the regional autonomy. In the selection process, candidates’ experience, knowledge, skill and leadership qualities candidates are evaluated, as advised by the Principal of SMK2 Pangkalpinang City. It is difficult to distinguish the borderline between genuine loyalty and bureaucratic obedience.

By contrast, it would appear that the more junior principals are more likely to have difficulties coping with the new system. They are the appointments of the local government, appointed after the introduction of regional autonomy. The selection process follows the spirit of decentralization, without involving the central office (DVSE), and following local government selection processes. The earlier talent-scouting process had the advantage of at least providing certain criteria for select the best candidate, whereas now it would appear the local governments do not necessarily take talent into consideration. As a teacher from SMK1 Tangerang District observed: “Often, the background and experience of the candidates do not match with the position and therefore he or she is incapable of handling the given tasks. It should be the right person for the right position”⁶⁶⁰.

The impact is obvious. In Bangka District, for example, the newly-appointed Principal of SMK2 is struggling to establish networks both locally and nationally. Similarly, in Tangerang District, the Principal of SMK1 is also new and facing the same problem. The principals of SMK1 and SMK2 Bekasi district are also appointments of the new local governments there. Although school performance still is likely to be successful, leadership-wise, these newer principals are threatened with internal problems, such as the boomerang effect from such success, with complaints from teachers regarding the tight and hierarchical bureaucracy of administration. Such problems were not found among the more senior principals interviewed for this study.

⁶⁵⁹ School principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 17 May, 2005

⁶⁶⁰ Senior Teacher SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

In summary, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the school environment has changed dramatically. Schools have become much more engaged in the program development process, as well as responsive, independent and empowered. Schools are not just functioning as educational institutions but as program development centres. Principals have been challenged by internal and external demands. The amount of experience they have plays an important role in anticipating and managing the challenges they face. Such problems arise from the impact of regional autonomy in general, rather than from the promulgation of any specific regulations for improving education.

8.3 The Changing Roles of Schools

Regional autonomy has forced schools to perform more than just their main functions. The EODs are the most important local government office for schools. They are recently established institutions and have never been involved in managing VSE previously. They do not as yet have the capability of providing all the administrative and technical support that schools need, thus replacing the role played by the DVSE in managing VSE, as stipulated by the Regional Autonomy Law. The DVSE still tends to control VSE programs in the schools by indirect support, especially in the form of financial grants for programs and other consultative services. There is still no hierarchical link with local governments and the DVSE has difficulties approaching local governments.

The personnel of the schools themselves have the most experience in administering VSE programs and activities. This has encouraged the schools studied in this research to assume greater responsibilities in planning, with the support of and in cooperation with the DVSE. Thus, supporting Fiske and Ladd's argument, the schools, as agents of the central government, have facilitated the implementation of the national government's programs⁶⁶¹.

8.3.1 Initiator Function

Although other bodies with roles to play in managing education have been established, such as the Local Education Boards (*Dewan Sekolah*) in every district and city and school committees (*Komite Sekolah*) in schools in this transition phase of regional autonomy, their existence appears to have not been very useful yet. The school committees are independent bodies, consisting of representatives of the surrounding community, including parents, community or village leaders, business and industry groups, education experts or other

⁶⁶¹ Fiske, Edward B., and Ladd, Helen F. (2000), p. 8

stakeholders interested in educational development⁶⁶². “The function of the board and committee is to provide suggestions, considerations, and recommendations to the local government and to the education unit (school) regarding educational programs and policy...”⁶⁶³.

The majority of staff interviewed from schools for this study suggested that the school committees in their schools are not yet functioning optimally. Although the existence of a committee is quite helpful as a partner to schools in running programs and in a control capacity, most interviewees claim they are no different to the body it replaced, which only collected student fees or contributions. The Principal of SMK1 Pangkalpinang City had found that: “The difficulty is in finding a good committee leader. In my opinion, it is just as if we still have the old BP3 leader, but just with a different shirt. Ideas still come mostly from the school. Hopefully this will change, as the Board of the Education starts to encourage more participation from school committees”⁶⁶⁴.

A teacher from the same school suggested that “as far as moral support goes, the committee is useful, but not materially. They just come once in a while and have not as yet demonstrated any real use”⁶⁶⁵. However, school committees have become the trend in most schools, especially those involved in this research. They represent one element of the concept of school-based management (MBS). Their responsibilities are clearer and their position is not under the school principals, as were the former BP3. The committee serves as a partner to the school and all policies and programs are to be discussed and approved by the committee. In addition, the existence of a committee is a central office prerequisite for schools to obtain block grants. The school committees have become part of the VSE structure, but have not emerged as the main driving force for school development, as hoped for in the school-based management plans. It has been found in this study that committees are, as yet, still “unable to provide much of a contribution”⁶⁶⁶.

The school staff themselves, by contrast, as the ones most familiar with VSE programs and future needs. The staff were found to be full of ideas for VSE development. An example is SMK1 Bekasi City, which after successfully ‘re-engineering’ its courses to meet local labor market needs, it is proposing to become an integrated school, that is a school which will not only provide more courses at secondary level but also more advanced training similar to

⁶⁶² Team Development of the Board of Education and School Committee (2004)

⁶⁶³ Team Development of the Board of Education and School Committee (2004), p.5

⁶⁶⁴ Principal SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 10 June 2005. BP3 was the earlier form of school committee.

⁶⁶⁵ Senior Teacher SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18 June 2005

⁶⁶⁶ Senior Teacher SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 9 February 2005

Australia's TAFE courses. In making these changes, the school encountered opposition from the local bureaucracy⁶⁶⁷. Other schools studied have been similarly proactive with initiatives for improvement, including, as in SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, the promotion of VSE locally by establishing school exhibitions to showcase student competencies, as a means of introducing VSE to the local community and local government. Other schools, such as in Tangerang City have come up with their own creative ideas, from providing seminars, training, and other activities, using their own resources.

Schools' capacity for initiative is due in part to the support from the central government in the form of DVSE grants, strategies of 're-positioning' or 're-engineering', marketing and 'self-implementation' and good use of information and communications technology. Schools have taken advantage of all of these to create improvements, relying on their own resources, without waiting for instructions and suggestions from the DVSE or the EOPs, as happened in the past. Although the EODs, as has been found in this study may not yet be considered capable of technical and administrative support, most have been helpful. Institutionally, this support is very important for schools. Such school-based development initiatives emerging in the transition stage of regional autonomy reform represent a new paradigm of school development, which would have been impossible under the pre-autonomy model. As Street and Temperley argue:

“The world of education is changing. Increasingly, we are moving away from the models of the past (central control, planned change, schools as independent and autonomous units, national strategy) and towards approaches to system development that can make sense of diversities between schools in ways that will contribute to increased learning across the education systems.... That is the challenge of the twenty-first century for education systems around the world”⁶⁶⁸.

8.3.2 *The Role of Problem Solver*

Schools are growing in independence and creativity and the schools themselves are obviously the most familiar with their particular local problems confronting them, which might never get solved just relying on national policies and initiatives. Schools are now free to choose any strategy they feel fit to address their specific issues. For example, SMK1 Bekasi District has introduced a business course, even though the original background of the school is technical. It has been the tendency, although there is no gender discrimination, that technical schools are

⁶⁶⁷ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed February 2005

⁶⁶⁸ Street, Hilary and Temperley, Julie (2005),

attended by mostly boys, while in the business schools, girls dominate. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi District claims that he has attained multiple benefits from such an initiative, not just the students' enthusiasm to enrol in this new course, but also better discipline amongst existing students. Before, students often came late to school and there were a lot of fights among his students or between his students with those from other schools. With the appearance of the girls in their school, enrolling in the non-technical course, the boys have presented in class on time with tidy uniform and haircuts and fighting has ceased, he claims⁶⁶⁹.

The schools are also becoming problem-solvers for the local government authorities, in that the schools themselves are anticipating the needs of the teachers. Central government policies for improving the access to education, through the 're-positioning' strategy, have enabled local governments to extend vocational education to all types and levels of education - from primary to high (SMA) schools (both public and private) and even to Islamic schools⁶⁷⁰. It has been discovered in this research that, since the commencement of regional autonomy, the autonomy of local governments has increased and they have taken advantage of this to implement populist policies and open many new vocational schools, especially private ones, and to introduce new courses in existing schools. This could not be achieved without support from skilled and experienced teachers in the existing SMKs, as the recruitment of new teachers has proved difficult for the schools in Tangerang District and Bangka District.

The new flexibility of schools to offer new or 're-engineered' courses has been very successful. The Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP) of West Java Province advised that the introduction of vocational courses, especially in agriculture, via distance education in certain Islamic schools (*pesantren*) in remote areas was done after consultation with the local community and the determination that these would be the most useful programs to meet their needs⁶⁷¹. The same EOP Head has also given his support to the chemistry program initiated by the local government, to be opened in a private vocational school in Majalengka District (a district not included in this research). However, one downside of this independence, as pointed out by the Head of the EOP Banten Province, is that those vocational schools with very limited resources, in terms of funding, teachers and equipment for practicum are still missing out. In such schools, students can only study theory. This is the

⁶⁶⁹ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed February 2005

⁶⁷⁰ DVSE Program Guidelines 2004 and 2005

⁶⁷¹ Head of EOP West Java Province, interviewed July 2005

case mostly in private vocational schools. Equipment is very expensive; one CNC machine⁶⁷², for example, costs USD 105,263⁶⁷³.

8.3.3 Schools as Motivators

The locally-based education policies and programs made possible by regional autonomy indeed have occurred under the authority of local governments however, the initiative has mostly come from the schools (SMKs) themselves. The majority of local governments involved in this study have concentrated on primary and secondary level education and not vocational secondary education. With regards to VSE, local governments have tended to just follow policies and programs set by the DVSE, albeit lending support to the proposals originating from the schools by assisting them to obtain DVSE block grants packages. The Head of the EOD Bekasi District argues: “All programs for development are still those emanating from Jakarta; not one has emerged from this region”⁶⁷⁴.

As discussed previously, one of the schools under his jurisdiction, SMK1 Bekasi City, has been very successful in obtaining DVSE block grants and problem-solving by introducing courses in its new technology and business streams. However, the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City claims that it is difficult to motivate the people in their Local Education Office (EOD): “If an idea comes from us, they look at it negatively and don’t want to allow us to continue, however, if we really insist, we might get there ...”⁶⁷⁵.

In other locations of this study, the same picture emerges: schools have to try many approaches, some formal, some informal to try to motivate the EODs to lend their support. Some schools meet with the mayor or regent, as the top local government leaders or lobby their local member of parliament (in the DPRD), with the intention of influencing the Local Education Office (EOD) to support their proposals, before submission to the EOD for discussion. As discussed previously, most of the EODs are unfamiliar with VSE and they also have limited funding. One senior teacher from SMK1 Tangerang District asserts: “Motivation for educational development and improvement should first come from those in the schools, and not from the local government”⁶⁷⁶. Williams and Johnson argue in support: “The

⁶⁷² CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machine is a machine like lathe, operated in computer program ‘basic’, The operator only needs to input the instruction programs and the machine will operating automatically in making goods, for examples bolts and nuts

⁶⁷³ Principal SMK1 Bekasi city, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁶⁷⁴ Head of EOD Bekasi City, interviewed 18 April 2005

⁶⁷⁵ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

⁶⁷⁶ Senior Teacher SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

importance of motivating people comes partly as a result of the change in the work environment. But it also results from the growth in number of knowledge workers”⁶⁷⁷.

Most schools in this study have been successful in obtaining several block grants for programs, so this means they have been successful in obtaining their EOD’s support for the application, specially, and the VSE sector, in general. Block grants, as stated in the DVSE guidelines, can be obtained prior to EOD or the mayor or regent’s approval, however for this, schools must provide their own share of the funding. Local officials often collaborate in order to win support from the DVSE however, in some locations of this research, the local governments have been found to have been motivated to support the additional needs of schools, such as providing aid for students to do industrial training, especially with the transportation and living expenses. This occurred in Tangerang District, where SMK1 was able to convince the local government to provide funds for upgrading equipment and building renovations. “Collaborative enquiry is an essential professional activity for any school community that wishes to continue to grow and develop”⁶⁷⁸.

8.3.4 Schools as Part of Local Education Management

The position of schools is improving from being passive recipient institutions to becoming part and parcel of every administrative process, together with local government. In the past, the EOPs acted as the agent of the central government, managing all school operational needs, including funding, staffing, salaries, programs, materials. Now these activities are managed locally and schools are adapting to the new way. One teacher had found: “The shifting of the administration of staffing and funding to local government is not a problem; it’s running smoothly”⁶⁷⁹. However, another teacher’s view was: “Since regional autonomy, there is a policy that, before implementing something, we must liaise with the Local Education Office in advance. This feels strange and inconvenient at times as, for decades, we’ve been used to dealing with the provincial or central government authorities only”⁶⁸⁰.

One principal stressed the challenge for schools, when discussing any issue with the EOD, of finding the right person to deal with: “With the EOD, because there are so many issues they must deal with, with limited staff, with limited experience, I need to find the right person to lobby – someone with the necessary operational or technical experience ...”⁶⁸¹.

⁶⁷⁷ Williams, Kate and Johnson, Bob (2004), p. 58

⁶⁷⁸ Street, Hilary and Temperley, Julie (2005), p.13

⁶⁷⁹ Senior Teacher SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005

⁶⁸⁰ Senior teacher SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁶⁸¹ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

A teacher from the same school made the following criticism:

“Usually the background and the experience of the officials appointed don’t match the responsibilities they are supposed to handle. Therefore, they are incapable of doing the job properly. We lack the right man in the right place. It may be okay to deal directly with the regent or the head of the EOD, as they hold political positions and have experts available to advise them. However, dealing with the different divisions within the EOD, such as with section or sub-section heads, is difficult as it is hard to find an expert in the field of education....The once-every-three-years promotion of officials leads to a lack of structure and disruption, as existing programs are terminated and replaced by the new ideas and programs - which are mostly very different – of the new leaders”⁶⁸².

Although such conditions illustrate the challenges for schools in approaching their EODs, it seems most schools have started breaking down barriers between themselves and the local government education administration. Thus, they are no longer just passive recipients, sitting outside the boundaries of education management. From the local governments there have also been endeavours to involve teachers from the established vocational schools (SMKs) in the introduction of new vocational courses or, even, new vocational schools. Existing schools (SMKs) and their teachers assume the extra responsibility of helping to implement vocational programs in other schools, especially private vocational schools as well as in primary and Islamic schools (*madrasah* and *pesantren*). Most of the local governments examined in this research were found to have the same strategy of giving the public the opportunity to become involved in developing vocational education. The result of consultation with the community concerning their needs has been the opening new private schools and the ‘re-engineering’ of existing courses in schools. This means that the vocational schools (SMKs) are becoming part of the management of vocational education in general, beyond the boundaries of their own particular school. This, in turn, helps schools to improve themselves as well. One teacher asserts: “Since regional autonomy, we have more flexibility and we are not dependent on the central government, as we are able to formulate anything in the school. In terms of prosperity, for decades we never got support from Jakarta. Now it’s improving as we get some support from our local government, even if it’s just a small amount, for things like uniforms”⁶⁸³.

This supports the argument that regional autonomy has brought about a decentralization of education management and administration to local government in the districts and cities. Most

⁶⁸² Senior Teacher SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed in 3 March 2005

⁶⁸³ Senior Teacher SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005

school operational and developmental needs are now being managed by the local government authorities. However, such local management also includes the conduct of tasks previously performed by central government authorities, which have now been ‘deconcentrated’ or decentralised. Both schools and the local governments are mostly managing programs and policies determined by the central government, when it comes to the budget allocations (DAU and DAK), staffing quotas, grants and programs. Rosalind Levačić argues: “School governing bodies are able to choose how to manage their allocated budgets, as they see fit for the purposes of their schools. It is also up to them to decide how many teaching and ancillary staff to employ and they are also responsible for appointing, disciplining and dismissing staff...”⁶⁸⁴.

8.4 Schools at Risk

It is undeniable that the majority of schools (SMKs) involved in this research have been able to survive the impacts of regional autonomy, becoming more autonomous, independent, self-reliant and empowered. However, the funding issue appears to be threatening the future of the schools. VSE, as mentioned by one principal is “expensive, needs a large area, many buildings and equipment and huge operational costs”⁶⁸⁵. He estimated that the annual operational costs for his school are approximately USD 92,631 per year. With the exception of SMK2 Bangka District, most of the schools in this study are categorized as fully-equipped and were established before regional autonomy and thus their only costs are operational costs, not establishment costs. For decades, besides receiving funding for operational costs from the central government, the vocational schools (SMKs) have been allowed to collect the money from the students for supporting these operational costs.

Since the introduction of regional autonomy in 2001 however, financial arrangements for schools have changed and have become the responsibility of local governments. Currently, most of the local governments of this study have not invested in vocational education, due to local budget limitations and competing demands from many sectors. As a result, most of the schools have reported experiencing budget deficiencies in what they receive from their local governments, especially for their operational costs. In addition, central government financial support is now in the form of incentive schemes, or block grants, as discussed in Chapter 4. National policy on providing operational budget for secondary schools still allows schools to collect money, in the form of fees, from students. However, at the school level, it is counter-productive to do so, in as far as the essence of regional autonomy principles goes.

⁶⁸⁴ Levačić, Rosalind (1995), p. 8

⁶⁸⁵ Principal SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed April 2005

8.4.1 Lack of Synchronized Policies

Vocational secondary schools (SMKs) are suffering from the lack of a sufficient operational budget. The policy of free school for the primary level of education has not been, in practice, extended to the vocational secondary level. The prominent Indonesian newspaper, *Kompas*,⁶⁸⁶ quoted Sudi Silalahi, Cabinet Secretary of the Republic of Indonesia, who asserted that the concept of free school is aimed at freeing the 9.6 million poor students in primary and secondary education level from all school expenses by providing USD 589,473,684.21. One member of the DPRD of Pangkalpinang City regretted that concrete means for implementing this ideal are not yet firmly in place, however “the people have noted that it has been declared that education is free”⁶⁸⁷. The impact on school management is unavoidable, as described by the Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District: “Last year, on the one hand, the DPRD was interrogating me as to why my school was still collecting examination fees from students; on the other hand, students rallied to protest about the fees”⁶⁸⁸.

The principal of SMK1 Bekasi District claims that, in his estimation, if the local government were actually capable of providing the necessary operational budget funding of USD 85,000, then the school really would be in a position to give free tuition to students. However, their protests have not inspired local decision makers to solve this problem, except in the form of promises. In this district, a member of the DPRD states: “From 2005 on, books will be free for students”⁶⁸⁹. The head of the EOD in Bekasi District reports: “Improvements to teachers’ prosperity has been realized by giving USD 42.10 every month, since 2004. Improvements in prosperity for the poor of society have been realised by freeing students from poor families from having to pay their expenses at primary and secondary school level. This is also in line with the policy of the provincial government”⁶⁹⁰.

One official of the BAPPEDA Tangerang City, also commenting on the funding issue for vocational schools: “For the vocational schools it is quite hard; development of this sector is not yet priority. It has been determined that it is not an easy task and that huge financial investment is involved. A feasibility study is needed, including an evaluation of the market, and it should be conducted by experts who are really experienced in this area”⁶⁹¹. The Head of the EOD Tangerang district also reports that commitment to vocational secondary education

⁶⁸⁶ *Kompas*, edition of 18 March 2005

⁶⁸⁷ Member of the DPRD, Pangkalpinang City, interviewed June 2005

⁶⁸⁸ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

⁶⁸⁹ Member of the DPRD Bekasi City, interviewed May 2005

⁶⁹⁰ Head of the EOD Bekasi District, interviewed May 2005

⁶⁹¹ Head of Bappeda Tangerang City, interviewed February 2005. The BAPPEDA is the local government body responsible planning.

is lacking: “If we look at the laboratories in vocational schools, which were built with huge amounts of money, until recently, they were not being utilised efficiently and this has contributed to the expensiveness of vocational education”⁶⁹².

Thus, it can be asserted that, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the situation of school finances is uncertain. There is policy inconsistency in the upper levels of bureaucracy with the dynamic changes actually occurring in the schools themselves. There is lack of support or commitment from the relevant local institutions, which is reflected in the lack of local government financial support to schools. The community is becoming more critical and vocal and paying more attention to the services provided by schools. Even students are becoming more aware of decisions made by school management and are demanding better services and better education.

8.4.2 Insufficient Budget

Optimizing community contributions is still the primary option for anticipating operational budgeting problems. Even with many complaints, such as warnings from the DPRD and protests from students, most of the schools in this study report that they have no other options. In order to avoid operational failure, they are forced to collect contributions from students. The Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City reports that, besides from his school’s production unit, his school is reliant on community participation, especially the monthly school fees from students, as there is no support from central and local government⁶⁹³. The Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District argues even more for the need to charge student fees: “Last year, the local government gave us the routine budget amount for vocational schools (SMK), but this is the same amount as for senior high schools (SMA), when our operating costs are much higher. For electricity alone, the monthly bill can be twice or triple that of an SMA, not to mention for other items, such as student training materials and equipment”⁶⁹⁴.

Another funding option available to schools is to optimize their existing production units. As discussed in Chapter 4, many of these have been operating for years, and with the idea that revenue earned would be used in part to assist with school operating costs. The Head of the EOD Tangerang District, reflecting his frustration of struggling convincing the local government, declared: “we will not be begging, as we have an integrated production unit”⁶⁹⁵.

⁶⁹² Head of the EOD Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

⁶⁹³ Principal SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed May 2005

⁶⁹⁴ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

⁶⁹⁵ Head of EOD Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

At the time of this study, the Head of the EOD Pangkalpinang City was preparing local regulations for production unit operation, which he determined that, besides their purpose of improving student competency, production units should be optimized commercially as money-makers, to support school operations⁶⁹⁶.

However, most school principals interviewed are still optimistic that the funding situation will improve. The Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District believes that the decision-makers are, in fact, not paying less attention to vocational schools, but that it is just that they are limited in their understanding of this sector⁶⁹⁷. He is confident that, in the near future, they will in more of a position to focus on development of vocational schools (SMK). A member of DPRD argues that the EOD has not yet been capable of analysing and rationalising the reasons for the plans they have proposed. He claims the EOD has failed to promote good coordination with the DPRD and other relevant local institutions⁶⁹⁸. Most local governments have not been encouraged to pay attention to VSE development. He gives the example, in his district, that as the EOD there has been able to communicate its needs and plans clearly and convincingly, the local government of Bangka District has started to deliver financial support for school building maintenance⁶⁹⁹.

8.4.3 Limited Community Participation

It is not yet the trend, it appears, for the community to give financial support to school development. One school principal argues that the support of his community is superb, but not in financial form. He suggests schools need to promote their market value⁷⁰⁰. In the big cities, as understood by the Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, it is even worse: “The individualistic nature of the community is strong and getting community financial contribution is far from realization. Inviting people just to attend a meeting is difficult, not to mention asking for donations. However, there is a lot of support from industry. For example, we have been donated a set of gasoline engines, two sets of used diesel engines and forty second-hand computers”⁷⁰¹.

The Principal of SMK1 Tangerang District argues that vocational schools should be for students from families with a stronger economic background, as most of the school activities

⁶⁹⁶ Head of the EOD Pangkalpinang City, interviewed June 2005

⁶⁹⁷ Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed March 2005

⁶⁹⁸ A member of the DPRD Bekasi District, interviewed in May 2005

⁶⁹⁹ Head of the Education Commission of the DPRD Bangka District, interviewed May 2005.

⁷⁰⁰ Principal of SMK1 Tangerang district, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁷⁰¹ Principal of SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005

are costly. Electricity, materials and tools all cost money⁷⁰². However, in reality SMK students are still drawn mainly from the lower economic group, as found in most of the schools involved in this research. A teacher from SMK1 Bekasi City notes: "...generally, our students are from the lower socio-economic group"⁷⁰³.

In contrast, in Pangkalpinang City as explained by the Principal of SMK2, the community is very supportive. The parents have never complained or been suspicious of the school management, even visiting often to pay the school fees. They have also contributed in the renovation of the buildings and in improving school facilities. "The economics of BABEL is strong, as is the motivation of the parents"⁷⁰⁴ remarks the principal. One of his senior teachers adds: "Business people prefer to give aid directly, rather than being asked to discuss school programs"⁷⁰⁵.

The Principal of SMK1 Bangka District argued that he has also successfully obtained parent contributions, with which he has been able to improve facilities, in the form of computers, a language laboratory, electric typewriters and a telecommunication shop (WARTEL). Seemingly, money is a very sensitive issue in the education sector. People are more enthusiastic to assist schools with goods, rather than in the form of money. Thus, unless financial arrangements for schools changes, it seems that the budget will always be the main issue for schools, especially for the vocational secondary schools (SMKs).

8.5 Chapter Summary

It is undeniable that the spirit of regional autonomy and the strategies of the Central Education Office (DVSE) have significantly stimulated the improvement of vocational secondary schools (SMKs). However, although full school autonomy, as scholars, especially Slamet (2000) expected, has not been reached, the transformation in the schools is happening. The environment in the schools is changing, due to the increasing type and number of activities staff and teachers are involved in, during this transition stage of regional autonomy. They not only have to manage routine tasks of teaching and student administration, but they are also very involved with other activities - internally (within the school) and externally - related to applying for block grants and implementing programs. The independence of schools is emerging as one of the consequences of the changed system of government management of

⁷⁰² Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005

⁷⁰³ Senior teacher SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 3 April 2005

⁷⁰⁴ Principal SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005

⁷⁰⁵ Senior teacher SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed in 23 June 2005

education, especially with regard to the shifting responsibilities between the DVSE and the local governments, which have not been able to provide sufficient support to the schools. As a consequence of all the increasing activity, interaction among staff within schools is improving, with working relationships becoming closer and the working environment more harmonious, under strong leadership from principals. Most of the schools in this study have been successful in obtaining and implement several programs grants (some schools, up to eight packages, as listed in Figure 4). This suggests that the leadership provided by the principals has been outstanding, as they have been able to manage their own school resources to compete with other schools to obtain this funding in the form of these grants and to then implement the related programs. This also indicates that the experience of principals is a very influential factor in a school's survival of an unsupportive situation. The skill of principals is also important for anticipating and resolving problems arising.

It is obvious that locally, in district and cities, the personnel of the vocational schools are the ones with the most expertise in vocational secondary education. In many cases, the schools themselves become the initiators of the new local government policies and programs in the VSE sector. The people in the schools themselves are the ones most familiar with their problems, needs and aspirations and, therefore, with more independence, they have been able to come up with solutions to problems that are impossible to solve by national policy, especially with regard to student discipline. As the local government officials are still learning about VSE, schools have taken the initiative to motivate and encourage them to start paying attention to the VSE sector. With regard to trying to improve education access for vocational studies, teachers have been very influential in paving the way for new courses or the 're-engineering' of existing ones as well as in promoting the establishment of new vocational secondary school (SMK), as recruiting new vocational teachers has proved almost impossible.

The capacity, capability and the independence of the schools (SMKs) is improving. However, to become fully autonomous schools, determining their own needs, in terms of appointing staff, deciding what programs to run and budgeting is still impossible, as these aspects, especially the budgeting, are still determined by the local government⁷⁰⁶. As Bush and Bell

⁷⁰⁶ The term of 'School Autonomy' in improving the 'quality education' used by Halasz, Gabor (1995), Derouet, Jean-Louis (2000), 'School Based Management' by Levačić, Rosalind (1995), Nurkolis (2002), 'School Management Initiative' (SMI) by Chan, David and Mok Ka-Ho (2001), 'Education Decentralization' by Preston, Rosemary (1993), Gershberg, Alec Ian (1999), Rhoten, Diana (2000), Karlsen, Gustav E. (2000), Gorostiaga Derqui, Jorge M., (2001), Langen, Annemarie Van and Dekkers, Hetty (2001) and Bjork, Christopher (2004)

have argued: “Truly independent, non systemic schools would ordinarily be considered self-governing or autonomous schools”⁷⁰⁷.

The Local Education Office (EOD) is still adopting the old strategy of the Central Education Office (DVSE) regarding the needs of the schools (SMKs) and not applying a ‘self-implementation’ approach. The management of the EOD does not involve the schools in the process of procurement and the schools are still the recipients only. All of the operational or routine needs of the schools, such as office equipment and teaching and practicum materials are provided and delivered by the EOD directly. Thus, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, schools are still acting as recipients of the local government, in terms of operational needs and programs but also as implementers of central government programs.

However, it is indisputable that the future of the vocational secondary schools is at risk, particularly with the current financial arrangements. The poorly coordinated nature of central and local government policies on funding is causing major financial problems at the school level especially, with regards to operational costs. The Central Education Office’s (DVSE) block grants scheme is indeed helping the financial situation of selected schools, as is the ‘de-concentration’ scheme, which utilizes provincial governments to assist in actually distributing the block grants to the schools. Other challenges are produced by the limited knowledge on behalf of local governments of the needs of vocational secondary schools and the fact that, at present, this education sector is not a priority. Most of the schools (SMKs) studied have experienced a budget shortfall for funding school operating costs, particularly for paying electricity bills⁷⁰⁸. Community participation in the research locations studied was found to be very weak, in terms of aid in the form of money. However, the world of industry has been found to be helpful in assisting schools with student training equipment.

⁷⁰⁷ Bush, Tony and Bell, Les (2002), p. 35

⁷⁰⁸ The schools (SMKs) in this research are categorized as ‘complete’ school, that is, stocked with equipment, including lathes, drilling machines, scraping, welding and other industrial tools. All of these are ‘electricity-reliant’ in operation.

CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION

9.1 The Political Context

The introduction of regional autonomy represents a radical political shift in Indonesian governance. It has empowered the local governments in districts and cities, the lowest level of government, by directly devolving responsibilities and government revenue in the expectation that the local governments would determine their own programs and policies, rather than the provinces as was the case in most other countries. This radical practice supports Turner's (2003) argument that devolution will help create an efficient, effective and responsive mode of government. However, although the introduction of regional autonomy may have been timely from the political point of view in preventing the territorial disintegration of Indonesia, such rushed and unplanned decentralization has found the local governments unprepared to assume responsibilities, with the result that in areas such as vocational secondary education programs and policy development have been disrupted.

9.1.1 Policies and Programs in Vocational Secondary Education

The development of vocational secondary education programs and policies has been transformed by devolution of decision making authority to and the empowerment of local governments. This approach has been very popular among researchers, yet, in the case of Indonesia, devolution has meant is that policy initiatives have to be taken by local governments and, at the time of this research there were no national guidelines for the development of vocational secondary education. This transition stage of regional autonomy, it has been impossible for the DVSE, as the central government institution most responsible for vocational secondary education, to control and manage the programs and policies in the same way it did in the past, when it was supported by a top down approach, characteristic of a highly centralised government. In this era of regional autonomy, every level of government has developed its own agenda. All local governments are more concerned with developing the economy and enhancing the prosperity of their people, with the consequence that policies and programs have tended to assume a populist character. VSE has not been a high priority for most local governments because of the complexity and expense of the VSE schools (SMK) to operate and develop.

Ironically, the financial arrangements associated with regional autonomy strategy have enabled the DVSE to retain much control over the development of VSE in the districts and

cities. The 'de-concentrated' budgeting system and the block grant program have enabled the DVSE to direct and support program developments in the schools. The block grants have not only stimulated schools to communicate, coordinate programs and discuss any issues with the Central Education Office (DVSE), but have also encouraged the local governments to support vocational secondary education. In addition, the variety of ways block grants can be packaged to support developmental programs in schools has facilitated the achievement of the national policy of 'access and quality'. Most importantly, the schools (SMKs) have had to compete with each other to obtain block grants and to carry out the associated activities, which has meant that certain tasks, formerly performed centrally, by the DVSE, have been transferred to the schools. The DVSE has ensured the implementation of its programs and policies through direct cooperation with the schools, assuming the role the Provincial Education Offices (EOP or *Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*) performed and largely bypassing the education offices of local governments.

9.1.2 The Bureaucratic Relationships between Central and Regional Education Offices

The relationships between central and regional governments in the management of the VSE sector has changed from a hierarchical one, led by the DVSE in Jakarta to one of partnership between the central and regional governments. Although not explicitly determined, such a condition has been identified previously by Bjork (2003 and 2006), when studying primary education in Indonesia, that the provincial and local governments have started to reposition their status to become more autonomous. The capacity of the DVSE to control the relationships with the regions has been weakened by the greater autonomy of the governments of the Provinces, Districts and Cities. The more autonomous regional governments have greater authority to independently manage their organizations, including the management of the VSE. In the provinces, especially in the old provinces, the influence of the Provincial Education Offices (EOPs) has been through the experience of its staff personnel, most of whom had worked in the old education offices, (*Kanwil*), which were abolished with regional autonomy. Structurally, the EOP (*Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi*) is part of the provincial government. The DVSE has to rebuild the relationship with these EOPs, recognising the autonomous status of provincial governments. In the old provinces, personal relationships and the shared working experience of key officials have sustained cooperation between the education offices of the central and provincial governments. In this situation, the implementation of the VSE programs has been coordinated quite smoothly to achieve the expected targets. However, in the new provinces this is not the situation. The EOPs are entirely new structures, with new personnel, who have little experience in the management of vocational education and few personal relationships with counterparts in the central and local

governments. Thus, the relationship between the DVSE and the new, provincial education offices (EOP) is in a developmental stage and the coordination of VSE programs is hampered by the lack of experience in vocational education and absence of personal working relationships.

In both the old and the new provinces, the officials in the Local Education Offices (EOD or *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten/Kota*) were mostly recruited from the old education offices - *Kandep* and the *Dinas Pendidikan Kabupaten/Kota* – that had never been responsible for vocational secondary schools. The principal responsibilities of the EODs are to implement the education policies of the heads of local government – the mayors and regents. In addition, the head of the EODs are appointed (and dismissed) by the local government, which, in most cases, is at the discretion of the mayor or regent and is political in nature and does not take into consideration the skills and experience of the official. In these circumstances, the DVSE has had difficulty establishing good working relations. As a result, the DVSE has been limited in its capacity to encourage local governments to focus on VSE.

9.1.3 The Relationships within Local Government

The bureaucratic and political relationships within local government are beyond the DVSE's control and influence. This is supported by the findings of Ramage (2002) and Sukma (2003) that misinterpretation and implementation of the regional autonomy in the regions are influencing the horizontal relationships. The role of the Local Planning Board (BAPPEDA) is to coordinate the programs and budgets from all the offices responsible for specific areas, including education. At this stage, the relationship between them is regarded as internal coordination between personnel of the same level and of local institutions of similar status, all being responsible to the mayor or regent. This makes establishing relationships and reaching mutual understanding relatively easy, especially when it comes to developing VSE programs. The BAPPEDA is aware of the EOD's responsibilities for VSE development and, similarly, the EOD is aware of its role of proposing programs and budgets, but following advice and suggestions from the BAPPEDA in doing so. The BAPPEDA is, in turn, mostly guided by local regulations. As the knowledge and experience of both the BAPPEDA and the EODs with regard to VSE is limited, the result is that, in many cases, there has not been much improvement in proposed programs. The quality of VSE programs depends, in fact, much more upon cooperation between the EODs and the schools (SMKs) themselves.

The relationship between the local government offices and the Local Peoples' Representative (DPRD) represents interaction between the executive and legislature branches of government.

The DPRD, with its legislative function, has the right to approve and monitor local government budgets, including that of the VSE sector. This is reflected in the annual program and budget proposals made by the EOD. VSE programs, along with other Local Government programs, are formulated and proposed by BAPPEDA in cooperation with the EODs. The DPRD has the authority to accept, reject or modify program and budget proposals. This research found that the DPRDs tend to focus on the cost of each proposed program, regardless of whether such programs have been identified as urgently needed or not. As the DPRD is the most powerful local institution when it comes to endorsing the plans proposed annually and because the EODs have, to date, not yet been capable of sufficiently explaining the programs they are proposing due to their lack of knowledge of the VSE sector, what often occurs is that the schools (SMK) themselves have to lobby the DPRD Members. The schools' lobbying of members of the DPRD in order to secure sufficient funding illustrates the changing bureaucratic and political dynamics brought about by the introduction of regional autonomy and challenges posed for the development of the VSE sector.

9.1.4 Management of VSE Development

The shared management model for the VSE development is what has been created by the introduction of regional autonomy, which replaced the highly centralised and top-down, model. The Indonesian experience of shared management contrasts to that of other countries such as Hungary, New Zealand, South Africa, England, Norway and British Columbia (in Canada), as found by Karslen (1999), where the regions were given greater authority to manage their educational sector independently to suit the real local needs. Provincial and local governments, in theory, have the right to manage education, including VSE independently and the national policy is supposed to be only a guideline. However, in the transition stage of regional autonomy, this new arrangement has not been the reality. The radical application of regional autonomy, that is, transferring of central government responsibilities directly to local governments, has meant that provincial governments have lost direct responsibility for VSE development. The local governments have the responsibility to manage the VSE sector, but lack the experience and knowledge to conduct their responsibilities effectively. The VSE sector is not a priority program for local governments, with the result that there is widespread failure to provide for even the basic and routine operational needs of schools (SMK). This has very serious implications for the future of the development of VSE throughout Indonesia.

What is actually occurring in practice, during the transition stage of regional autonomy, is that the DVSE is still exercising considerable influence on the development of VSE programs in

the schools. Much of the DVSE's control is exercised through its support of programs for the schools (SMK) with the block grant funding. The role of the provincial and local governments is limited to administration, although local governments are required to contribute to the funding of some of the block grants. Thus, in essence, the DVSE in Jakarta still holds the reins when it comes to controlling VSE development.

9.1.5 The Impact of the Regional Autonomy on the Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK)

The dynamic changes emerging from the introduction of regional autonomy have resulted in some deterioration in the developmental aspects of the VSE. Contrary to Slamet's (2000) expectations, for example, full school autonomy has not been the reality. However, there has been a positive result in that it has forced the individual schools (SMKs) to discover their own strengths and operate in a more open bureaucratic and political environment. The schools have been required to solve problems as they arise and to improve their capacity to survive and develop. The behaviour of most schools (SMK) is rapidly changing from being passive recipients of central government programs to becoming proactive and independent managers. Locally, in the districts and cities, the role of the schools has expanded from that of just educational institutions who teach students to that of strategic local institutions who provide vital middle-level manpower skills to industry, especially following the successful 're-engineering' of programs to offer a variety of courses designed to meet local needs.

On the negative side, some schools (SMK), new ones in particular, have had difficulties adapting to the changing government system. The limitations and weaknesses of school resources, especially limited manpower, has led to some schools being incapable of adjusting and being able to benefit from the greater autonomy, as it relates to VSE. In this transition stage of regional autonomy, schools can only acquire their operational and developmental needs met through taking the initiative themselves. This is a critical issue, as is the ability of local governments to sufficiently support the needs of their schools, otherwise, the future will see an increased gap between the schools that are successful in competing for central government funds and lobbying local government for adequate funding and those schools that are not.

9.2 Lessons Learnt

The introduction of regional autonomy in Indonesia has not just influenced the political sphere, but has also, undoubtedly, sparked dramatic changes in the education sector, in particular vocational secondary education. As argued by Turner (2003), the manner in which

regional autonomy was introduced in Indonesia has differed from the practice of many other countries by transferring powers from the central government direct to the local governments, bypassing the second tier of government in the provinces. This has, indeed, been effective in protecting the nation from territorial disintegration. This was a prime concern of Rasyid (2003), one of the initiators of regional autonomy in Indonesia. The threat of provinces seeking to separate from Indonesia has been decreased substantially, by distributing power to local governments. The function of provincial governments has become rather ambiguous and, ineffective.

However, aside from the political success of regional autonomy, its implementation in such a radical manner has been very costly. The provincial governments were the most experienced and capable governments in the regions. Under regional autonomy, provincial governments have a much reduced management role in education. This means, however, that the experience and skills of provincial government education officials is wasted. Local governments have gained authority and autonomy in the management of the VSE sector but face the cost of improving their own human resources and allocating resources to vocational education as indicated by Karslen (2000), Rondinelli (2001), Bjork (2003 and 2006).

This research has found that in the education sector, particularly in VSE, the impact of this political change on the role and functions of the central and local governments has been to cause schools (SMK) much greater uncertainty. The routine support and guidance schools received from the DVSE has been terminated and schools have to cope with the incapacity of their local governments to function as required. Surprisingly, however, these conditions have resulted in the kindling of a spirit of autonomy in the schools rather than in local governments as the regional autonomy laws intended. Many of the better schools have been able to benefit from more relaxed control from Jakarta and the inexperience of local government to carve out a space for their initiative and knowledge of vocational education. As a result, in this transition stage of regional autonomy, the performance of most schools (SMK) has improved and school based management enhanced. This has been an unintended consequence of regional autonomy law, however, it was the outcome recommended by Slamet (2000), who was a member of the school based management development team.

9.3 Recommendations

In the transitional stage of regional autonomy, there have been dramatic impacts on the management and organization of the VSE sector all the way through to the schools. The performance of most of the schools (SMK) involved in this research has indeed been

improving, albeit unintentionally. However, this has only been the case in schools that have the leadership, staff and resources to make the most of the opportunities provided by greater autonomy. At this stage, the key trigger for development in the vocational secondary schools remains the central government's block grant funding. However, this form of funding is limited. The competitive nature of block grant funding means that good schools improve and poor and weak schools languish. Thus, current seemingly successful school performance can be misleading and temporary, with no guarantee of continued success. The future development of the sector has become dependent on the continued provision of block grants.

Therefore, in order to support the sector wide development of vocational education a change in strategy is required. The DVSE needs to reformat the provision of the block grants, from being competitive in nature to targeting schools (SMK) at risk, that is: newly-opened schools; schools lacking resources and leadership as well as those schools that have not received any block grants, which has sometimes been related to the lack of support from local governments. It might sound contradictory, politically-speaking, with the spirit of regional autonomy, however, in the transition stage, the DVSE has retained considerable influence and control in the schools. The use of ICT has been an effective tool, to support schools and overcoming administrative and bureaucratic problems. Thus, it would be worthwhile to further develop electronic management (EM) systems for the management of the VSE sector in the support of national programs and policies. Official websites could be used to inform and as a vehicle for discussion, coordination and for performing certain transactions, such as applying for block grants.

This research found that many officials in the provincial and district government education offices lacked experience in and knowledge of the VSE sector as well as in the management of the sector. It is recommended that the DVSE develop a capacity building program of workshops and other training programs for these regional government officials.

In addition, as local governments have, for the most part, not established new vocational secondary schools, (SMK) it is crucial to promote the 're-engineering' concept as a strategy for empowering local governments. The concept of offering new vocational courses, in schools at any level, primary or secondary level, state or private (including in the Islamic schools) is not only relatively cheap and affordable for most local governments, but also is consistent with the principles of regional autonomy, particularly with regard to meeting local needs for mid-level, skilled manpower. The existing SMKs could act as the logistical centre in providing for needs associated with 're-engineering', such as: teachers; curriculum; materials; and technical assistance. They could also be the place for students to undertake

compulsory programs in vocational or technical training. Industrial or field training could be carried out in the available places of employment surrounding the location of the schools in which the vocational programs are provided.

In conclusion, this research found that many local governments had little understanding of and gave a low priority to vocational education. The schools (SMK) had often found it difficult to penetrate the bureaucracy and management of local government. Although it might be considered contrary to the principles of regional autonomy, it is recommended that the DVSE take a more active role to promote VSE to the local governments. It may be that this can only occur through the promulgation of specific laws or regulations, pertaining to VSE development.

This research has presented an account of a pivotal period in the implementation of new policies in education which shift the locus of power from the central and regional levels of bureaucracy to local levels, with schools taking on responsibilities for their management and development. Decentralization, delegation and local autonomy are replacing top down hierarchical modes of operation. The central level of educational management has however retained power and influence over policy and parts of the budget. The introduction of the new policy is taking time, and has as evidenced in this thesis, is providing challenged and opportunities for greater self responsibility and successes.

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Appendix 1. List of Block Grants in 2004

No	Name of Program	Target		Unit Cost	Sub Total
		Number	Unit	USD	USD
1	Long Distance SMK Development in Islamic schools/other institutions	600	schools	10,869.57	6,521,739.13
2	Small SMK development in SMP	140	schools	27,173.91	3,804,347.83
3	Empowering the Private SMK	900	schools	10,869.57	9,782,608.70
4	Re-engineering Public SMK	500	locations	10,869.57	5,434,782.61
5	ICT Centre Developments	38	locations	27,173.91	1,032,608.70
6	Education Book	17,4350	exemplars	NA	NA
7	Industrial Teacher Apprentice	290	teachers	NA	NA
8	School Mapping and Strategic Planning	416	locations	1,086.96	452,173.91
9	Contracted Teachers	340	teachers	NA	NA
10	Education Quality Assurance	1	province	NA	NA
11	Teacher Training	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Mobil Training Unit	7	schools	38,043.48	266,304.35
13	IT/JIS Training	47	locations	2,717.39	127,717.39
14	Education Radio Programs	10	schools	6,521.74	65,217.39
15	Entrepreneur Development Subsidy	10	institution	2,717.39	27,173.91
16	Business Center Development Subsidy	3	institution	10,869.57	32,608.70
17	Support for budget operation in Monitoring and Evaluation of BBE in District or City	416	cities/ districts	2,717.39	1,130,434.78
18	Education Management in East Indonesia Area	16	locations	1,902.17	30,434.78
19	VSE Innovation development	31	locations	5,434.78	168,478.26
20	SMK Appreciation	22	schools	1,086.96	23,913.04
21	IGI Industrial Certification	2,280	peoples	27.17	61,956.52
22	Subsidy for the Standard English TOEIC Certification for the student	3,000	students	14.13	42,391.30
23	Subsidy for the Standard English TOEIC Certification for the teachers/ <i>Widyaiswara</i>	120	peoples	27.17	3,260.87
24	Subsidy Industrial Certification for the Students	3,000	students	27.17	81,521.74
25	Subsidy Industrial Certification for the Teachers/ <i>Widyaiswara</i>	120	teachers	32.61	3,913.04
26	Supporting for the Implementation of BBE SMK PPKT	150	locations	13,586.96	2,038,043.48
27	Supporting Block Grants for the Implementation of SMK (PPPG/LPMP) Teacher Training	30	packages	27,173.91	815,217.39
28	Subsidy for the Production Based Training (PBT) Activity	45	schools	2,173.91	97,826.09
29	Supporting the Small SMK in	140	locations	27,173.91	3,804,347.83

	SMP				
30	The Development of Shifting SMK from SLTP-PKK	18	schools	13,586.96	244,565.22
31	Scholarships for Women School Leavers	100	peoples	163.04	16,304.35
32	Shared Support for International Potential SMK	25	schools	16,304.35	407,608.70
33	Shared Support for National Potential SMK	170	schools	8,152.17	1,385,869.57
34	Coaching the Entrepreneurship Class	15	institution	5,434.78	81,521.74
35	The Education of Micro Hydro and TIKM (Adv)	13	peoples	2,445.65	31,793.48
36	Post Grade Education (S2) of Macaronis (Adv)	12	peoples	2,021.74	24,260.87
37	Post Grade Education (S2) of Informatics (Adv)	40	peoples	250.00	10,000.00
38	Post grade Education (S2) of Informatics (Adv)	13	peoples	8,152.17	105,978.26
39	Entrepreneurships Development	58	schools	2,173.91	126,086.96
40	Outlet SMK Development	20	schools	1,630.43	32,608.70
41	The Preparation of Skills Olympics for students	1	location	91,304.35	91,304.35
42	Teacher's Certificate Program (new)	400	peoples	489.13	195,652.17
43	Teacher's Certificate Program (Adv)	300	peoples	407.61	122,282.61
44	Diploma Programs D3 (new)	500	peoples	543.48	271,739.13
45	Diploma Programs D4 (adv)	220	peoples	1,000.00	220,000.00
46	Subsidy for the testing of special training	2,500	students	10.87	27,173.91
47	The Development of Big SMK	4	schools	81,521.74	326,086.96
48	The preparation of ISO Standard of Training Centre	20	schools	8,152.17	163,043.48
49	The Pilot Project of Accreditation	100	schools	326.09	32,608.70
50	The Supports for the Implementation of BBE Community College	50	locations	13,586.96	679,347.83
51	Supporting for the Equipment from IGI	19	institution	3,804.35	72,282.61
52	Subsidy for developing the potential area at SMK in Papua	5	locations	16,304.35	81,521.74
53	System development of HRD DVSE	2	packages	40,760.87	81,521.74
54	Sharing Supports for the establishment of Small SMK in the boarder area	5	locations	27,173.91	135,869.57
55	Sharing Supports for the establishment of New School (USB) Phase II (2003)	63	locations	54,347.83	3,423,913.04
56	Sharing Supports for the establishment of New School	47	locations	54,347.83	2,554,347.83

	(USB) Phase III (Cities/Regencies)				
57	Sharing Supports for the establishment of New School (USB) Phase III (broader lines)	4	locations	108,695.65	434,782.61
58	Hotel Training	10	locations	27,173.91	271,739.13
59	Sharing for the establishment of Language Laboratory	40	locations	8,152.17	326,086.96
60	Sharing for the establishment of Training Unit Laboratory/MTU CNC	3	locations	27,173.91	81,521.74
61	Sharing for the Educational equipment	63	locations	5,434.78	342,391.30
62	Sharing Supports Developing 'Centres"	6	locations	54,347.83	326,086.96
63	Sharing Supports Developing 'Sisters'	30	locations	27,173.91	815,217.39
64	SISCO Equipment	5	locations	6,521.74	32,608.70
65	Consultant for Educational Quality Assurance/Implementation Development Planner	1	packages	6,521.74	6,521.74
	TOTAL			USD	49,431,271.74

Source: Program Outlines, 2004 - DVSE

Appendix 2. List of Block Grants in 2005

No	Name of Program	Target		Unit Cost	Sub Total
		Number	Unit	USD	USD
1	Subsidy School Grants	4,821	schools	3,804.35	18,340,760.87
2	Subsidy ICT Centre	118	schools	21,739.13	2,565,217.39
3	Subsidy School Mapping	435	locations	1,630.43	709,239.13
4	Subsidy Industrial Apprentices Teachers/Students	1,766	peoples	326.09	575,869.57
5	Sharing Supports for Small SMK in SMP (Adv/New and PKP	515	schools	27,173.91	13,994,565.22
6	Sharing Supports for Distance Class of SMK in Islamic Schools/other institutions	415	schools	8,152.17	3,383,152.17
7	Sharing Supports for empowering the SMK with National Standards	458	schools	13,586.96	6,222,826.09
8	Sharing Supports BLPT	9	locations	54,347.83	489,130.43
9	Sharing Supports for Hotel Training	26	locations	27,173.91	706,521.74
10	Sharing Supports for Re-engineering SMK	139	schools	10,869.57	1,510,869.57
11	Sharing Supports for USB from 2002/2003/2004	123	schools	54,347.83	6,684,782.61
12	Subsidy Vocational Education Innovation	60	packages	5,434.78	326,086.96
13	Subsidy Capital for Entrepreneurship Class Development	50	schools	2,717.39	135,869.57
14	Subsidy for Big SMK Development	40	schools	2,717.39	108,695.65
15	Subsidy for the Preparation of ISO Standard of Training Education Institution	30	schools	8,152.17	244,565.22
16	Subsidy SMK Outlet	40	schools	2,717.39	108,695.65
17	Subsidy Community Development	40	packages	5,434.78	217,391.30
18	Subsidy for Women School Leavers	100	peoples	163.04	16,304.35
19	Subsidy for Establishment and Empowerment LSP	15	LSP	1,086.96	16,304.35
20	Subsidy for Competency Test Location	150	locations	2,717.39	407,608.70
21	Subsidy for Contracted Teachers	4,392	Man Months	108.70	477,391.30
22	Subsidy for SMK Scholarships	20,000	peoples	39.13	782,608.70
23	Subsidy for Industrial Certification	10,000	students	29.89	298,913.04
24	Subsidy for Certifications of the TOEIC Standard English Language	3,000	students	19.02	57,065.22

25	Subsidy for Education Radio	10	packages	5,434.78	54,347.83
26	Subsidy for IT/JIS/WAN City	20	packages	2,717.39	54,347.83
27	Sharing Supports for International Standard of SMK	20	packages	16,304.35	326,086.96
28	Sharing Supports for United Secondary School	25	schools	8,152.17	203,804.35
29	Sharing Supports for USB Establishment in Regencies/Cities boarders (Bovendigul, Talaud Islands, Entikong and Belu)	4	locations	108,695.65	434,782.61
30	Sharing Supports for USB Establishment in Regencies/Cities boarders (Sota and Sekau)	2	locations	108,695.65	217,391.30
31	Sharing Supports for Boarder USB Establishment	2	locations	108,695.65	217,391.30
32	Sharing Supports for SMK USB Establishment (Phase V)	50	locations	54,347.83	2,717,391.30
33	Sharing Supports for Community College (Reward)	25	locations	13,586.96	339,673.91
34	Sharing Supports for Community College (New)	50	locations	27,173.91	1,358,695.65
35	Sharing Supports for Fishery and Forestry Centre	12	packages	27,173.91	326,086.96
36	Sharing Supports for Hotel Training	20	packages	27,173.91	543,478.26
37	Sharing Supports for MTU – ICT	5	packages	27,173.91	135,869.57
	TOTAL			USD	65,309,782.61

Source: Program Outlines, 2005 - DVSE

Appendix 3. List of Interviewees

Location/ Code	Position and Date of Interview
<i>Central Government</i>	
010101	Director of Vocational Secondary Education, interviewed 27 January 2005
010102	Head of the Planning Subdivision of the Central Office (DVSE), interviewed 14 January 2005
010103	Head of the Accreditation Subdivision of the Central Office (DVSE), interviewed 14 January 2005
010105	Head of Facility, Subdivision of the Central Office (DVSE), interviewed 12 January 2005
010106	Head, Curriculum Section of the Central Office (DVSE), interviewed 18 January 2005
010107	Head, Accreditation Section of the Central Office (DVSE), interviewed 18 January 2005
<i>Provincial Government</i>	
022222	Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP). Banten Province, interviewed 20 July 2005
033333	Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP), West Java Province, interviewed 12 July 2005
044444	Head of the Provincial Education Office (EOP), Bangka Belitung Province, interviewed 27 July 2005
<i>Local Government</i>	
<i>Tangerang City</i>	
020102	Head of the BAPPEDA, Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005
020103	Head of the Local Education Office (EOD), Tangerang City, interviewed 7 February 2005
020104	Principal, SMK4 Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005
020105	Senior Teacher, SMK4, Tangerang City, interviewed 9 February 2005
020106	Principal, SMK3, Tangerang City, interviewed 8 February 2005
020108	Manager of TIFIKO, a company from Tangerang City, interviewed February 2005
020109	School supervisor, interviewed 9 February 2005
<i>Tangerang District</i>	
020201	Member of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), Tangerang District, interviewed 10 March 2005
020202	Head of the BAPPEDA, Tangerang District, interviewed 5 March 2005
020203	Head of the Local education Office (EOD) Tangerang District, interviewed 9 March 2005
020204	Principal SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005
020205	Senior Teacher, SMK1 Tangerang District, interviewed 4 March 2005
<i>Bekasi City</i>	
030101	Head of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD) Bekasi City, interviewed 12 April 2005
030102	Head of BAPPEDA, Bekasi city, interviewed 14 April 2005

030103	Head of Local education Office (EOD) Bekasi city, interviewed in 18 th April 2005
030104	Principal, SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed 4 April 2005
030105	Senior teacher, SMK1 Bekasi City, interviewed in 3 April 2005
<i>Bekasi District</i>	
030201	Head of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), Bekasi District, interviewed 25 May 2005
030202	Head of the BAPPEDA, Bekasi District, interviewed 5 May 2005
030203	Head of the Local Education Office (EOD), Bekasi District, interviewed 6 May 2005
030204	Principal, SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 9 May 2005
030205	Senior Teacher, SMK1 Bekasi District, interviewed 12 May 2005
030206	Principal SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed in 17 May 2005
030207	Senior teachers, SMK2 Bekasi District, interviewed 16 May 2005
<i>Pangkalpinang City</i>	
040101	Head of Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 27 June 2005
040102	Head of BAPPEDA, Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 7 June 2005
040103	Head of Local education Office (EOD) Pangkalpinang city, interviewed in 27 th June 2005
040104	Principal, SMK1 Pangkalpinang city, interviewed 10 June 2005
040105	Senior Teacher, SMK1 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 18 June 2005
040106	Principal SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005
040107	Senior Teacher, SMK2 Pangkalpinang City, interviewed 23 June 2005
<i>Bangka District</i>	
040201	Head of the Education Commission of the Regional People's Representative Assembly (DPRD), Bangka District, interviewed 25 July 2005
040202	Head of the BAPPEDA, Bangka District, interviewed 20 July 2005
040204	Principal, SMK1 Bangka District, interviewed 4 July 2005
040205	Senior teacher, SMK1 Bangka District, interviewed 4 July 2005
040206	Principal, SMK2 Bangka District, interviewed 18 July 2005
<i>Voluntary Contributors</i>	
0500001	Head of LPMP (Education Quality Assurance Board) of Bangka Belitung, interviewed 1 August 2005
0500002	Head of EOD of Pasir District, interviewed 18 June 2005
0500003	Head of Bappeda of NTB Province, informal discussion in 2002