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Revised school-based management framework implementation: Best practices, challenges and insights from school leaders

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ABSTRACT

This paper studied the implementation of the Revised School-Based Management (SBM), where the profile of the schools, the level of SBM implementation, the differences based on profile variables, best practices of school leaders, the challenges they faced, and their perspectives were studied. Using the descriptive-qualitative research design helped in gathering the quantitative measures, as well as the experiential perspective of the school leaders.It was found that most schools are small with fewer than 10 teachers, and that they had been implementing SBM for at least six years. The high level of SBM implementation across Curriculum and Teaching, Learning Environment, Leadership and Governance, Accountability, Human Resource Development, and Finance and Resource Management further proves how effective the implementation of SBM principles is within the schools. Nevertheless, there were variations in implementation depending on school size and human resource capability. Smaller schools showed greater flexibility and involvement in their management approach, while larger schools had difficulty coordinating activities. Some of the effective practices employed by school administrators include collaborative leadership, financial transparency, stakeholder involvement, and matching school plans with budget planning. Nevertheless, the schools identified various barriers to implementing SBM. These included lack of adequate financing, lack of access to enough resources, non-cooperation, lack of willingness for change, and the problem of flooding. Resilience, team work, and cooperation among the communities needed to adopt the approach of SBM in their activities had been highlighted by the administrators of the school. In conclusion, it can be seen that SBM has been successfully implemented in most public primary schools to various degrees according to the school's size and resource availability. Although teamwork and transparency play a vital role in ensuring the successful implementation of SBM, other challenges need to be considered.

Keywords: Revised School-Based Management (SBM), collaborative leadership, stakeholder engagement, school governance, school leadership.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental human right and an indispensable foundation for national development. In the Philippines, educational reforms have consistently sought to ensure that basic education is accessible, equitable, responsive, and of high quality. Central to these reforms is School Based Management (SBM), a governance approach that brings decision making closer to schools and communities so that educational policies, programs, and resources can respond more effectively to local conditions and learner needs. The legal foundation of this commitment is established in Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which recognizes the right of all citizens to quality education and mandates the State to take appropriate measures to make education accessible to all (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 1987). This constitutional mandate provides the broader policy context within which decentralization and participatory school governance have developed as mechanisms for improving educational quality and responsiveness.

The institutionalization of SBM was further strengthened through Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, which established decentralization, accountability, and shared responsibility as fundamental principles of basic education governance. The law recognizes schools as important units of governance and places school heads at the center of instructional leadership and administrative management (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001). Consequently, school heads are expected not only to administer institutional operations but also to lead school improvement through participatory governance, effective resource management, instructional supervision, and stakeholder engagement. This governance orientation is complemented by the Local Government Code of 1991, or Republic Act No. 7160, which provides mechanisms through which local government units can support basic education in areas such as facilities, funding, community participation, and learning activities. Taken together, these legal provisions establish an interconnected governance structure in which national education policies, schools, local governments, and communities share responsibility for educational improvement.

The operationalization of SBM is further supported by Division Memoranda, Schools Division Office directives, and localized governance mechanisms that facilitate the establishment and functioning of School Governing Councils (SGCs), the preparation of School Improvement Plans (SIPs), and meaningful community participation. At the school level, the SIP, Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), and other localized programs and projects translate broader governance objectives into specific interventions addressing learner and institutional needs. These mechanisms reflect the central premise of SBM that schools become more responsive when decision making authority is exercised closer to learners and communities. Through such localized planning and governance structures, decentralization becomes not merely a transfer of administrative responsibility but a means of empowering schools to identify priorities, mobilize resources, implement appropriate interventions, and evaluate their own progress.

The Revised SBM Framework advances this governance orientation by strengthening shared leadership, accountability, stakeholder participation, and continuous improvement. It conceptualizes schools as increasingly self-managing institutions in which stakeholders participate meaningfully in decision making, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The framework is anchored on six dimensions comprising curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, finance and resource management, and mobilization. Collectively, these dimensions provide standards for assessing institutional performance and directing school improvement initiatives toward learner centered outcomes. The framework consequently emphasizes transparency,

participatory leadership, responsible resource utilization, and the systematic use of evidence in governance decisions. This orientation reflects the broader literature on SBM, which maintains that devolving decision making authority to those closest to learners enables schools to formulate localized responses to educational needs while strengthening leadership, accountability, and stakeholder participation.

Within this framework, school leaders occupy a pivotal position because the success of decentralized governance depends substantially on their capacity to translate autonomy into effective school improvement. School heads simultaneously function as instructional leaders, administrative managers, resource managers, and community mobilizers. Leithwood et al. (2020) emphasized that school leadership significantly influences school effectiveness and learner achievement through vision setting, capacity building, and organizational development. Within SBM, these leadership responsibilities extend to collaborative planning, supervision of instructional programs, resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and alignment of school operations with the SIP and national educational priorities. Leadership under SBM is therefore not limited to administrative compliance but encompasses the ability to develop collective responsibility and create organizational conditions that support continuous improvement.

The importance of leadership is reinforced by evidence identifying collaborative and participatory governance as among the most significant practices associated with effective SBM implementation. Spillane (2020) emphasized collaborative leadership as a process through which leadership responsibilities and decision making are shared among members of the school community. Studies involving schools with advanced SBM practices similarly indicate that cooperative leadership, transparency, and participative decision making can strengthen organizational performance and stakeholder relationships. School heads who meaningfully involve teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders are better positioned to develop shared ownership of reforms and sustain school improvement efforts. Active SGCs, regular stakeholder consultations, clearly defined responsibilities, and transparent financial reporting further reinforce accountability and trust, demonstrating that decentralization becomes more effective when autonomy is accompanied by inclusive governance mechanisms.

Stakeholder engagement is particularly significant because SBM assumes that school improvement is a collective responsibility rather than the exclusive function of administrators. Partnerships with parents, local government units, nongovernment organizations, private institutions, and civic groups can strengthen resource mobilization, infrastructure development, learning programs, and other school initiatives. Such partnerships also extend the capacity of schools beyond the resources formally provided by the education system. The effectiveness of these relationships, however, depends on communication, trust, reciprocity, and clearly understood roles. Where these conditions are present, stakeholders can become active partners in planning and implementing reforms. Where participation is weak or merely symbolic, SBM may remain procedural rather than genuinely participatory.

Evidence based and data informed decision making constitutes another important feature of effective SBM. School leaders increasingly use learner performance data, assessment results, program indicators, monitoring instruments, and other forms of evidence to identify needs and determine appropriate interventions. UNESCO (2021) emphasizes that data informed leadership can enhance school efficiency and improve learning outcomes. Related literature indicates that schools that regularly evaluate programs against performance indicators are better able to sustain gains and advance their SBM implementation. Continuous capacity building complements this practice by strengthening the competencies of school heads, teachers, and other SBM practitioners. Professional development, leadership training,

and technical assistance can improve competencies in governance, instructional leadership, financial management, stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and evidence based planning. Thus, successful SBM involves not only the transfer of authority but also the development of the human and organizational capacities necessary to exercise that authority effectively.

These principles are theoretically grounded in several complementary perspectives that explain why decentralized and participatory governance can contribute to school improvement. Decentralization Theory provides a central foundation for SBM by proposing that transferring decision making authority and resource management responsibilities to lower organizational levels can improve efficiency and effectiveness. Caldwell (2005) argued that locating these responsibilities closer to operational contexts enables institutions to respond more directly to specific needs. Applied to education, this perspective suggests that schools require sufficient governance autonomy to design programs, allocate resources, and address concerns according to local conditions. The SBM approach of the Department of Education reflects this principle by providing schools with greater responsibility for improving educational programs and institutional operations.

Participatory Governance Theory further explains the collaborative dimension of SBM. McNulty and Wampler (2015) emphasized that involving important stakeholders in decision making can promote transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in institutional reforms. Within schools, these stakeholders include administrators, teachers, learners, parents, and community representatives. This theoretical perspective is reflected in the Revised SBM Framework through mechanisms such as SGCs and school planning teams, which provide structures for shared deliberation and collective responsibility. Participatory governance therefore complements decentralization by emphasizing that the transfer of authority should not concentrate power solely in the school head but should create opportunities for meaningful stakeholder participation in school governance.

The emphasis of SBM on continuous institutional improvement is also consistent with Total Quality Management in Education. Deming (1986) and Sallis (2002) emphasized continuous improvement, satisfaction, organizational learning, and systematic attention to quality. Within SBM, schools are similarly expected to establish processes that continually improve instruction, management, governance, and learner outcomes. Schools can therefore be understood as organizations in which quality improvement requires regular assessment, evidence based intervention, stakeholder involvement, and sustained monitoring. The convergence between Total Quality Management and SBM lies in their common emphasis on organizational responsibility for improving processes and outcomes rather than treating quality as the result of isolated interventions.

Human Capital Theory provides another important explanation for the role of professional development within SBM. Becker (1964) argued that investments in education, knowledge, and skills increase productivity and contribute to sustained development. From this perspective, SBM initiatives that strengthen the capacities of teachers and school leaders represent investments in the human resources required for effective educational governance. Capacity building programs in instructional leadership, financial management, planning, and stakeholder engagement can therefore enhance the competence of school personnel while strengthening institutional performance. The repeated emphasis in the literature on continuous professional development supports this theoretical proposition, particularly because greater school autonomy requires leaders and teachers who possess the knowledge and competencies necessary to make sound decisions and assume expanded responsibilities.

Social Capital Theory further explains why community relationships are essential to SBM implementation. Putnam (2000) described social capital in terms of networks, trust, and reciprocity that enable individuals and communities to cooperate toward shared goals. In

SBM, these relationships facilitate the involvement of parents, local government units, civic organizations, and other partners in school improvement. The form of social capital that supports SBM may vary according to context. Bonding social capital may be particularly influential in smaller or rural communities where close interpersonal relationships facilitate collective action, while bridging social capital may be especially useful in urban settings where schools can establish partnerships with nongovernment organizations and diverse community sectors. This perspective reinforces the view that school governance cannot be understood solely through formal policy structures because effective implementation also depends on the quality of relationships connecting schools with their communities.

Collectively, Decentralization Theory, Participatory Governance Theory, Total Quality Management in Education, Human Capital Theory, and Social Capital Theory demonstrate that effective SBM requires more than the formal delegation of authority. Decentralization provides schools with space to respond to local needs, participatory governance ensures that authority is exercised collaboratively, quality management establishes continuous improvement as an organizational responsibility, human capital development strengthens the competence of those implementing reforms, and social capital enables schools and communities to mobilize relationships and resources toward shared educational objectives. Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for examining SBM as a process of school empowerment, leadership development, resource management, collaborative governance, and continuous institutional improvement.

Despite its potential, the implementation of SBM remains shaped by significant organizational, financial, and contextual challenges. Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos (2021) identified resource constraints as an important limitation affecting school level management and educational improvement. Small and remote schools may experience inadequate funding, insufficient infrastructure, limited personnel, and restricted access to learning resources, making it difficult to fully satisfy SBM standards and validation requirements. Larger schools, while potentially having greater resources, may face more complex coordination and management demands. These differences demonstrate that the effectiveness of SBM cannot be evaluated independently of school classification, institutional capacity, and community context.

Administrative workload also presents a persistent challenge. School heads are responsible for documentation, reporting, financial management, compliance requirements, program implementation, stakeholder coordination, and instructional supervision. When administrative demands become excessive, school leaders may have less time to perform their instructional leadership functions. Communication and stakeholder participation create additional difficulties. Parents may be unable to participate consistently because of socioeconomic constraints, limited awareness, competing responsibilities, or insufficient opportunities for engagement. Schools may likewise experience misunderstandings, conflicting interests, unclear responsibilities, and communication problems among SBM implementers. Maintaining active and meaningful participation in SGCs is therefore difficult even when policies formally require their establishment.

Another tension concerns the relationship between autonomy and accountability. SBM is founded on the principle that schools should have sufficient authority to make decisions appropriate to their circumstances, yet many administrative procedures and policy requirements remain centralized. School leaders must consequently navigate the expectation of localized decision making while simultaneously meeting national and division level compliance requirements. When documentation and validation become dominant, implementation risks becoming compliance driven rather than transformative. This tension

underscores the need to understand SBM not simply through formal indicators but through the actual experiences of those responsible for interpreting and implementing its requirements within particular school environments.

Insights from school leaders suggest that the capacity to navigate these challenges depends strongly on trust, collaboration, resilience, communication, and shared responsibility. Leadership within SBM is therefore relational as well as administrative. Qualitative findings in the literature suggest that school heads who practice participatory governance and communicate openly with stakeholders are better able to respond to organizational constraints. Leaders likewise emphasize the need for context sensitive implementation because schools differ considerably in enrollment, personnel, resources, community participation, and institutional circumstances. A uniform approach may therefore be insufficient for realizing SBM objectives across diverse educational settings. Flexible and adaptive strategies are needed to ensure that SBM principles remain responsive to actual school conditions.

The literature consequently presents a consistent pattern. Revised SBM has substantial potential to strengthen leadership, governance, accountability, stakeholder participation, resource management, and continuous improvement, yet its success depends on the conditions under which schools exercise their expanded responsibilities. Collaborative leadership, transparent governance, active stakeholder engagement, continuous capacity building, evidence based decision making, and strong community partnerships emerge as enabling practices. Conversely, inadequate resources, administrative workload, insufficient training, inconsistent stakeholder participation, communication problems, and tensions between autonomy and centralized accountability remain barriers. These converging findings demonstrate that SBM outcomes cannot be attributed to policy design alone but are shaped by the interaction among leadership capacity, organizational structures, available resources, stakeholder relationships, and local context.

Although SBM has been widely examined, an important gap remains in localized research concerning the lived experiences of school leaders implementing the Revised SBM Framework. Much of the existing literature emphasizes quantitative measures of implementation and performance, while comparatively fewer studies provide detailed qualitative accounts of how school leaders interpret the framework, develop effective practices, address constraints, and adapt governance processes to different school classifications and community contexts. Understanding these experiences is essential because formal measures may establish the extent to which standards are achieved but may not fully explain how such achievements are produced, why particular difficulties persist, or what strategies leaders employ in actual school settings. Examining leadership experiences therefore provides an opportunity to connect policy expectations with the realities of implementation.

Against this background, the present study seeks to explore the best practices, challenges, and insights of school leaders in implementing the Revised SBM Framework. By examining how school leaders exercise shared leadership, promote stakeholder participation, manage resources, strengthen accountability, respond to contextual constraints, and pursue continuous improvement, the study aims to generate evidence that can inform policy enhancement, strengthen school governance, and improve leadership practices in basic education. Such an inquiry recognizes that the effectiveness of SBM ultimately depends on how its principles are translated from policy into everyday governance practices within schools.

The significance of the study extends to the various actors involved in basic education governance. For school leaders and administrators, the findings may provide practical strategies for strengthening leadership, decision making, stakeholder engagement, resource

management, and responses to implementation challenges. For teachers, the experiences identified in the study may demonstrate approaches for strengthening collaboration and shared responsibility in school improvement. Parents, community members, local government units, and other stakeholders may gain a clearer understanding of their respective roles in creating supportive school environments and contributing to the development of schools as responsive learning institutions.

For the Department of Education, the findings may provide evidence for enhancing existing policies, programs, monitoring systems, technical assistance, and capacity building initiatives supporting the Revised SBM Framework. Local evidence concerning implementation practices and constraints can assist policymakers in determining where governance mechanisms require further strengthening and how support may be differentiated according to school context. The findings may likewise inform policy recommendations intended to improve accountability, transparency, stakeholder participation, leadership development, and resource management. From an academic perspective, the study contributes to the growing literature on educational administration, decentralized school governance, leadership, and school effectiveness by generating contextualized evidence regarding the implementation of SBM in Philippine schools.

Ultimately, the Revised SBM Framework represents a critical policy mechanism for strengthening educational governance through decentralization, shared leadership, accountability, stakeholder participation, and continuous improvement. Anchored in the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Republic Act No. 9155, complemented by Republic Act No. 7160, and operationalized through Department of Education policies and localized governance mechanisms, SBM seeks to empower schools to respond more effectively to learner and community needs. Its transformative potential, however, depends on how school leaders and stakeholders negotiate opportunities for autonomy while addressing persistent constraints involving resources, workload, participation, coordination, and accountability. An examination of the best practices, challenges, and insights of school leaders is therefore necessary to understand how the Revised SBM Framework functions in actual school contexts and how its implementation can be strengthened to promote effective governance, empowered leadership, improved school performance, and better learner outcomes.

Statement of the problem

The objectives of this study include the exploration of the implementation process of the Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Framework through the identification of its best practices, challenges, and lessons learned by the school leaders. Particularly, this study seeks to uncover further understanding of how the school leaders implement the SBM framework, overcome SBM-related implementation challenges, and support school governance and improvement. Through the findings of the study, recommendations are made to improve the capacity of the school leaders, school governance, and the process of SBM implementation itself.

1. Investigate how school leaders implement the Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Framework in their respective institutions.
2. Identify the best practices in the implementation of the Revised SBM Framework practiced by school leaders.
3. Uncover the challenges faced by school leaders in the implementation of the Revised SBM Framework.
4. Determine the lessons learned by school leaders concerning the implementation of the SBM framework.

5. Analyze the impact of the SBM framework implementation on the school governance, leadership, stakeholders, and resources.
6. Formulate recommendations that may improve the leadership, governance, and the process of SBM implementation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-comparative research method, which was adopted because the investigation aimed at determining and comparing the level of management practices and performance of beginning school heads. The use of descriptive measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency made possible the presentation of data obtained from the participants, providing a clear picture of the assessments conducted by the respondents on their management practices and performance. Moreover, the comparative aspect of the design was useful in establishing any significant difference in the responses based on the appropriate classification of variables. In the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher utilized narrative design, which involved studying the personal experiences and stories of the respondents with regards to the application of the Revised SBM model. As per John W. Creswell (2013) and D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly (2000), narrative design is characterized by the inclusion of participants' views, perspectives, judgments, and understandings in order to better understand their realities. Qualitative data collected in the study were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (TA), a flexible qualitative approach used to identify, analyze, and interpret meaningful patterns or themes within the qualitative data set through a systematic coding process. Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke stated that TA was useful in the interpretation of themes and patterns within the data gathered from the participants.

The population of this study consisted of school leaders from public elementary and secondary schools implementing the Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Framework within the selected research locale. These school leaders included school heads, principals, head teachers, and other administrators who have direct involvement in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating SBM initiatives in their respective schools. As key implementers of SBM, they possess valuable knowledge, experiences, and insights regarding the practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with the framework's implementation. The participants were selected based on their experience and active participation in SBM processes, ensuring that they could provide rich and relevant information necessary to address the objectives of the study.

With regard to the data gathering procedure, the request letter was first given to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval and then sent to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval as well. Once all the approvals were obtained, the researcher also secured the necessary support from the Public Schools District Supervisors of the chosen public elementary schools to ensure that the data collection process proceeded smoothly. The questionnaire was given to the school heads in the selected public elementary schools in Oriental Mindoro. The researcher personally handed out the questionnaires and explained the importance of the study. Where this was not possible due to issues such as time constraints and distance, the researcher turned to Google Forms as another tool to obtain data. In both cases, participants were assured that their data would be used exclusively for the study. Aside from the survey and Google Form, interviews were conducted in order to gather further data and verify the results from various perspectives. Answers obtained from the questionnaire and Google Form provided insights into the major problems raised by the research. Once all the questionnaires were collected, responses were analyzed according to the methodological approach.

Regarding the validation of the research instrument, after submitting the first draft for evaluation and feedback, the advice offered by the adviser, along with other panel members, was critically analyzed and utilized in modifying the instrument to create its revised form. In addition, the validity of the questionnaire items was ensured through analysis conducted by professionals, such as three Public School District Supervisors. Furthermore, the items included in the survey questionnaire and interview guide underwent detailed analysis to determine their retention and modification in relation to their relevance and effectiveness in collecting the required data for this study.

To test the reliability of the instrument, a single-test method was employed. It was administered once to fifteen (15) public elementary school leaders from Naujan Municipality, who were not included in the sample of respondents. Upon retrieval, it was tallied and analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The reliability of the research instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the indicators under the School-Based Management (SBM) framework. The results show that all variables obtained acceptable to excellent reliability coefficients, indicating that the instrument is dependable for measuring management practices and performance among beginning school heads. Specifically, curriculum and teaching obtained a Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.94, interpreted as Excellent Reliability, indicating very high internal consistency among its items. Learning environment yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.92, also classified as Excellent Reliability, suggesting that the items strongly measure the same construct. Leadership recorded 0.87, interpreted as Good Reliability, indicating strong and acceptable consistency among items. Governance and accountability obtained 0.76, considered Acceptable Reliability, showing that the items are still consistent but may benefit from further refinement. Human Resource and team development likewise obtained 0.93, reflecting Excellent Reliability and confirming that the indicators are highly consistent. Lastly, finance and resource management and mobilization recorded 0.79, also interpreted as Acceptable Reliability, indicating adequate internal consistency. According to the standard interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha, values of 0.70 and above indicate acceptable reliability, while values closer to 1.00 indicate stronger internal consistency. Since all variables fall within the acceptable to excellent range (0.76 to 0.94), this confirms that the questionnaire items consistently measure the intended constructs under the DepEd SBM framework. Therefore, the instrument is statistically sound and valid for use in analyzing the management practices and performance of beginning school heads, ensuring that the findings of the study are credible and dependable.

The data gathered in this study were treated and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through the following specific tools. Descriptive statistics included the computation of the mean, median, and standard deviation of the data collected. Mean, standard deviation, and rank were used to describe the profile of the public elementary schools, the level of revised SBM implementation, and the best practices, challenges, and insights of SBM implementation for school heads. One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to determine the significant difference in the profile of the public elementary schools, the level of revised SBM implementation, and the best practices, challenges, and insights of SBM implementation for school heads. Scheffe's Test, a post hoc statistical method, was used to conduct multiple comparisons after obtaining a significant result in an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). For the qualitative data, the study utilized Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis to systematically identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes within the data.

Finally, the research was conducted in complete compliance with research ethical standards as well as those stipulated under the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). In order to safeguard human rights, various ethical considerations were adopted

during the conduct of the research. Before the collection of data, participants were handed an informed consent form, in which they were made aware of the purpose and extent of the research. Furthermore, it was stated in the form that participation was completely voluntary, and that participants could withdraw at any time during the course of the study without any form of retribution. In order to safeguard the identity of the research participants, all gathered data were used solely for academic and research purposes. An alphanumeric coding scheme was used to make transcripts and field notes anonymous by using pseudonyms instead of personal names, and personal identification data were edited or removed when transcribing data from interviews and in the writing of reports. All digital data were encrypted using passwords on secure cloud based and physical data storage devices, in accordance with Republic Act No. 10173. The printed transcripts and notes were kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet and were to be disposed of properly after the mandatory period of data storage. Moreover, in order to increase the reliability and validity of the qualitative findings, bracketing and objectivity were exercised throughout the analysis of data, ensuring that the views and narratives of the participants were captured accurately and objectively without invading their privacy in any way.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from public elementary schools included in the study, with sample sizes across the different profile variables ranging from 206 to 209 respondents due to variations in item response rates. The study employed a descriptive research design utilizing a survey questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument, with a sampling approach targeting public elementary schools within the study area. Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed as the primary statistical and analytical techniques used to describe the profile of respondent schools and the level of implementation of the Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Framework across its various domains. The discussion that follows is grounded strictly in the data gathered and is interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study, which sought to characterize the profile of the sampled schools and assess the extent to which SBM practices have been manifested in the areas of Curriculum and Teaching, and Learning Environment.

With respect to school classification, out of the 209 schools included in the study, 139 or 66.19% were classified as small schools, 65 or 30.95% were classified as medium schools, and 5 or 2.38% were classified as mega schools. These figures indicate that small schools constitute the majority of the respondents, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total sample, which suggests that small schools are the most prevalent type of public elementary school within the study area. Medium schools represent nearly one-third of the sample, while mega schools comprise only a small proportion, reflecting their limited presence relative to the other classifications. This predominance of small schools is consistent with prior observations that basic education systems in many developing regions remain composed largely of smaller, community-based institutions rather than large, urbanized mega schools, a structural reality that has implications for how governance frameworks such as SBM are operationalized at the school level.

In terms of the number of teachers, among the 208 samples analyzed, 125 schools or 60.10% reported having fewer than 10 teachers, 62 schools or 29.81% reported having 10 to 19 teachers, 11 schools or 5.29% reported having 20 to 29 teachers, and 10 schools or 4.81% reported having 30 teachers or more. These results reveal that most of the public elementary schools maintain small teaching faculties, as more than half of the schools employ fewer than 10 teachers, reinforcing the earlier finding that the schools studied are generally small in

nature and may therefore be predisposed to challenges associated with limited human resources. Nearly one-third of the respondent schools employ between 10 and 19 teachers, signifying a moderate human resource base, while very few schools employ 20 or more teachers, indicating that only a small number of large schools were included in the sample. The preponderance of small schools with fewer than 10 teachers carries direct implications for the application of the Revised SBM Framework, as a limited teaching force often compels school administrators and teachers to assume multiple administrative and instructional duties simultaneously. At the same time, the relatively small scale of these schools may facilitate closer coordination among personnel and foster stronger interpersonal collaboration, given the reduced organizational distance between school heads and teaching staff. This dual implication, of resource constraint on one hand and relational cohesion on the other, provides a useful lens for understanding how human resource distribution can shape the practical implementation of SBM programs at the school level.

Regarding the number of years of implementing the Revised SBM Framework, out of the 206 public elementary schools involved in the study, 127 schools or 60.48% had implemented SBM for more than six years, 42 schools or 20.00% had been practicing SBM for four to six years, 32 schools or 15.24% had been implementing SBM for one to three years, and 5 schools or 2.38% had been practicing SBM for less than a year. These findings show that most public elementary schools are already considerably experienced in implementing the SBM Framework, with the majority reporting more than six years of practice. This suggests that SBM governance has already been widely institutionalized in many schools, providing school leaders and personnel ample time to fully internalize the framework within their organizational contexts. The high percentage of schools with extensive implementation experience may be attributed to the sustained efforts of the educational authority to embed SBM practices into the standard operations of public elementary schools. Nonetheless, a smaller proportion of schools reported comparatively shorter periods of implementation, with some having adopted the system only within the past year. Such schools may still be at a preliminary or developmental stage in their SBM journey and may consequently require more intensive assistance, mentoring, and training to achieve full adoption of the framework. These yearly differences in implementation duration may meaningfully influence the depth of experience and level of competence that school personnel bring to the SBM process, a consideration that is important for interpreting variations in implementation outcomes across the sample. Taken together, the spread of implementation years across the sampled schools provides a solid empirical foundation for assessing the effectiveness, best practices, and persistent challenges associated with SBM implementation over time.

Turning to the substantive dimensions of SBM implementation, the level of Revised SBM Implementation in the area of Curriculum and Teaching yielded a composite mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.63), which falls under the interpretation "Always Manifested," indicating that practices and indicators related to curriculum delivery and learner development were consistently observed among the public elementary schools included in this study. Among the individual indicators, the highest mean score was obtained by the item "Teachers integrate topics promoting peace and DepEd core values" (Mean = 3.57, SD = 0.57), followed closely by "Teachers prepare contextualized learning materials responsive to the needs of learners" (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.58) and "Grade 3 learners achieve the proficiency level for each cluster of early language, literacy, and numeracy skills" (Mean = 3.52, SD = 0.61). These results suggest that schools place strong emphasis on value formation, contextualized instruction, and the attainment of foundational learning competencies among young learners. Remediation activities conducted by teachers to address learning gaps also registered a high

mean (M = 3.49, SD = 0.63), underscoring ongoing efforts to provide additional academic support, while learner proficiency in 21st century skills and core learning areas as measured by the National Achievement Test likewise reflected consistent manifestation (M = 3.46, SD = 0.64). The conduct of test item analysis to inform teaching and learning processes also registered a favorable mean (M = 3.44, SD = 0.66), indicating that assessment outcomes are regularly utilized to refine instructional strategies. Comparatively lower, though still classified as "Always Manifested," were the indicators pertaining to school-based Alternative Learning System (ALS) learner certification (M = 3.38, SD = 0.67) and the engagement of local industries to strengthen Technology and Livelihood Education-Technical Vocational Livelihood (TLE-TVL) course offerings (M = 3.29, SD = 0.69). These relatively lower scores suggest that while these practices are performed frequently, they represent areas where further strengthening may be warranted, particularly in forging stronger industry linkages and expanding alternative learning pathways for out-of-school learners. Collectively, these findings demonstrate strong evidence of the Curriculum and Teaching dimension of the Revised SBM Framework among the sampled schools, reflecting the sustained commitment of school administrators and teachers toward improving instructional quality, facilitating learner achievement, and responding to diverse learning needs. This pattern aligns with the broader premise of school-based management, which holds that decentralized decision-making at the school level enables more responsive and contextually grounded instructional practices than centrally imposed, uniform approaches.

With respect to the Learning Environment dimension, encompassing indicators of access, inclusion, and well-being, all items likewise registered an interpretation of "Always Manifested," with a composite mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.63), identical in magnitude to the composite mean obtained for Curriculum and Teaching. This finding indicates that the initiatives undertaken by the schools are consistently oriented toward safeguarding the safety, inclusion, and overall well-being of learners. Among the individual indicators, the highest mean scores were obtained by the presence of a functional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) plan (M = 3.60, SD = 0.54), zero incidence of child abuse (M = 3.58, SD = 0.56), and the existence of a functional Child Protection Committee (M = 3.56, SD = 0.58). These results suggest that safety and child protection are strongly prioritized across nearly all facets of school operations. The indicator on culture-sensitive activities also scored favorably (M = 3.51, SD = 0.60), as did the reduction of drop-out incidence (M = 3.47, SD = 0.63) and the zero incidence of bullying (M = 3.45, SD = 0.65), reflecting sustained institutional efforts to maintain safe and supportive school climates. Comparatively lower mean scores, though still within the "Always Manifested" range, were observed for access to learning experiences for disadvantaged learners, out-of-school youths, and adult learners (M = 3.42, SD = 0.66), the functionality of the school-based ALS program (M = 3.39, SD = 0.68), the functional support mechanism for mental wellness (M = 3.36, SD = 0.70), and the presence of special education and Persons with Disability (PWD)-friendly facilities (M = 3.28, SD = 0.72). These lower, though still positively interpreted, scores point to areas requiring continued institutional attention, particularly the strengthening of inclusive infrastructure and mental health support systems for learners with diverse needs. This pattern of findings resonates with the inclusive education principles embedded in the SBM framework, which emphasize that access, safety, and well-being must be addressed comprehensively, rather than selectively, to ensure that no learner is left behind in the pursuit of quality basic education.

Taken as a whole, the results of this study demonstrate that the sampled public elementary schools, though predominantly small in scale, as evidenced by the prevalence of small school classifications and correspondingly limited teaching staff, have nonetheless achieved a consistently high level of implementation of the Revised SBM Framework across

both the Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Environment dimensions, with identical composite means of 3.46 for both domains, both interpreted as "Always Manifested." These findings directly address the objectives of the study by establishing not only the demographic and organizational profile of the participating schools but also the extent to which SBM practices have been internalized in instructional and environmental domains, despite the resource constraints that often accompany smaller school configurations. The convergence of strong implementation scores with a predominance of small, resource-limited schools suggests that the effectiveness of SBM governance may be attributable less to institutional scale and more to sustained years of implementation, as most schools in the sample had practiced SBM for more than six years, allowing sufficient time for the framework to become embedded in school culture and operations. These findings contribute to the broader body of knowledge on school-based management by illustrating that consistent, long-term institutional commitment to SBM principles can yield strong implementation outcomes even in contexts characterized by limited human and material resources. The results likewise underscore specific areas, such as industry linkages for TLE-TVL programs, ALS learner certification, mental wellness support, and inclusive facilities for learners with special needs, that merit further institutional investment to elevate implementation from consistently favorable to fully optimized levels. These findings provide a foundation for the subsequent chapter, which examines the relationships among these variables and further tests the hypotheses guiding this investigation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that public elementary schools generally operate as small institutions with medium levels of teacher staffing and varying periods of School Based Management (SBM) adoption, and these structural characteristics play a meaningful role in shaping the extent to which SBM is practiced. Across all dimensions examined, the Revised SBM framework was found to be implemented at a high to very high level, reflecting strong and consistent compliance with decentralization based management strategies among school leaders and personnel. This high degree of implementation was not uniform across all institutions, however, as the number of teachers and the length of time a school had adopted SBM emerged as significant factors influencing the depth and consistency of practice, suggesting that school profile variables cannot be overlooked when evaluating management effectiveness.

Beyond the quantitative measures of implementation, the findings reveal that school leaders employ a range of efficient practices that actively promote participation, accountability, and the enhancement of instructional processes. These practices underscore the critical importance of leadership, collaboration, and stakeholder involvement as foundational elements for the successful and sustained implementation of SBM. Taken together, these results affirm that effective school management is not solely a function of policy compliance but is deeply rooted in the relational and collaborative dynamics that school leaders cultivate with teachers, parents, and the broader community.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that schools establish an innovative monitoring and evaluation process capable of generating immediate, data driven feedback to support timely and informed decision making. Particular attention should also be given to small schools, which may require additional assistance in the form of personnel and funding to strengthen their capacity for SBM implementation. Furthermore, sustaining and deepening partnerships with parents, community stakeholders, and local government units is essential to reinforcing the support systems that underpin school programs and activities. To ease the

adoption of new initiatives, schools should likewise develop effective orientation and communication strategies designed to minimize resistance to program or policy innovations. Given the value demonstrated by efficient leadership practices in this study, it is further recommended that such practices be systematically documented to enable replication across other schools facing similar contexts and challenges. Finally, schools are encouraged to consider adopting the proposed strategic plan as a practical mechanism for improving the implementation of the Revised SBM, thereby ensuring that the insights generated through this study translate into concrete, sustained improvements in school governance and management practice.

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