**CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPING SCHOOLS: BASIS FOR A COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK**

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**Abstract**

*This study is qualitative research that employed descriptive design. It aimed to determine the challenges encountered by the Level 1(Developing) schools in the District Schools, Division of Bulacan, Philippines in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) as a basis for the proposal of a Compliance Framework. Generally, this study describes the level of compliance in the implementation of School-Based Management of participant schools. The study also determined how the schools addressed the challenges encountered that led to the development of a Compliance Framework. In the gathering of data needed in this study, the researchers utilized the School-Based Management (SBM) validation results of each school. Other data were gathered from the School Heads and SBM (School-Based Management) coordinators through survey-interview using semi-structured interview questions formulated by the researchers. Gathered data were organized, tallied, and tabulated for better interpretation and analysis. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the actual performance of schools studied was way below the expected standards of advanced level of School-Based Management and that there is a need for improvement of these schools in the implementation of all the principles of School-Based Management. In particular, this study revealed that participant schools experienced challenges in managing the four dimensions/principles of School-Based Management. The challenges that the schools encountered in terms of Leadership and Governance include guiding the teachers in the proper implementation of School-Based Management, the school head’s role in providing guidance to teachers and parents, establishing open communication, implementation of plans, and monitoring of plan execution, engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, initiatives from school district officials. The challenges encountered in terms of Curriculum and Instruction include the adequacy of learning technologies, appropriateness of learning materials for the learners, evidence of learning outcomes and performance improvement, financial resources to support curriculum instruction, and upskilling and retooling of teachers. The challenges encountered in terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvements include financial and time constraints, compliance with pertinent documents, periodic review of appraisal mechanisms, continuous improvement projects, familiarity with the implementation of the School-Based Management, performance evaluation tools, documentation protocol, and recording of outputs, continuous school progress, and improvement, the commitment of teachers through equitable compensation, and involvement of stakeholders for improvement. The challenges encountered in terms of Management Resources include financial constraints, teachers & students’ engagement in school operations, support from the low-income earning family of stakeholder, involvement of the community, limited support from small stakeholders, manpower resources, engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, insufficient school fund, and immediate support from the Local Government Unit. Based on the conclusion, the researchers recommend that schools need to conduct comprehensive training on the management and implementation of the School-Based Management (SBM) system. It is necessary to require School Heads and teachers to attend related training on adequate supervision, curriculum development, and accomplishing monthly and quarterly instructional and supervisory plans. In addition, periodic monitoring of the school’s performance is needed to determine if the actual accomplishments of the school fully comply with the School-Based Management standards. Active engagement of the schools to the community is also recommended. Lastly, the implementation of the proposed Compliance Framework generated in this study is highly recommended to intensify the implementation of School-Based Management to improve the level of the school from Level 1 to a higher level.*

**Keywords**

Challenges, School-Based Management, Beginning school, Compliance Framework

**1. Introduction**

School-Based Management (SBM) is a strategy that focuses on the improvement of every public school’s general performance in education by transferring significant decision-making authority from the Central Office to individual schools. Most countries adopt School-Based Management to enhance school systems, improve teaching and learning for better student achievements, empower school officials and train them to be better leaders, promote accountability, and ensure the safety and welfare of all members of school communities (Tacay, 2022). In the Philippines, School-Based Management (SBM) is a DepEd (Department of Education) thrust that decentralizes the decision-making from the Central Office and field offices to individual schools to enable them to better respond to their specific education needs (DepE5, 2015). School-Based Management is anchored in Republic Act No. 9155 also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, Schools First Initiative (SFI, 2005), and Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA, 2006). RA 9155 which indicates Local units and other stakeholders as partners in education service delivery. Through the involvement of teachers, parents, and other community members in these key decisions, SBM can create more effective learning environments for children (World Bank, 2017). The underlying principle of the said program is that the people directly involved and affected by school operations are the best persons to plan, manage and improve the school (Bernaldez, 2018).

School-Based Management (SBM) has four principles being implemented; Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Accountability and Continuous Improvement, and Management Resources. The Leadership and Governance, which pertains to the performance of the school to provide a Development Plan developed collaboratively by the stakeholders of the school and community and the school, is organized by a clear structure and work arrangements that promote shared leadership and governance and define the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders (Caburnay, 2022). The Curriculum and Instruction involve the teaching and learning process in school, teachers’ competencies, and learners’ performance (Simon, 2021). The Accountability and Continuous Improvement, which validates the clear, transparent, inclusive, and responsive accountability system is in place, collaboratively developed by community stakeholders, which monitors expected and actual performance, continually addresses the gaps, and ensures a venue for feedback and redress (Caburnay, 2022). Lastly, the Management of Resources assesses the school resources that are collectively and judiciously mobilized and managed with transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency (Simon, 2021). These principles are shadowed by the primary objectives of SBM, to empower the school heads to lead their teachers and students through reforms that lead to higher learning outcomes; bring resources, including funds down to the control of the school to spur change in line with decentralization; strengthen partnership with communities to invest time, money and effort in making the school a better place to learn; and integrate school management and instructional reformation for school effectiveness (Camacho and Farrales, 2022).

DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2012 was implemented to further strengthen the School-Based Management (SBM) practice and re-emphasize the centrality of the learners and the involvement of relevant community basic education service delivery. School-Based Management is being implemented as education involves partnerships, of which the school-community relationship, as the most fundamental, is perhaps the most widely theorized and researched. However, many different kinds of partnerships exist in education settings, and they can occur at different levels within the education system. Partnerships are often expected to address multiple needs simultaneously, such as providing education to those who could not afford it, bringing together a particular set of values, maintaining indigenous languages and cultures, or providing a special focus alongside a general education. In order to have the most positive impact on the academic and wellness outcomes of students, it is imperative that schools and communities work together through a collaborative and comprehensive approach (Reyes, 2021).

The implementation of School-Based Management is being evaluated based on the standard criteria set by the Department of Education. The Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Assessment Tool is guided by the four principles of ACCESs (A Child and Community Centered Education System). The indicators of SBM practice were conceptualized from the ideal of an ACCESs school system. The unit of analysis in the school system may be classified as beginning, developing, and advanced (accredited level). The SBM practice is ascertained by the existence of structured mechanisms, processes, and practices in all indicators. A team of practitioners and experts from the district, division, region, and central office validates the self-study/assessment before establishing an SBM practice level. The highest level “advanced” is a candidate for accreditation after a team of external validators confirmed the evidence of practices and procedures that satisfies quality standards (DepEdCAR, 2015).

Challenges in the implementation of School-Based Management are a normal occurrence and have to be addressed. Abulencia (2021) pointed out that SBM issues involving public schools include a high dropout rate, quality educational service, high repetition rate, and limited holding capacity of the schools. Full implementation of some schools in the Philippines was obtained evidently by the 100% collaboration of schools and stakeholders in general school operations. Cortez (2022) stated that selected schools in National Capital Region (NCR) slightly implemented the SBM which manifested the insufficient documentation of the implementation and a low percentage of level 3 schools. In this study, the researchers opted to analyze the challenges of Level 1 schools in the implementation of School-Based Management and aimed to propose a compliance framework that may strengthen and improve the schools’ School-Based Management (SBM) implementation.

**2. Method**

The study was conducted in five (5) Level 1 schools regarding School-Based Management (SBM) compliance in the District Schools, Division of Bulacan, Philippines. This study is qualitative research that utilized the descriptive design. Document analysis was employed to describe the level of compliance in School-Based Management of each school. Document analysis is an approach in which documents are interpreted by the researchers to give voice and meaning to an assessment topic. Analyzing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus groups or interview transcripts are analyzed (Bowen, 2009). To find out the challenges encountered by the schools in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM), a survey interview using semi-structured interview questions formulated by the researchers was performed with the school heads and SBM coordinators. The respondents were chosen on the basis of pre-determined criteria set by the researchers: (1) Knowledge of the background of School-Based Management; and (2) Involvement in the implementation of School-Based Management. Data gathered from the school document and interviews with respondents were organized, tallied, and tabulated for better interpretation and analysis.

**3. Result**

**3.1. The description of the level of compliance in School-Based Management of each school**

The compliance level of SBM practice for each principal is rated on the following Numerical Ratio Scale; 0 for no evidence of performance, 1 for evidence indicates beginning structures and mechanisms are in place to demonstrate ACCESs, 2 for evidence indicates planned practices and procedures are fully implemented and aligned to ACCESs, and 3 for evidence indicates practices and procedures satisfy the quality standard. The overall/average rating for SBM practice is interpreted as follows; 1.00 to 1.49 is interpreted as Level 1 or developing, 1.50 to 2.49 is interpreted as Level 2 or maturing, and 2.50 to 3.00 is interpreted as Level 3 or advanced (DepEdCAR, 2015).

**Table 1** *Level of compliance in School-Based Management of Schools*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **Leadership and Governance** | **Curriculum and Instruction** | **Accountability and Continuous Improvement** | **Management Resources** | **Overall rating** | **General Status** |
| Balasing Elementary School | 1.20 | 1.46 | 1.44 | 1.42 | **1.38** | Level 1(Developing) |
| Perez Elementary School | 1.10 | 1.90 | 1.00 | 1.80 | **1.45** | Level 1(Developing) |
| Camachile Elementary School | 1.12 | 1.22 | 1.00 | 1.40 | **1.19** | Level 1(Developing) |
| M. Sapa Elementary School | 1.40 | 1.26 | 1.24 | 1.42 | **1.33** | Level 1(Developing) |
| Silangan Elementary School | 1.24 | 1.28 | 1.00 | 1.28 | **1.20** | Level 1(Developing) |
| ***Average:*** | 1.19 | 1.42 | 1.17 | 1.46 |  |  |

The table (Table 1) shows the level of compliance of participant schools in School-Based Management. All schools are in Level 1 or developing status. The evidence of School-Based Management practice of the schools indicates that beginning structures and mechanisms are in place to demonstrate ACCESs. Usually, small schools are at this level due to limited resources in terms of funds and support from stakeholders. According to Santos (2019), the gaps and needs in these level (Level 1) in terms of SBM performance are clearly visible because of limited support as the main stakeholders, such as Local Government Unit (LGU) and Local School Board (LSB), prioritize big schools in terms of fund allotment. In other words, schools with level 1 performance indicate poor enactment of transparency and low value of support mechanisms.

The two most difficult dimensions for the small schools as shown by their level of compliance are Leadership and Governance with an average rating of 1.19, and Accountability and Continuous Improvement with an average rating of 1.17. The four principles of School-Based Management, *Leadership, and Governance* guides the education system to achieve its shared vision, mission, and goals making them responsive and relevant to the context of diverse environments. *Curriculum and Learning Systems* anchored on the community and learners’ contexts and aspirations are collaboratively developed and continuously improved. *Accountability and continuous improvement* mean having a clear, transparent, inclusive, and responsive accountability system in place, collaboratively developed by the school community, which monitors performance and acts appropriately on gaps and gains. *Management of Resources* are collectively organized, judiciously mobilized, and managed with transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency to support targeted education outcomes. Along with these four principles of ACCESs, the SBM practice evolved within the context of “differentiated practice” as created and affected by the variations in the typology of schools, leadership quality, and characteristics, resources of the community, diversity of learners, and extent and depth of community involvement (DepEd, 2012). The variations in the typology of schools, like the small schools, affected their compliance with the SBM requirements.

**3.2. Challenges in School-Based Management Implementation**

**3.2.1. In terms of Leadership Governance**

**Table 2** *Challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Leadership Governance*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant School** | **Respondents’ Response** | **Challenges** |
| School 1 | *The first time that I handled this school, their SMB (School-Based management) section is empty and without any record. Although the teachers knew what SMB was all about, they do not know what to do about it. What I did is I patiently guided them to complete the documents needed. With the grace of our Lord, we are now validated as Level 1 already.* | Guiding the teachers in the proper implementation of the School-Based Management |
| School 2 | *I experienced difficulty in performing my role in guiding the teachers and parents**Communication and cooperation with parents is hardly achieved.* | School head’s role in providing guidance to teachers and parentsEstablishing open communication |
| School 3 | *School plans are not implemented. If implemented, desired outputs are not met due to lack of monitoring.* | Implementation of plans and monitoring of plan execution |
| School 4 |  *It is challenging to let the stakeholders like LGU, Barangay committee on education, alumni, PTA, etc. to involve in school improvement planning.* | Engagement of the local community in school improvement planning |
| School 5 | *Initiatives of school administrators for a review and improvement of a development plan.* | Initiatives from school district officials |

The table above (Table 2) shows the responses of the respondents that led the researchers to determine the challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Leadership Governance. School no. 1 encountered challenges in guiding the teachers in the proper implementation of School-Based Management. School no. 2 encountered challenges in the school head’s role in providing guidance to teachers and parents and establishing open communication with the parents. School no. 3 encountered challenges in the implementation of school plans and monitoring the execution of these plans. School no. 4 encountered challenges in the engagement of the local community in school improvement planning. School no. 5 encountered challenges in the initiatives of school district officials.

**3.2.2. In terms of Curriculum and Instruction**

**Table 3** *Challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Curriculum and Instruction*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant School** | **Respondents’ Response** | **Challenges** |
| School 1 | *We only have one projector for the school and is only used during school activity. It is not used in classroom teaching.* | Adequacy of learning technology |
| School 2 | *Our school lacks appropriate and good learning materials. Our library is so small and textbooks are outdated.* | Appropriateness of learning materials for the learners |
| School 3 | *We lack evidences to show improved learning outcomes, like achievement rates, promotion rates, and failure rates. We also lack evidence of improved performance using localized curriculum, monitoring tool and assessment tool.* | Evidence of leaning outcomes and performance improvement |
| School 4 |  *Our teachers voluntarily use money from their own pocket to provide their own teaching materials and learning materials for their students.*  | Financial resources to support curriculum instruction |
| School 5 | *Lack of adequate trainings and professional development seminars for the teachers.* | Upskilling and retooling of teachers |

The table above (Table 3) shows the responses of the respondents that led the researchers to determine the challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Curriculum and Instruction. School no. 1 encountered challenges in the adequacy of learning technologies. School no. 2 encountered challenges in appropriateness of learning materials for their learners. School no. 3 encountered challenges in providing evidence of learning outcomes and performance improvement. School no. 4 encountered challenges in financial resources to support curriculum instruction. School no. 5 encountered challenges in upskilling and retooling teachers.

**3.2.3. In Terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvement**

**Table 4** *Challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvement*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant School** | **Respondents’ Response** | **Challenges** |
| School 1 | *There are tendencies for us to come up with plans for the school year, but because of some constraints financially, and sometimes suspension of classes due to bad weather, the percentage of accomplishment at the end of the school year is reduced* | Financial and time constraint |
| School 2 | *The school find difficulty to comply with school handbook, Memorandum of Agreement, accomplishment report, and assessment framework.**Appraisal mechanism are not reviewed regularly nor continuously.**We’re still in level 1 but our rating was higher compared to last year.* | Compliance with pertinent documentsPeriodic review of appraisal mechanism |
| School 3 | *We don’t have continuous improvement projects in our school this school year.**We admit that our school is still in the beginning stage based on the SMB (School-Based Management) performance. This is because we are still in the preliminary stage of the SMB implementation.* | Continuous improvement projectsFamiliarity in the implementation of the School-Based Management |
| School 4 | *Performance assessment are not objective. Documentation of activities are not given importance and recording of the activity outputs are often neglected. But in terms of SMB (School-Based Management) we are compliant from planning to implementation and monitoring. It means our school is progressing and improving in my three years of being the school head.* | Performance evaluation toolsDocumentation protocol and recording of outputsContinuous school progress and improvement |
| School 5 | *Teachers financial difficulties reduce teacher’s commitment to the school**Low participation of our stakeholders, both internal and external, that makes our school still in level 1.* | Work commitment of teachers through equitable compensationInvolvement of stakeholders for improvement |

 The table above (Table 4) shows the responses of the respondents that led the researchers to determine the challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvement. School no. 1 encountered challenges in financial and time constraints. School no. 2 encountered challenges in complying with pertinent documents and periodic reviews of the appraisal mechanism. School no. 3 encountered challenges in continuous improvement projects and familiarity of the teachers in the implementation of the School-Based Management. School no. 4 encountered challenges in the performance evaluation tools, documentation protocol and recording of outputs, and continuous school progress and improvement. School no. 5 encountered challenges in the commitment of teachers to their work by providing equitable compensation for them. The school also encountered challenges in the involvement of the stakeholders in school improvement.

**3.2.4. In terms of Management Resources**

**Table 5** *Challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Management Resources*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Participant School** | **Respondents’ Response** | **Challenges** |
| School 1 | *There are tendencies for us to come up with plans for the school year, but because of some constraints financially, and sometimes suspension of classes due to bad weather, the percentage of accomplishment at the end of the school year is also reduced* | Financial constraints |
| School 2 | *We, the teachers and the students, should be the one to perform first before we involve our external stakeholders. The students and teachers are the first to act for the school operations.**It is very hard for us to mobilize our stakeholders and seek participation from them because we are in a rural area where most of the families here belong to an average to low income earner.* | Teachers & students’ engagement in school operationSupport from the low income earning family of stakeholder |
| School 3 | *We have our PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) but they are not active this year. For our external stakeholders, we primarily rely support from the LGU, community, alumni, and private individuals. Other than that, we don’t yet have bigger stakeholder that could provide us bigger support.* | Involvement of the communityLimited support from small stakeholders |
| School 4 | *We have limited number of teachers that could work together in making and executing plans.**Stakeholders like LGU, Barangay committee on education, alumni PTA, etc. lacks involvement in school improvement planning.* | Manpower resourcesEngagement of the local community in school improvement planning |
| School 5 | *When it comes to resources, we have small MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses).**We also seldom become a recipient of supports especially financial support coming from the LGU (Local Government Unit) because they prioritize the Central School and other bigger schools.* | Insufficient school fundImmediate support from the Local Government Unit |

The table above (Table 5) shows the responses of the respondents that led the researchers to determine the challenges encountered by the participant schools in the implementation of School-Based Management in terms of Management Resources. School no. 1 encountered challenges in financial constraints. School no. 2 encountered challenges in engaging the teachers & students in school operations. The school also encountered challenges in soliciting support from the low-income earning family of stakeholders. School no.3 encountered challenges in the involvement of the community and limited support from small stakeholders. School no. 4 encountered challenges in manpower resources and engagement of the local community in school improvement planning. School no. 5 encountered challenges in insufficient school funds and immediate support from the Local Government Unit.

**3.3. Proposed Compliance Framework**

Based on the result of the study, along with the combined views and suggestions of the respondents during the interview process, a proposed Compliance Framework (Figure 1) was crafted by the researchers. The proposed framework is aligned with the principles of the existing School-Based Management of the schools and was based on the challenges encountered by these schools. The objective of the framework is to intensify the implementation of the School-Based Management of schools that may help elevate their level and general status.

**Target outcome**

Level 2 School-Based Management Performance

**Update/reexamine areas of improvements**

**Monitor development and improvements**

**Map out obligations to areas of improvements**

Effective school head, Clear & achievable development plan, Periodic performance assessment, Curriculum & instruction development, Collaborative activities, Involvement of stakeholders, Commitment & accountability

**Identify challenges of Level 1 schools**

School heads’ role, Planning, implementation & documentation, Competencies of teachers, Improvement of instructions, Community involvement, Manpower, financial & time constraints, Commitment level of teachers

**Figure 1** *Proposed Compliance Framework*

**4. Conclusion**

 Based on the findings, it was concluded that the actual performance of schools studied was way below the expected standards of advanced level of School-Based Management and that there is a need for improvement of these schools in the implementation of all the principles of School-Based Management. In particular, this study revealed that participant schools experienced challenges in managing the four dimensions/principles of School-Based Management. The challenges that the schools encountered in terms of Leadership and Governance include guiding the teachers in the proper implementation of School-Based Management, the school head’s role in providing guidance to teachers and parents, establishing open communication, implementation of plans, and monitoring of plan execution, engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, initiatives from school district officials. The challenges encountered in terms of Curriculum and Instruction include the adequacy of learning technologies, appropriateness of learning materials for the learners, evidence of learning outcomes and performance improvement, financial resources to support curriculum instruction, and upskilling and retooling of teachers. The challenges encountered in terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvements include financial and time constraints, compliance with pertinent documents, periodic review of appraisal mechanisms, continuous improvement projects, familiarity with the implementation of School-Based Management, performance evaluation tools, documentation protocol, and recording of outputs, continuous school progress and improvement, the commitment of teachers through equitable compensation, and involvement of stakeholders for improvement. The challenges encountered in terms of Management Resources include financial constraints, teachers & students’ engagement in school operations, support from the low-income earning family of stakeholder, involvement of the community, limited support from small stakeholders, manpower resources, engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, insufficient school fund, and immediate support from the Local Government Unit.

**5. Recommendation**

Based on the aforementioned conclusion, the researchers recommend that schools need to conduct comprehensive training on the management and implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) system. It is necessary to require School Heads and teachers to attend related training on adequate supervision, curriculum development, and accomplishing monthly and quarterly instructional and supervisory plans. In addition, periodic monitoring of the school’s performance is needed to determine if the actual accomplishments of the school fully comply with the School-Based Management standards. Active engagement of the schools to the community is also recommended. Lastly, the implementation of the proposed Compliance Framework generated in this study is highly recommended to intensify the implementation of School-Based Management to improve the level of the school from Level 1 to a higher level.

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