**Implementation of School-Based Management Program: Basis for Localized Policy Formulation**

**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** School-based management can be described as a system where there is a significant and consistent decentralization of authority to the school level to make decisions related to the allocation of resources. Resources are broadly defined to include knowledge, technology, power, material, people, time, and money. They also function as the collaborative school management cycle that integrates goal-setting, need identification, policy-making, planning, budgeting, implementing, and evaluative processes.

**Aim:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate concerns, challenges, and prospects of school-based management programs from the perspective of formulating policy in light of the aforementioned results in the literature.

**Methods:** This study utilized a standardized instrument on school-based management program from the Department of Education in assessing the SBM practices in the Division of Meycauayan.Each of the respondents was given a structured set of questions. In gathering the data, the researcher carried out the following procedure. The data collected was tabulated and processed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The issues, challenges, and prospects that awaited in the implementation of school-based management was quantified using frequency counts, percentages, and ranking procedures.

**Result:** Principals, teachers, and other stakeholders perceive SBM as promoting balanced and inclusive power dynamics. They agree on the distribution and effectiveness of power among principals, teachers, Board of Governors, parents, and the collective school community. The flexibility in funding arrangements (mean score of 4.95), monitoring of income and expenditure (mean score of 4.97), and full utilization of resources and space (mean score of 4.89) further underscored the program's robustness. Information maintenance and access control over resources were well executed, with scores of 4.91 and 4.93, respectively. The presence of guidelines and procedures for allocating resources and space (mean score of 4.95) also contributed to the program's success. The data indicated that the School-Based Management Program was exceptionally well-implemented, with all indicators receiving outstanding ratings, highlighted the effectiveness and efficiency of the program in fostering a collaborative, resourceful, and well-managed educational environment.

**Conclusion:** There is an effective implementation and management. The SBM program in Meycauayan Division demonstrates a high level of effectiveness across key operational areas. Stakeholders consistently rated the program as outstanding in leadership, resource management, staff engagement, and overall program implementation. The study will contribute to the strengthening of the School-Based Management program in the Division of Meycauayan, enhancing its ability to foster effective school governance, improve educational outcomes, and deepen community engagement. By addressing challenges and building on existing successes, the Division can ensure sustainable progress and continued advancement towards educational excellence.

**Keywords:** *School-Based Management, policy making, Curriculum Development, Instructions*

**Introduction**

“School-Based Management (SBM) is a concept that offers schools autonomy to determine school policies to improve the quality, efficiency, and equity of education to accommodate the wishes of the local community and establish close cooperation between schools, communities, and government” (Zaid et al., 2022; Amos et al., 2021). SBM emphasized the centrality of the learners and the involvement of the relevant community, basic education and service delivery. Also, School-Based Management aimed to improve education by handing the authority in decision making to individual schools from District Offices. Additionally, SBM promised principals more power and freedom to execute their leadership (McInerney, 2015). As a result, many interest groups were drawn to participate in formulating school policy. Schools also gave qualified instructors a platform to voice their thoughts and assume more responsibility for their choices. To further strengthen the School-Based Management. Pursuant to the DepEd Order 83, Series of 2012 was implemented or the “Implementing Guidelines on the Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Framework, Assessment Process and Tool (APAT)” to further strengthen the School-Based Management practice and re-emphasize the centrality of the learners and the involvement of relevant community basic education service. “The concept of SBM was a result of the crisis steaming from the flexibility and control structure that exists in the school system. So, suggestion to improve the accountability, control on subordinate, construction of comprehensive and specific goal, and strict control of the great opposition adhere to the concept of loosely-coupled. Which means to have a loosely control over the individual or unit enable to move freely without the need for co-ordination and control, accountability and collaboration arise as an alternative” (Vally and Daud, 2015; Rosyida & Purwanto, 2022).

Numerous implementation issues caused by the School Management Initiative policy have led to unfavorable impressions of SBM. The Education Department does not sufficiently support efficient school management in schools, and it appeared that there was not enough time for principal preparation and teacher training programs to develop a body of professionals to deal with the changes required. The school community was not sufficiently motivated to assume or accept responsibility for improving school management. The rigid funding and budget levels that are unrelated to performance appear to be discouraging schools.

The majority of aided schools are publicly supported since they operate under a code between the Director of Education and the schools' sponsoring body, in contrast to private, for-profit schools and those government schools under the jurisdiction of the Education Department.

Meanwhile, principals hold the greatest status and act as the primary managers of the schools, so it is crucial to understand how they view SBM. An international strategy for education reform was school-based management (SBM) (Bandur, 2015). Although it goes by many names, including local management of schools, site-based management, self-managing schools, school-site autonomy, school-based budgeting, curriculum development, shared decision-making, restructuring, and decentralized management, school-based management lacks a clear definition.

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**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Research Design**

This study utilized a quantitative method to be able to provide facts, essential knowledge about the nature of program, closer observation into the practices and behavior, as well as in formulating policies and programs. Turner & White (2024) discuss advancements in statistical methods and data analysis techniques that are enhancing the evaluation of educational interventions and learning outcomes.

The quantitative method would tackle the issues and challenges of the administration in implementing the SBM program as well as making a localized policy that can be formulated to enhance SBM.

**Respondents of the Study**

The respondents of the study were the elementary teachers in the Division of Meycauayan for school year 2023-2024.

**Instrument of the Study**

This study utilized a standardized instrument on school-based management program from the Department of Education in assessing the SBM practices in the Division of Meycauayan.

In terms of content, the highlight of the study was the assessment of the implementation of the school-based management program. The implementation of SBM was assessed in terms of access, quality, and transparency.

Another part of the instrument was the appraisal of issues and challenges in the implementation school-based management in the Division of Meycauayan. The quantitative part dealt with the implementation of SBM as described on the following principles.

Meanwhile, the prospects that await the implementation of school-based management program were likewise evaluated as an aid in developing policy formulation and/or reformulation.

The mode of data gathering was the questionnaire method. Each of the respondents was given a structured set of questions. In gathering the data, the researcher carried out the following procedure. First, a letter was sent to the District Supervisor of Meycauayan to ask permission in the conduct of the proposed study. Next, with the approval of the District Supervisor, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the respondents personally or via Google Form. Lastly, the researcher collected the questionnaires from the respondents and checked whether all the questions are answered.

The data collected was tabulated and processed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). In order to analyze and interpret the data gathered, the following statistical measures were used: The implementation of the school-based management program was quantified using the following scale: The issues, challenges, and prospects that awaited in the implementation of school-based management were quantified using frequency counts, percentages, and ranking procedures.

**Result and Discussion:**

Key indicators, such as the school head's and senior staff's leadership in setting goals, policies, priorities, plans, and budgets, achieved a mean score of 4.87, indicating solid strategic leadership. The link maintained between the school head and the School Management Committee was also rated highly, with a mean score of 4.91, emphasizing effective communication and collaboration.

Staff engagement was a priority, with opportunities for expressing views (mean score of 4.88), invitations for comments and suggestions on school matters (mean score of 4.94), and involvement in major decisions (mean score of 4.92) all receiving "Outstanding" ratings. Clear grievance procedures further support this participatory approach, which scored 4.97.

The fairness and appropriateness of duty deployment to team members, considering their qualifications, experiences, and skills, received the highest rating of 4.98. Resource management is also highly effective, with the identification and utilization of available resources (mean score of 4.91), fair apportionment according to priorities (mean score of 4.93), and the matching of the school budget to policies and priorities (mean score of 4.96).

The flexibility in funding arrangements (mean score of 4.95), monitoring of income and expenditure (mean score of 4.97), and full utilization of resources and space (mean score of 4.89) further underscored the program's robustness. Information maintenance and access control over resources were well executed, with scores of 4.91 and 4.93, respectively. The presence of guidelines and procedures for allocating resources and space (mean score of 4.95) also contributed to the program's success.

The data indicated that the School-Based Management Program was exceptionally well-implemented, with all indicators receiving outstanding ratings, highlighted the effectiveness and efficiency of the program in fostering a collaborative, resourceful, and well-managed educational environment, aligns with Amon (2021) argument that “if the implementing of SBM programs was highly observed, and there is still a pressing need to improve some implementation aspects the outcome will serve as a foundation for school leaders to improve school efficiency and service delivery”.

Several critical issues and challenges need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of the School-Based Management Program. These included resource limitations, role clarity, professional development, teacher training, parental involvement, and decision-making authority. Addressing these areas is essential for the successful implementation and sustainability of the SBM program. This finding aligns with the research by Cheng (2015), which proposes “a school-based mechanism based on the concepts and theories of SBM, multi-level self-management, layer management, matrices of school technology and school culture, and principles of congruence, for school leaders and educators to pursue the school's continuous development and effectiveness”. Principals and teachers favored managing physical and material resources under SBM, with solid agreement on the efficiency, effectiveness, and timely procurement and mobilization of resources.

There is a strong positive attitude among principals and teachers towards managing staff and student personnel under SBM, highlighted the program's effectiveness in enhancing commitment, motivation, professional development, discipline, communication, and overall management aligned with Liu et al (2023) statement that “professional development had a significant positive effect on teachers' work commitment, and that work commitment affects the quality of teacher learning”.

The principals and teachers hold a favorable view of financial management under SBM, with solid agreement on increased accountability, sound management practices, decision-making competency, realistic budgeting, and improved decision-making processes. Thus, this aligned to the study of Bandur, A. (2019) that recommended “the school heads attend training and seminars related to school financial management, involving school planning teams and community involvement. Effective management of school financial resources is crucial for financing all school activities”. In addition, principals and teachers hold a favorable view of curriculum and instruction management under SBM, with solid agreement on timely syllabus coverage, quality education delivery, instructional program improvements, positive cultural shifts, innovative classroom practices, and overall curriculum and instruction effectiveness. This finding aligned with the study by Amon & Bustami (2021) that “by implementing SBM, curriculum management and learning processes can be carried out effectively and efficiently, build student character, improve learning achievement, and improve the quality of education”.

Further, principals and teachers hold a favorable view of school-community relations under S.B.M., with solid agreement on the equitable distribution of power, active vision development, policy determination, inclusive communication, evolving governance roles, and democratic practices within the school environment. This aligned with the study by Retnaningsih & Santosa (2020) that “the implementation of SBM in Muhammadiyah Mutihan Elementary School is quite good. The school is more flexible because it can manage schools independently, making programs based on the school's needs and abilities. The community always supports and helps school activities and controls the school. Supporting factors in implementing SBM are the community, alumni, foundations, and sponsors. While the inhibiting factor is limited land, schools cannot provide sports fields for students and the limited ability to accompany teachers”. That principals and teachers have a favorable perception of the task areas under SBM, with solid agreement on the effectiveness of budgeting, staffing, curriculum and instruction, goal-setting, and organizational structures.

Overall, the data underscored SBM's effectiveness in enhancing school management practices, while also highlighting critical areas for improvement to sustain its positive impact in the Division of Meycauayan. This aligns with the study by Crawford, M. (2020) that “implementing the SBM programs should be highly observed, and there is still a pressing need to improve some implementation aspects. Thus, the outcome will serve as a foundation for school leaders to improve school efficiency and service delivery”.

The SBM program was highly effective and well-implemented across multiple dimensions. It achieved outstanding ratings in leadership and strategic planning, staff engagement, resource management, and overall program management.

Despite its effectiveness, the SBM program faces significant challenges. Key issues include inadequate facilities, role ambiguity among school principals, limited knowledge about SBM, insufficient professional development for leaders, and financial constraints.

Principals and teachers overwhelmingly support the efficient management of physical and material resources under SBM. They strongly agree on the program's ability to improve resource efficiency, timely procurement, and effective resource mobilization.

There is strong agreement among principals and teachers regarding the positive impact of SBM on managing staff and student personnel. This included increased commitment and motivation among teachers, reduced supervision, enhanced professional development, and improved student discipline.

SBM was highly regarded for its financial management practices. Stakeholders agree on increased accountability, sound financial management, competency in decision-making, realistic budgeting, and improved decision-making processes.

Principals and teachers expressed strong agreement regarding the effective management of curriculum and instruction under SBM. This includes timely syllabus coverage, delivery of quality education, improvements in instructional programs, and positive changes in school culture.

SBM was perceived positively in fostering school-community relations. Stakeholders agree on equitable power distribution, active school vision development, policy determination, inclusive communication, and democratic governance within schools.

There is a widespread positive perception among principals and teachers regarding SBM's effectiveness in various task areas, including budgeting, staffing, curriculum and instruction, goal-setting, and organizational structures.

Principals, teachers, and other stakeholders perceive SBM as promoting balanced and inclusive power dynamics. They agree on the distribution and effectiveness of power among principals, teachers, Board of Governors, parents, and the collective school community.

The SBM program enhances school management practices and fostering positive attitudes among stakeholders. However, they also underscored significant challenges that need to be addressed to sustain and further improve the program's impact in the Division of Meycauayan.

**Conclusion**

There is an effective implementation and management. The SBM program in Meycauayan Division demonstrates a high level of effectiveness across key operational areas. Stakeholders consistently rated the program as outstanding in leadership, resource management, staff engagement, and overall program implementation. This indicates robust leadership, effective utilization of resources, and strong support for participatory decision-making processes.

There are challenges and areas for improvement faced. Despite its successes, the SBM program faces significant challenges. Issues such as inadequate facilities, role ambiguity among school principals, and limited knowledge about SBM highlight areas requiring urgent attention. Addressing these challenges is crucial to further enhance the program's effectiveness and sustainability.

There is a positive stakeholder attitude. Principals, teachers, and other stakeholders hold positive attitudes towards SBM, particularly in terms of resource management, staff and student personnel management, financial management, curriculum and instruction, and school-community relations. Their strong agreement on these aspects underscores the program's positive impact on school operations and community relations.

Strengthening of communication and collaboration. Foster better communication and collaboration among stakeholders, including clearer role delineation for school principals and enhanced community engagement.

Continuous evaluation and adaptation. Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to continuously assess the program's impact and adapt strategies as needed.

In general terms, the SBM program in the Division of Meycauayan has significantly improved school management practices and stakeholder engagement. While facing challenges, its positive impact on resource management, staff and student relations, and overall school-community dynamics is evident. By addressing challenges and implementing targeted recommendations, the Division can further strengthen the SBM program, ensuring sustained improvements in educational quality and community involvement.

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**Recommendation**

**Enhanced Training and Professional Development:** Provide comprehensive training sessions and professional development programs for school principals and senior staff on SBM principles, practices, and leadership skills. This will equip school leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively implement SBM, improve decision-making, and foster a culture of participatory management.

**Infrastructure Development:** Prioritize infrastructure improvements to address the lack of facilities reported by stakeholders. Adequate physical resources are essential for creating a conducive learning environment and supporting efficient school operations under the SBM framework

**Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly define roles and responsibilities of school principals, teachers, and School Management Committees (SMCs) to reduce role ambiguity and enhance operational efficiency. Role clarity promotes effective decision-making, accountability, and collaboration among stakeholders, crucial for successful SBM implementation.

**Community Engagement and Communication:** Implement strategies to enhance communication and collaboration between schools, parents, community members, and local authorities.Improved community engagement fosters mutual trust, transparency, and support for SBM initiatives, enhancing overall program effectiveness and sustainability.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:** Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to systematically assess the implementation and impact of SBM initiatives. Regular evaluation allows for the identification of strengths, weaknesses, and areas needing improvement, guiding informed decision-making and continuous program enhancement.

**Resource Allocation and Financial Management:** Strengthen financial management practices, including realistic budgeting, increased accountability, and efficient resource allocation. Effective financial management ensures optimal use of resources, supports sustainable program growth, and enhances overall organizational efficiency.

**Capacity Building for Teachers and Staff:** Provide on-going professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their pedagogical skills, instructional methods, and classroom management techniques. Empowered and skilled teachers are essential for delivering quality education and achieving educational outcomes aligned with SBM goals.

**Policy Review and Adaptation:** Continuously review and adapt SBM policies and guidelines based on feedback from stakeholders, emerging educational trends, and evolving community needs. Flexible and responsive policies promote innovation, adaptation to changing circumstances, and sustained improvement in educational quality.

**Collaborative Leadership and Decision-Making:** Foster a culture of shared leadership and participatory decision-making among school stakeholders, including principals, teachers, students, and community representatives. Inclusive decision-making processes enhance stakeholder engagement, ownership of initiatives, and alignment of school practices with community expectations.

By implementing these recommendations, it will contribute to the strengthening of the School-Based Management program in the Division of Meycauayan, enhancing its ability to foster effective school governance, improve educational outcomes, and deepen community engagement. By addressing challenges and building on existing successes, the Division can ensure sustainable progress and continued advancement towards educational excellence.

**Ethical Approval:**

As per international standards or university standards written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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