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# 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 employs a 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. This study describes the compliance level of participant schools in SBM implementation and how they addressed the challenges encountered that led to the development of a Compliance Framework. The researchers gathered data from the SBM validation results of each school and survey interviews with the school heads and SBM

coordinators. Results showed that the actual performance of the schools studied was significantly below the required criteria for achieving an advanced level of School-Based Management and that there is a need for improvement in these schools' application of all the SBM principles. Results also revealed that participant schools encountered several challenges in the implementation of school-based management. It was recommended that schools undertake comprehensive training on the administration of the School-Based Management system. The adoption of the proposed Compliance Framework developed in this study is highly recommended to intensify SBM implementation in schools, which can contribute to improving their overall level and general status.

# **Keywords**

School-Based Management, Developing Schools, Compliance Framework, Implementation

# 1. Introduction

School-Based Management (SBM) involves the decentralization of authority and decision-making in public education. This system empowers individual schools to manage crucial aspects of their operations within a defined framework of objectives, policies, curriculum, standards, and accountabilities, all established centrally. Decentralization has been at the center of a recent wave of development strategies aimed at strengthening local institutions. The initiative is driven by the idea that increased local control will result in more responsive institutions. The concept of school-based management encompasses reforms that are aimed at schools (Yasuyuki et al., 2022). The aim is to ensure a systematic and consistent approach to school-level decision-making. This approach also aims to empower school officials, foster accountability, and assure the welfare of all members of the school community. Most countries adopt school-based management to strengthen educational systems and elevate the quality of teaching and learning to improve student performance. With the enactment of RA 9155 in 2001 as a legislative framework, SBM was formally implemented in the Philippines as a governance framework of the Department of Education (DepEd) (Pasubillo & Asio, 2023). SBM is the strategy of the DepEd that transfers decision-making from the Central Office and field offices to individual schools in order that they can better meet their unique educational needs. According to RA 9155, local government units (LGUs) and other stakeholders are partners in the delivery of educational services. SBM can build better learning environments for students by involving

teachers, parents, and other community members in making vital decisions. SBM has been shown to support school growth and guarantee that educational institutions offer high-quality social and economic advantages that most closely align with the fundamental beliefs and interests of the surrounding communities. It gives schools greater freedom in how they allocate their financial, material, and human resources (Olaseni, 2019).

School-Based Management has four principles being implemented: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Accountability and Continuous improvement, and Management of Resources. Leadership and Governance is structured with a clear structure and work arrangements that encourage shared leadership and governance and specify the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders. It pertains to the accomplishments of the school in providing a development plan created cooperatively by the stakeholders, community, and school. A study by Laranang (2022) demonstrates that effective school governance has an essential effect on leadership, pedagogical expertise, relationships with stakeholders, and the quality of education. The Curriculum and Instruction constitutes the school's teaching and learning process, the competencies of teachers, and learners' achievements. Accountability and Continuous Improvement, developed collaboratively by community stakeholders, recognize the existence of a clear, transparent, inclusive, and responsive accountability system. It also ensures a forum for feedback and redress by tracking expected and actual performance and addressing any gaps. Decentralization of decision-making attempts to better link policy requirements with educational needs, enhance staff accountability and monitoring, and align incentives. SBM also intends to create assessments and evaluations and to reinforce school autonomy (Llangco, 2023). Lastly, the Management of Resources assesses the school resources that are jointly and appropriately mobilized and effectively, efficiently, and transparently administered. These principles are overshadowed by the main goals of School-Based Management, which are to grant authority to school heads in guiding their teachers and students towards improved learning outcomes. This involves devolving resources, including funding, to the school level to encourage changes in line with decentralization. The primary goal of school-based management in the Philippines is to enable schools and stakeholders to take a more active role in the administration and decisionmaking processes of their specific schools. Making decisions is a shared duty between teachers and the school community, which promotes a positive professional learning environment and advances the process of teaching and learning (Ayeni & Bamire, 2022). To enable

administrators, teachers, parents, and other people in the community to engage in school governance and improvement, SBM aims to decentralize power and resources (Lara & Pañares, 2023).

Challenges in the implementation of SBM are a normal occurrence and must be addressed. SBM challenges in public schools encompass issues such as a significant dropout rate, the provision of quality educational services, a high repetition rate, and limited school holding capacity. Better decision-making in education can be facilitated by school-based management. It provides people in charge with the ability to take decisive action to address the actual issues and challenges that the school is facing (Lara & Pañares, 2023). Full implementation in some schools in the Philippines was evidently obtained through the collaboration of schools and stakeholders in overall school operations. In this study, the researchers opted to analyze the challenges of Level 1 schools in SBM implementation and aimed to propose a compliance framework that may strengthen and improve the schools' SBM system.

# 2. Method

The study was conducted in five (5) Level 1 schools regarding SBM compliance in District schools in the Division of Bulacan, Philippines. This study is qualitative research that utilizes a descriptive design. Document analysis was employed to describe the level of compliance in School-Based Management of each school. Document analysis is a method wherein researchers interpret documents to provide a perspective and understanding of a specific assessment topic. This process involves extracting key themes from the content, much like how focus groups or interview transcripts are examined. By doing so, document analysis allows researchers to give expression and significance to the subject under consideration. (Bowen, 2009). To find out the challenges encountered by the schools in the implementation of School-Based Management, a survey interview using semi-structured interview questions was performed with the school heads and SBM coordinators. The respondents were selected according to specific criteria established by the researchers. The data collected from both school documents and respondent interviews was systematically organized, tallied, and presented in tabular form to facilitate more effective interpretation and analysis.

# 3. Result

This part presents the findings of the study as follows: the description of the compliance level of participant schools in school-based management; challenges in the implementation of school-based management; and the proposed Compliance Framework developed in this study.

# 3.1. The Description of School-Based Management Compliance Level of Participant Schools

The compliance level of SBM practice for each school is rated on the following Numerical Ratio Scale: 0 for no evidence of performance; 1 for evidence showing that preliminary mechanisms and frameworks for demonstrating ACCESs (A Child and Community-Centered Education System) are in place; 2 for evidence demonstrating that intended actions are taken, carried out, and in line with ACCESs; and 3 for evidence showing that procedures and practices meet the required standards for quality. 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.

 Table 1: School-Based Management Compliance Level of Participant Schools

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

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

The table (Table 1) shows the SBM compliance level of the participant schools. All schools are in Level 1 or developing status. The evidence of School-Based Management practices in the schools indicates that preliminary mechanisms and frameworks for demonstrating ACCESs are

in place. Usually, small schools are at this level due to limited resources in terms of funds and support from stakeholders. The gaps and needs at this level (Level 1) in terms of SBM performance are clearly visible because of limited support as the main stakeholders, such as the Local Government Unit (LGU) and Local School Board (LSB), prioritize big schools in terms of fund allotment. The two most difficult dimensions for the participant 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. In conjunction with the four principles of ACCESs, the SBM practice developed in response to the concept of "differentiated practice," which was shaped and influenced by variations in school typology, leadership quality, characteristics, community resources, learners' diversity, and the level and depth of community engagement. 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 and Governance

**Table 2:** Challenges encountered by the participant schools in SBM implementation in terms of Leadership and Governance

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

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

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 SBM implementation in terms of Leadership and Governance. School No. 1 encountered challenges in guiding the teachers in proper SBM implementation. 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. Leadership and governance is a function that is carried out successfully and effectively by enabling all of the individuals and other assets within the school to improve performance in order to fulfill the mission and achieve the learning objectives (Darwis et al., 2023).

### 3.2.2. In terms of Curriculum and Instruction

**Table 3:** Challenges encountered by the participant schools in SBM implementation in terms of Curriculum and Instruction

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

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

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 SBM implementation in terms of Curriculum and Instruction. School No. 1 encountered challenges with the adequacy of learning technologies. School No. 2 encountered challenges in the 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 with financial resources to support curriculum instruction. School No. 5 encountered challenges in upskilling and retooling teachers. The issue of education quality at every level and educational unit is one of the challenges facing education in the current globalization era. Numerous initiatives, including curriculum development, training, raising teacher competency, and purchasing books and learning aids, have been undertaken to raise the standard of education in the country (Rau et al., 2023). The role of schools in educating society's members cannot be overstated. It is the location of the teaching and learning process. The majority of institutions are currently grappling with the ongoing challenge of enhancing and expanding student learning (Quisquino, 2021).

# 3.2.3. In Terms of Accountability and Continuous Improvement

**Table 4:** Challenges encountered by the participant schools in SBM implementation 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	Financial and time constraint
	accomplishment at the end of the school year is reduced	
School 2	The school finds it difficult to comply with the school handbook, Memorandum of Agreement, accomplishment report, and assessment framework.  Appraisal mechanisms are not reviewed regularly nor continuously.  We're still in level 1 but our rating was higher compared to last year.	Compliance with pertinent documents Periodic 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 projects Familiarity with SBM implementation
School 4	Performance assessments are not objective. Documentation of activities is 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 tools Documentation protocol and recording of output Continuous school progress and improvement

School 5	Teachers' financial difficulties reduce teacher's commitment to	Work commitment of	
	the school	teachers through equitable	
	Low participation of our stakeholders, both internal and external,	compensation	
	that makes our school still in level 1.	Involvement of stakeholders	
		for improvement	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

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 SBM implementation in terms of Accountability and Continuous improvement. School No. 1 encountered challenges in terms of 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 with SBM implementation. School No. 4 encountered challenges in the performance evaluation tools, documentation protocol and recording of output, and continuous school progress and improvement. School No. 5 encountered challenges in the work commitment of teachers through equitable compensation and stakeholders' involvement for improvement.

# 3.2.4. In terms of Management of Resources

**Table 5:** Challenges encountered by the participant schools in SBM implementation in terms of Management of Resources

Participant	Respondents' Response	Challenges	
School			
School 1	There are tendencies for us to come up with plans for the school	Financial constraints	
	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		
School 2	We, the teachers, and the students, should be the ones to perform	Teachers & students'	
	first before we involve our external stakeholders. The students and	engagement in school	
	teachers are the first to act for the school operations.	operation	
	It is very hard for us to mobilize our stakeholders and seek	Support from the low-	
	participation from them because we are in a rural area where	income families of	
	most of the families here belong to an average to low-income	stakeholders	
	earner.		
School 3	We have our PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) but they are not	Involvement of the	
	active this year. For our external stakeholders, we primarily rely	community	
	on support from the LGU, community, alumni, and private	Limited support from small	
	individuals. Other than that, we don't yet have bigger stakeholder	stakeholders	
	that could provide us bigger support.		
School 4	We have a limited number of teachers that could work together in	Manpower resources	
	making and executing plans.	Engagement of the local	

	Stakeholders like LGU, Barangay committee on education, alumni	community in school
	PTA, etc. lacks involvement in school improvement planning.	improvement planning
School 5	When it comes to resources, we have small MOOE (Maintenance	Insufficient school funds
	and Other Operating Expenses).	Immediate support from the
	We also seldom become a recipient of supports especially	Local Government Unit
	financial support coming from the LGU (Local Government Unit)	
	because they prioritize the Central School and other bigger	
	schools.	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

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 SBM implementation in terms of Management of Resources. School No. 1 encountered challenges in financial constraints. School No. 2 encountered challenges in engaging the teachers and students in school operations. The school also encountered challenges in soliciting support from low-income families 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 the engagement of the local community in school improvement planning. School No. 5 encountered challenges with insufficient school funds and immediate support from the local government unit (LGU). In the study of Reyes et al. (2022), it shows that the most significant issue is the urgent need for more classrooms to accommodate the expanding student body. This data shows that teachers had serious concerns about the need for additional classrooms, which is a common occurrence in government schools. Their budgetary constraints are the reason for the shortage of classrooms. SBM can only be implemented effectively and efficiently if it is supported by qualified human resources for handling and operating schools, adequate funds to compensate employees and other education personnel in accordance with their roles, suitable infrastructure and amenities, and community support. (Darwis et al., 2023).

### 3.3. Proposed Compliance Framework

Based on the findings of the study and 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 system and was based on the challenges encountered by the schools. The goal of the framework is to intensify the implementation of School-Based Management in

schools, which can contribute to improving their overall level and general status. The framework consists of pillars in the achievement of every school's goal of becoming a High-Level school in terms of SBM compliance. All are anchored in the four principles of SBM implementation. The first pillar anchored in leadership and governance includes an effective school head and proper implementation and documentation. The second pillar anchored in curriculum and instruction includes curriculum development, improvement of instructions, and teachers' competencies. The third pillar, anchored in accountability and continuous improvement, includes clear and available development plan and periodic performance assessments. The third pillar, anchored in accountability and continuous improvement, includes collaborative activities and the involvement of stakeholders. The salient items in each part of this framework will help the school elevate its level and general status.

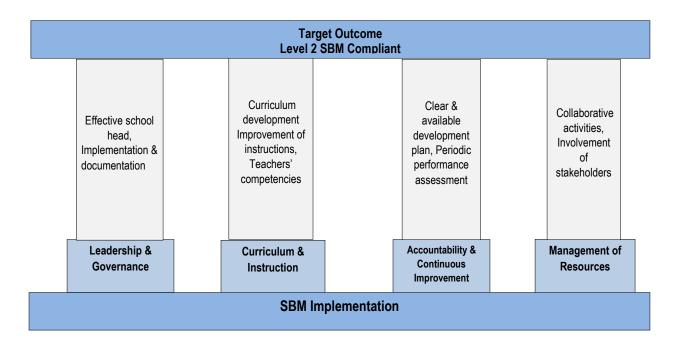


Figure 1: Proposed Compliance Framework

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

# 4. Conclusion

After analyzing the results, it was concluded that the actual performance of the schools studied was significantly below the required criteria for achieving an advanced level of School-Based Management and that there is a need for improvement in these schools' application of all of the School-Based Management principles. This study revealed that participant schools

experienced several challenges in managing the four principles of SBM. The challenges that the schools encountered in terms of Leadership and Governance include guiding the teachers in proper SBM implementation, the role of school heads in providing guidance to teachers and parents, establishing open communication, the implementation of plans and monitoring plan execution, the engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, and initiatives from school district officials. The challenges encountered in terms of Curriculum and Instruction include the adequacy of learning technologies, the appropriateness of learning materials for the learners, evidence of learning outcomes and performance improvement, financial resources to support curriculum instruction, and the upskilling and retooling of teachers. The challenges encountered in terms of Accountability and Continuous improvement include financial and time constraints, compliance with pertinent documents, periodic review of appraisal mechanisms, continuous improvement projects, familiarity with SBM implementation, performance evaluation tools, documentation protocols and recording of outputs, continuous school progress and improvement, the commitment of teachers through equitable compensation, and the involvement of stakeholders for improvement. The challenges encountered in terms of Management of Resources include financial constraints, teachers and students' engagement in school operations, support from the low-income families of stakeholders, involvement of the community, limited support from small stakeholders, manpower resources, engagement of the local community in school improvement planning, insufficient school funds, and immediate support from the Local Government Unit.

### 5. Recommendation

Considering the aforementioned conclusion, the researchers recommend that schools undertake comprehensive training on the administration and execution of the School-Based Management system. It is necessary to require School Heads and teachers to attend relevant training on effective supervision, curriculum design, and carrying out monthly and quarterly teaching and assessment plans. In addition, periodic monitoring of the school's performance is needed to assess whether the school's actual achievements fully adhere to SBM standards. Active engagement by the schools in the community is also recommended. Lastly, the adoption of the proposed Compliance Framework developed in this study is highly recommended to intensify SBM implementation in schools, which may contribute to improving their overall level and general status.

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