

" Challenges in the Implementation of School-Based Management "

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ABSTRACT

School-Based Management (SBM) is a governance reform that decentralizes decision-making and enables schools to take a more active role in improving educational quality and learner outcomes. In the Philippines, School-Based Management (SBM) has been institutionalized through the Department of Education's policies and supported by Republic Act No. 9155, which emphasizes shared governance and accountability in schools. Despite these efforts, several challenges continue to affect the successful implementation of SBM practices.

This study examined the challenges encountered in implementing School-Based Management in selected public elementary schools in the District of Bohol Province during the school year 2025. A descriptive–quantitative research design was used to determine the extent of challenges experienced by school personnel. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to school heads, assistant principals, department heads, master teachers, and classroom teachers.

The findings revealed that limited financial resources, heavy administrative workload, and insufficient training are among the most significant challenges affecting the implementation of SBM. These results highlight the need for stronger institutional support, including adequate funding, continuous professional development, and improved administrative systems. The study provides insights that may assist school leaders and policymakers in strengthening SBM implementation and addressing barriers that affect school governance practices.

Keywords: School-Based Management, implementation challenges, educational leadership, school governance, public elementary schools

INTRODUCTION

School-Based Management (SBM) has been widely recognized as a significant strategy for improving school governance and enhancing the quality of education. The concept of SBM promotes decentralization by transferring authority and decision-making responsibility from central education authorities to individual schools. Through this approach, school leaders, teachers, and community stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate in planning, implementing, and monitoring programs that improve teaching and learning processes.

In the Philippines, School-Based Management (SBM) has been institutionalized through Department of Education policies and reinforced by Republic Act No. 9155, which promotes shared governance and accountability at the school level. However, many schools still encounter challenges that influence how effectively SBM practices are implemented. In addition, Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, further reinforces the goal of improving the quality of education through learner-centered and context-responsive practices. Several governance dimensions, including leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and resource management, generally guide the implementation of SBM. These components aim to ensure that schools can plan strategically, monitor performance, and use resources effectively to improve learner outcomes. When effectively implemented, these governance dimensions can contribute to improved instructional practices, stronger accountability systems, and enhanced academic outcomes.

Although SBM offers several potential benefits, its implementation is not without difficulties. Schools often face various barriers that may limit their capacity to fully implement SBM practices. Among these challenges are

limited financial resources, inadequate professional development opportunities, resistance to organizational change, and insufficient participation from parents and community stakeholders. In many cases, school heads and teachers also face increased administrative workloads and documentation requirements, which may reduce the time available for instructional leadership and collaborative planning.

Understanding these challenges is important in strengthening the implementation of SBM in public schools. Identifying the barriers encountered by school personnel can provide valuable insights into the gaps between policy expectations and actual implementation practices. Moreover, examining these challenges can help policymakers and educational leaders design appropriate interventions that address institutional limitations and support schools in achieving improved academic performance.

Although numerous studies have examined the benefits of School-Based Management in improving school governance and student achievement, limited research has focused specifically on the challenges school personnel encounter when implementing SBM in local public elementary school contexts. In many cases, policy expectations for decentralized management may not fully align with the realities schools face regarding resources, administrative workload, and stakeholder participation. Understanding these implementation barriers is essential in determining whether SBM reforms are being effectively implemented at the school level.

Therefore, this study aimed to examine the challenges encountered in implementing School-Based Management in selected public elementary schools in the District of Bohol Province during the school year 2025. Specifically, the study sought to identify the major challenges school personnel face in implementing SBM and determine the extent to which these challenges affect school governance practices.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

School-Based Management (SBM) has been widely recognized as an educational reform strategy that decentralizes decision-making authority from central education agencies to individual schools. Through this approach, school leaders, teachers, and community stakeholders are given greater autonomy to plan programs, allocate resources, and implement policies that address the specific needs of their learners and communities. The primary goal of SBM is to improve educational quality and school effectiveness by empowering local stakeholders and promoting participatory governance in schools. Recent studies also highlight the opportunities and challenges of implementing SBM. According to Hartinah and A. W. Rofahima (2024), School-Based Management can improve the quality of education when schools effectively manage resources, strengthen leadership practices, and encourage active stakeholder participation.

Several international studies have emphasized the potential benefits of SBM in improving school performance and accountability. According to Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos (2011), decentralization reforms such as SBM can improve school outcomes by increasing transparency, strengthening accountability mechanisms, and encouraging active participation among teachers and community stakeholders. When schools are granted greater autonomy in decision-making, they are better able to design programs that respond to their learners' needs. Similarly, the World Bank (2007) reported that SBM initiatives have contributed to improved school governance and student achievement in several countries where schools were provided with sufficient financial resources and institutional support.

Despite these potential advantages, numerous studies have identified significant challenges that affect the successful implementation of SBM. One of the most frequently cited challenges is the limitation of financial resources available to schools. Financial capacity is essential in enabling schools to implement improvement programs, maintain infrastructure, and acquire instructional materials necessary for effective teaching and learning. Bruns et al. (2011) emphasized that school autonomy alone is not sufficient to improve educational outcomes unless it is accompanied by adequate financial support and resource allocation. In many developing education systems, schools rely heavily on limited operational funds, which restrict their ability to implement innovative programs and sustain school improvement initiatives.

Another challenge commonly identified in the literature is the increased administrative workload experienced by school leaders and teachers. Implementing SBM requires school personnel to engage in extensive planning,

documentation, reporting, and monitoring to ensure accountability and transparency. While these processes are important for effective governance, they may also increase the administrative burden placed on school personnel. Karakose, Ozdogru, and Malkoc (2024) reported that school leaders often struggle to balance administrative responsibilities with instructional leadership roles. Excessive administrative tasks may limit the time available for supervising classroom instruction, mentoring teachers, and focusing on student learning outcomes.

The lack of sufficient training and professional development opportunities is another factor that affects the effectiveness of SBM implementation. Effective school-based management requires school personnel to possess competencies in leadership, strategic planning, financial management, and collaborative decision-making. However, some teachers and school leaders may not receive adequate preparation to carry out these responsibilities effectively. Caldwell (2005) emphasized that the success of SBM depends largely on the leadership capacity and professional competence of school personnel. Without continuous professional development and capacity-building programs, school staff may struggle to implement governance processes associated with decentralized management.

Stakeholder participation is also a critical component of successful SBM implementation. One of the fundamental principles of SBM is shared governance, which encourages collaboration among school leaders, teachers, parents, and community members in planning and decision-making processes. According to Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1996), strong partnerships between schools and communities are a significant factor in the success of SBM initiatives. When parents and community members actively participate in school governance, schools gain access to additional resources, support networks, and diverse perspectives that can improve educational programs. However, many schools continue to experience limited stakeholder participation due to factors such as a lack of awareness, limited time, or insufficient understanding of SBM processes.

Monitoring and evaluation systems also play an essential role in ensuring the effectiveness of SBM practices. Effective monitoring mechanisms allow schools to assess the progress of school improvement plans and determine whether educational programs are producing the intended outcomes. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2016) emphasized that accountability and evaluation mechanisms are crucial components of decentralized education systems. Without systematic monitoring processes, schools may struggle to identify areas for improvement and ensure that governance practices align with institutional goals.

In the Philippine context, the implementation of School-Based Management has been strengthened through various policy reforms introduced by the Department of Education. Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, institutionalized shared governance in the Philippine education system and promoted decentralization at the school level. The implementation of SBM in Philippine schools is further guided by the SBM framework developed by the Department of Education (2021), which provides standards for assessing school governance and continuous improvement practices. Under this policy, school heads were granted greater authority to manage school operations, implement educational programs, and mobilize community support. Later reforms, such as Republic Act No. 10533, further reinforced the importance of context-responsive and learner-centered educational practices within decentralized governance structures.

However, studies conducted in Philippine schools indicate that SBM implementation continues to face several institutional and operational challenges. Semanero, Berania, and Reyes (2023) found that many developing schools encounter difficulties in complying with SBM standards due to limited resources, inadequate training opportunities, and complex administrative requirements. These constraints may limit schools' ability to fully implement governance reforms intended to improve school performance and accountability. Leadership capacity has also been identified as a critical factor influencing the success of SBM initiatives. Leithwood and Menzies (1998) argued that school leadership plays a significant role in guiding schools through organizational change and facilitating collaborative decision-making processes. Effective school leaders can mobilize resources, build partnerships with stakeholders, and support teachers in implementing improvement programs. Conversely, limited leadership capacity may hinder the effective implementation of SBM policies and reduce the impact of decentralization reforms on school performance.

Overall, the literature indicates that while School-Based Management offers significant opportunities for improving school governance and educational quality, its implementation is often constrained by financial

limitations, administrative workload, insufficient training, limited stakeholder participation, and weaknesses in monitoring systems. These challenges highlight the importance of strengthening institutional support mechanisms to ensure schools can effectively implement SBM policies and practices. Understanding these barriers is therefore essential in identifying strategies that can enhance the effectiveness of decentralized school management systems and support schools in achieving improved educational outcomes.

The reviewed literature highlights the importance of School-Based Management (SBM) as a governance reform that improves school effectiveness through decentralized decision-making and increased stakeholder participation. International and local studies consistently emphasize that SBM provides schools with greater autonomy to plan programs, manage resources, and implement policies that respond to learners' and communities' needs. When properly implemented, SBM can strengthen accountability, enhance collaboration among stakeholders, and improve educational outcomes.

However, the literature also reveals that several institutional and organizational factors influence the successful implementation of SBM. Financial limitations remain one of the most frequently reported challenges, as schools often depend on limited operational funds that restrict the implementation of school improvement initiatives. Administrative workload has also been identified as a significant barrier, as school leaders and teachers are required to complete extensive documentation, monitoring, and reporting tasks associated with SBM processes.

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the importance of professional competence and leadership capacity for effectively implementing SBM. Studies suggest that without adequate training and continuous professional development, school personnel may struggle to fulfill the management responsibilities required under decentralized governance systems. Similarly, stakeholder participation is crucial to the success of SBM initiatives, as collaboration among schools, parents, and community members can provide additional resources and support for educational programs.

Despite the growing body of literature on School-Based Management, many studies have focused primarily on its benefits and impact on school performance. In contrast, fewer studies have examined the specific challenges encountered by school personnel during implementation. In particular, limited research has explored the institutional barriers affecting SBM implementation in local public elementary school contexts. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by examining the challenges that school personnel face in implementing School-Based Management in selected public elementary schools in the District of Bohol Province during the school year 2025.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

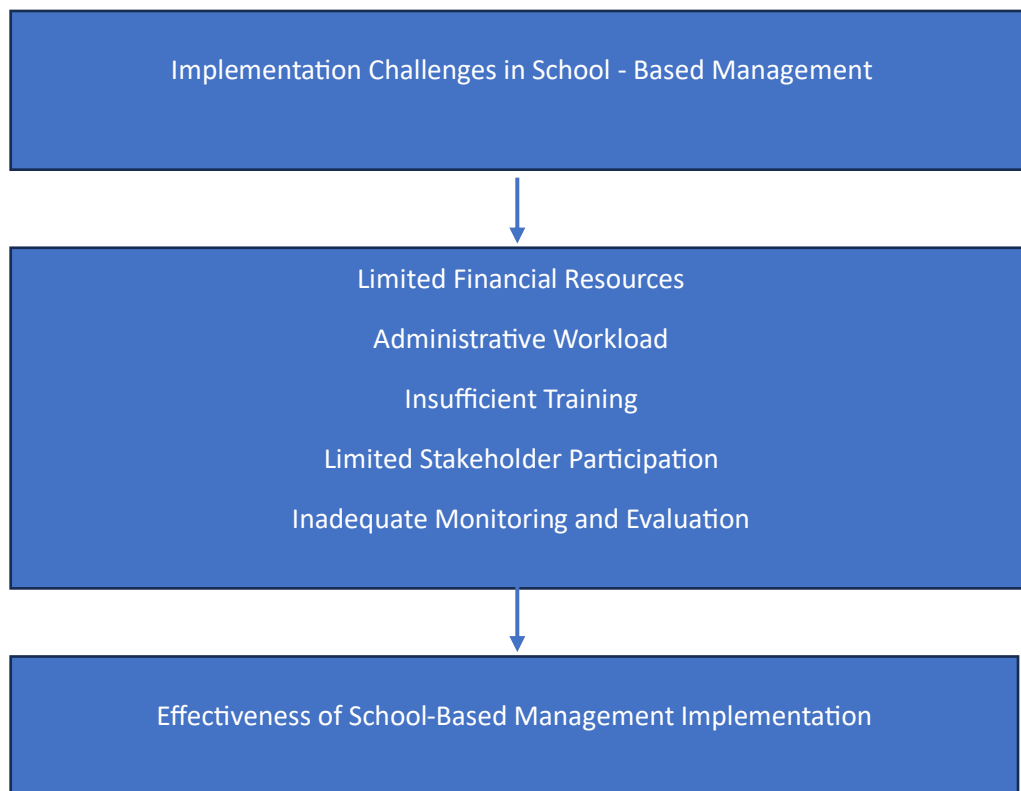
This study is anchored in the concept of decentralized school governance within the School-Based Management framework, which emphasizes empowering schools to manage resources, implement educational programs, and collaborate with stakeholders to improve learner outcomes. SBM promotes participatory decision-making, accountability, and continuous school improvement by involving school leaders, teachers, parents, and community members.

In this study, several factors identified in the literature were identified as potential challenges to the implementation of School-Based Management. These include limited financial resources, administrative workload, insufficient training for school personnel, limited stakeholder participation, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems. These factors may influence the effectiveness of SBM practices in schools by affecting school personnel's capacity to fulfill governance responsibilities and implement improvement programs.

The study's conceptual framework assumes that these institutional and organizational challenges influence the successful implementation of School-Based Management. These challenges may hinder the effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of school programs. Understanding the extent of these challenges can help identify areas where institutional support and capacity-building interventions are needed to strengthen SBM implementation.

The study, therefore, examines how these identified challenges affect the implementation of School-Based Management in selected public elementary schools. The findings of the study may provide insights to help educational leaders and policymakers design strategies to address barriers to SBM practices and enhance the effectiveness of decentralized school governance.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



METHODOLOGY

Design

This study employed a descriptive–quantitative research design to explore the challenges encountered in the implementation of School-Based Management in public elementary schools. The descriptive design was suitable as it allowed the researchers to capture and examine the school personnel's perceptions of the challenges in implementing SBM. Through descriptive statistical analysis, the study identified the extent to which various institutional, administrative, and stakeholder factors pose challenges to effective school-based management practices.

Locale

This study was carried out in selected public elementary schools in the District of Bohol Province during the school year 2025. Schools were selected on their active implementation of School-Based Management within the governance framework mandated by the Department of Education. They differ in size, available resources, and levels of stakeholder participation, providing a more comprehensive view of the challenges faced in implementing SBM practices. The district was considered an appropriate setting for the study because it represents typical public school conditions where SBM policies are implemented at the school level. Examining the experiences of school personnel in this context enabled the researcher to gain insights into the practical challenges schools face in translating SBM policies into effective management and instructional practices.

Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of school heads, assistant principals, department heads, master teachers, and classroom teachers from selected public elementary schools. These individuals were selected as participants

because they play essential roles in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of School-Based Management practices within their respective schools.

School heads and assistant principals are the ones responsible for leading school improvement initiatives and ensuring that SBM policies are effectively implemented. Department heads and master teachers provide instructional leadership and assist in coordinating academic programs and school activities. Classroom teachers, on the other hand, directly participate in implementing school plans and educational programs that contribute to student learning outcomes. Their perspectives were considered valuable in understanding the actual challenges encountered in SBM implementation at different levels of school management.

Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was designed to gather relevant information regarding the implementation of School-Based Management and the challenges encountered by school personnel. The questionnaire consisted of several sections that addressed different aspects of the study.

The first section collected information on respondents' demographic profiles, including their positions, years of service, and highest level of education. This information helped provide a clearer understanding of the participants' background and professional experience.

The second section focused on identifying the challenges encountered in implementing School-Based Management. The statements in this section address potential barriers, which include limited financial resources, insufficient training in SBM practices, resistance to organizational change among staff, lack of stakeholder participation, inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems, and the administrative workload experienced by school personnel.

Respondents were asked to rate each statement using a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 5 (Very Serious Challenge), 4 (Serious Challenge), 3 (Moderate Challenge), 2 (Minor Challenge), and 1 (Not a Challenge). This rating scale allowed the researcher to quantify the respondents' perceptions of the extent of challenges encountered in SBM implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of School-Based Management

Challenges	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Limited financial resources	4.20	Serious Challenge
Insufficient training	3.95	Serious Challenge
Administrative workload	4.10	Serious Challenge
Limited stakeholder participation	3.70	Moderate Challenge
Inadequate monitoring and evaluation	3.60	Moderate Challenge

Table 1 summarizes the challenges several public elementary schools face in implementing School-Based Management (SBM). The findings show that several institutional and operational obstacles continue to hinder the effective application of SBM practices.

Based on the results, limited financial resources obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.20, indicating it is a serious challenge. This indicates that financial limitations remain a key barrier to the effective implementation of SBM initiatives in schools. Although SBM promotes school-level autonomy in planning and implementing improvement programs, the availability of financial resources greatly influences the extent to which these plans can be carried out. Schools rely primarily on their allocated Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), which may not be sufficient to support various school improvement initiatives, infrastructure needs,

and instructional materials. Consequently, limited financial resources may restrict the schools' ability to implement innovative programs to improve teaching practices and school management. This finding supports the observation by Bruns, Filmer, and Patrinos (2011) that decentralization reforms can be effective only when schools have sufficient financial capacity to implement planned interventions.

Another challenge identified in the study is the administrative workload experienced by school personnel, which had a weighted mean of 4.10 and was also interpreted as a serious challenge. The findings suggest that implementing SBM requires extensive documentation, reporting, planning, and monitoring, which significantly increase the administrative responsibilities of school heads and teachers. While these processes are essential for accountability and transparency, the time and effort required to complete such tasks may reduce the time available for instructional leadership, classroom preparation, and direct engagement with learners. Teachers and school leaders may find it difficult to balance administrative responsibilities with their core educational functions, thereby affecting the efficiency of SBM implementation. Similar findings were reported by Karakose, Ozdogru, and Malkoc (2024), who noted that administrative burden is a key challenge for school leaders in managing school improvement initiatives.

The results also identified a significant gap in professional development, with insufficient training recording a weighted mean of 3.95. Classified as a serious challenge, this suggests that school personnel are often tasked with SBM responsibilities without the necessary preparation, potentially hindering the effective execution of decentralized governance. School-Based Management requires teachers and school leaders to perform tasks related to planning, decision-making, resource management, and monitoring of school programs. However, without continuous capacity-building programs, some personnel may feel inadequately prepared to perform these roles. The lack of systematic training programs may limit the effectiveness of SBM practices and reduce teachers' confidence in participating in governance and leadership processes. This observation aligns with Caldwell's (2005) emphasis that the success of SBM largely depends on the capacity and competence of school personnel to carry out decentralized management responsibilities.

Another challenge identified in the study is limited stakeholder participation, which obtained a weighted mean of 3.70 and was interpreted as a moderate challenge. School-Based Management emphasizes collaborative governance, in which parents, community members, and local stakeholders actively participate in school planning and decision-making. However, the findings indicate that stakeholder engagement is not always consistent across schools. Some respondents reported difficulties in encouraging parents and community members to attend meetings, participate in school improvement planning, or contribute to school initiatives. Factors such as limited awareness of SBM policies, limited time, and insufficient understanding of governance processes may contribute to low stakeholder participation. When stakeholder participation is limited, schools may also lose valuable opportunities to access community resources and external support that could strengthen educational programs. This finding supports the study of Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1996), which highlighted that strong collaboration between schools and communities is essential for the effective implementation of SBM reforms.

The study also identified inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as another challenge in SBM implementation, with a weighted mean of 3.60, interpreted as a moderate challenge. Monitoring and evaluation play a critical role in assessing the effectiveness of school programs and identifying areas for improvement. However, some respondents indicated that monitoring activities are not always consistently implemented due to time constraints, lack of technical expertise, or limited access to appropriate evaluation tools. Without consistent monitoring and evaluation, schools may struggle to determine whether their SBM initiatives are effectively implemented and aligned with their intended management goals. This observation is consistent with the OECD's (2016) findings, which emphasized that accountability and evaluation mechanisms are essential components of effective decentralized school governance systems.

Overall, the results indicate that the challenges encountered in implementing School-Based Management are both structural and capacity-related. Financial constraints, heavy administrative workload, insufficient training opportunities, limited stakeholder participation, and inconsistent monitoring mechanisms collectively influence the effectiveness of SBM practices in public elementary schools. These challenges may hinder school leaders'

and teachers' ability to fully implement governance reforms intended to improve educational quality and learner performance.

Despite these challenges, SBM continues to provide schools with the opportunities to exercise greater autonomy in planning and implementing programs that respond to the needs of their learners and communities. However, the effectiveness of SBM reforms depends largely on the availability of adequate institutional support, including financial assistance, professional development programs, and strong stakeholder collaboration.

Addressing these challenges is therefore essential in strengthening the implementation of SBM in public elementary schools. Providing more funding, offering ongoing professional development for school staff, encouraging greater community involvement, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems can help improve the effectiveness of SBM practices. Through these efforts, schools may be better positioned to utilize decentralized governance structures to improve instructional practices, strengthen school governance, and enhance the effectiveness of SBM implementation.

CONCLUSION

The study found that schools continue to face several challenges in implementing School-Based Management. Among the most significant barriers identified were limited financial resources, heavy administrative workload, and insufficient training for school personnel. These challenges may hinder school leaders' and teachers' ability to effectively carry out SBM responsibilities, such as planning, decision-making, and program implementation.

Moderate challenges were also identified, including limited stakeholder participation and gaps in monitoring and evaluation. These issues can hinder collaboration between schools and the community, reducing the overall effectiveness of accountability within the SBM framework.

Overall, the results emphasize the importance of strengthening institutional support systems to improve the implementation of School-Based Management in public elementary schools. Adequate funding, continuous professional development opportunities, and stronger stakeholder engagement may help schools address the existing barriers and enhance the effectiveness of SBM practices.

The findings of this study may serve as a basis for policy improvements and support programs to address the challenges schools face in implementing School-Based Management.

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