

Exploring the Relationship Between School Heads' Participative Leadership and School-Based Management Practices: Inputs for Policy Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and School-Based Management (SBM) practices in public schools within the Schools Division Office of Gapan City. Anchored on the Systems Theory Framework, the study examined how participative leadership contributes to effective school governance and stakeholder engagement in the implementation of SBM. Specifically, the study assessed participative leadership and SBM practices in terms of curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource management and mobilization. The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. Respondents consisted of 33 elementary school heads and 8 secondary school heads from public schools in Gapan City. Data were gathered through a survey questionnaire on participative leadership and the accomplished SBM Self-

Assessment Checklist. Statistical tools such as frequency count, weighted mean, and correlation analysis were used in interpreting the data. Findings revealed that school heads generally demonstrated a high level of participative leadership and effective SBM practices across all indicators. Furthermore, results showed a significant relationship between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices, indicating that collaborative and inclusive leadership approaches positively influence school governance and management. The study highlights the importance of strengthening stakeholder participation, shared decision-making, and collaborative leadership in achieving effective school-based management. Based on the findings, inputs for policy enhancement were proposed to further improve leadership practices and SBM implementation in public schools.

Keywords: *participative leadership, school-based management, school governance, school heads, stakeholder engagement, policy enhancement, educational leadership*

INTRODUCTION

Participative leadership is a widely recognized approach that promotes collaboration, shared responsibility, and mutual trust within organizations. Rooted in the belief that the involvement of multiple stakeholders enhances decision-making, participative leadership encourages a decentralized approach where leaders share authority and engage subordinates in setting goals, solving problems, and making decisions. In schools, this leadership model is particularly vital as it nurtures a collective culture where teachers, parents, and other stakeholders work together to support student achievement. By empowering these key players, participative leadership not only builds a strong sense of ownership and accountability but also paves the way for sustainable improvement in education systems.

In public schools, school heads serve as the key implementers of participative leadership. Their role is central to developing an environment where both teachers and community stakeholders feel valued and actively

contribute to school governance. School heads in public schools, particularly in the Philippines, face the dual responsibility of managing administrative tasks while also leading instructional improvement. Through participative leadership, they can tap into the collective wisdom and expertise of their teachers and stakeholders and enhance the school's capacity to address complex challenges. This approach, when effectively implemented, can transform schools into dynamic learning communities that promote collaboration, shared decision-making, and continuous professional growth.

A critical framework that strongly aligns with participative leadership in Philippine public schools is the school-Based Management (SBM) system. As outlined in DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2024 (Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of the Revised SBM System), the revised guidelines emphasize the need for schools to operate with greater autonomy and accountability while maintaining strong links with their stakeholders. These guidelines provide a structured approach that empowers schools to make decisions that are tailored to their unique contexts. Participative leadership plays a crucial role in this framework, as it encourages school heads to promote an environment where stakeholders—including teachers, parents, and community members—actively contribute to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of school improvement efforts. The participatory nature of SBM ensures that different voices are represented in decision-making processes. This collaborative approach not only strengthens school governance but also builds trust and engagement among all members of the school community.

In the Schools Division Office of Gapan City, the push for stronger participative leadership among school heads has gained momentum, particularly in line with the implementation of the revised SBM guidelines. Gapan City schools face unique challenges, including a need for greater collaboration between school heads and their stakeholders. While the SBM framework provides a roadmap for decentralized management, there are varying levels of success in its application across schools. Some schools in the SDO have excelled in promoting teacher collaboration and stakeholder participation, while others struggle to fully engage their communities. These disparities highlight the need to better understand how school heads can practice participative leadership to more effectively implement SBM and improve school outcomes.

The focus on participative leadership and SBM in the SDO Gapan City reflects a broader national effort to improve school governance and educational quality. However, while the policy framework is in place, there remains a need to explore how school heads' leadership styles influence the actual implementation of SBM in their schools. The interplay between leadership practices and school-based management is crucial in ensuring that schools can meet their goals for student achievement, teacher development, and stakeholder engagement. Understanding this relationship can offer valuable insights into the factors that enhance or hinder the effectiveness of SBM and provide a basis for refining policies that support school heads in their leadership roles.

Given the importance of effective school governance and the central role of participative leadership in SBM, this study was conceived to examine the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and school-based management. By identifying key inputs for policy enhancement, the study aims to address gaps in current leadership practices and provide actionable recommendations for improving SBM implementation. The urgency of this study lies in the recognition that the success of SBM is not solely dependent on policy but also on the leadership dynamics that shape its execution. Through this research, the researcher hoped to contribute to more effective school leadership models that will empower public schools in Gapan City and beyond to achieve their full potential.

Accordingly, this article examined how school heads' participative leadership is associated with School-Based Management practices and how the findings may inform inputs for policy enhancement in public schools.

Literature Review

Participative Leadership

Participative leadership is increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. Defined as a leadership style that encourages team members to engage in the decision-making process, participative leadership promotes a collaborative environment where individual contributions are valued. Vroom and Yetton (1973) were among the pioneers in exploring this leadership approach.

Their work laid the foundation for understanding how participative leadership can lead to higher job satisfaction and commitment among employees.

In addition to the foundational theories, Glover and Ronning (2000) provide empirical evidence supporting the relationship between participative leadership and employee satisfaction. Their study illustrates that organizations adopting participative practices experience greater employee engagement and morale. By creating an inclusive environment, leaders can enhance the overall workplace culture. This is echoed by Carter (2016), who highlights the role of participative leadership in organizational change and asserts that engaging employees in the change process not only minimizes resistance but also harnesses different perspectives that contribute to innovative solutions.

Moreover, Bennett and Anderson (2003) stress the relevance of participative leadership in managing change effectively. Their research demonstrates that leaders who solicit input from their teams are more successful in implementing changes, as employees feel more invested in the outcomes. This participative approach aligns well with contemporary organizational practices, where agility and responsiveness to market dynamics are crucial. The collaboration produced by participative leadership allows organizations to adapt more efficiently to changes, as teams are more likely to buy into the vision and actively contribute to the implementation process.

Lang (2017) further explores the effectiveness of participative leadership in various organizational contexts. His study highlights how participative practices can lead to enhanced problem-solving capabilities within teams. By involving employees in decision-making, organizations can use the collective intelligence of their workforce, which is essential for addressing complex challenges. The positive impact of participative leadership extends beyond immediate organizational benefits; it also contributes to employee development, as individuals gain valuable skills and experience through active involvement.

Yukl (2013) provides a comprehensive overview of various leadership theories, including participative leadership. His work emphasizes the significance of adaptability in leadership styles and notes that participative leadership can be particularly effective in developing a sense of shared responsibility among team members. This adaptability is crucial in today's rapidly changing business environment, where leaders must balance inclusivity with decisiveness. By understanding the dynamics of participative leadership, organizations can create a culture that supports collaboration, innovation, and resilience.

In conclusion, the literature on participative leadership highlights its vital role in enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. As organizations face increasingly complex challenges, adopting participative leadership practices can provide a strategic advantage by promoting collaboration, improving employee engagement, and facilitating successful change management.

Participative Leadership in Schools

Participative leadership, characterized by shared decision-making and collaborative engagement, is increasingly recognized for its positive impact on organizational effectiveness, particularly in educational settings. This leadership style encourages contributions from all team members, developing an inclusive environment that can enhance morale and commitment (Wang et al., 2022). Studies indicate that participative leadership not only improves job satisfaction but also correlates positively with teachers' performance and school climate. For instance, research by Hastuti et al. (2017) demonstrated that principals employing participative leadership styles significantly influence the work ethic of teachers.

The theoretical framework surrounding participative leadership suggests that it operates through mechanisms outlined in social exchange theory, where leaders' inclusive practices promote trust and commitment among followers (Wang et al., 2022). Moreover, participative leadership has been linked to enhanced communication, which plays a critical role in shaping a positive school climate. A study by Yuneti et al. (2019) found that effective communication under participative leadership styles contributed to improved teacher performance.

The outcomes of participative leadership extend beyond individual satisfaction to include broader organizational benefits. For example, Lunas (2019) found that participative leadership enhances job satisfaction among employees, which, in turn, positively affects overall workplace productivity. This correlation suggests that leaders who engage their teams in the decision-making process not only empower individuals but also drive

collective success. Additionally, participative leadership has been shown to mediate the relationship between respect for employees and job satisfaction (Lunas, 2019).

Despite the numerous advantages, the literature also points to challenges in implementing participative leadership, such as resistance from individuals accustomed to more traditional hierarchical structures. Understanding these barriers is essential for successful adoption. The comprehensive review by Wang et al. (2022) identifies potential research avenues, including the need to explore how cultural contexts influence the effectiveness of participative leadership, particularly in varied educational settings.

In conclusion, participative leadership presents a compelling framework for enhancing organizational dynamics within educational institutions. Its positive implications for teacher performance, job satisfaction, and school climate emphasize its significance as a leadership approach in modern education.

School-Based Management

School-Based Management (SBM) has become a critical aspect of educational reform in many countries, including the Philippines. It emphasizes decentralization, giving more autonomy to schools and involving various stakeholders in decision-making processes. According to DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2015, SBM aims to enhance accountability and improve educational outcomes through active participation from parents, teachers, and the community (DepEd, 2015). This approach has been shown to promote a sense of ownership among stakeholders.

Research indicates that effective implementation of SBM can significantly improve school performance. For instance, Abad and Ramos (2020) conducted a meta-analysis revealing that schools adopting SBM practices experienced enhanced student performance and increased stakeholder engagement. They argue that the participative nature of SBM allows for more tailored educational strategies that meet the specific needs of the community. This aligns with the findings of Cruz (2021), who emphasizes that school heads play a key role in developing a collaborative environment conducive to SBM.

Moreover, community involvement is crucial in the SBM framework. Roxas and Cabral (2020) highlight that strong community engagement leads to better educational outcomes. Their study emphasizes the importance of forming partnerships between schools and local organizations, which not only supports resource mobilization but also reinforces the shared responsibility for educational success. These partnerships can facilitate various initiatives, from school improvement plans to extracurricular activities that enrich students' learning experiences.

However, the implementation of SBM in the Philippines is not without challenges. De Guzman (2022) identifies several barriers, including resistance to change among educators and insufficient training for school heads. This study suggests that overcoming these obstacles requires continuous professional development and a shift in mindset towards collaborative governance. Furthermore, Merrill (2018) discusses the need for a supportive policy environment to sustain SBM practices.

The current situation in the public schools illustrates the complexities surrounding SBM. With ongoing efforts to enhance school governance, many schools are beginning to adopt SBM principles, but challenges such as limited resources and varying levels of stakeholder engagement persist (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2019). These challenges highlight the need for a structured approach to implementing SBM, ensuring that all stakeholders are adequately prepared and involved.

In conclusion, the significance of participative leadership within the SBM framework cannot be overstated. As schools explore the complexities of educational reform, the active participation of stakeholders remains crucial for success.

Theoretical and Conceptual Foundation

This study was grounded in the Systems Theory Framework, which posits that organizations, such as schools, are dynamic entities composed of interconnected components influencing one another. Von Bertalanffy (1968) emphasizes that Systems Theory promotes a holistic understanding of complex systems by examining how various elements interact to produce outcomes. This framework facilitates an exploration of the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices and allows for an analysis of how leadership practices impact SBM implementation.

The application of the Systems Theory Framework highlights how participative leadership by school heads promotes a collaborative culture that engages stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community members. This approach aligns with Systems Theory principles which emphasizes feedback loops and interdependence among system components (Meadows, 2008). School heads who practice participative leadership create an inclusive atmosphere that enhances the flow of information and ideas which ultimately strengthens decision-making processes and governance.

Additionally, the framework enabled an investigation of how participative leadership influences SBM practices. Effective SBM, as outlined in DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2024, relies on the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, with school heads playing an essential role in guiding these interactions (DepEd, 2024). The study explored practices through which participative leadership can enhance stakeholder involvement.

In conclusion, utilizing the Systems Theory Framework aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices. By analyzing interactions within the school system, the study sought to identify actionable insights for informing policy enhancements. The ultimate goal was to establish a framework demonstrating how effective leadership practices can cultivate a collaborative environment, thereby improving school governance and student outcomes.

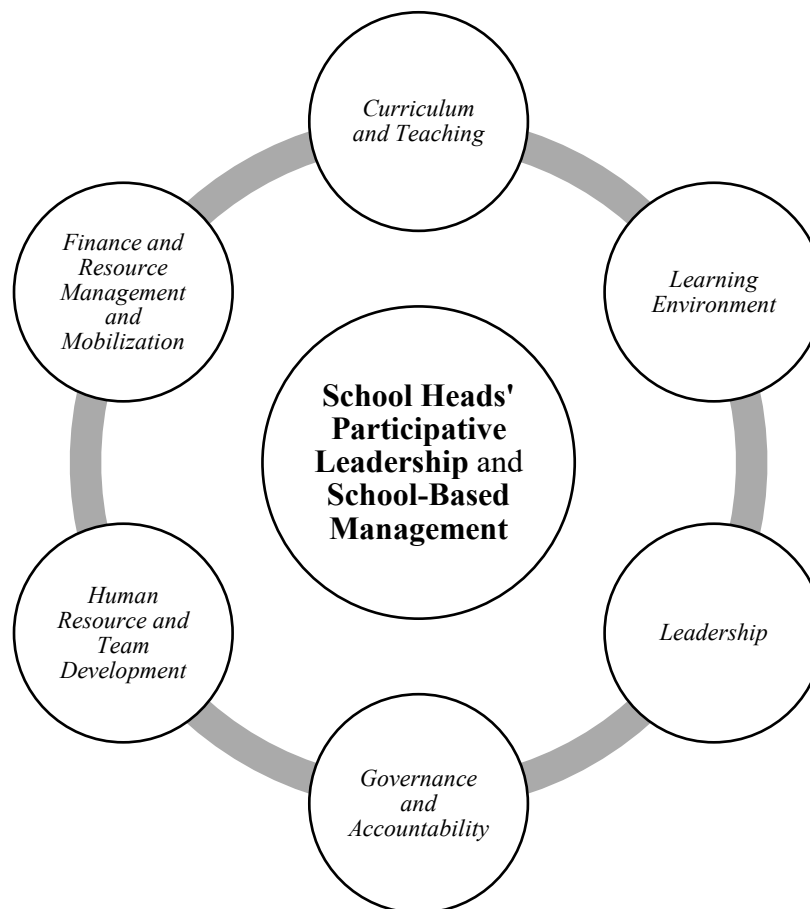


Figure 1. *Conceptual paradigm of the study.*

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) practices among public elementary and secondary school heads in the Schools Division Office of Gapan City. This design was specifically chosen to examine relationships between variables, allowing for a deeper understanding of how participative leadership influences SBM practices.

The descriptive aspect of the research focused on identifying the current SBM practices across key operational areas, including curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource management and mobilization. The correlational aspect investigated the degree to which participative leadership correlates with effective SBM implementation, providing insights into patterns and potential causative links.

The findings from this study aim to inform educational policymakers and stakeholders about the critical leadership qualities that enhance SBM practices. By offering evidence-based recommendations, the study sought to guide the refinement of policies to promote participative leadership and strengthen the implementation of SBM within public schools.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in public elementary and secondary schools within the Schools Division Office of Gapan City during School Year 2024-2025.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Respondents

The respondents for this study consisted of 33 public elementary and 8 secondary school heads from the SDO Gapan City for the School Year 2024-2025. Engaging them provided a comprehensive view of how participative leadership impacts SBM practices.

Sampling Method

This study employed universal sampling to include all public elementary and secondary school heads within the SDO Gapan City. By engaging the entire population of school heads, this approach captured a wide range of perspectives and experiences, which was crucial for analyzing how participative leadership influences SBM practices.

Universal sampling is particularly effective in this context, as it allowed for a comprehensive examination of participative leadership and SBM practices across varied school environments. This inclusivity enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings and ensured that the data reflect the actual conditions and practices in schools.

Research Instrument

Sources of Data

The primary source of data for this study was a survey administered to all school heads to assess their participative leadership and SBM practices. This survey focused on various dimensions, such as curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource management and mobilization.

Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed questionnaire to evaluate the participative leadership practices of school heads. This assessment covered 6 dimensions, including curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource

management and mobilization. Each dimension consisted of 10 items rated on a five-point Likert scale, which included the following frequency descriptors:

Table 1. School Heads' Participative Leadership Scale

Likewise, the study utilized the school-Based Management (SBM) Self-Assessment Checklist adopted from DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2024. This checklist is designed to evaluate the degrees of manifestation of SBM practices across six critical operational areas: Curriculum and Teaching; Learning Environment; Leadership; Governance and Accountability; Human Resource and Team Development; and Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization.

The checklist comprises a total of 42 items distributed across the six areas as follows: Curriculum and Teaching - 8 items; Learning Environment - 10 items; Leadership - 4 items; Governance and Accountability - 6 items; Human Resource and Team Development - 7 items; and Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization - 7 items.

To assess the degree of manifestation of each SBM indicator, the following scale was employed:

Table 2 SBM Degrees of Manifestation Scale

Table 1. *School Heads' Participative Leadership Scale*

Frequency	Description
Always	The school head consistently implements participative leadership practices in all relevant situations.
Very Often	The school head frequently engages in participative leadership, applying these practices in most situations.
Often	The school head regularly uses participative leadership practices, though there may be some variability in their application.
Sometimes	The school head occasionally employs participative leadership practices, with inconsistent application depending on circumstances.
Never	The school head does not engage in participative leadership practices at any time.

Table 2. *SBM Degrees of Manifestation Scale*

Degree of Manifestation	Description
Always Manifested	An SBM indicator is consistently observed and achieved at all times
Frequently Manifested	An SBM indicator is most of the time observed and achieved
Rarely Manifested	An SBM indicator is sometimes observed and achieved
Not Yet Manifested	An SBM indicator is neither observed nor achieved

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection for this study commenced with obtaining approval from the Schools Division Research Committee to ensure compliance with ethical standards and research protocols. The research proposal, which outlined the study's objectives to explore and analyze the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices and how these insights can enhance policy development within public schools, was submitted to the Committee.

Upon receiving approval, the researcher administered the developed questionnaire on participative leadership practices to all respondents using Microsoft Forms. Data collection took place between October and November 2024. The survey was distributed online, accompanied by reminders to encourage full participation.

Efforts were made to achieve complete participation from all 41 school heads to ensure a representative and comprehensive assessment of participative leadership across schools in the division.

Additionally, data on SBM practices were extracted from the accomplished SBM Self-Assessment Checklist previously submitted by the school heads in August 2024.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed to summarize the responses from school heads regarding their participative leadership and SBM practices across the six operational areas: curriculum and teaching; learning environment; leadership; governance and accountability; human resource and team development; and finance and resource management and mobilization. These statistical measures provided a clear picture of the current implementation of each area in the schools.

Additionally, correlation analysis, specifically Pearson correlation, was used to explore the relationship between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices. This statistical method measured the strength and direction of the linear relationship between these two variables.

The results of this analysis further enhanced the understanding of the dynamics between leadership practices and school-based management and allow for more targeted policy recommendations.

Ethical Consideration

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to their involvement in the study. School heads were provided with clear information regarding the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of participating in the research. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences.

The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants' responses were strictly maintained to protect their privacy. School heads' identities were not disclosed, and their responses were aggregated in a way that prevents the identification of individuals. All personal or sensitive information provided by participants were securely stored, ensuring that unauthorized access is prevented.

Moreover, the principle of beneficence guided the research process to ensure that the study benefits not only the participants but also the broader school community. In addition, the research adhered to the highest standards of integrity and honesty in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Any conflicts of interest were transparently disclosed, and limitations or biases in the study were acknowledged to ensure the credibility and validity of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings derived from the analysis of the collected data. It also interprets these results in relation to the study objectives and existing literature. The discussion highlights key trends, patterns, and significant observations, providing a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Table 3. *Summary of School Heads' Participative Leadership by Domain*

Dimension	Overall Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Curriculum and Teaching	4.65	Always
Learning Environment	4.70	Always
Leadership	4.78	Always
Governance and Accountability	4.72	Always
Human Resource and Team Development	4.74	Always
Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization	4.76	Always

The findings show that school heads consistently practiced participative leadership across all six domains. Their strongest practices were observed in finance and resource management, leadership, and human resource/team development, indicating strong emphasis on transparency, staff empowerment, collaboration, and shared responsibility. Although all indicators were rated within the 'Always' range, areas such as parental involvement, grant-writing participation, and regularly seeking inputs from staff and the wider school community remain points for continued strengthening.

Table 4. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Curriculum and Teaching*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I actively involve teachers in curriculum development discussions.	4.73	Always
I seek feedback from teachers on teaching strategies and methods.	4.68	Always
I encourage collaborative lesson planning among teachers.	4.56	Always
I promote professional development opportunities based on teachers' input.	4.76	Always
I facilitate workshops to gather teachers' ideas on improving instructional practices.	4.39	Always
I collaborate with teachers to assess student learning outcomes.	4.61	Always
I support innovative teaching methods suggested by the teaching staff.	4.66	Always
I promote an environment where teachers can share best practices.	4.76	Always
I value and incorporate teachers' suggestions in curriculum-related decisions.	4.73	Always
I regularly engage in discussions with teachers about curriculum changes.	4.59	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.65	Always

Table 5. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Learning Environment*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I actively seek input from staff and students to improve the learning environment.	4.66	Always
I promote a culture of respect and collaboration among students and staff.	4.83	Always
I regularly assess the physical and emotional safety of the school environment.	4.71	Always
I encourage student involvement in school improvement initiatives.	4.73	Always
I listen to concerns raised by staff and students regarding the learning environment.	4.83	Always
I involve parents in discussions about creating a positive learning atmosphere.	4.51	Always

I support initiatives that promote inclusivity and diversity in the school.	4.76	Always
I recognize and celebrate student achievements to develop motivation.	4.85	Always
I collaborate with staff to implement programs enhancing student well-being.	4.76	Always
I encourage open communication among students, staff, and parents about learning environment issues.	4.85	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.75	Always

Table 6. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Leadership*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I empower staff members to take on leadership roles within the school.	4.68	Always
I regularly seek input from staff when making important decisions.	4.73	Always
I provide opportunities for shared decision-making among staff.	4.76	Always
I demonstrate transparency in leadership and decision-making processes.	4.88	Always
I encourage staff to participate in leadership training programs.	4.78	Always
I create an atmosphere where staff feel comfortable voicing their opinions.	4.83	Always
I promote a vision for the school that includes contributions from staff.	4.76	Always
I acknowledge the contributions of staff in decision-making.	4.80	Always
I regularly communicate the rationale behind decisions to the staff.	4.63	Always
I lead by example in promoting participative practices within the school.	4.78	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.76	Always

Table 7. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Governance and Accountability*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I involve staff in the development of school policies and procedures.	4.78	Always
I ensure transparency in the decision-making processes of the school.	4.83	Always
I actively seek feedback from the school community regarding governance issues.	4.68	Always
I promote accountability by encouraging staff to take responsibility for their roles.	4.80	Always
I collaborate with stakeholders to develop school improvement plans.	4.61	Always

I facilitate discussions on ethical practices within the school.	4.63	Always
I regularly report on school performance and encourage staff input on improvements.	4.76	Always
I support initiatives that promote shared governance among staff and stakeholders.	4.80	Always
I encourage the establishment of committees involving staff in governance matters.	4.71	Always
I hold regular meetings to discuss governance issues with staff and stakeholders.	4.61	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.72	Always

Table 8. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Human Resource and Team Development*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I actively support the professional growth of staff through training and development.	4.78	Always
I promote teamwork and collaboration among staff members.	4.90	Always
I encourage staff to share their expertise with one another.	4.68	Always
I seek input from staff on professional development needs.	4.68	Always
I recognize and value the contributions of all staff members.	4.90	Always
I promote a culture of mentorship among staff.	4.73	Always
I ensure that staff have access to necessary resources for their development.	4.68	Always
I regularly evaluate the effectiveness of professional development programs.	4.61	Always
I involve staff in designing team-building activities.	4.80	Always
I create opportunities for staff to collaborate on projects and initiatives.	4.66	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.74	Always

Table 9. *School Heads' Participative Leadership in Terms of Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
I involve staff in budget planning and resource allocation discussions.	4.73	Always
I promote transparency in financial management practices.	4.88	Always
I encourage staff to contribute ideas for resource mobilization.	4.78	Always

I ensure that funding decisions align with the needs of the school community.	4.85	Always
I seek input from staff on prioritizing resource needs.	4.80	Always
I collaborate with community partners to enhance resource availability.	4.71	Always
I regularly communicate financial decisions and their implications to staff.	4.76	Always
I recognize the contributions of staff in fundraising and resource mobilization efforts.	4.71	Always
I encourage staff to participate in grant-writing initiatives.	4.54	Always
I provide updates on financial management and resource utilization.	4.85	Always
Average Weighted Mean	4.76	Always

Table 10. *Summary of School-Based Management Practices by Domain*

Domain	Overall Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Curriculum and Teaching	2.83	Frequently Manifested
Learning Environment	3.04	Frequently Manifested
Leadership	3.56	Always Manifested
Governance and Accountability	3.63	Always Manifested
Human Resource and Team Development	3.78	Always Manifested
Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization	3.64	Always Manifested

The schools' SBM practices were generally strong, particularly in human resource and team development, finance and resource management, governance and accountability, and leadership. Curriculum and teaching, and learning environment were frequently manifested, suggesting that while data-driven instruction, contextualized materials, safety, and wellness supports were evident, continued attention is needed in ALS certification, inclusive facilities, access to learning experiences, and industry linkages.

Table 11. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Curriculum and Teaching*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Grade 3 learners achieve the proficiency level for each cluster of early language, literacy, and numeracy skills	2.73	Frequently Manifested
Grade 6,10, and 12 learners achieve the proficiency level in all 21st. century skills and core learning areas in the National Achievement Test (NAT)	2.63	Frequently Manifested
School-based ALS learners attain certification as elementary and junior high school completers	1.32	Not Yet Manifested
Teachers prepare contextualized learning materials responsive to the needs of learners	3.51	Always Manifested

Teachers conduct remediation activities to address learning gaps in reading and comprehension, science and technology, and mathematics	3.63	Always Manifested
Teachers integrate topics promoting peace and DepEd core values	3.66	Always Manifested
The school conducts test item analysis to inform its teaching and learning process	3.80	Always Manifested
The school engages local industries to strengthen its TLE-TVL course offerings	1.32	Not Yet Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	2.83	Frequently Manifested

Table 12. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Learning Environment*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
The school has zero bullying incidence	3.27	Always Manifested
The school has zero child abuse incidence	3.68	Always Manifested
The school has reduced its drop- out incidence	3.20	Frequently Manifested
The school conducts culture- sensitive activities	3.34	Always Manifested
The school provides access to learning experiences for the disadvantaged, OSYS, and adult learners	2.73	Frequently Manifested
The school has a functional school-based ALS program	1.46	Not Yet Manifested
The school has a functional child-protection committee	3.61	Always Manifested
The school has a functional DRRM plan	3.73	Always Manifested
The school has a functional support mechanism for mental wellness	3.29	Always Manifested
The school has special education- and PWD-friendly facilities	2.07	Rarely Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	3.04	Frequently Manifested

Table 13. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Leadership*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
The school develops a strategic plan	3.66	Always Manifested
The school has a functional school-community planning team	3.56	Always Manifested
The school has a functional Supreme Student Government/ Supreme Pupil Government	3.76	Always Manifested
The school innovates in its provision of frontline services to stakeholders	3.27	Always Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	3.56	Always Manifested

Table 14. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Governance and Accountability*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
The school's strategic plan is operationalized through an implementation plan	3.68	Always Manifested
The school has a functional School Governance Council (SGC)	3.07	Frequently Manifested
The school has a functional Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	3.83	Always Manifested
The school collaborates with stakeholders and other schools in strengthening partnerships	3.78	Always Manifested
The school monitors and evaluates its programs, projects, and activities	3.71	Always Manifested
The school maintains an average rating of satisfactory from its internal and external stakeholders	3.68	Always Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	3.63	Always Manifested

Table 15. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Human Resource and Team Development*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
School personnel achieve an average rating of very satisfactory in the individual performance commitment and review	3.83	Always Manifested
The school achieves an average rating of very satisfactory in the office performance commitment and review	3.83	Always Manifested
The school conducts needs-based Learning Action Cells and Learning & Development activities	3.80	Always Manifested
The school facilitates the promotion and continuous professional development of its personnel	3.78	Always Manifested
The school recognizes and rewards milestone achievements of its personnel	3.73	Always Manifested
The school facilitates receipt of correct salaries, allowances, and other additional compensation in a timely manner	3.63	Always Manifested
Teacher workload is distributed fairly and equitably	3.85	Always Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	3.78	Always Manifested

Table 16. *School-Based Management Practices in Terms of Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
The school inspects its infrastructure and facilities	3.76	Always Manifested
The school initiates improvement of its infrastructure and facilities	3.78	Always Manifested
The school has a functional library	3.37	Always Manifested

The school has functional water, electric, and internet facilities	3.85	Always Manifested
The school has a functional computer laboratory/classroom	2.80	Frequently Manifested
The school achieves a 75-100% utilization rate of its Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE)	3.98	Always Manifested
The school liquidates 100% of its utilized MOOE	3.93	Always Manifested
Average Weighted Mean	3.64	Always Manifested

Relationship Between School Heads' Participative Leadership and SBM Practices

Table 17. *Correlation Matrix Between School Heads' Participative Leadership and School-Based Management Practices*

School Heads' Participative Leadership	School-Based Management Practice Pearson Correlation (r)	School-Based Management Practice Significance (p)
Curriculum and Teaching	0.67	0.012
Learning Environment	0.71	0.004
Leadership	0.75	0.003
Governance and Accountability	0.64	0.014
Human Resource and Team Development	0.69	0.003
Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization	0.68	0.012

The Pearson correlation of 0.67 between school heads' participative leadership and the SBM practices in terms of Curriculum and Teaching domain indicates a strong positive relationship. This means that the more school heads involve staff in decision-making and leadership processes, the more effective the practices related to curriculum development and teaching become. The significance level of 0.012 suggests that this relationship is statistically significant, providing moderate evidence against the hypothesis. School heads' collaborative leadership promotes a more engaged and proactive approach to curriculum design and instructional strategies.

A correlation of 0.71 between participative leadership and the SBM practices in terms of Learning Environment domain shows a strong positive association. School heads who actively involve their staff in decision-making processes contribute significantly to improving the learning environment. This correlation, supported by a p-value of 0.004, provides strong evidence that participative leadership directly enhances the atmosphere in which students learn, developing a more inclusive, supportive, and productive environment for both students and teachers.

The relationship between school heads' participative leadership and the SBM practices in terms of Leadership is particularly strong, with a Pearson correlation of 0.75. This indicates that as school heads practice participative leadership, there is a marked improvement in overall leadership within the school. The p-value of 0.003 confirms the result is highly significant, suggesting that involving staff in leadership decisions leads to stronger, more effective leadership structures in schools. This finding emphasizes the importance of shared leadership in creating a cohesive school environment.

With a correlation of 0.64, school heads' participative leadership is shown to have a strong positive impact on the SBM practices in terms of Governance and Accountability. The p-value of 0.014 indicates a significant relationship, suggesting that when school heads involve their staff in decision-making, it enhances governance practices and accountability within the school. This collaborative approach promotes transparency and responsibility, leading to more accountable decision-making processes in the school community.

The Pearson correlation of 0.69 between participative leadership and the SBM practices in terms of Human Resource and Team Development indicates a strong positive relationship, showing that school heads who engage

their staff in decision-making contribute to better professional development and team cohesion. The p-value of 0.003 provides significant evidence that this leadership approach helps build more effective teams and supports the continuous development of human resources, which in turn strengthens the overall capacity of the school.

In the dimension of Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization, the Pearson correlation of 0.68 highlights a strong positive relationship between participative leadership and SBM practices. The p-value of 0.012 indicates statistical significance, showing that school heads who involve their staff in decision-making processes contribute to more effective resource management and mobilization. This participative approach helps improve financial planning and ensures that resources are allocated efficiently, benefiting the school community as a whole.

Given the above findings, the researcher was compelled to accept the hypothesis. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the school heads' participative leadership and the School-Based Management practices. This affirms the hypothesis that engaging staff in decision-making and leadership processes not only strengthens the overall functioning of the school but also enhances its governance and management practices. Thus, the study supports the idea that participative leadership is a crucial factor in improving the effectiveness of School-Based Management practices.

Inputs for Policy Enhancement

Based on the findings of the study, several policy enhancements for School-Based Management (SBM) can be recommended to improve the overall effectiveness of leadership and governance in schools. The significant relationship between school heads' participative leadership and SBM practices indicates that promoting an inclusive, collaborative leadership style can lead to improved school outcomes. This suggests the need for policies that promote a participative leadership model, encouraging school heads to actively involve staff in decision-making processes, promote transparency, and share responsibilities across the school community. These policies would help strengthen the connection between leadership and SBM practices, ultimately leading to better school performance.

Additionally, policies should emphasize continuous professional development for both school heads and teachers. By equipping school leaders with the necessary skills to effectively manage SBM practices, such as communication, team building, and resource mobilization, the overall quality of school governance can be improved. Training programs should focus on strengthening the leadership competencies of school heads, enabling them to manage various school challenges while developing an environment of collaboration and shared responsibility.

Another key policy consideration is strengthening stakeholder engagement. Policies should formalize consultation processes with teachers, parents, and the wider community to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are actively involved in school management and decision-making. By encouraging a culture of collaboration, schools can better align their strategies with the needs of their students and communities. Ensuring that the voices of teachers, students, and parents are heard can create a more inclusive environment that supports the goals of SBM.

Policies should also focus on developing robust governance and accountability frameworks. School heads must be held accountable for the efficient use of resources and the achievement of school goals. Clear guidelines should be established for monitoring and assessing the implementation of SBM practices. This would ensure that resources are allocated effectively, and the decisions made by school heads reflect the best interests of students and staff.

Furthermore, the encouragement of resource mobilization and financial management is crucial. Policies should support school heads in developing partnerships with local community stakeholders and organizations to enhance the availability of resources for school improvement. Effective resource mobilization strategies will allow schools to address funding gaps and better meet the needs of their learners.

Finally, policies should advocate for the integration of monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of SBM practices. This would provide valuable data for improving leadership strategies and school management. Regular assessments of SBM implementation will help school leaders identify areas for improvement and ensure that the participative leadership approach continues to drive positive changes in school

outcomes. By incorporating these policy recommendations, schools can enhance their SBM processes, resulting in better educational outcomes and stronger leadership across the board.

CONCLUSION

The findings across various aspects of school heads' participative leadership demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting collaboration, transparency, and empowerment in all areas. School heads are highly effective in engaging teachers, staff, and the broader school community in decision-making processes related to curriculum, teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance, human resource development, and finance. Notable strengths include promoting professional development, creating a supportive learning atmosphere, ensuring transparent financial practices, and involving staff in governance and resource management. While overall practices are well-executed, areas such as enhancing parental involvement, seeking more feedback, and strengthening collaborative lesson planning or grant-writing initiatives present opportunities for further improvement. By continuing to emphasize these areas, school heads can further optimize their leadership practices, ensuring sustained growth and success for both staff and students.

The findings from the school-Based Management (SBM) practices across various domains—curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource management—reveal a generally strong performance with areas for improvement. The schools demonstrate effective data-driven instruction, commitment to learner safety, inclusivity, and mental wellness, as well as strong leadership and governance practices. Human resource management is notably exemplary, with fair workload distribution and consistent professional development. Financial stewardship is also commendable, ensuring efficient use of resources. However, gaps remain in areas such as inclusive education for learners with disabilities, alternative learning pathways, and enhancing the functionality of specific governance structures, suggesting the need for targeted interventions and continued collaboration to further strengthen SBM practices.

The study reveals a strong and statistically significant relationship between school heads' participative leadership and the effectiveness of School-Based Management (SBM) practices across various domains. The findings highlight that school heads who involve their school community in decision-making processes contribute significantly to improvements in key areas, such as curriculum development, the learning environment, leadership structures, governance and accountability, human resource development, and resource management. The statistical significance of these correlations stresses the importance of participative leadership in enhancing SBM practices. Therefore, the study supports the hypothesis that participative leadership plays a critical role in strengthening the overall functioning of schools and improving governance and management practices.

Based on the study's findings, several policy enhancements can improve School-Based Management (SBM) effectiveness. Policies should promote participative leadership, encouraging school heads to involve staff in decision-making and promote transparency. Continuous professional development for school leaders and teachers is essential, focusing on communication, team building, and resource management. Strengthening stakeholder engagement through formal consultation with teachers, parents, and the community is also crucial. Policies should establish clear governance and accountability frameworks, support resource mobilization, and encourage partnerships with local organizations. Lastly, integrating monitoring and evaluation systems will help assess SBM effectiveness and drive continuous improvement in school management.

Recommendations

School heads should focus on enhancing parental involvement and actively seeking more feedback from the school community. Strengthening collaborative lesson planning and grant-writing initiatives could also improve staff engagement and resource acquisition. Continuous emphasis on professional development and creating a supportive learning environment should remain a priority, ensuring sustained growth for both students and staff while promoting a culture of transparency and shared decision-making.

Schools should focus on addressing gaps in inclusive education, especially for learners with disabilities, and enhancing alternative learning pathways. Strengthening specific governance structures will also contribute to more effective SBM practices. Continued efforts to ensure data-driven instruction, learner safety, and financial stewardship are essential. Schools should implement targeted interventions to improve inclusivity and governance practices, while maintaining their commitment to professional development and resource management.

School heads continue to involve their school communities in decision-making processes across all domains. Strengthening collaborative leadership will promote improvement in curriculum development, governance, human resource management, and resource mobilization. School heads should focus on building cohesive teams, enhancing communication, and maintaining inclusive practices to further enhance SBM effectiveness.

Policies should focus on promoting participative leadership by encouraging school heads to involve staff in decision-making and promote transparency. Ongoing professional development programs for school leaders and teachers should be prioritized, focusing on communication, teamwork, and resource management. Strengthening stakeholder engagement through formal consultations and partnerships with local organizations is crucial for improving SBM practices. Additionally, policies should include clear governance frameworks, support for resource mobilization, and the integration of monitoring and evaluation systems to assess SBM effectiveness and drive continuous improvement in school management.

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