## Meeting our Commitment: School-Based Management System in the lens of School Performance

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Advocates of school-based management believe that school performance will improve if educational management is focused on the school-level rather than on the division level. This paper aimed to find out if the school-based management system level of implementation significantly influences the school performance. The findings of the study reveal that the level of implementation of the school-based management system of the administrators in the elementary schools of Makilala Districts was in the developing and maturing level. Most of the administrators' school performance was meeting the standards in the NAT average rating. School-based management system level of implementation in terms of leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability,

and continuous improvement and management of resources significantly influence school performance. All of these indicators are the best significant predictors of school performance. These results further indicate that the higher is the administrators' level of implementation on leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources, the higher is the level of school performance.

*Keywords* — School-based management, school performance, descriptive –correlational design, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

Studies in school performance have grown considerably worldwide to account for the quality of functioning of the schools using performance indicators, which expresses various aspects of the organization (Dorn, 1998). School performance indicators compare the current environmental condition and the desired one. It measures the organization's capability of generating quantified value to indicate the level of management process (Liyanage & Kumar, 2001).

On the other hand, School-Based Management (SBM) is the decentralization of levels of authority to the school level. Responsibility and decision-making over school operations were transferred to principals, teachers, parents, sometimes students, and other school community members. The school-level actors, however, have to conform to or operate within a set of the centrally determined framework of goals, policies, curriculum, standards, and accountability (The World Bank, 2014). The underlying principles of the said program are that the people directly involved and affected by school operations are the best persons to plan, manage, and improve the school (Marshall, 2003). Therefore, SBM is establishing a public relationship to enhance the stakeholders' involvement in school programs and projects.

Decentralization in decision making for school improvement puts unremarkable pressure on the school heads as it transfers authority over one or more of the following activities such as budget allocation, hiring and firing of teachers and other school staff, curriculum development, textbooks, and other educational material procurement, infrastructure improvement, setting the school calendar to better meet the specific needs of the local community, and monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance and student learning outcomes (Sindhvad, 2009). The School-Based Management System believes that

the increasing involvement of the school-level stakeholders in the management of the school will likely increase the school's ability and accountability on school performance (Lawler III,1986). Reforms on education demanding a high level of production empowers the school to deliver services applying a model of high involvement from the stakeholders and assessing how the SBM works in different circumstances (Wohlstetter, Simver, and Mohrman, 1994).

Developing countries have been detrimental to the impact of school-based management since researchers conducted were not evident on the conclusive linkage that SBM has led to efficient management and improved quality of education (De Grauwe, 2005). However, in 2012, Onyango, in her study, concluded that a strong positive relationship was noted between the role of the principal and teachers on school-based management to enhance academic achievement. The Increase in students' performance and self-esteem can be attributed to their meaningful participation in the school's decision-making. In addition, establishing the relationship of the school management and school performance, Malen Ogawa, and Kranz (1990) indicate that school-based management's drawbacks are due to piecemeal pursuits. The School council focused on activities of the school rather than instruction and curriculum. Inattention to classroom instruction is not deep-rooted to School-based management. SBM teams shall not be blamed for defeating to increase student achievement.

In Indonesia, a law was passed to decentralize its National Education System, which allows the involvement of local communities in the management of schools. A school council was formed at every school level to improve the quality of education (Bandur, 2008). In the case of England and Wales, through a law where schools have been given greater powers to manage their own affairs within clearly defined national frameworks (Ranson, Farrell, Peim, & Smith, 2005). In Malaysia, educators believe that the cluster school established will help in enhancing educational excellence. In the study of Malaklolunthu and Shamsudin (2011), findings indicate that successful implementation of the cluster school initiative needs reorientation on the school community to accommodate a new concept of school-based management. The School-Based Management in the Philippines was officially implemented as a governance framework of DepEd in 2001 through the RA 9155 as a legal cover. SBM has been a powerhouse mechanism that improves the quality of education at the primary level (Abulencia, 2012). In the study of Yamauchi (2014) on the impact of SBM in the Philippines, findings revealed that when the experienced principals and teachers

eagerly introduced the SBM in their local schools, their students' achievement increased.

However, despite the policy changes and reforms of the Department of Education, Philippine Educational System in the Basic Education Program often lose status to achieve the desired target because of some factors like the poor planning, poor implementation strategy, as well as lack of monitoring system on the implementation at all levels. Since SBM is on its strict execution in the Department of Education, therefore, it needs a crucial and critical assessment of how SBM influences the elementary school performance.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The research would like to assess the implementation of School-Based Management concerning School Performance. Specifically, this study aimed to: 1) describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in the position, and number of relevant trainings attended; 2) determine if the administrators' socio-demographic characteristics in terms of gender, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in the position, and number of relevant training attended significantly influence school performance; 3) describe the school-based management system level of implementation in terms of leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources; 4) assess the school performance in terms of the National Achievement Test; 5) find out if the schoolbased management system level of implementation significantly influences the school performance; find out if school-based management system level of implementation such as leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources significantly influences school performance; 6) identify issues and problems in the implementation of school-based management system.

## FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The guiding premise of the study was based on the theories of "equifinality" and "decentralization," which assumes that the school is a self-managing system and regards initiative of human factor and improvement of the internal process as important. School-Based Management (SBM) is the institutional expression

of the decentralization of education at the grassroots level. It was based on the national policy of the decentralization set initially by the Local Government Code of 1991 (RA 7160) as a response to the new challenges for sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-reliant and more active partners in the attainment of national goals (Operations Manual on SBM, 2006).

The Department of Education urges schools to realize the decentralization through its 10-year master plan (1995-2005) by giving more decision-making powers to local school officials to improve its nationwide operations and delivery of services. Subsequently, DECS Order No. 230 in 1999 further defined decentralization to mean such as promotion of school-based management, transfer of authority and decision-making for central and regional offices to the divisions and schools, sharing education management responsibilities with other stakeholders such as the Local Government Units (LGUs), parent-teacher-community associations (PTCAs), and non-government organizations.

## **METHODOLOGY**

## Research Design

The data were generated from a self-administered survey of 45 school administrator-respondents in the four school districts of Makilala, Cotabato. A descriptive-correlational research design was selected to fulfill the aim of this study. It is descriptive in purpose in terms of gathering the data to describe the level of implementation of the School-Based Management System in the four districts of the public elementary schools in Makilala, Cotabato. The school performance was also described using the National Achievement Test result. The data on the level of implementation of the school-based management and the school performance was then correlated to show a relationship between the variables used and then later treated with multiple regression analysis.

## Research Site

The study was conducted in the four school districts of Makilala under the jurisdiction of the Cotabato Division. All the school districts of Makilala were the setting of the study. The four school districts include the Makilala East District located in Kisante, Makilala, Makilala Central District in Poblacion, Makilala, Makilala North District in Saguing, Makilala, and Makilala West District in Bulakanon, Makilala, Cotabato. These school districts were chosen

because these were considered the schools which were easily accessible and have conducted benchmarking activities to the other DepEd Divisions on matters of the implementation of the school-based management system. The other school districts in the Cotabato Division were still starting to comply with the said program, the reason for not including them in the study.

## **Participants**

All school administrators in the public elementary schools of Makilala District in Cotabato Division were included in the study. To be included as respondents, the school administrators were screened based on the following criteria: 1) the school administrator must have at least 3 years of administrative experience; 2) The school has already received the National Achievement Test Result, and 3) The school has conducted a benchmarking activity regarding the implementation of the school-based management system. All those who formed part of the samples were asked to answer the survey questionnaire regarding their assessment of the implementation of the school-based management system.

#### Instrumentation

The Revised School-Based Management (SBM) Assessment tool was guided by the four principles of ACCESs (A Child- and Community-Centered Education System). The indicators of SBM practice were contextualized on the ideals of an ACCESs school system. The research instrument was composed of a survey questionnaire with 21 items. It was designed to assess the level of implementation of school-based management. The instrument used was adopted from the Revised School-Based Management Assessment Tool of the Department of Education (DepEd) as revised on November 12, 2012. The tool has the consistency and reliability of .80 Alpha, which meant that the questionnaire is highly reliable. The level of SBM implementation was measured using the following indicators: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Accountability and Continuous Improvement, and Management of Resources. The unit of analysis was the school system, which was classified as developing, maturing, and advanced (accredited level). The SBM practice was ascertained by the existence of structured mechanisms, processes, and practices in all indicators. A team of practitioners and experts from the district, division, region, and central office validates the self-study/assessment before a level of SBM practice was established. A school on the advanced level may apply for accreditation. The highest level, the

"advanced," is a candidacy for accreditation.

To assign numerical values to the estimates of the extent or magnitude of the items measured, the researcher adopted a four-point rating scale. The table below shows the weight, continuum, responses, and interpretation for measuring or ascertaining the level of implementation of school-based management.

Weight	Continuum	Response	Interpretation
4	4.21-5.0	Advance	Evidence indicates practices and procedure that satisfy quality standards
3	3.41-4.20	Maturing	Evidence indicates planned practices and procedures that are fully implemented and aligned to ACCESs
2	2.61-3.40	Developing	Evidence indicates developing structures and mechanisms that are in place to demonstrate ACCESs
1	1.81-2.60	No evidence	Needs improvement

The school performance, in terms of the National Achievement Test (NAT) of their schools, was measured using the distribution of scores as follows:

90% - 100%-Superior

75% - 89%-Meeting Standard

35% - 74%-Below Standard

0% - 34%-Poor

#### Ethical consideration

Ethical standards were carefully considered in the conduct of the research. The researchers see to it that before the conduct of the study, consent from the participants was secured. Respondents were informed that they are free to withdraw their participation during the research activity. The research avoided the use of provoking, biased, or other unpleasant words in the questionnaires. The purpose of the study was made known to the respondents, and the research data was carried with the utmost confidentiality. Ethical standards were also considered in writing the research. All sources of information were quoted and cited to give credit to the authors or sources.

### **Data Collection**

The researchers identified the research respondents as the elementary school administrators. A letter seeking permission to conduct the study was then

presented by the researchers to the Schools Division Superintendent. In the same manner, a formal letter was given to the school principals of all the elementary schools in the four school districts of Makilala in Cotabato Division. Having been granted permission, the researchers conducted the assessment instrument. The retrieval of the survey tool took two weeks after its distribution.

## Statistical Techniques

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics like mean, frequency count, and percentage to summarize the information. The study used the Multiple Regression Analysis to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Administrators of Elementary Schools in Makilala, Cotabato

CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY ( $n = 45$ )	PERCENTAGE (%)	
Gender			
Male	17	37.8	
Female	28	62.2	
Age (Years)			
34 – 39	12	26.7	
40 – 45	15	33.3	
46 – 51	9	20.0	
52 – 57	6	13.3	
58 – 63	3	6.7	
Civil Status			
Single	2	4.4	
Married	41	91.1	
Widow	2	4.4	
Highest Educational Attainment			
BEED/BSED	4	8.9	
BEED/BSED with MA Units	13	28.9	
MA Graduate	23	51.1	
MA with Ed.D. Units	3	6.7	
MA with Ph.D. Units	1	2.2	
Ph.D. Graduate	1	2.2	

Number of Years in the Position				
1 – 5	18	40.0		
6 – 10	17	37.8		
11 – 15	8	17.8		
16 – 21	1	2.2		
22 – 26	1	2.2		
Number of Trainings Attended				
None	1	2.2		
1 – 5	23	51.1		
6 – 10	14	31.1		
11 – 15	5	11.1		
16 – above	2	4.4		

Table 1 presents the frequency and percent distribution of the sociodemographic profile of the school administrators. The profile includes gender, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in the position, and number of training attended.

The elementary school administrator-respondents in the four districts in Makilala were composed of 37.8 percent males and 62.2 percent females. This result implies that the school administrators in the four districts of Makilala were dominated by women. The distribution of the age range of the school administrators consisted of 26.7 percent belonged to 34-39 years old, 33.3 percent were within the age bracket of 40-45 years old, 20.0 percent were between 46 – 51 years old, 13.3 percent were 52 - 57 years old and 6.7 percent were 58 – 63 years old. The findings showed that a fair representation of three generations of school administrators the young, the middle-aged, and the old. However, most of the school administrators are in their middle age.

For the civil status of the school administrators, the married ones composed the majority (91.1%), followed by 4.4 percent by single and widow, respectively. The finding revealed that most of the school administrators were married.

In terms of educational attainment, 8.9 percent finished BEED/BSED, 28.9 percent finished BEED/BSED with units earned in Master of Arts in Education. 51.1 percent graduated Master of Arts in Education, 6.7 percent finished Master of Arts in Education with Doctor of Education units, and there were two school administrators who graduated Master of Arts in Education with Ph.D. units earned and Doctor of Philosophy, respectively. The data showed that most of the school administrators were graduates of Master of Arts in Education and BEED/

BSED with earned units in Master of Arts. This implies that school administrators are motivated to themselves professionally.

The supervisory experience of the school administrators ranged from 1 to 30 years, where 40.0 percent had been in the position for 1-5 years, 37.8 percent from 6-10 years, 17.8 percent for 11-15 years, and 2.2 percent had been in the position from 16-21 and 22-26 years, respectively. The finding reveals that the school administrators were predominantly young in the assigned administrative positions.

Almost all of the school administrators attended pieces of trainings where 51.1 percent had 1-5 pieces of trainings, 31.1 percent had 6-10, 11.1 percent had 11-15, 4.4 percent had 16-above trainings, and only 2.2 percent who have not attended any training. The result implies that most of the school administrators had five trainings, either district, division, regional, or national level.

## Relationship between Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Administrators and Their School Performance

Table 2 shows that the combined contributions of the administrators' sociodemographic characteristics did not significantly influence school performance (F - value = 0.772, p 70.05). Taken singly, none of the demographic variables had been a significant predictor of school performance.

Table 2. Combined Contributions of the Administrators' Socio-Demographic Characteristics

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	STANDARD	t - VALUE	PROBABILITY
	β	ERROR		
Constant	85.947	6.001	14.323	0.000
Gender	-2.327	1.668	-1.395	0.171
Age	0.002	0.121	0.019	0.985
Civil Status	-3.667	3.692	-0.993	0.327
Highest Educational Attainment	0.526	0.743	0.708	0.483
Number of Years in the Position	0.027	0.184	0.146	0.885
Number of Trainings Attended	0.086	0.161	0.533	0.597
Multiple R-square = 0.109	ns = not significar	nt at 5% level		
F-Value = 0.772 ns				
Probability = 0.597				

# School-Based Management System Level of Implementation in Some Areas Evaluated from the Schools

The administrators were assessed according to their school-based management system level of implementation in terms of leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources. The results presented reveal that in terms of leadership and governance, 57.8 percent of the administrators were assessed as developing, 37.8 percent of them as maturing, and 4.4 percent as advanced.

For curriculum and instruction, the majority (53.3%) of the administrators were assessed as developing, 44.4 percent were maturing, and 2.2 percent were assessed as advanced. In the area of accountability and continuous improvement, most of the administrators, 51.1 percent, were evaluated as maturing, but 2.2 percent of them needed improvement. On the management of resources, 51.1 percent of the administrators were assessed as maturing, 44.4 percent were developing, and 4.4 percent were advanced. This result implies that the school-based management system implementation of the elementary school administrators in Makilala was on the developing and maturing level for all indicators of the SBM system. However, few were already in the advanced level of implementation.

Redesigning the whole school organization is what a school-based management system requires to improve school governance. The organization's authority must introduce changes in school functioning as it improves school performance. For SBM to work, schools must engage in the professional development and training for teachers and other stakeholders in teaching, managing and problem-solving; information about student performance, parent and community satisfaction, and school resources to help school-level people make informed decisions; and a reward system to acknowledge the increased effort SBM requires of participants as well as to recognize improvements in school performance (Mohrman, Wohlstetter, and Associates, 1994). Other studies also pointed out the importance of principal leadership and teachers' instructional guidance mechanism, the establishment of a clear curriculum framework would also improve school performance (Wohlstetter, Smyer, and Mohrman, 1994).

## Administrators' Performance in Terms of National Achievement Test (NAT)

In the Department of Education, school performance in the elementary schools has been measured through the nationwide administration of the National Achievement Test (NAT) for Grades III and VI pupils. This evaluation

aimed to find out the extent of learning that has taken place for the school year.

In this study, most of the administrators' school performance (91.1%) was meeting the standards with 75-89 percent NAT average rating, and 8.9 percent of them were with superior school performance with 90-100 percent NAT average rating. This result implies that schools' performance belonged to the standard level of performance based on the NAT standard distribution of scores of the Department of Education.

## Relationship between the Administrators' School-Based Management System Level of Implementation and Their School Performance

The table presents the combined contributions of the administrators' school-based management system level of implementation in terms of leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability, and continuous improvement and management of resources significantly influence school performance (F-value = 2.893, p<0.05).

Taken singly, all of these independent variables are the best significant predictors of school performance. These results further indicate that the higher is the administrators' level of implementation on leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources, the higher is the level of organizational performance.

The results have supported the study of Nsubuga (2001) as cited by Gadia (2012) that unless school administrators are well-equipped with knowledge in management and leadership, they would not be able to improve school performance significantly. His study established that effective school performance requires visionary leadership and that there is a strong relationship between visionary leadership and transformational leadership.

In addition, Gadia (2012) stressed that research studies on effective schools concentrated on the principal's instructional leadership. Researchers found out that an effective school is a school under a principal's strong leadership with the following characteristics: having a vision which focuses on student achievement, understood by the teachers and students, taking the initiative, actively exploiting resources, spreading the good news about the school, and articulating a vision.

Table 3.

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	STANDARD	t - VALUE	PROBABILITY
	β	ERROR		
Constant	80.770	2.578	31.334	0.000
1. Leadership and Governance	20.091	7.452	2.696*	0.010
2. Curriculum and Instruction	15.012	7.361	2.039*	0.048
3. Accountability and Continuous Improvement				
•	16.344	6.930	2.358*	0.023
4. Management of Resources	21.234	7.389	2.874*	0.007

Multiple R-square = 0.235

\* = significant at 5% set level

F-Value = 2.893\*

Probability = 0.0258

## Issues and Problems on School-Based Management System Affecting the Performance of the School

Based on the data gathered, a few of the school administrators in Makilala School Districts have issues and problems in the implementation of the school-based management system. Enumerated below were the issues and problems encountered:

- a. On Leadership and Governance
  - More weight on administrative work was given attention by the school administrators and instructional supervision, which is not done regularly.
  - Overlapping of activities hinder the administrators from doing their regular instructional supervision.
  - Parents and other stakeholders have minimal support for the school.

## b. On Curriculum and Instruction

- Sustainability of the programs that address the performance of pupils is not attained 100 percent due to insufficient funds.
- Insufficient and inadequate supplies and materials hinder the realization of the plans.
- Lack of seminars and pieces of training for teachers and administrators, especially on new curriculum K to 12.
- Learning materials such as textbooks, learning guides, etc. are not available or limited.

- c. On Accountability and Continuous Improvement
  - Only a few stakeholders are aware of their roles and functions in the implementation of programs in the school.
  - Lack of funds hinders improvement.

## d. On Management of Resources

- Resources of schools through the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) are very limited that programs and projects cannot be implemented and materialized.
- The partnership between school and PTA is lessened due to the implementation of some programs limited to classroom needs only.
- Some schools have very limited income-generating programs and are enough to supplement the funds for the feeding program.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The educational interest in SBM of the school leaders as a reform to improve school performance is increasing. Research from the School-Based Management programs found an essential improvement that brought about instruction and curriculum reforms in public elementary schools. The commitment of the stakeholders in the practical information and dissemination of the implementation of the SBM plays an important role for SBM to work. In addition, these schools had influential principal leaders who led by creating ownership in a shared vision of the schools and by delegating specific projects and tasks to the members of the stakeholders. These successful SBM schools had multiple formal and informal mechanisms that encouraged comfortable working relationships among all staff; development of skills among various stakeholders; a strong partnership between parents and the community in the school organization; and addressing the student needs and accomplishments.

A lot of literature would agree that the increasing engagement of the school-level stakeholders will help increase the capacity of the school towards accountability of the school performance. The decision-making process was tailored based on the identified needs of the local school community, the reason why the implementation of the school-based management system becomes a centerpiece of the Department of Education schools in the Philippines. The opportunities for the involvement of the stakeholders become a strong predictor of the increased productivity and effectiveness of the schools.

Based on the results, the profile of the school principal was seen not to influence the school performance. However, the leadership styles of the principals are strong determinants of the school performance, the reason it will be recommended as a variable for the future researches.

The school-based management system level of implementation in elementary schools was mostly in the developing and maturing level. The mandate of the Department of Education dramatically emphasizes the level of accreditation of the different public schools regarding the implementation of the SBM. Initiatives of school visits and assessments were made by the school leaders and DepEd personnel to evaluate how the schools work on the standards set by the organization. The National Achievement Test in the elementary schools of Makilala was meeting the standards, and only a few were at the superior level. This implies the need to check on the other aspects of the school system. Other indicators of the school performance must also be given attention since it is a constitutional mandate to provide quality education to all learners.

In the overall context of the study, the school-based management system levels of implementation significantly influenced the school performance.

### TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of the study may be best translated to various media communication for information dissemination, if not, further awareness campaign. Results may also be given to different schools since SBM implementation is now strictly complied by all schools.

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