Challenges in the Implementation of School-Based Management in the Division of Northern Samar

Louie C. Baluyot

Teacher III, E.J. Dulay National High School, Division of Northern Samar

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the extent of challenges encountered in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) in the Division of Northern Samar, specifically in terms of administrative, environmental, and technological aspects. It also seeks to assess the extent of SBM implementation in the areas of curriculum and instruction, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, and human resource and team development. Furthermore, the study aims to explore the significant relationship between the challenges faced and the level of SBM implementation.

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed in this study, conducted across selected schools in the Division of Northern Samar. The respondents included 18 school heads and four School Governance Council members (GPTA president, SPGO president, teachers' club president, and LGU representative) from both big and small schools in the municipalities of Capul, San Isidro, Lavezares, Catarman, Lope de Vega, Mondragon, Pambujan, Lapinig, and Catubig. The research instrument for measuring SBM implementation was based on DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2024: Policy Guidelines on the Revised School-Based Management System.

Findings revealed that SBM was highly implemented in areas such as curriculum, instruction, governance, and financial management. The challenges faced were of moderate level, with environmental concerns influencing the learning environment and administrative difficulties affecting leadership and human resource development. Technological challenges, however, were found to have no significant impact on SBM implementation.

Keywords: Educational Leadership, Governance and Accountability, School-Based Management

INTRODUCTION

School-Based Management (SBM) has long been recognized as a key reform initiative to improve educational outcomes through greater autonomy, accountability, and participatory governance in schools. Rooted in the principles of decentralization, SBM empowers school heads and stakeholders to make decisions that are responsive to the unique needs of their learners and communities [1]. In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) institutionalized SBM through DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2012, which provided the Revised Guidelines on the Implementation of SBM, aiming to strengthen school governance by focusing on four dimensions: leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources [2].

Recent developments have continued to emphasize the critical role of SBM in achieving quality and inclusive education. DepEd Order No. 34, s. 2022, which outlines the Basic Education Development Plan (BEDP) 2030, highlights SBM as a mechanism for schools to respond proactively to contextual issues such as learning loss, inequality, and localized needs [3]. Likewise, DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2023 on the implementation of Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) underscores the alignment of school goals and resource utilization with SBM principles [4].

Despite these reforms, various challenges continue to hinder the full realization of SBM, particularly in geographically isolated and economically disadvantaged areas like the Division of Northern Samar.

Administrative burdens such as high workloads, limited decision-making autonomy, and lack of leadership training constrain the effectiveness of school heads [5]. Environmental factors, including poverty, natural disasters, and weak community involvement, further limit the delivery of basic education services [6]. Technological challenges—exacerbated by the shift to digital learning during the COVID-19 pandemic—have also created disparities in SBM implementation due to limited access to ICT resources and low digital literacy among educators [7].

Studies consistently points to the uneven implementation of SBM across school divisions. For instance, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies [8] emphasized the need for differentiated SBM support, especially in underserved regions. Furthermore, studies like that of De Guzman and Almerino stress the importance of local capacity-building and stakeholder engagement in enhancing SBM effectiveness [9].

Given this context, this study aimed to determine the challenges in the implementation of School-Based Management in the Division of Northern Samar. Specifically, it sought to: (1) assess the extent of challenges in terms of administrative, environmental, and technological aspects; (2) evaluate the extent of SBM implementation across six domains—curriculum and teaching, learning environment, leadership, governance and accountability, human resource and team development, and finance and resource mobilization; and (3) examine the significant relationship between the identified challenges and the extent of SBM implementation. By grounding the study in the DepEd policy directions, the research intends to provide actionable insights to strengthen SBM practices and promote more effective, inclusive, and resilient school leadership in Northern Samar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in the Division of Northern Samar using a descriptive-correlational research design. The respondents in this study are the 18 school heads and four (4) members of the school governance council (GPTA president, SPGO president, teachers' club president, LGU representative) of the two (2) big and small schools in Capul, San Isidro, Lavezares, Catarman, Lope de Vega, Mondragon, Pambujan, Lapinig and Catubig. The instrument for the implementation of school-based management, it will be taken from the DepEd Order No. 007, s. 2024: Policy Guidelines on the Revised School-Based Management System.

RESULTS

SBM was highly implemented in curriculum, learning, governance, and finance. Challenges were moderate, with environmental issues affecting the learning environment and administrative challenges impacting leadership and HR development. Technological challenges had no significant impact.

DISCUSSION

Challenges in the Implementation of School-Based Management

The findings of the study in Table 1 highlight the various challenges encountered by school heads in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) across administrative, technological, and environmental dimensions. Each category of challenge was evaluated based on a weighted mean and interpreted using a standard descriptive scale.

Administrative Challenges

The results show that administrative challenges were moderately encountered by school heads, with an overall mean of 3.03. The highest-rated challenge was the high administrative workload (mean = 3.38), indicating that school heads are burdened with multiple roles, affecting their efficiency in SBM implementation. This was followed by limited decision-making autonomy (mean = 3.22), suggesting persistent bureaucratic constraints despite SBM's aim of decentralization. Other moderately encountered issues included inadequate leadership training (mean = 2.97), difficulty in monitoring and evaluating SBM (mean = 2.84), and weak stakeholder

engagement (mean = 2.76). These findings imply that while school heads attempt to fulfill their leadership roles, systemic limitations and lack of support hinder their effectiveness.

Technological Challenges

Technological challenges were also moderately encountered, with an overall mean of 2.87. The most pressing concern was limited access to ICT resources (mean = 3.30), which is particularly evident in remote schools where digital tools are scarce. Cybersecurity and data privacy concerns (mean = 3.23) also posed significant challenges, followed by financial constraints in procuring educational technology (mean = 2.84). Notably, implementation issues with DepEd's digital initiatives (mean = 2.64) and low digital literacy among school heads and teachers (mean = 2.46) further indicate that despite national efforts toward digital transformation, local capacities remain insufficient. This technological gap could delay or weaken SBM implementation, particularly in data-driven decision-making and school governance.

Environmental Challenges

Among the three categories, environmental challenges were the most encountered, with an overall mean of 3.21, still within the moderately encountered range but close to the "highly encountered" threshold. The most critical challenge was socioeconomic disparities among learners (mean = 3.94), which significantly impact school attendance, participation, and performance. The vulnerability to natural disasters (mean = 3.51) also emerged as a highly encountered issue, affecting school infrastructure and continuity of programs. Challenges such as community resistance to change (mean = 2.94), geographical barriers (mean = 2.90), and inconsistent LGU support (mean = 2.77) underscore the broader contextual and structural difficulties in implementing SBM, especially in geographically isolated and socioeconomically challenged areas of Northern Samar.

The grand mean for all challenges was 3.04, indicating that the extent of challenges faced by school heads in implementing SBM is moderately encountered overall. While none of the challenge domains reached the "very highly encountered" level, the persistent moderate ratings across all categories suggest that implementation is consistently hampered by a combination of internal capacity issues, resource limitations, and external environmental factors. This means that there is a need for comprehensive capacity-building programs for school leaders, increased investment in digital infrastructure and training, and stronger multi-sectoral support—particularly from local government units and community stakeholders. Addressing these challenges is essential to fully realize the participatory and decentralized goals of SBM in the Division of Northern Samar.

Table 1. Extent of Challenges in the Implementation of SBM

Extent of Challenges		
Administrative Challenges	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
3. **High administrative workload** – School heads often handle multiple responsibilities, including instructional leadership, budgeting, and compliance with DepEd policies, leading to work overload and inefficiency.	3.38	ME
1. **Limited decision-making autonomy** – Although SBM promotes decentralization, school heads face bureaucratic constraints that limit their authority in making financial and operational decisions.	3.22	ME
2. **Inadequate leadership training** – Some school heads lack formal training in management, financial planning, and stakeholder engagement, which affects their ability to implement SBM effectively.	2.97	ME
5. **Difficulty in monitoring and evaluating SBM implementation** – Without proper assessment tools and clear performance indicators, school heads may struggle to track the effectiveness of SBM initiatives.	2.84	ME

4. **Weak stakeholder engagement** – While SBM emphasizes participatory governance, some schools struggle to gain active involvement from teachers, parents, and community stakeholders.	2.76	ME
Sub-mean	**3.03**	**ME**
Technological Challenges	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
1. **Limited access to ICT resources** – Many schools, especially in remote areas, lack computers, internet connectivity, and other digital tools necessary for effective school management.	3.30	ME
4. **Cybersecurity and data privacy concerns** – Schools may lack proper protocols for protecting sensitive student and school data from unauthorized access or breaches.	3.23	ME
3. **Challenges in implementing DepEd's digital initiatives** – Programs such as the Learning	2.78	ME
Management System (LMS) and digital records management are not fully utilized due to lack of technical support and training.	2.64	ME
5. **Financial constraints in procuring educational technology** – Budget limitations prevent schools from investing in modern technology and software that could enhance learning and administrative efficiency.	2.84	ME
2. **Low digital literacy among school heads and teachers** – Some educators and administrators are not well-versed in using technology for teaching, data management, and school administration.	2.46	SE
Sub-mean	**2.87**	**ME**
Environmental Challenges	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
3. **Socioeconomic disparities** – Students from low income families may struggle with attendance and learning due to financial constraints, requiring school heads to implement more inclusive policies.	3.94	HE
2. **Vulnerability to natural disasters** – Floods, typhoons, and earthquakes disrupt school operations, damage infrastructure, and hinder the consistent implementation of SBM programs.	3.51	HE
4. **Community resistance to change** – In some areas, traditional beliefs or lack of awareness about SBM lead to reluctance among parents and local leaders to actively participate in school decision-making.	2.94	ME
1. **Geographical barriers in remote schools** – Schools in far-flung or island areas, such as those in Laoang, face transportation and accessibility challenges, making it difficult for school heads to implement programs and access resources.	2.90	ME
5. **Inconsistent support from local government units (LGUs)** – Some LGUs provide minimal assistance in funding and implementing SBM initiatives, making it difficult for school heads to sustain school improvements.	2.77	ME
Sub-mean	**3.21**	**ME**
Overall mean	**3.04**	**ME**

Legend:

4.20-5.00	very highly encountered (VHE)
3.40-4.19	highly encountered (HE)
2.60-3.39	moderately encountered (ME)
1.80-2.59	slightly encountered (SE)
1.00-1.79	not encountered (NE)

Extent of Implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)

The findings presented in Table 2 show the extent to which the six key principles of School-Based Management (SBM)—namely Curriculum and Teaching, Learning Environment, Leadership, Governance and Accountability, Human Resource and Team Development, and Finance and Resource Mobilization—have been implemented in the Division of Northern Samar. The results are analyzed based on sub-means and the overall mean, interpreted according to a descriptive scale.

Curriculum and Teaching

This domain was found to be highly implemented, with a sub-mean of 3.60. Most indicators, such as the integration of peace and DepEd core values (mean = 4.54), test item analysis (mean = 4.46), and contextualized learning materials (mean = 4.39), were rated very highly implemented. Teachers also conduct remediation activities (mean = 4.36), reflecting efforts to bridge learning gaps. However, the low performance of Grade 3 learners in early literacy and numeracy (mean = 1.03) and low ALS certification rates (mean = 2.30) reveal areas needing urgent attention and intervention. These outliers slightly pull down the sub-mean despite strong performance in other areas.

Learning Environment

The learning environment domain was also highly implemented, with a sub-mean of 3.45. Significant indicators such as the existence of a functional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) plan (mean = 4.24), child protection committee (mean = 4.04), and mental wellness support mechanism (mean = 3.79) reflect commitment to learner safety and well-being. However, the non-implementation of a school-based ALS program (mean = 1.19) and only average provision for SPED/PWD-friendly facilities (mean = 3.31) indicate gaps in inclusivity and accessibility.

Leadership

Leadership practices were rated very highly implemented, with a sub-mean of 4.32. The presence of a functional Supreme Student Government/Pupil Government (mean = 4.55), school-community planning teams (mean = 4.34), and strategic plans (mean = 4.20) highlight participatory governance. The innovation in frontline service provision (mean = 4.19) also shows that leadership practices are evolving to meet stakeholder needs.

Governance and Accountability

This area showed the highest level of implementation, with a sub-mean of 4.43. Indicators such as a functional Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) (mean = 4.62), monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (mean = 4.58), and stakeholder collaboration (mean = 4.51) demonstrate robust governance practices. These results underscore the strong accountability systems and active engagement with both internal and external stakeholders in the school system.

Human Resource and Team Development

The implementation in this domain was also rated very highly, with a sub-mean of 4.27. High scores were

reported in personnel recognition, professional development, equitable workload distribution, and receipt of proper compensation (means ranging from 4.27 to 4.32). These findings indicate a strong focus on staff well-being and performance, key factors in sustaining SBM.

Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization

This area received a sub-mean of 4.18, placing it under the highly implemented category. High performance was observed in infrastructure improvements (mean = 4.45), MOOE utilization (mean = 4.38), and facility inspection (mean = 4.36). However, relatively lower ratings for the computer lab (mean = 3.89) and library (mean = 3.81) indicate room for improvement in instructional resources.

The overall mean score was 4.04, indicating that School-Based Management is very highly implemented in the Division of Northern Samar. Despite specific areas requiring targeted interventions—especially in early grade literacy, ALS, SPED access, and digital infrastructure—SBM practices across leadership, governance, teaching, and human resource development are commendably strong. These findings reflect a committed and functional school system that continuously strives for quality, accountability, and inclusive education.

Table 2. Extent of Implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)

SBM IMPLEMENTATION		
Curriculum and Teaching	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
6. Teachers integrate topics promoting peace and DepEd core values	4.54	VHI
7. The school conducts test item analysis to inform its teaching and learning process	4.46	VHI
4. Teachers prepare contextualized learning materials responsive to the needs of learners	4.39	VHI
5. Teachers conduct remediation activities to address learning gaps in reading and comprehension, science and technology, and mathematics	4.36	VHI
8. The school engages local industries to strengthen its TLE-TVL course offerings	3.91	HI
2. Grade 6,10, and 12 learners achieve the proficiency level in all 21 st. century skills and core learning areas in the National Achievement Test (NAT)	3.82	HI
3. School-based ALS learners attain certification as elementary and junior high school completers	2.30	SI
1. Grade 3 learners achieve the proficiency level for each cluster of early language, literacy, and numeracy skills	1.03	NI
Sub-mean	**3.60**	**HI**
Learning Environment	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
1. The school has zero bullying incidence	3.55	HI
2. The school has zero child abuse incidence	3.54	HI
3. The school has reduced its dropout incidence	3.63	HI
4. The school conducts culture-sensitive activities	3.68	HI
5. The school provides access to learning experiences for the disadvantaged, OSYs, and adult learners	3.55	HI

6. The school has a functional school-based ALS program	1.19	NI
7. The school has a functional child-protection committee	4.04	HI
8. The school has a functional DRRM plan	4.24	VHI
9. The school has a functional support mechanism for mental wellness	3.79	HI
10. The school has special education- and PWD-friendly facilities	3.31	AI
Sub-mean	**3.45**	**HI**
Leadership	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
3. The school has a functional Supreme Student Government/ Supreme Pupil Government	4.55	VHI
2. The school has a functional school-community planning team	4.34	VHI
1. The school develops a strategic plan	4.20	VHI
4. The school innovates in its provision of frontline services to stakeholders	4.19	HI
Sub-mean	**4.32**	**VHI**
Governance and Accountability	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
1. The school's strategic plan is operationalized through an implementation plan	4.32	VHI
2. The school has a functional School Governance Council (SGC)	4.26	VHI
3. The school has a functional Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	4.62	VHI
4. The school collaborates with stakeholders and other schools in strengthening partnerships	4.51	VHI
5. The school monitors and evaluates its programs, projects, and activities	4.58	VHI
6. The school maintains an average rating of satisfactory from its internal and external stakeholders	4.30	VHI
Sub-mean	**4.43**	**VHI**
Human Resource and Team Development	**Weighted Mean**	**Interpretation**
1. School personnel achieve an average rating of very satisfactory in the individual performance commitment and review	4.31	VHI
2. The school achieves an average rating of very satisfactory in the office performance commitment and review	4.17	HI
3. The school conducts needs-based Learning Action Cells and Learning & Development activities	4.18	HI
4. The school facilitates the promotion and continuous professional development of its personnel	4.31	VHI
5. The school recognizes and rewards milestone achievements of its personnel	4.32	VHI
6. The school facilitates receipt of correct salaries, allowances, and other additional compensation	4.32	VHI
7. Teacher workload is distributed fairly and equitably	4.27	VHI
Sub-mean	**4.27**	**VHI**

Finance and Resource Management and Mobilization		
2. The school initiates improvement of its infrastructure and facilities	4.45	VHI
7. The school liquidates 100% of its utilized MOOE	4.38	VHI
1. The school inspects its infrastructure and facilities	4.36	VHI
6. The school achieves a 75-100% utilization rate of its Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE)	4.30	VHI
4. The school has functional water, electric, and internet facilities	4.09	HI
5. The school has a functional computer laboratory classroom	3.89	HI
3. The school has a functional library	3.81	HI
Sub-mean	**4.18**	**HI**
Overall mean	**4.04**	**VHI**

Legend:

4.20-5.00 very highly implemented (VHI)

3.40-4.19 highly implemented (HI)

2.60-3.39 averagely implemented (AI)

1.80-2.59 slightly implemented (SI)

1.00-1.79 not implemented (NI)

Relationship between the Challenges and Extent of Implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)

Table 3 presents the statistical relationship between the challenges encountered (administrative, environmental, and technological) and the extent of implementation of the six SBM principles using Pearson's r correlation coefficient. The analysis identifies which specific challenges have a statistically significant influence on the implementation level of SBM components.

Administrative Challenges

The data reveal significant negative correlations between administrative challenges and several SBM components: Learning Environment ($r = -0.201$, $p = 0.034$), Leadership ($r = -0.277$, $p = 0.032$), and Human Resource and Team Development ($r = -0.200$, $p = 0.034$). These significant inverse relationships suggest that as administrative challenges increase—such as high workload, limited decision-making autonomy, and inadequate leadership training—the implementation of SBM in these areas decreases. This implies that administrative burdens hinder school leaders' ability to foster a positive school environment, exhibit effective leadership, and support professional development.

On the other hand, the correlations with Curriculum and Teaching, Governance and Accountability, and Finance and Resource Management Mobilization were not significant, indicating that these areas may be more resilient to administrative challenges or supported by other mechanisms.

Environmental Challenges

Among all the components, only Learning Environment ($r = 0.379$, $p = 0.040$) showed a significant positive correlation with environmental challenges. This result is somewhat counterintuitive and may reflect how schools actively respond to environmental issues—such as disasters or socioeconomic disparities—by strengthening interventions and support mechanisms (e.g., DRRM plans, child protection, mental wellness programs). In this

context, challenges may be driving improved implementation in this particular domain.

The remaining SBM areas showed no significant correlation with environmental challenges, indicating that such challenges may not directly influence the implementation levels in curriculum, leadership, governance, human resource, or finance components.

Technological Challenges

All correlation results between technological challenges and SBM implementation across all components were not significant, with Pearson r values ranging from -0.018 to 0.09. This suggests that while technological issues such as limited ICT access and low digital literacy exist, they do not have a statistically significant effect on how SBM is implemented in the different areas. It may also indicate that schools have adapted their SBM practices despite technological limitations, perhaps relying more on traditional methods and face-to-face systems in school governance and operations.

Administrative challenges negatively and significantly affect three key SBM components—learning environment, leadership, and human resource development—highlighting the critical need for reducing bureaucratic burdens and improving leadership capacity. Environmental challenges significantly influence the learning environment, suggesting that schools intensify efforts in safety and inclusivity when faced with external risks. Technological challenges have no significant relationship with SBM implementation, possibly due to compensatory mechanisms or alternative strategies in the absence of digital support. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing internal administrative structures and external environmental realities to sustain and improve SBM implementation.

Table 3. Relationship between the Challenges and Extent of Implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)

Challenges	Parameters	Implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)					
		Curriculum And Teaching	**Learning Environment**	**Leadership**	**Governance And Accountability**	**Human Resource Team and Development**	**Finance And Resource Management Mobilization**
Administrative	Pearson r	-0.153	**-.201***	**-0.277***	-0.098	**-.200***	-0.095
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.108	**0.034**	**0.032**	0.303	**0.034**	0.32
	Interpretation	Not significant	**Significant**	**Significant**	Not significant	**Significant**	Not significant
Environmental	Pearson r	0.004	**.379***	-0.014	-0.03	-0.069	0.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.969	**0.04**	0.882	0.751	0.467	0.972
	Interpretation	Not significant	**Significant**	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant
Technological	Pearson r	-0.012	-0.018	-0.011	0.057	0.09	0.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.902	0.852	0.905	0.55	0.345	0.72
	Interpretation	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant	Not significant

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that schools in the Division of Northern Samar moderately face administrative, environmental, and technological challenges. This implies that while SBM implementation is ongoing, these issues may slow down progress if not addressed. Policymakers and school administrators should prioritize streamlining administrative tasks, enhancing disaster preparedness, and investing in ICT infrastructure to sustain school efficiency.

The overall implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) is very high. that schools are committed to decentralized and participatory governance. This suggests that existing structures and practices can serve as models for less-performing schools, and further support can build on these strengths to ensure long-term sustainability.

Administrative challenges significantly hinder leadership, learning environment, and human resource development. Despite these obstacles, strong leadership, governance, and personnel support drive effective SBM implementation. Continued efforts are needed to address internal barriers and strengthen support in technology and inclusivity.

Significant administrative and environmental challenges still impact specific domains of SBM. Administrative challenges showed a significant negative relationship with leadership, human resource development, and curriculum, suggesting that high workload, limited autonomy, and lack of training hinder effective implementation. Environmental challenges were significantly related only to the learning environment, highlighting the impact of socioeconomic conditions and disaster vulnerability. Meanwhile, technological challenges showed no significant relationship with any SBM parameter, indicating a general detachment between current tech issues and the actual delivery of SBM components. This implies that addressing these barriers particularly administrative and environmental remains crucial to sustaining and improving SBM effectiveness across schools in the region.

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