



An Assessment of School-Based Management Practices at Muntinlupa National High School

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the level of School-Based Management (SBM) practice at Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS) and identified Priority Improvement Areas (PIAs) and challenges affecting its implementation across four SBM dimensions: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Learning, Accountability and Continuous Improvement, and Management of Resources. Using a descriptive-evaluative design, data were collected from 202 SBM implementers through frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and correlation analysis. Results showed that MNHS achieved an Advanced level in Leadership and Governance and Accountability and Continuous Improvement, while Curriculum and Learning and Management of Resources remained at the Maturing level. Challenges significantly influenced SBM implementation, correlating strongly with implementers' profiles. Based on findings, an SBM Enhancement Plan was developed, detailing targeted strategies, programs, and activities to address identified challenges and improve compliance with implementation standards. The study recommends integrating the plan into the school improvement plan for a holistic approach to sustained improvement.

RESUMO

O estudo avaliou o nível de prática de Gestão Baseada na Escola (SBM) na Escola Secundária Nacional de Muntinlupa (MNHS) e identificou Áreas Prioritárias de Melhoria (PIAs) e desafios que afectam a sua implementação em quatro dimensões de SBM: Liderança e Governança, Currículo e Aprendizagem, Responsabilidade e Melhoria Contínua e Gestão de Recursos. Utilizando um design descritivo-avaliativo, os dados foram coletados de 202 implementadores do SBM por meio de contagens de frequência, porcentagens, pontuações médias e análise de correlação. Os resultados mostraram que o MNHS alcançou um nível Avançado em Liderança e Governança e Responsabilidade e Melhoria Contínua, enquanto o Currículo e a Aprendizagem e Gestão de Recursos permaneceram no nível de Amadurecimento. Os desafios influenciaram significativamente a implementação do SBM, correlacionando-se fortemente com os perfis dos implementadores. Com base nas conclusões, foi desenvolvido um Plano de Melhoria da GBP, detalhando estratégias, programas e atividades direcionadas para enfrentar os desafios identificados e melhorar a conformidade com os padrões de implementação. O estudo recomenda a integração do plano no plano de melhoria escolar para uma abordagem holística à melhoria sustentada.

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Introduction

The globalization of education has led to a paradigm shift in policies and practices, driving decentralization to improve learning outcomes (Romanowski & Du, 2021). This shift redistributes decision-making authority from centralized bodies to local governments and schools, fostering more responsive governance structures. Originating in the United States after World War II, decentralization gained global traction in the mid-1980s with the rise of neoliberal globalization (DeMatthews et al., 2016). Among the various governance models, school-based management (SBM) emerged as a widely adopted framework, granting schools autonomy over critical areas such as curriculum, personnel, budgeting, and governance (Arar & Nasra, 2018).

This study adopts SBM as its conceptual framework, recognizing its potential to enhance school management, improve student performance, and strengthen local leadership (Isa, 2020). Through encouraging participatory decision-making among administrators, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders, SBM aims to empower schools to address educational challenges effectively. Research stresses that successful SBM implementation correlates with improved learning outcomes, teacher motivation, and resource optimization (Berhanu, 2023). However, its success largely depends on the capacity of school leaders to navigate challenges such as resource constraints, time limitations, and institutional support (Silabay & Alegre, 2023).

Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS), one of the largest secondary schools in the Philippines, actively implements SBM to enhance administrative and instructional effectiveness. As a public institution serving a diverse student population, MNHS must align its governance structures with DepEd's SBM standards while addressing local educational needs. Operating within a resource-constrained environment, MNHS faces financial limitations, time constraints, and institutional expectations that pose challenges to effective SBM implementation. Despite these obstacles, the school continues to refine its SBM strategies to enhance student learning and overall performance.

While existing literature explores SBM in relation to leadership styles (Collado et al., 2024), management effectiveness (Francisco et al., 2024), and flexible learning modalities (Bartolata et al., 2024), there remains a gap in understanding its practical implementation in large, resource-limited public schools like MNHS. This study addresses this gap by examining the level of SBM practice at MNHS and identifying the challenges encountered by implementers. Specifically, it investigates the profile of SBM implementers concerning age, gender, position, length of service, and role in the SBM Task Force. It also assesses the school's SBM practice across four key dimensions: leadership and governance, curriculum and learning, accountability and continuous improvement, and management of resources.

Additionally, the study explores the challenges implementers face, including time constraints, institutional expectations, support systems, decision-making processes, and financial resources. It examines whether significant differences exist between these challenges and the implementers' demographic profiles. Furthermore, it analyzes the relationship between SBM dimensions and the challenges encountered, providing insights into how SBM implementers manage obstacles.

Development

Using a descriptive research design, the study aimed to assess the level of practice and challenges associated with School-Based Management (SBM) implementation at Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS). The descriptive component documented the profiles of SBM implementers, the SBM dimensions, and the challenges faced, while the evaluative aspect explored correlations between the implementers' profiles, SBM practices, and challenges. The results served as the foundation for developing an SBM enhancement plan to improve the implementation process and meet quality standards.

To address the research objectives, data collection involved 202 respondents, all members of the SBM task force at MNHS. Their direct involvement in implementing SBM made them the most reliable sources of information on challenges and practices. The study employed purposive sampling, deliberately selecting respondents based on their knowledge and experience, specifically their membership in the SBM task force. Data were gathered using survey questionnaires tailored to capture relevant information. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, along with assurances of confidentiality and data privacy. A demographic survey questionnaire collected data on respondents' age, gender, position, length of service, and role in the SBM task force. The SBM assessment tool, issued through DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2012, enabled respondents to evaluate MNHS's level of practice across SBM dimensions. Another questionnaire, the implementation challenges survey, used a four-point Likert scale to identify challenges in time, expectations, support, decision-making, and financial resources. Additionally, a survey on actions taken to address these challenges assessed the extent to which strategies were employed to overcome them.

The research instruments underwent a rigorous validation process to ensure their reliability. The SBM implementation challenges survey was based on challenges outlined by Cotton (n.d.) and piloted among ten teachers. Their feedback was incorporated into the final version of the tool. Data collection was conducted after securing permission from the Schools Division Superintendent and coordination with the MNHS principal. The collected data were tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to address the research questions.

Various statistical methods were used to analyze the data. Frequency counts and percentages described the demographic profiles of the respondents. Mean scores were calculated to evaluate each indicator of the SBM dimensions. Weighted averages were used to identify challenges affecting SBM implementation, while correlation coefficients determined relationships between the implementers' profiles and SBM challenges. T-values were computed to test the significance of these correlations. The results provided insights into the relationship between SBM dimensions and challenges, while strategies for addressing implementation challenges were analyzed to gauge their effectiveness.

The scoring system for the SBM dimension survey required respondents to assign points to each indicator, with qualitative descriptions ranging from "no evidence" to "practices and procedures satisfy quality standards." The implementation challenges survey used a four-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to rate challenges as "not a challenge" to "extreme challenge." Similarly, the survey on actions taken to address challenges assessed the utilization of strategies, ranging from "not utilized" to "highly utilized." These scoring systems facilitated a systematic evaluation of the data, providing a clear picture of SBM implementation at MNHS.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to assessing the level of practice and challenges associated with SBM implementation at Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS). It focused on the profiles of SBM implementers, the SBM dimensions, and the challenges they encountered. While the study explored correlations between the implementers' profiles, SBM practices, and challenges, it did not extend to measuring the long-term impact of SBM on student performance or broader educational outcomes.

The study involved 202 respondents, all members of the SBM task force at MNHS. As such, the findings may not be generalizable to other schools with different organizational structures, resource allocations, or leadership dynamics. Furthermore, the research relied on self-reported data from survey questionnaires, which may be subject to response bias. While statistical analyses were conducted to establish relationships between variables, causality was not determined.

Results and Discussions

In terms of gender distribution, female respondents dominate the sample, making up 70.79% of the total, while males comprise 29.21%. This gender disparity aligns with broader trends in the education sector, where teaching positions are often female-dominated. The high proportion of female educators could influence decision-making and leadership approaches within SBM, particularly in fostering collaborative and inclusive school management practices. However, ensuring diverse leadership representation remains critical in addressing various perspectives and enhancing governance effectiveness (Table 1).

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Age	60 years old and above	5	2.48	5
	50-59 years old	22	10.89	4
	40-49 years old	33	16.34	3
	30-39 years	53	26.24	2
	20-29 years old	89	44.06	1
	Total		202	100
Sex	Male	59	29.21	2
	Female	143	70.79	1
	Total	202	100	
Length of Service	26-30 Years Old	8	3.96	6
	21-25 Years Old	12	5.94	5
	16-20 Years Old	18	8.91	4
	11-15 Years Old	24	11.88	3
	6-10 Years Old	75	37.13	1
	1-5 Years Old	65	32.18	2
	Total		202	100
Position	Master Teacher II	12	5.94	5
	Master Teacher I	14	6.93	4
	Teacher III	47	23.27	3
	Teacher II	56	27.72	2
	Teacher I	73	36.14	1
	Total		202	100
Role in the SBM Task Force	SBM Coordinator	2	0.99	5
	Dimension Head	8	3.96	3.5
	Asst. Dimension Head	8	3.96	3.5
	Program Owners	23	11.39	2
	Dimension Member	161	79.70	1
	Total		202	100

The distribution of respondents across length of service and positions highlights a predominance of early-career educators, with 1-5 years (32.18%) and 6-10 years (37.13%) of service being the most common categories. This aligns with the majority of respondents holding entry-level positions such as Teacher I (36.14%) and Teacher II (27.72%). While this suggests a relatively young workforce with high potential for growth, it also underscores the need for professional development and capacity-building programs to strengthen their role in SBM implementation. Additionally, the composition of the SBM Task Force reveals that most respondents (79.70%) serve as dimension members, indicating a widespread but possibly passive engagement in SBM activities. A relatively small proportion hold leadership roles, such as program owners (11.39%) and dimension heads (3.96%), suggesting the need for enhanced leadership training and greater involvement of educators in governance roles.

Table 2*Level of Practice Across SBM Dimensions*

Components	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (sd)	Rank	Interpretation
1. Leadership and Governance	2.578	0.358	1	Advanced
2. Curriculum and Learning	2.468	0.257	3	Maturing
3. Accountability and Continuous Improvement	2.555	0.382	2	Advanced
4. Management of Resources	2.082	0.231	4	Maturing
Overall	2.427	0.240		Maturing

Legend:
2.50-3.00 -Advanced
1.50-2.49 -Maturing
1.00-1.49 -Developing

Moreover, the level of practice across SBM dimensions at Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS) indicates varying degrees of implementation effectiveness. Among the four dimensions, Leadership and Governance achieved the highest mean score of 2.578 with a standard deviation of 0.358, placing it in the "Advanced" category. This suggests that the school has well-established leadership structures and governance mechanisms, which likely contribute to effective decision-making and policy implementation. Similarly, Accountability and Continuous Improvement ranked second with a mean score of 2.555, also categorized as "Advanced." This indicates that the school demonstrates strong mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and refining educational processes to ensure ongoing improvement.

Conversely, Curriculum and Learning (mean = 2.468) and Management of Resources (mean = 2.082) were categorized as "Maturing," highlighting areas that require further development. The relatively lower score for Management of Resources suggests challenges in optimizing financial, human, and material assets to support educational objectives effectively. Overall, the school's SBM implementation was classified as "Maturing" (mean = 2.427), indicating that while significant progress has been made, continuous efforts are necessary to enhance curriculum delivery and resource management.

These findings align with the study conducted by Obias (2023) on the level of SBM practice at Sta Cruz Elementary School, which also classified its SBM implementation as "Maturing." The study emphasized the need for continuous improvement in all dimensions, particularly in Curriculum & Instruction and Management of Resources, where challenges in stakeholder engagement and resource allocation were evident. Similarly, the present study at MNHS signifies the necessity for targeted interventions to improve these areas.

Table 3
Summary of the Challenges to SBM Operationalization

Components	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (sd)	Rank	Interpretation
1. Time	3.678	0.448	2	Encountered
2. Expectation	3.443	0.232	4	Moderately Encountered
3. Support	3.635	0.306	3	Encountered
4. Decision-Making	2.839	0.185	5	Moderately Encountered
5. Financial Resources	3.871	0.407	1	Encountered
Overall	3.493	0.204		Moderately Encountered

Legend:

<i>4.500-5.000</i>	<i>-Highly Encountered</i>
<i>3.500-4.499</i>	<i>-Encountered</i>
<i>2.500-3.499</i>	<i>-Moderately Encountered</i>
<i>1.500-2.499</i>	<i>-Least Encountered</i>
<i>1.000-1.499</i>	<i>-Not Encountered</i>

In term of the challenges to SBM operationalization at Muntinlupa National High School (MNHS), findings reveal that financial resources (mean = 3.871) rank as the most encountered challenge, followed by time constraints (mean = 3.678) and lack of support (mean = 3.635), all classified as "Encountered." This suggests that inadequate funding, time limitations, and insufficient institutional backing significantly hinder effective SBM implementation. Meanwhile, expectation-related challenges (mean = 3.443) and decision-making difficulties (mean = 2.839) were classified as "Moderately Encountered," indicating that while these issues exist, they pose comparatively lesser obstacles. The overall mean score of 3.493 categorizes SBM challenges at MNHS as "Moderately Encountered," implying that while barriers exist, they are not insurmountable. Addressing financial constraints, optimizing time management, and strengthening institutional support structures could enhance SBM operationalization and improve governance efficiency.

The findings in this study align with the research conducted by Berhanu (2023) on SBM implementation in Ethiopian schools, which highlighted ineffective execution due to administrative capacity issues, lack of cooperation from school leaders, and misunderstandings about SBM's importance. Similarly, MNHS faces challenges that stem from resource limitations, time constraints, and inadequate support systems, which may impact SBM efficiency. Berhanu suggested practical solutions such as forming a steering committee, piloting SBM projects, and providing legal authority to schools—strategies that could also be adapted to MNHS to mitigate challenges.

Table 4

Difference between the Respondents' Challenges and SBM Implementation Based on their Demographic Profile

Variables <i>Challenges to SBM Implementation based on...</i>	Computed t/f Value	Significance Value at 2-Tailed	Interpretation
Age	79.317	0.000	Significant, Reject H ₀
Sex	-5.384	0.117	Not Significant, Accept H ₀
Length of Service	135.934	0.000	Significant, Reject H ₀
Position	47.683	0.000	Significant, Reject H ₀
Role in SBM Task Force	22.070	0.000	Significant, Reject H ₀

Findings indicate that the challenges to SBM (School-Based Management) implementation vary significantly across several demographic profiles. The variables of age, length of service, position, and role in the SBM Task Force all have significant differences in challenges, as indicated by the computed t/f values (79.317, 135.934, 47.683, and 22.070, respectively), with corresponding p-values of 0.000, which are below the 0.05 significance level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H₀).

In contrast, sex does not show a significant difference in challenges, as its computed t/f value is -5.384, and the p-value of 0.117 is above the 0.05 threshold, indicating that sex is not a determining factor in SBM implementation challenges. This is parallel to the findings of Saro et al. (2022), suggesting that the demographic factors—such as age, length of service, position, and role in the SBM Task Force—are significant in influencing the challenges faced during SBM implementation.

The study emphasizes that SBM, as a form of decentralization, entrusts schools with greater autonomy, aiming to improve school performance and learning outcomes. The significant differences across demographic profiles in the table suggest that various stakeholders in SBM, from principals to teachers, experience different challenges depending on their background, which could influence the effectiveness of SBM practices.

Table 5

Summary of the Relationship Between MNHS' SBM Dimensions and Challenges to SBM Implementation

Variables <i>Challenges to SBM Implementation and SBM Dimension as to...</i>	Computed r-Value	Significance Value at 2-Tailed	Interpretation
Leadership and Governance	0.834	0.000	High Positive Correlation, Significant, Reject H ₀
Curriculum and Learning	0.761	0.000	High Positive Correlation, Significant, Reject H ₀
Accountability and Continuous Improvement	0.752	0.000	High Positive Correlation, Significant, Reject H ₀
Management of Resources	0.139	0.048	Negligible Correlation, Significant, Reject H ₀
Overall	0.844	0.000	High Positive Correlation, Significant, Reject H₀

Findings show that there is a significant and positive relationship between the SBM (School-Based Management) dimensions and the challenges to SBM implementation in most areas, with strong correlations observed in leadership and governance ($r = 0.834$), curriculum and learning ($r = 0.761$), and accountability and continuous improvement ($r = 0.752$). These correlations, all with p-values of 0.000, suggest that effective leadership, curriculum management, and accountability practices are strongly associated with the challenges schools face in SBM implementation, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis in each case.

However, the correlation between the management of resources and the challenges to SBM implementation is negligible ($r = 0.139$), though still significant with a p-value of 0.048, indicating that while resource management does play a role, it has a much weaker impact compared to the other dimensions. Overall, the high positive correlation of 0.844 further reinforces the idea that SBM's effectiveness is closely linked to how well these dimensions are managed, with leadership and governance being particularly influential.

In relation to the study by WS et al. (2022) on addressing challenges in School-Based Management (SBM), the findings underscore the importance of leadership, governance, and accountability in overcoming SBM implementation challenges. Ilma et al. highlight that SBM's effectiveness is heavily reliant on participatory planning and strong coordination, which is similar to the findings in the table where leadership and governance dimensions show high positive correlations with SBM challenges.

Final considerations/ Conclusions (lowercase, bold, Georgia 11 font, left-aligned, unnumbered)

The study reveals that MNHS educators are predominantly young (44.06% aged 20-29), with limited teaching experience (69.31% having ≤ 10 years), and a significant female

majority (70.79%). While the workforce is dynamic, there is a need for mentorship and leadership development, as most educators serve as dimension members (79.70%) in the SBM Task Force rather than in leadership roles.

SBM implementation at MNHS shows strong leadership and governance (mean = 2.578) and accountability (mean = 2.555), both categorized as "Advanced." However, curriculum and learning (mean = 2.468) and resource management (mean = 2.082) remain in the "Maturing" stage, requiring improvement. Key challenges include financial constraints (mean = 3.871), time limitations (mean = 3.678), and lack of institutional support (mean = 3.635), with significant variation based on age, experience, and SBM role.

Findings underscore the need for targeted interventions in resource management, leadership training, and capacity-building. Addressing financial limitations, enhancing institutional support, and refining time management strategies are essential for optimizing SBM effectiveness. Future research should examine SBM's long-term impact on student outcomes, teacher retention, and governance efficiency while exploring best practices across diverse school settings.

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