

# SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT (SBM) IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: THROUGH THE LENS OF TEACHERS

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## Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the experiences of elementary teachers in implementing the SBM level of practice in Panabo South 1 District. Further, this investigated teachers' coping strategies and insights which can be shared to others. Qualitative – phenomenological study was employed in exploring the views of the ten (10) elementary teachers of which primary instrument of data gathering was through in- depth interview. Major results revealed three major themes emerge as critical determinants in understanding the experiences of teachers in implementing SBM: empowerment and autonomy, collaboration and communication, and professional development and support. Furthermore, three major themes emerge as integral components of teachers' coping mechanisms within the context of SBM: adaptability and flexibility, collaborative problem-solving, and professional development and training. Finally, the major themes on the insights of teachers in implementing SBM were ownership and accountability, student-centered approaches, and challenges and opportunities for professional growth. Understanding these major themes provided a nuanced perspective on the insights of teachers in implementing School-Based Management. The research implications concerning the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) held significant relevance for educational policymakers, administrators, and practitioners. As we delved into the findings and insights derived from this study, it became evident that the implications extended beyond the immediate context of the research. The future directions of the study on implementing School-Based Management (SBM) are poised to significantly contribute to the continuous improvement of educational systems.

Keywords: *School-based management, elementary schools, phenomenology*

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## 1. The Problem and Its Setting

*"Empowering schools at the local level through school-based management is not just about decentralization; it's about democratization of education." – Anonymous*

School-Based Management (SBM) gives principals, teachers, students, and parents greater influence over the education process by entrusting them with budget, personnel, and curriculum-related decisions. It is the systematic decentralization to the school level of the authority and responsibility to make important decisions regarding school operations within a centrally determined framework of objectives, policies, curriculum, standards, and accountability. There may be more work for internal and external stakeholders, less efficiency, unequal school performance, a greater need for staff development, confusion regarding new roles and responsibilities, and coordination issues.

In Thailand, in the conclusion of his research, it was found that educational changes had a positive impact on both the levels of student accomplishment and the levels of teacher motivation in the schools located in Southern Thailand. He noted that school-based management (SBM) is a leadership paradigm that gives teachers and the local community the chance to actively engage in the development of schools, share shared objectives, and share responsibility for the learning outcomes of children (Haruthaithanasan, 2017).

Similarly, Indonesian schools have implemented a mandatory school-based management (SBM) policy to enhance education quality in general and school improvement and pupil achievement in particular. A survey was conducted in primary and junior high schools of the Denpasar district municipality in Bali, Indonesia, in light of the paucity of previous research establishing the validity of a link between SBM results and improved school climate and student achievement. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of data confirm that devolving authority to school-level decision-makers has increased participation and commitment, resulting in an enhanced teaching–learning environment (Bandur et al., 2021). Likewise, regarding the topic of school-based management, a number of research has been carried out. Katuuk et al. (2018) conducted research to investigate the challenges associated with putting SBM into practice and principals' levels of management ability.

Moreover, in the Philippines, even though there are numerous problems in the field of education that seem to be reoccurring across the country, Lopez (2022) asserts that there are specific issues in one school that require immediate attention. In times such as these, the Department of Education implemented School-Based Management, which decentralized decision-making from central and regional offices to school offices, allowing school administrators and principals to concentrate on school-specific challenges. Principals are given greater authority and responsibility over what occurred and will occur in their institutions.

On the same lens, in the elementary schools in Panabo South 1 District, similar challenges were encountered by the teachers in the implementation of SBM. These include poor enactment of transparency and low value of support mechanism. Also, there is difficulty with time management and availability of several resources, especially for smaller schools.

According to the report's findings and conclusions, it was suggested that the principal's managerial competence be improved and strengthened, especially in the areas of leadership, managerial, supervisory, and human resource management at the school. With my reading, I did not find a study that dwelt on the experiences of teachers in implementing SBM. Thus, I am motivated to pursue this investigation to explore the experiences, coping strategies, and insights of teachers in School-Based Management level of practice.

Since School-based Management has been a method that has been used in the promotion of strong relationships with stakeholders and in the enhancement of teaching and learning, it is imperative that this research be carried out as soon as possible. The social value of this research is enhanced by the engagement and collaboration of parents, stakeholders, and community members in the division of responsibility and decision-making responsibilities.

### *1.1 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of elementary teachers in implementing the SBM level of practice in Panabo South 1 District. Further, this investigated teachers' coping strategies and insights which can be shared to others.

At this stage of research, the experiences of teachers in school-based management (SBM) were generally defined as their learning and challenging experiences in the aspect of decentralization in education at the grassroots level. It is based on the national policy of decentralization that was originally established by the Philippine Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160) as a response to the new challenges to sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-sufficient and more effective partners in the attainment of the national goal. This was done as a response to the new challenges to sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-reliant and more effective partners in the attainment of the national goal.

### *1.2 Research Questions*

This study aimed to explore the experiences of teachers in SBM level of practice in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions

1. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice?
2. What are the coping strategies of teachers in coping with the challenges in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice?
3. What are the insights of teachers in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice?

The findings of this study would contribute to the existing body of knowledge in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice to the following entities.

### *Department of Education*

This research would be of assistance and support to the Department of Education, particularly in one of its reform projects in basic education that creates exceptional and performing schools in the department. By winning accolades at both the regional and national levels, these schools have shown that they are competent and possess desirable attributes.

### *School Administrators*

According to the researcher, the findings of this case study are crucial for school principals. Learning outcomes might be enhanced when they gained knowledge about SBM best practices and benchmark projects, activities, and programs. In addition, this research would inspire them to improve as institutional leaders and to take responsibility for their actions, no matter how difficult the times may be.

### *Teachers*

Additionally, educators stand to gain from the findings of this research. They would work diligently and become motivated on the implementation of SBM in their schools by planning, constructing, and making instructional materials for the benefit of children both at home and at school. This would be done for the benefit of children both at home and at school. This research will help them realize the necessity of conforming to educational standards, which is one of the foundations of the concept that underpins both the curriculum and the teaching, which they are responsible for as learning facilitators.

### *Students*

Implementing school-based management (SBM) can have significant implications and benefits for students. SBM empowers school communities, including students, to actively participate in decision-making processes. This involvement can lead to better educational policies, teaching methods, and curriculum development, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of education. When students are involved in the decision-making processes of their school, it can lead to increased engagement and a sense of ownership in their education. Students may feel more connected to their school community, leading to a positive impact on attendance, participation, and overall academic achievement.

### *Parents/Stakeholders*

In addition, parents and stakeholders would be aware of their responsibilities and accountability at school as members of the governing body that sustains the school community. This study would inform them that at the school level, the entire school community is responsible for the school's activities, not just the principal and teachers. Improving school performance through the collaboration of community leaders, local government officials, and other stakeholders.

### *Future Researchers*

When it comes to School-based Management (SBM) practices, this study might be used as a reference for academics in the future who are attempting to discover answers to questions raised by previously identified issues. In addition, the results of this research would assist them in investigating and delving further into the crucial role that school administrators have in the implementation of SBM, as well as the function that the community plays in the development of teaching and learning outcomes.

The following terms were defined operationally for clarity and understanding.

### *School-Based Management*

SBM is the institutional manifestation of grassroots decentralization in education. It is based on the national policy of decentralization originally established by the Philippine Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160) as a response to the new challenges to sustainable human development by empowering local communities to become self-reliant and more effective partners in achieving national goals (DepEd, 2006). In this study, this focuses on the implementation of SBM level of practice in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City.

### *Elementary Schools*

In this study, this refers to the elementary public schools situated in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City that implement School-Based Management.

## *Lens of Elementary Teachers*

In this study, this refers to the experiences or perspectives of elementary teachers in implementing SBM level of practice in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City

### *1.3 Review of Significant Literatures*

In this section presents a review of related literature about the perception of elementary teachers in School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice. The sources came from books, journals, internet articles, and other publications. The authors are properly cited and acknowledged. The propositions, theories, and findings are believed to be relevant to the present study.

#### *School-Based Management*

School-based management is a form of decentralization in the field of education, according to a study. It defines decision-making authority for school sites and encourages schools to be accountable and liable for the learning outcomes of students under their care and authority. In addition, its primary objective is the enhancement of school performance and student achievement. (Sumarsonoa et al., 2019) Those who are integrally involved in addressing the challenges, issues, and problems at school are involved in decision-making so that they can plan and implement various programs and projects that meet the requirements of students.

In 2012, the Department of Education implemented School-based Management in all public schools, despite its existence for decades in the educational systems of countries such as Australia, the United States, Indonesia, and others. One of its objectives is to enhance learning outcomes by encouraging all institutions to continuously develop. Thus, the management framework must consider the unique requirements of the students and the community. However, schools are unable to improve due to obstacles encountered in the implementation of SBM (Leroy, 2013).

Prasch (2019) identified some of the issues encountered by SBM stakeholders. There is more work for internal and external stakeholders, less efficiency, unequal school performance, a greater need for staff development, confusion regarding new roles and responsibilities, and coordination issues. Schools also encountered a lack of knowledge among stakeholders regarding what SBM is and how it operates; a lack of decision-making skills, communication, trust among stakeholders, and teachers' time commitment; and the unwillingness of some administrators and teachers to delegate decision-making authority to others (Prasch, 2019).

According to research that was carried out by Bala (2017), some of the difficulties that have been faced by the SBM committee in the Northwest Zone of Nigeria include a lack of adequate communication, a lack of members' commitment, and a reluctance on the part of members to attend meetings. These results align with those of Adediran (2010), who discovered a similar set of obstacles in addition to a lack of enthusiasm among members of the SBM committee.

Moreover, school-based management involves significant and consistent decentralization at the school level in which the entire school community has decision-making authority. These decisions involve the allocation of knowledge, technology, materials, authority, people, money, time, and labor, among other resources. In addition, school-based management involves more than just the integration of goal setting, planning, and budgeting. Rather, decision-making entities must ensure that management cycles include implementation and systematic evaluation in order to provide room for improvement, as the school remains accountable to central authority for any decisions made (Okitsu & Edwards, 2017).

Malaysia has used School-Based Management (SBM) for two decades. However, Malaysian social science academics ignored SBM studies. SBM implementation success is unknown. A decade-long literature study on SBM in Malaysia found minimal application of administrative-control and professional-control approaches. This evaluation highlighted school leadership and teacher competence as key problems. The researcher suggested a uniform SBM evaluation tool and highlighted the responsibilities of district and state education administrators in empowering school leaders and teachers and the PTA. Empowering school leaders increases leadership capability, while empowering teachers increases motivation and professional advice in pedagogy, professional development, accountability, and integrity (Isa et al., 2020).

## **2. Method**

In this chapter, some important sections were presented. These were philosophical and qualitative assumptions of the study, research design, research participants, ethical considerations, role of the researcher, data collection, data analysis and trustworthiness of the study.

## 2.1 Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

Recent discussions focused on the paucity of philosophical thought in scientific inquiry. Numerous eminent scholars in the past emphasized the importance of discussing philosophical issues in relation to evolving research methods, the theoretical, and intellectual foundations of any investigation. These four fundamental assumptions were not as complicated as their titles suggested. During the planning phase of a research study, or any endeavor for that matter, certain assumptions were always made. As a researcher, it was not my responsibility to substantiate or determine their validity. According to research (Palagolla, 2016), this was the case.

My research topic concentrated on the level of SBM implementation among elementary school instructors in the South 1 District of the Davao Panabo City Division. In order to better concentrate my efforts, I chose to investigate some of the theoretical concepts or methods of qualitative research to better describe the question I was attempting to answer. Nevertheless, I could not get there unless I provided a more comprehensive definition of the issue. Four philosophical assumptions were enumerated by Creswell and Poth (2016):

**Ontology.** In qualitative research, ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of being, existence, or reality. It is focused on comprehending the fundamental nature of the social and cultural phenomena under investigation. Qualitative researchers explore and define the nature of the social world and the relationships between its various elements. Ontological assumptions play a guiding role for researchers in understanding what they believe exists and shaping their perception of reality (Creswell and Poth, 2016)

The ontological stance adopted by a researcher has a significant impact on various aspects of the research process, including research design, data collection methods, and data analysis. For instance, a researcher with a realist ontology may employ more structured methods to uncover an objective reality, while a researcher embracing a constructivist ontology might utilize more open-ended and interpretive approaches to capture subjective experiences and meanings attributed by individuals. In summary, ontology in qualitative research involves the researcher's assumptions and beliefs about the nature of reality, influencing the entire research process, from the formulation of research questions to the interpretation of findings.

**Epistemology.** Epistemology in qualitative research pertains to the examination of knowledge and its acquisition, encompassing questions related to the nature of knowledge, its sources, and the criteria for considering information as knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Within the realm of qualitative research, epistemology is focused on comprehending how researchers gain knowledge and interpret the social world.

The epistemological stance adopted by a researcher significantly influences their approach to research design, data collection, and data analysis. Those adhering to a positivist epistemology may prioritize objective and measurable data, employing structured research methods. In contrast, researchers embracing constructivist epistemology may accentuate the significance of subjective experiences, employing more open-ended and interpretive methods. To sum up, epistemology in qualitative research addresses inquiries about the nature of knowledge and how researchers come to comprehend and interpret the social world. The selection of an epistemological stance molds the research process and determines the types of conclusions that can be drawn from the study.

**Axiology.** Axiology in qualitative research referred to the study of values, specifically examining the role of values in the research process. It involved an exploration of the researcher's and participants' values, as well as an acknowledgment of how these values might have shaped the research design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2016). So, in this, study, I greatly considered the information of my participants very valuable as it would serve as my basis to explore the experiences of kindergarten teachers in teaching alphabet knowledge to the learners and their insights drawn from their experiences.

By addressing axiological considerations, qualitative researchers aimed to enhance the credibility, validity, and ethical soundness of their studies. A reflexive approach to axiology involved ongoing self-awareness and critical reflection throughout the research process, enabling researchers to navigate the complex interplay of values in qualitative inquiry. It was essential for researchers to transparently report their values and biases, as well as how they addressed them, in order to contribute to the transparency and trustworthiness of the research.

In this study, I considered the information provided by my participants to be extremely valuable, as it served as the basis for my investigation into the experiences of elementary teachers in implementing SBM level of practice in South District, Division of Panabo City, their coping mechanisms in response to the challenges they encountered, and the insights



gained from their experiences.

Rhetoric. The purpose of this research was to investigate the methods that authors and presenters used to enlighten, convince, or inspire certain audiences while addressing particular circumstances. The primary emphasis of rhetoric was on the use of argumentation and speech as methods for influencing the opinions of both people and groups. In addition, rhetoric gave you a framework that you could use to critically analyze the choices you made while writing or reading. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), having knowledge of how to utilize the tools of rhetoric might have made it easier for you to communicate with others and convince more people to agree with your perspective

In addition to this, I limited the number of words that I had to employ in each phrase. When I was crafting the goal statements and the researcher inquiries, I utilized qualitative terminology such as "explore" to help demonstrate this notion.

## 2.2 Qualitative Assumptions

This qualitative study utilized a phenomenological approach. Armstrong (2017) defined phenomenology as an experiential philosophy. According to phenomenology, human experience was the ultimate source of all meaning and value. All philosophical systems, scientific theories, and aesthetic assessments were abstractions of the actual world's flux and decline. According to phenomenology, the researcher's job was to describe the structures of experience, such as consciousness, the imagination, relationships with others, and the position of the human subject in society and history. Phenomenological theories of literature viewed the work of art as mediators between the consciousnesses of the author and the reader, or as attempts to disclose aspects of the nature of humans and their environments.

Without specific details or updated information on the School-Based Management (SBM) practices in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City, I can offer a general context for discussion. School-Based Management is a decentralized approach to educational administration that emphasized participatory decision-making at the school level. In the South 1 District of Panabo City, the implementation of SBM reflected an effort to enhance the autonomy of schools, allowing them to tailor their policies and practices to meet the unique needs of their students and communities. The level of SBM practice in this district may have varied, influenced by factors such as local leadership, community engagement, and available resources. Challenges and successes in implementing SBM could have been related to the district's socio-economic context, the involvement of stakeholders, and the effectiveness of support structures. Further investigation into the specific initiatives, collaborative efforts, and outcomes within the SBM framework in South 1 District would have provided a more nuanced understanding of its level of practice and its impact on the local education landscape.

## 2.3 Research Design

This qualitative phenomenological study investigated the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of elementary teachers in implementing SBM level of practice. The study of Seidman (2006), cited by Bevan (2014), indicated that qualitative methods required three interviews per person, the first of which was a life history interview that provided context, the second of which was an interview designed to reconstruct experiences with their structural relationship, and the third of which allowed the respondent to reflect on their experience.

I employed a qualitative research design to comprehend and investigate the lived experiences of elementary school teachers implementing the SBM level of practice. Additionally, this design facilitated a complete comprehension of human experience and problems. Furthermore, it was the most common method for collecting data through participant interviews. All data was extracted from the participants through in-depth interviews and phone recordings.

Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that attempts to capture the substance of a phenomenon by examining it from the perspective of those who have experienced it. Phenomenology aimed to explain the significance of the experience of a phenomenon in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced (Neubauer et al., 2021). Similarly, the phenomenological approach was utilized for this qualitative endeavor. Following Creswell's (2015) example, I demonstrated how phenomenological research could be used to investigate the shared lived experiences of multiple individuals who experienced the same concept or phenomenon. Educational qualitative research designs included phenomenology (Creswell, 2015).

Phenomenology was an approach that I chose because it lent itself well to the study of lived or shared experiences. It was a powerful instrument for acquiring a good knowledge of human experiences, particularly the experiences of elementary teachers with regard to the implementation of SBM level of practice.

In addition to a series of methodological procedures, I used purposive sampling to identify participants for this study. During the data collection procedure, I conducted in-depth interviews (IDI) to accomplish data saturation. The information was subjected to thematic analysis. In this study, I rigorously assimilated and applied both the concept of dependability and ethical considerations. This method was used to collect information from participants regarding their experiences. This allowed the participants to ruminate on their experiences and develop their SBM-level managerial skills.

#### 2.4 Research Participants

This phenomenological inquiry involved ten (10) elementary teachers in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City. All 10 participants were interviewed in-depth virtually (IDI). All of them underwent virtual in-depth interviews. In determining the number of participants, I followed the suggestion of Francis et al. (2010), cited by Simet et al. (2018b), which recommended a sample size of ten interviews and a 'stopping criterion' of three. This study followed Creswell's (2014) suggestion that a characteristic of a qualitative research design is the small number of participants, and that the sample size typically ranges from three to ten participants, depending on the qualitative design used.

In order for the participants in this study to make their selections, the technique of purposive sampling was used. According to Guetterman (2015), purposive sampling is a technique in which the researcher selects participants on the basis of their characteristics. Moreover, according to the research conducted by Palinkas et al. (2015), which was cited by Campbelle et al. (2020), purposive sampling is a technique for identifying and selecting cases that make the most efficient and pertinent use of limited research resources. This is achieved by selecting participants who are most likely to provide efficient and pertinent information.

The participants were selected based on the following criteria: (a) must be elementary teachers who were connected to a public school in South 1 District in the Division of Panabo City; (b) must have at least one (1) year of service; (c) they must be willing to impart their experiences in the study. On the other hand, the following were the exclusion criteria: (a) elementary teachers with less than one year of teaching experience; and (b) elementary teachers outside of South 1 District, Division of Panabo City. Moreover, I strictly complied with the criteria set for selecting research participants and ensured that the research participants were varied in terms of gender, age, status, and school category.

In addition, the participants were informed of the interview schedule, including the time and location. Given the importance of their availability and propensity to participate, the capacity for clear, expressive, and reflective communication of experiences and perspectives was deemed morally significant (Bernard, 2002). Similarly, promoting an honest and open exchange of information aided in reducing biases and threats to the validity of this study.

#### 2.5 Ethical Consideration

In conducting research, ethical considerations were strictly adhered to. Although ethical considerations are essential, researchers must become more aware of contemporary factors that influence the reporting of ethical considerations in research studies. This study aimed to investigate the experiences of elementary school teachers in implementing the SBM level of practice. Participants who served as teachers exercised their human rights. Priority number one was assuring the participants' welfare and maintaining the confidentiality of their identities and responses. To establish ethical considerations, I adhered to the fundamental ethical consideration principles outlined in the Belmont Report of 1979, namely respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

**Respect for Persons.** According to Nambisan (2017), in order for people to be afforded respect, it was necessary to acknowledge that they were self-sufficient, self-aware, and capable of appreciating the value of their own distinctive thoughts and choices. The degree of protection was determined by the nature of the prospective advantages and hazards, which were presented in the form of understandable informed consent, necessary for participants to voluntarily take part in the research project (Research Integrity, 2021).

I included the ethical opinion that the people who participated in my research were capable of making their own decisions and that their autonomy was respected at all times so that I could create respect for individuals as an important ethical principle in my investigation. Before beginning the actual research project, Informed Consent Forms, also known as ICFs, were sent out to all of the participants. The ICFs were made available to participants to get their agreement and to enable their participation in a way that was both voluntary and without any element of compulsion on their behalf. The ICFs were made available for distribution so that participants could sign them. I provided the participants with a sufficient

amount of time to read the whole of the permission form before deciding whether or not they would willingly take part in the research. The participant's signature on the permission form demonstrated that they had read the document in its entirety, understood what it said, and were prepared to take part in the study.

In spite of this, if at any point throughout the interview they expressed a desire to withdraw their involvement, I respected their choice and made sure that there was no element of force involved in the process. The ICF provided them with information on the survey. The ICF form that I gave them included the following components: (a) adequate information about the research study, its focus, nature, full information of the methodology and its suitability, and its potential risks and benefits; (b) the participant's capacity for decision-making; and (c) the participant's voluntary participation. I gave them the form because I wanted to ensure that they were fully informed about the research study. The participant was only able to give their approval to an encrypted ICF if it was shown to them.

During the orientation preceding the in-depth interviews, I reminded them of the study's purpose, its significance to the community to which they belonged, and the potential risks and benefits of participation. I also described the study's methodology, data analysis, and implications. Due to the fact that this study was conducted during the pandemic, it was essential to ensure the safety of the researcher and participants (Williamson and Burns, 2014). This limited distribution of ICFs to the gatekeeper. If an in-person interview was required, I adhered to health protocols, such as donning a face mask and washing my hands. I also requested permission to record the interview for purposes of documentation and data analysis. I assured them that the recordings would be safely stored and disposed of in accordance with the Data Privacy Act.

I also reassured the participants that they would not suffer any harm as a result of their participation in the study project by assuring them that I would adhere to all of the ethical principles and health regulations. I also let them know that there were no major dangers associated with taking part in the research on their end.

In order to show proper regard for the people involved, both the secrecy of the information and the anonymity of the participants were taken into consideration. As a direct consequence of this, the confidentiality of any personally identifying information revealed by participants throughout the process of data collection and reporting was maintained (Allen, 2017).

I informed my participants that their identities would be protected by assigning them code names, blackening their signatures, and encrypting their data on secure storage devices, hard drives, and computers. Prior to the interview, I asked them to compose a personal email using their code identities. During the virtual interview, I also assigned them code names for use as screen identities. I also informed them that using this personalized email address and code identity would safeguard them throughout all research-related communications, including the interview.

I also promised that member checking would be carried out in order to further respect the authority of my participants. During this process, the participants had the opportunity to examine the transcripts and correct any comments that did not adequately represent their thoughts. This ensured that the findings were accurate.

**Beneficence.** The 1979 Belmont Report defined beneficence as the ethical treatment of others characterized by respect for and protection of their autonomy and pursuit of their well-being. In addition, an evaluation had to identify measures that would maximize the anticipated benefits of the research and mitigate any risks or potential harm (Nambisan, 2017). Consequently, a generous and compassionate act that exceeded exact duty and was accompanied by a profound reverence for the moral obligations of others was exemplary (Podany, 2017).

For this research to adhere to the beneficence principle, I protected the participants and their institutions. By allocating them code names and blackening their signatures on signed documents, all identifying information, including their names and signatures, was kept secret. I also ensured that my participants were protected and cared for at all costs. In addition, I reassured the participants that, aside from the time commitment, their participation in the study posed minimal risks. Due to the fact that the study was conducted during the pandemic, I ensured that all safety protocols were followed to prevent the spread of Covid-19 by conducting the interview virtually or online. When conducting face-to-face interviews, I ensured that all participants strictly adhered to appropriate health protocols.

In addition, I maximized the potential benefits of this investigation for the participants. Their participation facilitated the communication of their experiences and concerns regarding the implementation of SBM-level practice. Informing the academy and the community about elementary teachers' experiences with School-Based Management (SBM) level of practice could pave the way for school administrators to create a policy that addresses the concerns and aspirations of teachers and implements an intervention program to help them maximize the benefits of School-Based Management (SBM) and minimize its problems.



Within the scope of this study, I also ensured that the benefits of this research were communicated to all public elementary school teachers. The findings of this study were disseminated to the school administrators of the participating institutions to assist them in formulating policies and programs that would benefit the teacher community. I also let them know that the findings of the study would be presented at conferences where their rights and interests would be safeguarded.

Justice. Justice focused on the concept of participant impartiality (Townsend et al., 2010), which included moral requirements for impartial methods and study participant selection outcomes (Belmont Report, 1979). To ensure a reasonable and equitable distribution of participants, the abolition of compelled participation was the most essential aspect of the concept of justice (Adams, 2013). In addition, it promoted the equitable distribution of rewards and risks by prohibiting the exploitation of vulnerable individuals and assuring the neutrality of the subject pool and recruitment of volunteers (Research Integrity, 2021).

To assure the validity of this study, I used the technique of purposive sampling to select participants equitably. Participants were identified based on the requirements for participation. In addition, I ensured that participants came from qualified institutions within the chosen school district. Based on the inclusion criteria, a letter of permission from the participant's school had to be obtained and sent to the school principal. In this investigation, discrimination in participant selection was forbidden.

Furthermore, justice was done not only for the people who took part in the research but also for the community in which they lived. Only questions that were pertinent to the aim of the study were asked throughout the interview process; this was because the scope and constraints of the research were taken into consideration.

Within the scope of this investigation, only queries relevant to the research objectives were posed to the participants. Their experiences, coping strategies, and insights in instituting SBM level of practice in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City were the focus of research topics and in-depth questions posed to them.

Moreover, I ensured that the interview time and platform were selected based on the convenience of the participants. I ensured that they did not incur any expenses. Instead, I reimbursed them in cash for their internet and data connection charges incurred during the online interview. Additionally, participants received a token of appreciation for their participation in the study. To ensure fairness, the questions asked during the IDI were derived from the research questions. To obtain voluminous data, however, incisive and iterative inquiry was utilized.

In addition, to ensure fairness in terms of research location, I selected participants based on the selection criteria, study concentration, and various research sites. The number of research participants at each research location was distributed fairly. The research sites were elementary schools in South 1 District, Division of Panabo City, as the study's participants were public elementary school teachers who observed the phenomenon of interest. These three or more research locations were institutions where the participants were elementary teachers; those who were not elementary teachers not detailed in South 1 District were not included.

I also placed a copy of the study in the library of Rizal Memorial Colleges for future use. I also provided a copy of the results and discussion of this study to the school principals of the participating schools so that they could use them as a foundation for formulating and implementing policies and programs that would benefit and aid their teachers in terms of SBM level of practices.

The Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10173) in the Philippines established the legal framework for protecting the privacy of individuals' personal information. In the context of qualitative research, adherence to the provisions of this act was crucial to ensure the ethical and lawful handling of data. Researchers engaging in qualitative studies had to be particularly mindful of the principles outlined in the act, as the nature of qualitative research often involved the collection and analysis of sensitive personal information. Prior to data collection, researchers had to inform participants about the purpose, methods, and potential uses of the information obtained, obtaining their informed consent in compliance with the act. It was essential to guarantee the confidentiality and security of data throughout the research process, from collection to storage and dissemination. Researchers had to implement safeguards to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure of sensitive information.

Additionally, when sharing research findings, efforts had to be made to de-identify data to protect the privacy of participants. Overall, researchers conducting qualitative studies in the Philippines had to integrate a robust understanding of the Data Privacy Act into their research protocols to uphold the rights and privacy of individuals involved in their studies.

## 2.6 Role of the Researcher

To conduct qualitative research, a researcher had to be prepared to invest a substantial quantity of time and energy in both the data acquisition and data processing phases (Corbin, 2014). Denzin and Lincoln (2013) argued that when conducting qualitative research, the researcher was an instrument of data collection.

One of my responsibilities as a researcher was to function as the interviewer or discussion facilitator. In addition, I was accountable for the data's transcription and encoding. The researcher was the subject's point of contact and communication channel. It was my responsibility in this investigation to gain access to the participants' mental and emotional states. Moreover, according to Sutton and Austin (2015), the primary responsibility of the researcher was to protect the personal information of the participants and ensure their safety and well-being.

As a researcher, my primary responsibility in this study was to ensure ethical rigor. Before, during, and after the conduct of this research, I sought approval from multiple authorities, including the Dean of Graduate School at Rizal Memorial Colleges, to ensure that all procedures were followed and adhered to. Similarly, I protected all information to assure the security of all participants.

As the sole researcher involved in this study, I conducted a virtual in-depth interview and directed participants through the correct interview protocol. Before we began the interview, I first obtained permission to record it so that I could retain a copy. In addition, I interrogated the participants by posing questions and making other inquiries to capture additional data required for the study. Using the meeting application's screen recording feature, I ensured that the totality of the virtual interview was accurately documented in my role as a researcher. This measure was taken to ensure that the responses of every single participant were taken into account during the data transcription procedure.

My responsibilities also included serving as a transcriber. As a transcriber, it was my responsibility to convert recorded data into text by attentively, repeatedly, and meticulously listening to the digital interview recording. This enabled me to confirm that the content had been accurately transcribed and prevent data-related misunderstandings. In addition, the interview could be conducted in the participant's native language so that they could express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their entirety. As a result, one of the duties of my position as a researcher was to translate the responses of the participants from their native language to Standard English, the language used in academic research.

In addition, I verified that the transcripts accurately reflected what the participants intended to convey during the virtual interview. This allowed participants to examine the transcriptions of their responses, which was extremely useful during the member-checking procedure. I also served as the primary data analyst because I was the one to analyze the text to comprehend the context and identify the themes that arose from the participants' responses. In addition, the researcher was responsible for ensuring that ethical standards were adhered to when carrying out the aforementioned responsibilities.

Maintaining the ethical standards of the study while adhering to the specified responsibilities and obligations for researchers was always essential and required. This was because maintaining these standards was always essential and vital. In addition, it was necessary to conduct research and evaluate the morality of the plan to successfully complete this assignment.

## 2.7 Data Collection

In order to obtain data from the participants, there was a series of steps and protocols that needed to be followed to conduct the study successfully. According to Creswell (2015), qualitative researchers engaged in a series of actions prior to the conclusion of a research study to acquire data. As a researcher, I had to be familiar with each step of data collection. To achieve fruitful outcomes, the following measures were taken:

In order to conduct this study, I first obtained approval and support from the Dean of the Graduate School and the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Rizal Memorial Colleges, respectively. Both the letter of support from the Dean and the certificate of approval from the Research Ethics Committee served as evidence that I was authorized to conduct the research project. I then obtained a letter from the Division of Panabo City DepEd office granting permission to conduct the research.

Second, I provided an informed consent form to the elementary teachers and asked for their permission to include them as study participants or key informants. The participants were provided with the information contained in the informed consent form regarding the purpose of the study. I elaborated on the data collection procedure, the confidentiality of their identity, and how the information they provided would be maintained and preserved. Then, the signed assent served as evidence that their participation in the study was voluntary.

After collecting participants' signed informed consent forms, an in-depth interview was conducted using a validated

interview guide. The interview was conducted with each participant. The date and time of the interview were determined at the discretion of the participants, and they were reminded of the appointment the day before. The entire interview was recorded in writing and electronically, with the participants' permission. The entire face-to-face interview was conducted with courtesy. Written and recorded data were properly stored and systematically analyzed to answer the research questions.

I immediately conducted the primary analysis and commenced transcription after the interview. In this section of the research, I ensured that the Data Privacy Act was rigorously adhered to in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants' personal information. In order to eradicate the prospect of bias and erroneous interpretation, all of the information gathered from the participants was handled correctly. After that, I guaranteed the data's security and confidentiality.

## 2.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis was the process of using facts to discover a solution to a problem. It contributed to the decision-making process and helped researchers draw conclusions (Ashirwadani, 2014). These five stages included journaling, anecdotes, vignettes, coding, and thematic networks, per Akinyode and Khan (2018). As a researcher, I had to increase my knowledge of the newly developed qualitative approach to inquiry, data collection in an environment sensitive to the communities and study locations of the subjects, and inductive data analysis that identified patterns or themes by scrutinizing transcriptions.

Moreover, Norris, White, and Moules (2017) suggested that organizing codes and themes facilitated the transition from text to interpretation in research (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Similarly, Bengtsson (2016) stated that researchers used codes and themes to identify concepts and patterns during the analysis process to ensure reliability.

In my study, I used markers and crayons on analyzed text that exemplified important and recurring themes. Then, I grouped text with the same pen color and highlighted and labeled it with words and short sentences. Each answer of the participants was recorded and grouped according to their answers.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis because it allowed researchers to classify content that was both implicit and explicit (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). Using an exhaustive theme analysis, researchers were able to generate reliable and enlightening findings (Nowell et al., 2017). A thematic analysis, according to the author, was the process of identifying, analyzing, organizing, summarizing, and reporting on themes that arose from a data collection.

In this investigation, thematic analysis was conducted. The responses of all participants were then categorized and analyzed from general to specific. Answers with comparable central concepts were extracted and categorized into a vast array of categories. Each subject required at least three fundamental concepts to function. In addition, I designated each participant in the study a code name.

The selected theme was then exemplified using a wide variety of informational and material sources. Based on the premise that learning is most effective through immersive, real-world experiences. A strategy that can be adopted by a large number of individuals and is applicable to a diversity of theories and fields of study.

I then composed the responses to the study questions in tabular and textual format, making it easier to present the data in an aesthetically pleasing, easily understandable, and structured manner based on qualitative characteristics. I rigorously adhered to these measures in order to comprehend and accomplish the objective of my research. I also solicited input and additional confirmation from my data analyst in order to produce more convincing and clear analytical results.

In a similar vein, Guion et al. (2011) defined environmental triangulation as a type of triangulation that employed multiple research locations, settings, and other pertinent environmental variables, such as the time, day, or season. The goal was to determine whether environmental factors may have affected the collected research data. If the results remained unchanged under diverse environmental conditions, they were considered reliable. It was only employed when environmental factors were expected to influence the results.

This study employed environmental triangulation by incorporating the locations and circumstances of elementary teachers engaged in the process of instituting SBM level of practice through dialogues about the results. As a researcher, I believed that the environments in which the participants were discovered, and the locations of those individuals may have an effect on the data analysis performed with the available information.

## 2.9 Trustworthiness of the Study

Researchers persuaded themselves and others of the significance of their research findings by demonstrating their credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To satisfy the demands of the study's consumers, a qualitative study also adhered to the standard convention for trustworthiness; thus, researchers employed all methods for promoting trustworthiness (Anderson et al., 2007). Additionally, this research was guided by the principles of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

Credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1989) cited the credibility of the qualitative study as one of the most essential factors in establishing trustworthiness. Internal consistency is what the term "credibility" alludes to. The most significant obstacle is determining how to conduct rigorous analysis and demonstrating to others that it has been done (Gasson, 2004). Despite the limitations imposed by the new normal circumstance, to develop credibility measures for my study, I conducted member verification, iterative questioning during in-depth interviews, a comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation, triangulation, and a review of previous research. Implementing the study required the use of a tried-and-true method for accurately incorporating operational phases.

In addition, Shenton (2004) reported that iterative questioning is a concrete method for establishing credibility to unearth intentional lies. As the researcher, it was my responsibility to ensure that the interpretations were comprehensive and that the interpreters' understanding of the research participants, context, and methods was as precise and exhaustive as possible, so that accurate data could be collected from the participants.

In this study, a qualitative investigation utilized a methodical, recurrent, and recursive process of iterative inquiry. Within the context of this study, I had the option of altering the wording of the inquiries, providing the respondent with additional prompts, or rephrasing the topic. I also had the option of varying the query sequence. It provided participants with the option to rationalize and organize their responses, resulting in the collection of more transparent and relevant data. In addition, it aided me in obtaining the participants' trust and acquiring a deeper understanding of their culture and living environment.

In addition, there was an emphasis on member verification to validate and seek information regarding the data's accuracy (Simpson & Quigley, 2016). In this study, I ensured that each participant received a copy of the collected data and asked them to evaluate my interpretation. I also provided them with the opportunity to suggest adjustments to certain concepts if they were dissatisfied or believed their thoughts were being misrepresented. This ensured that my research was conducted scientifically.

Moreover, Schwandt (2001) emphasized that creating a detailed description required more than simply collecting pertinent information. In reality, to describe social action in great detail is to begin to analyze it by noting the circumstances, meanings, intentions, strategies, etc. that characterize a particular episode. As a researcher, I composed a thorough description of the study's methodology using paper and electronic records collected prior to, during, and after an interview and preserved in a secure and secret location.

To determine the extent to which the results of previous studies were consistent with these findings, it was necessary to investigate the results of previous research frames. To evaluate the quality of my qualitative work as a researcher, I compared my study's findings to any existing knowledge and literature.

Dependability. Dependability was the consistency of data over time and under the conditions of the investigation. To maintain consistency in the approach, it was recommended that the phases be replicated in the study of all areas to avoid premature closure and thereby reduce the impact of any biases (Polit & Beck, 2014; Connelly, 2016). Similarly, according to the principle of dependability in qualitative research, the study's findings should be presented so that other researchers can derive comparable conclusions from the data. This can be improved by meticulously documenting all research activities, findings, and potential course adjustments as the study progresses. Then, an external researcher can evaluate the accuracy of the documentation and the extent to which the data supports the conclusions (Nasaji, 2020).

I used detailed methodological descriptions to address the dependability issue more directly, allowing a future researcher to duplicate the work, if not necessarily with the same results. The research design could therefore be considered a "prototype model." By perusing such in-depth coverage, the reader could also assess the extent to which appropriate research practices were followed (Shenton, 2004).

In my research, I guaranteed a more direct approach to the issue of dependability through the collection and presentation of plain and coherent data. My data's consistency would be beneficial for future research. A comprehensive description of the study assisted the researcher in collecting coherent data. I provided a thorough explanation of the data so that future researchers could replicate the study.

Similarly, Brown (2005) emphasized that the use of multiple data collection techniques (such as observations, interviews, and surveys) to generate overlapping and, therefore, cross-validating data, or the use of overlapping methods, which carefully designed methodological triangulation, could increase the reliability of research.

In addition, according to Bernard (2012), the exact number of interviews required to accomplish data saturation in a qualitative study was unknown, but the researcher should capture as much information as feasible. In addition, interview questions should be devised so that different participants can respond to the same questions; otherwise, data saturation would be impossible because the target would be continuously changing (Guest et al., 2006).

As a result, it was my primary responsibility as a researcher to keep all information derived from in-depth interviews strictly confidential. I validated the veracity of the research materials using all of the information obtained from the interviews and discussions. To prevent bias, I also provided the research participants with the opportunity to verify the information gleaned from the interview.

**Confirmability.** Neutrality was another concept related to confirmability. It was the responsibility of the researcher to safeguard the intersubjectivity of the data. The evidence had to support the interpretation, not the preferences and worldview of the researcher. In this instance, analysis was secondary to interpretation (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

As stated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), the audit trail was an essential component of this procedure because it enabled any observer to track the progression of the research step by step through the documented decisions and methods. An audit trace was a comprehensive record of the procedures followed during a research project, from its inception to the development and presentation of its findings. Similarly, according to Creswell and Miller (2000), researchers created an audit trail by journaling and memoing the inquiry process, maintaining a research diary of all activities, devising a chronology for data collection, and documenting data analysis procedures in detail.

In this research, I used an audit trail to prevent any bias from one person's idea to the next. In addition, the audit trail could demonstrate to the reader that the study was credible. This ensured that the participants received coherent information and that no misunderstandings occurred during the study's execution. However, all data, observations, interview responses, and documents were preserved. Their information was kept secret from others.

In-depth methodological description was another measure of concreteness employed. According to Shenton (2004), the incorporation of a detailed methodological description, as well as the acknowledgment of flaws in study methods and their effects, could enable the validity of research results to be evaluated.

In this study, I ensured that the findings were based on the experiences of the participants and not on my own opinions. To avoid bias, I meticulously transcribed and translated the data and ensured that the results were consistent. I returned the transcribed data to the participants so they could determine whether or not the data was accurate.

**Transferability.** In contrast, transferability was the interpretive equivalent of generalizability. It described how the findings of qualitative research could be transferred to a new context involving additional participants (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begin, 2004). It was the extent to which concepts and theories could be applied to other situations. It offered the researcher depth and contextualized specific data. (Tong, & Dew, 2016) Researchers were able to compare their findings to those of other studies conducted in various regions or populations, as well as position their findings within other theoretical frameworks. Similarly, transferability referred to the extent to which qualitative research findings could be generalized or transmitted to other contexts or settings. Individual generalizing was primarily responsible for qualitative transferability (Ness, 2020). According to consultants (2020), the researcher facilitated the prospective user's evaluation of transferability through detailed description and targeted sampling.

I included all transcripts and data analyses in the appendix of my study so that they could be used as references in the future and to prevent bias. This aided the readers in relating the study's findings to their own experiences. I protected the security and privacy of the data that was collected. To identify the participants, I employed pseudonyms.

According to Shenton (2004), a comprehensive description of the investigated phenomenon permitted comparison. It was essential to provide a thorough description of the investigated phenomenon so that readers could completely comprehend it and compare it to instances they had personally encountered.

In my study, I ensured that the researchers determined the reliability of the study's results and conclusion so that they could use it in future research. I ensured that the collected data was accurate. In accordance with this, the researcher could ensure that the data would be consistent for the study to be of high quality and for future reference.

The files were renamed with codes and aliases to ensure the utmost security and confidentiality of the study's data. Thus, participant information and identification were safeguarded.

The information was encrypted and stored on a password-protected computer with a backup system. If the data storage limit was exceeded, all physical and digital copies of the files would be deleted and discarded, rendering it impossible to reconstruct the data.



### 3. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of elementary teachers in implementing the SBM level of practice in Panabo South 1 District. Further, this investigated teachers' coping strategies and insights which can be shared to others. At this stage of research, the experiences of teachers in school-based management (SBM) were generally defined as their learning and challenging experiences in the aspect of decentralization in education at the grassroots level. It is based on the national policy of decentralization that was originally established by the Philippine Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160) as a response to the new challenges to sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-sufficient and more effective partners in the attainment of the national goal. This was done as a response to the new challenges to sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-reliant and more effective partners in the attainment of the national goal.

#### *Experiences of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice*

The implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) represents a transformative approach to educational governance, shifting decision-making authority from centralized structures to individual schools. Within this context, teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the success of SBM initiatives. Their experiences in navigating the complexities of SBM are multifaceted, reflecting a dynamic interplay of various factors that influence their professional lives. Three major themes emerge as critical determinants in understanding the experiences of teachers in implementing SBM: empowerment and autonomy, collaboration and communication, and professional development and support. These themes highlight the multifaceted nature of teachers' experiences in implementing School-Based Management. The degree of empowerment, collaboration, and support can greatly influence the success and sustainability of SBM practices within a school setting. Understanding these themes is crucial for policymakers, school administrators, and educators aiming to enhance the effectiveness of SBM and create a positive working environment for teachers.

**Empowerment and Autonomy.** One major theme in the experiences of teachers in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) is the degree of empowerment and autonomy they experience. Teachers involved in SBM often find themselves with increased decision-making responsibilities and the authority to shape various aspects of the school environment, including curriculum design, resource allocation, and school policies. The level of autonomy can significantly influence the teacher's sense of ownership, job satisfaction, and the effectiveness of their instructional strategies. Positive experiences may lead to a more motivated and engaged teaching force, while challenges in managing increased responsibilities could result in stress and burnout.

IDI-01 reacted:

*"I've experienced a significant positive shift in my sense of empowerment. SBM has allowed me to take a more active role in decision-making processes. I have the autonomy to design and adapt my lessons to meet the specific needs of my students. The freedom to contribute to curriculum decisions and resource allocation has not only made me feel more valued but has also translated into a more engaging and tailored learning experience for my students. It's empowering to see our collective efforts shaping the educational environment positively."*

Additionally, IDI-05 unearthed:

*"I appreciate the intention behind SBM, and there are certainly aspects where I feel more empowered. However, the autonomy is somewhat mixed. While I have more say in certain decisions, there are still constraints and guidelines that limit the extent of my autonomy. Some decisions feel more collaborative, but others seem to come from a top-down approach. It's a work in progress, and I hope to see more genuine empowerment where teachers' insights are consistently valued and integrated into the decision-making process."*

Finally, IDI-06 confirmed:

*"Honestly, I haven't felt a significant increase in empowerment. While the concept of SBM is meant to give us more control, the reality feels different. Important decisions still seem to be made at higher levels, and we're left implementing them without much input. It's frustrating because I want to have a real say in what happens in my classroom and school. Until there's a more genuine transfer of decision-making power to teachers, it's hard to say that I feel truly empowered under SBM."*

The synthesis of interview responses from teachers regarding the theme of empowerment and autonomy in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) reflects a spectrum of perspectives. While some teachers express a positive shift in their sense of empowerment, citing increased autonomy in decision-making processes, others offer more nuanced views, acknowledging a mix of empowerment and constraints within the SBM framework. There is a common recognition of the intent behind SBM to empower educators, yet concerns emerge about the actualization of this empowerment in practice. The need for genuine collaboration and the integration of teachers' insights into decision-making processes is highlighted as a crucial aspect

for achieving a more robust sense of empowerment. Overall, these responses emphasize the importance of ongoing dialogue and refinement within the SBM model to ensure that teachers feel authentically empowered and have a meaningful impact on the educational landscape.

It was found that educational changes had a positive impact on both the levels of student accomplishment and the levels of teacher motivation in the schools located in Southern Thailand. He noted that school-based management (SBM) is a leadership paradigm that gives teachers and the local community the chance to actively engage in the development of schools, share shared objectives, and share responsibility for the learning outcomes of children (Haruthaithanasan, 2017).

School-based management is a form of decentralization in the field of education, according to a study. It defines decision-making authority for school sites and encourages schools to be accountable and liable for the learning outcomes of students under their care and authority. In addition, its primary objective is the enhancement of school performance and student achievement. (Sumarsonoa et al., 2019) Those who are integrally involved in addressing the challenges, issues, and problems at school are involved in decision-making so that they can plan and implement various programs and projects that meet the requirements of students.

In addition to the role of school administrators, teacher competence is a significant factor in the successful implementation of a policy. Ali et al. (2019) discovered a significant relationship between the decision-making and personal competency dimensions of teacher empowerment and teacher autonomy, both in general and in curriculum-specific aspects. As autonomous individuals, teachers must take proactive measures to maximize their decision-making freedom and autonomy in order to solve education-related issues (Varatharaj, 2015).

In addition, an article discussing School-based Management in the Philippines and its innovations in the public education system stated that by fostering transparency, intensifying collaborative practices, and ensuring stakeholders' participation at nearly all levels of decision-making, SBM honed and cultivated a culture of innovation in DepEd schools. In addition, SBM empowers educational leaders to make decisions regarding the curriculum and learning management, the hiring and administration of the institution's personnel, and the financial management of the school (Maca, 2019).

Involvement of teachers in governance must also be characterized by two-way communication, transparency, and trust. The essence of collaborative decision making is the capacity to hear and consider the opinions and suggestions of others. It is crucial to remember that leaders must not only heed their own voice, but also the voices of those around them. By doing so, leaders recognize the immense value of others. This teaches us that if we want our institution to prosper in planning and implementing decisions for the common benefit of all, mutual understanding among school personnel is vital (Kater, 2017).

#### *Collaboration and Communication.*

Another important theme revolves around the collaborative nature of SBM and the impact of communication among teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. Effective SBM requires open channels of communication and collaboration to ensure that decisions are made collectively and that all perspectives are considered. Teachers' experiences in implementing SBM may vary based on the quality of communication within the school community. Positive experiences may involve collaborative problem-solving, shared decision-making, and a sense of community among educators. On the other hand, challenges may arise when there is a lack of effective communication, leading to misunderstandings or conflicts.

IDI-02 meant:

*"SBM has brought about a positive shift in collaboration and communication within our school community. There's a more open exchange of ideas, and decisions are made collectively. Teachers, administrators, and parents are actively engaged in discussions about school policies, curriculum changes, and resource allocation. This collaborative approach has fostered a sense of unity and shared responsibility. Regular meetings and effective communication channels ensure that everyone is on the same page, contributing to a more cohesive and supportive educational environment."*

Likewise, IDI-03 responded:

*"The idea of increased collaboration is there, but the reality is a bit mixed. While there are efforts to involve teachers in decision-making, communication breakdowns and a lack of clear channels sometimes hinder effective collaboration. Some decisions seem to be made without thorough input from all stakeholders, leading to occasional confusion. We're on the right path, but there's room for improvement in terms of ensuring that communication is transparent and that everyone's perspectives are genuinely considered."*

Lastly, IDI-07 indicated:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in collaboration. While there are discussions, it often feels like decisions are made without truly involving teachers. Communication channels are not as effective as they could be, and there's a lack of clarity about the decision-making process. It's essential for SBM to prioritize genuine collaboration and ensure that teachers are not only informed but actively engaged in shaping the direction of the school. Without improved communication, the potential benefits of SBM might not be fully realized."*

The synthesis of interview responses from teachers on the theme of collaboration and communication in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) reflects a range of perspectives. While some teachers express a positive shift towards

increased collaboration, citing open discussions and collective decision-making, others offer more nuanced views, acknowledging challenges in communication and a need for improvement in transparency. The overarching theme underscores the importance of effective communication channels and genuine collaboration to ensure that all stakeholders, including teachers, are actively engaged in shaping the direction of the school. The synthesis highlights the recognition that successful SBM implementation requires ongoing efforts to foster a culture of open communication, inclusivity, and shared decision-making among educators and other stakeholders.

Consequently, school-based management (SBM) entailed participative management. In this regard, a School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a five-year development plan created with the assistance of the School Governing Council (SGC) and School Planning Team (SPT), which consists of the principal, teachers, community members, and other stakeholders. This SIP served as the basis for annual planning at the beginning of the school year and an evaluation at the conclusion of the academic year. This merely demonstrates that school-based management involves participation in which the community and local government units are mobilized by investing time, money, and effort to make the school a better place to learn, thereby enhancing the educational achievement of learners (Domitrovich et al., 2016).

In addition, it was believed that SBM is an exceptional strategy for the decentralization of educational institutions. This is because schools of all sizes will no longer be required to await directives from central offices before implementing projects and programs. In order to give principals, teachers, and community members more control and authority over what occurs in schools, district offices delegate decision-making to individual schools. According to Nir et al. (2016), those who are closest to students make better decisions that contribute to the development and enhancement of students' learning outcomes and school effectiveness.

Many believe that SBM as a form of education reform enables individual institutions to provide students with a quality education. Independence in school administration leads to the potential enhancement of school staff performance, direct participation in relevant organizations, and an expansion of the general public's comprehension of education. Good SBM implementation requires the demonstration of effective leadership, independence, impartiality, willingness, partnership, engagement, efficiency, and accountability. Also, according to Fathurrochman et al. (2002), school administrators should involve all relevant stakeholders in decision-making to improve school quality by achieving educational objectives.

In addition, school principals and teachers play a significant role in the success of SBM. This is due to the fact that teacher participation in decision-making is the key to a better understanding of the needs of students, allowing these needs to be met in a timely manner. This further implies that a meaningful conversation between the teacher and school principal would lead to significant areas where the teaching-learning process can be improved and appropriate action can be taken (Lasno et al., 2019).

Collaboration is deemed essential for inclusive education to be effective and reflective of best practices supported by research. In order for students with and without disabilities to learn in inclusive settings, general education and special education teachers and personnel must collaborate and share objectives, strategies, and physical space. Teachers and parents must form partnerships based on mutual trust and cooperation in order to provide an inclusive education. In order to establish effective institutions, pupils with and without disabilities must collaborate and support one another (Solone et al., 2020).

Although data-driven decision making can lead to increased student achievement, schools rarely use data effectively. Our hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analysis of this large-scale quantitative study reveals that, on average, teachers appear to score relatively well on the use of data for accountability and school development. Regarding education, however, several data sources are only utilized annually. School organizational characteristics and collaboration have the greatest impact on teacher data use in schools, according to Schildkamp et al. (2017).

### *Professional Development and Support*

The theme of professional development and support reflects the experiences of teachers in adapting to the changes brought about by SBM. Teachers may encounter opportunities for professional growth, such as training sessions on new teaching methodologies, leadership skills, or financial management. Positive experiences in this area can lead to increased job satisfaction and improved instructional practices. Conversely, challenges may arise when there is insufficient support or training, potentially leading to feelings of inadequacy, stress, or resistance to change among teachers. The level of support provided by administrators and the availability of resources for professional development significantly shape teachers' experiences with SBM implementation.

IDI-04 expressed:

*"SBM has brought about positive changes in terms of professional development and support. There's a greater emphasis on tailored training sessions that address the specific needs arising from our increased responsibilities. The support system is*

robust, with mentorship opportunities and resources to help navigate the challenges of the new roles. This proactive approach to professional development not only boosts confidence but also ensures that teachers are well-equipped to fulfill their evolving responsibilities under SBM."

In addition, IDI-08 revealed:

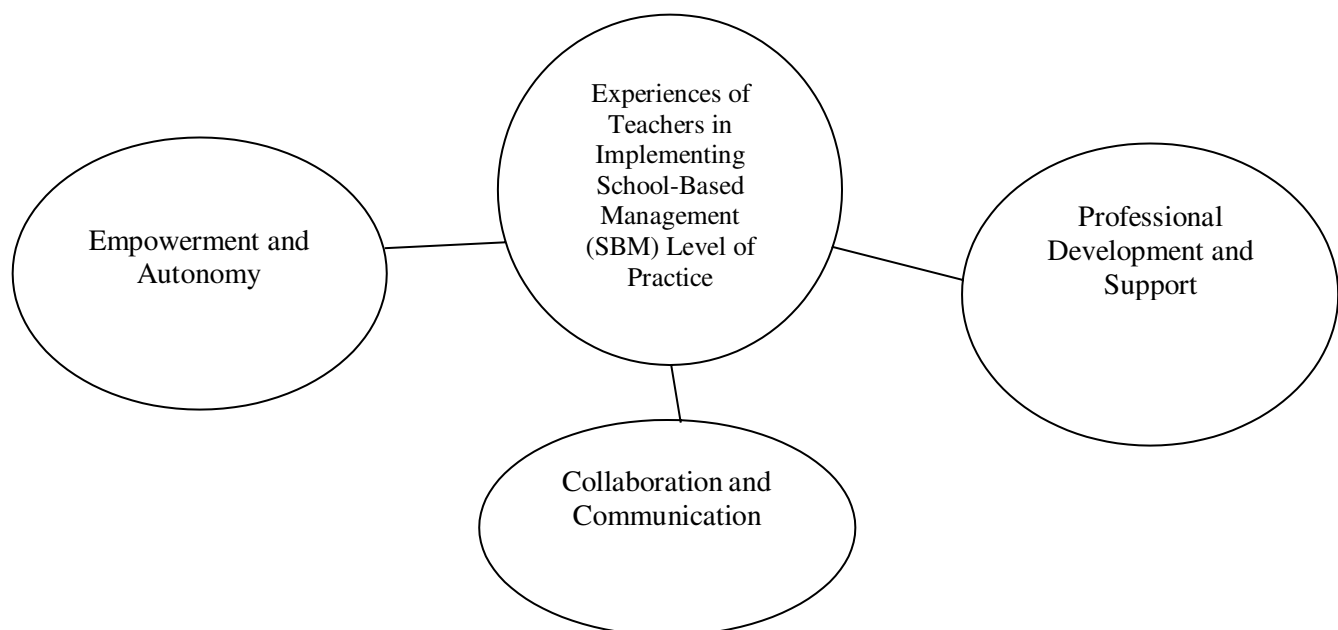
*"It's a bit of a mixed bag. While there are some opportunities for professional development, it doesn't always align with the specific challenges we face under SBM. The support system is there, but it could be more targeted and responsive. Sometimes it feels like we're left to figure things out on our own. More tailored training and a proactive support network would go a long way in helping teachers adapt to the changes brought about by SBM."*

Lastly, IDI-10 confirmed:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in professional development and support. The transition to SBM has brought about new challenges, but there's a lack of adequate training to address these issues. The support system feels limited, and it's not always clear where to turn for guidance. For SBM to be truly effective, there needs to be a more robust infrastructure for professional development, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared and supported in navigating the complexities of their evolving roles."*

The synthesis of interview responses from teachers on the theme of professional development and support in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) reveals a spectrum of perspectives. While some teachers express positive experiences with targeted training sessions and robust support networks, others convey a more mixed sentiment, pointing to the need for greater alignment between professional development opportunities and the specific challenges arising from SBM. Common among the responses is the acknowledgment that the support system, though present, could be more responsive and tailored to the evolving roles under SBM. Teachers highlight the importance of a proactive and targeted approach to professional development, emphasizing its crucial role in preparing educators to navigate the complexities of their changing responsibilities within the SBM framework. The synthesis underscores the call for continuous improvement in the infrastructure supporting teachers, ensuring that professional development initiatives are aligned with the unique demands of SBM implementation.

Malaysia has used School-Based Management (SBM) for two decades. However, Malaysian social science academics ignored SBM studies. SBM implementation success is unknown. A decade-long literature study on SBM in Malaysia found minimal application of administrative-control and professional-control approaches. This evaluation highlighted school leadership and teacher competence as key problems. The researcher suggested a uniform SBM evaluation tool and highlighted the responsibilities of district and state education administrators in empowering school leaders and teachers and the PTA. Empowering school leaders increases leadership capability, while empowering teachers increases motivation and professional advice in pedagogy, professional development, accountability, and integrity (Isa et al., 2020).



**Figure 1. Experiences of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice**

### *Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice*

The landscape of education is undergoing a transformative shift with the widespread adoption of School-Based Management (SBM), a model that decentralizes decision-making and empowers individual schools to take charge of their academic and administrative affairs. As this paradigm unfolds, teachers find themselves at the forefront of change, grappling with challenges and complexities associated with the implementation of SBM. Understanding how teachers cope with these challenges is crucial for creating a resilient and adaptive educational environment. Three major themes emerge as integral components of teachers' coping mechanisms within the context of SBM: adaptability and flexibility, collaborative problem-solving, and professional development and training.

In examining these three major themes, we gain insights into the dynamic strategies employed by teachers to cope with challenges in the implementation of SBM. The ability to adapt, collaborate, and engage in ongoing professional development not only helps teachers navigate obstacles but also contributes to the resilience and effectiveness of the entire educational ecosystem under the evolving paradigm of School-Based Management.

**Adaptability and Flexibility.** One major theme in understanding the coping mechanisms of teachers with challenges in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) is their adaptability and flexibility. Teachers often encounter various obstacles and changes during the SBM implementation process, ranging from shifts in roles and responsibilities to adjustments in teaching methodologies. The ability of teachers to adapt to these changes and exhibit flexibility in their approaches is a crucial coping mechanism. Teachers who can navigate uncertainties, embrace innovation, and adjust their strategies to align with SBM requirements are better equipped to overcome challenges and contribute positively to the implementation process.

IDI-02 uncovered:

*"SBM has truly enhanced my adaptability and flexibility. With the increased autonomy, I've been able to tailor my teaching methods to better suit the diverse needs of my students. The flexibility in decision-making allows for quicker adjustments to address emerging challenges. It's empowering to know that we can adapt our approaches to better meet the unique requirements of our school community. The newfound flexibility has not only improved my teaching but also made me more resilient in navigating changes within the dynamic educational landscape under SBM."*

Further, IDI-03 realized:

*"It's a bit of a mixed bag. While there's more room for autonomy, it also comes with added responsibilities that can be challenging to manage. The adaptability is there, but it often feels like we're navigating uncharted territory without a clear roadmap. There's a learning curve in balancing increased autonomy with the need for structure. I'm adapting, but it would be beneficial to have more guidance and resources to facilitate a smoother transition to the new responsibilities brought about by SBM."*

Finally, IDI-05 announced:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in adaptability and flexibility. The increased autonomy sounds good in theory, but the reality is that it brings more challenges than opportunities. There's a lack of clear guidance on how to navigate the new responsibilities, making it difficult to adapt effectively. While the intent may be to promote flexibility, it often feels like we're constrained by the uncertainties and complexities introduced by SBM. A more structured approach and targeted support would go a long way in facilitating adaptability."*

Teachers, when discussing the theme of adaptability and flexibility in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM), express a range of perspectives. One teacher highlights the positive impact of SBM on adaptability, emphasizing the newfound autonomy that allows for tailored teaching methods and quick adjustments to address emerging challenges. This teacher sees the increased flexibility as empowering and contributing to resilience in navigating changes within the educational landscape. In contrast, another teacher offers a more mixed perspective, acknowledging the autonomy but expressing challenges in managing added responsibilities. The adaptability is present but is coupled with a learning curve and a desire for more guidance to facilitate a smoother transition. A third teacher voices concerns about limited adaptability and flexibility, suggesting that the increased autonomy may not align with a structured approach, leading to difficulties in navigating new responsibilities introduced by SBM. This diversity of responses underscores the complex interplay between autonomy, adaptability, and the need for guidance within the evolving framework of School-Based Management.

In SBM, the more effective the principal is in their role, the more effective the implementation of the school's mission and vision, which results in increased human resource management efficiency (Shoma et al., 2015). The competency of a principal or superintendent is one of the factors that can impact the efficacy of a cluster school, as highlighted by Mansor and Suliman (2018). Ali et al. (2019) have suggested that school authorities, primarily principals and headmasters, should investigate various activities to enhance their leadership skills and autonomy that are pertinent to the management systems and educational goals of the twenty-first century. Principals and headmasters must be empowered to increase the level of



effectiveness of their leadership qualities in order to govern educational institutions and achieve the objective of SBM, which is to enhance the quality of education.

In addition, misunderstandings among teachers regarding changes in the education system and the dearth of involvement of the local school community in school administration can contribute to the efficacy of SBM implementation. The failures in implementing SBM can be attributed to a lack of comprehension of SBM implementation as well as minimal parental and community involvement due to the chunking or staging of information (Bandur, 2017; Syahrudin, 2014; Varatharaj, 2015).

**Collaborative Problem-Solving.** Another essential coping mechanism involves collaborative problem-solving among teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders. Challenges in SBM implementation may arise from conflicting perspectives, resource constraints, or resistance to change. Teachers who engage in collaborative problem-solving actively seek input from their colleagues, share ideas, and work collectively to find viable solutions. This theme emphasizes the importance of fostering a culture of teamwork and open communication, where teachers can pool their expertise to address challenges effectively. Collaborative problem-solving not only helps in overcoming specific issues but also strengthens the overall resilience of the school community in the face of ongoing challenges.

IDI-06 underscored:

*"SBM has had a positive impact on collaborative problem-solving within our school community. There's a culture of openness, and decisions are made collectively. Teachers, administrators, and parents actively engage in discussions, sharing insights and working together to find solutions. The collaborative approach has not only strengthened our sense of unity but has also resulted in more effective problem-solving. It's encouraging to see diverse perspectives considered, leading to well-rounded decisions that benefit the entire school."*

Also, IDI-09 communicated:

*"It's a bit of a mixed experience. While there are efforts to involve teachers in decision-making, the collaborative problem-solving process can be challenging. Sometimes decisions feel like they come from a top-down approach, and not all perspectives are considered equally. There's room for improvement in ensuring that everyone's insights are genuinely valued, leading to more inclusive and effective problem-solving under SBM."*

In addition, IDI-10 expressed:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in collaborative problem-solving. While there are discussions, it often feels like decisions are made without thorough input from all stakeholders. The process lacks true collaboration, and there's a need for a more inclusive approach. Effective collaborative problem-solving requires genuine engagement, and SBM could benefit from fostering a culture that values the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders in decision-making processes."*

Synthesizing the interview responses from teachers on the theme of collaborative problem-solving in School-Based Management (SBM) reveals a spectrum of perspectives. While some teachers express a positive shift toward a culture of openness, effective collaboration, and collective decision-making under SBM, others offer a more nuanced view, acknowledging challenges in ensuring equal consideration of all perspectives. The common thread among responses is the recognition of the importance of genuine collaboration in problem-solving processes, where diverse insights are valued. The synthesis emphasizes the need for ongoing efforts to strengthen the collaborative aspects of SBM, ensuring that decisions are truly collective and benefit from the wealth of perspectives within the school community. This underscores the significance of fostering a culture that encourages inclusive and effective problem-solving strategies as an integral part of the SBM implementation process.

Even though there are numerous problems in the field of education that seem to be reoccurring across the country, Lopez (2022) asserts that there are specific issues in one school that require immediate attention. In times such as these, the Department of Education implemented School-Based Management, which decentralized decision-making from central and regional offices to school offices, allowing school administrators and principals to concentrate on school-specific challenges. Principals are given greater authority and responsibility over what occurred and will occur in their institutions.

Hussein (2014) highlighted four factors for the significance of implementing SBM in Malaysia. First, SBM strengthens the development and transformational role of the school in the education transformation process; second, SBM fosters local level initiatives with locally developed programs that are sustainable and have long-lasting transformational effects. Thirdly, SBM enhances local leadership capabilities in terms of management experience and problem-solving, rather than relying heavily on top-down directives; and fourthly, SBM recognizes the professional role of school principals and teachers as key players, and the community as stakeholders, particularly in terms of decisions that affect them. Therefore, SBM is an adaptation made to enhance the education system that grants the school autonomy over administrative and management decisions (Varatharaj, 2015).

In any given policy, teachers are generally considered to be always ready for changes. However, teachers face loads of schoolwork and problems. There are inconsistencies between classroom practices that teachers believe in and prefer to use, with the practices mandated by policy, which are materialized in the form of the external testing system and accountability practice. However, it is common for administrators and teachers to always carry out all tasks following the established guidelines. Therefore, it is highly recommended to increase the motivation and guidance among teachers in areas such as pedagogy, professional development, accountability, and integrity. Autonomy in decision making among teachers will not be useful if the teachers are not prepared to be more proactive in his or her work. The ability to adapt to changes is a crucial trait among teachers as a part of their professionalism (Skedsmo & Huber, 2018).

As a guiding principle, shared governance acknowledges that each element of the education bureaucracy has a unique function, task, and responsibility for which it is primarily accountable for outcomes. In the decision-making process involving shared objectives, democratic consultation must be observed at all levels. The pupils, as the object and subject of instruction, shall be consulted on matters that affect their welfare and instructional requirements whenever and wherever appropriate and practicable. Operations are the responsibility of the concerned operating officer. The establishment of feedback mechanisms shall ensure coordinated and open communication between the central office, regional and division offices, and school campuses (RA 9155).

**Professional Development and Training.** The theme of professional development and training emerges as a significant coping mechanism for teachers grappling with the challenges of SBM implementation. Adequate training and ongoing professional development opportunities equip teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate new responsibilities and requirements associated with SBM. Teachers who have access to relevant training feel more confident and capable in handling challenges, making them more resilient in the face of change. Investing in continuous professional development serves as a proactive coping strategy, empowering teachers to stay informed, engaged, and capable of addressing challenges as they arise during the SBM implementation process.

IDI-01 articulated:

*"SBM has been a game-changer for professional development. The tailored training sessions have equipped me with the skills needed to navigate the increased responsibilities that come with SBM. The support system is robust, offering mentorship and resources that directly address the challenges we face. This proactive approach to professional development has not only boosted my confidence but has also created a conducive environment for continuous learning. It's evident that SBM values investing in educators, ensuring we have the tools and knowledge to succeed in our evolving roles."*

Moreover, IDI-04 underlined:

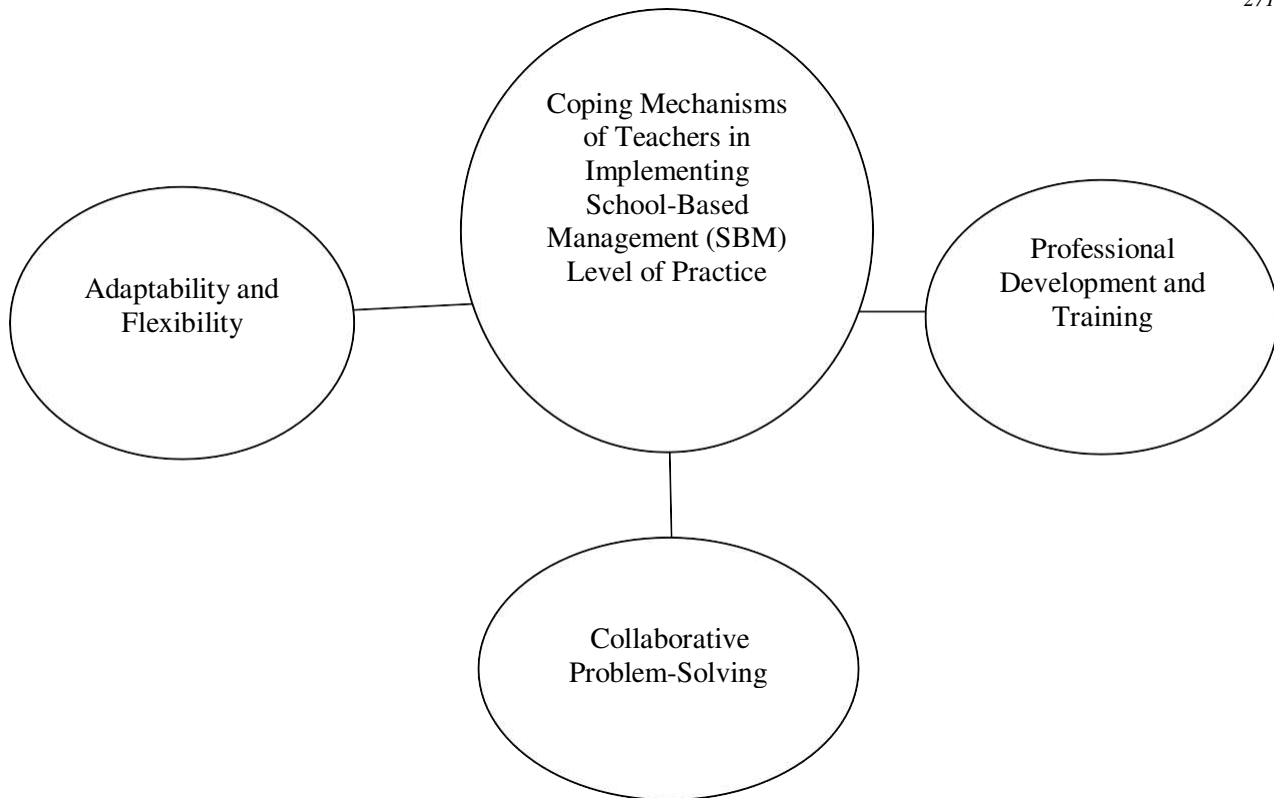
*"It's a bit of a mixed experience. While there are opportunities for professional development, it doesn't always align with the specific challenges we face under SBM. The support system is there, but it could be more targeted and responsive. Sometimes it feels like we're left to figure things out on our own. More tailored training and a proactive support network would go a long way in helping teachers adapt to the changes brought about by SBM."*

Further, IDI-08 unveiled:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in professional development. The transition to SBM has brought about new challenges, but there's a lack of adequate training to address these issues. The support system feels limited, and it's not always clear where to turn for guidance. For SBM to be truly effective, there needs to be a more robust infrastructure for professional development, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared and supported in navigating the complexities of their evolving roles."*

The synthesis of interview responses from teachers on the theme of professional development and training in School-Based Management (SBM) highlights a range of perspectives. While some teachers express a positive shift, citing tailored training sessions and a robust support system that equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the challenges introduced by SBM, others convey a more mixed or limited experience. Common among the responses is the acknowledgment that professional development opportunities could be more closely aligned with the specific demands of SBM, ensuring that educators receive targeted training to address the complexities of their evolving roles. The synthesis underscores the importance of ongoing efforts to enhance the infrastructure supporting professional development under SBM, emphasizing the need for responsiveness and tailored support to facilitate teachers' successful adaptation to the new educational paradigm.

The more intervention by district and state officers, the less teacher autonomy can be carried out in schools (Kim, 2018). Other than monitoring policy implementation, empowerment in school leaders and teachers, as well as identifying problematic teachers for further action should be focused on the district and state levels. Courses and workshops related to SBM that involve the school leader, teachers, parent, and community should be organized and promoted at the state and district levels to enhance further their knowledge and motivation in implementing this strategy in schools.



**Figure 2. Coping Mechanisms of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice**

### *Insights of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice*

The major themes on the insights of teachers in implementing SBM were ownership and accountability, student-centered approaches, and challenges and opportunities for professional growth. Understanding these major themes provides a nuanced perspective on the insights of teachers in implementing School-Based Management. It sheds light on their perceptions of ownership and accountability, the impact on student-centered approaches, and the challenges and opportunities for professional growth. This holistic understanding is essential for policymakers, administrators, and educators to refine and optimize SBM practices, ensuring that the insights of teachers are valued and integrated into the ongoing development of the decentralized educational model.

**Ownership and Accountability.** One major theme in understanding the insights of teachers in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) is the sense of ownership and accountability. Teachers' perspectives on SBM often revolve around their roles as active contributors to decision-making processes and the overall direction of the school. When teachers feel a sense of ownership, they are more likely to be invested in the success of SBM practices. Insights in this theme explore how teachers perceive their responsibilities, the impact of their decisions on the learning environment, and the level of accountability they experience under the SBM framework.

IDI-02 quipped:

*"SBM has positively transformed my sense of ownership and accountability. The decentralization of decision-making has given me a more active role in shaping the school's direction. I feel a stronger sense of ownership over my teaching strategies and involvement in curriculum decisions. With this autonomy comes a heightened accountability – I'm not just implementing decisions but actively contributing to them. It's motivating to know that our collective efforts directly impact the school's success, making me feel more invested in the educational journey of our students."*

Likewise, IDI-03 accentuated:

*"It's a mixed bag. While there's a push for increased ownership, it sometimes feels like accountability is unclear. Decisions are made collectively, but the lines of responsibility can be blurred. I appreciate the intent, but there's room for improvement in defining roles and expectations. It's essential to strike a balance where autonomy leads to a true sense of ownership without diluting the clarity of accountability for educators."*

Finally, IDI-07 communicated:

*"I haven't felt a significant increase in ownership. While the idea of SBM is to empower teachers, the reality is that crucial decisions often seem to come from higher levels. It's not always clear how much influence we truly have. Without a genuine sense of ownership, it's hard to feel a corresponding level of accountability. For SBM to be effective, there needs to be a more authentic transfer of decision-making power to teachers, ensuring that we are not just implementers but active contributors to the school's direction."*

The synthesis of teachers' interview responses on the theme of ownership and accountability within the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) reveals a range of perspectives. While some teachers express a positive transformation in their sense of ownership, citing active participation in decision-making and a heightened investment in the school's success, others offer more nuanced views. Concerns emerge regarding the clarity of accountability and the extent to which crucial decisions seem to originate from higher levels. The common thread among responses underscores the importance of a genuine transfer of decision-making power to teachers for effective SBM. Teachers emphasize the need for a clearer definition of roles and expectations to ensure that autonomy leads to true ownership without compromising the accountability of educators. The synthesis highlights the delicate balance required to empower teachers authentically within the SBM framework, fostering a culture where they are not just implementers but active contributors to the school's direction.

School-based management involves significant and consistent decentralization at the school level in which the entire school community has decision-making authority. These decisions involve the allocation of knowledge, technology, materials, authority, people, money, time, and labor, among other resources. In addition, school-based management involves more than just the integration of goal setting, planning, and budgeting. Rather, decision-making entities must ensure that management cycles include implementation and systematic evaluation in order to provide room for improvement, as the school remains accountable to central authority for any decisions made (Okitsu & Edwards, 2017).

School-Based Management (SBM) is a new paradigm in education management; a package of educational reform aimed at maintaining a balance of authority between the government and schoolchildren, as well as an autonomous decision-making center (Arar & Nasra, 2018; Bandur, 2017; Tansiri & Bong, 2018). In the education system, the level of decision-making is determined by the school's ability to make curriculum, personnel, and strategic planning decisions autonomously (Alyami & Floyd, 2019). Thus, School-Based Management can be defined as the responsibility of the school administrator (headmaster) to exercise autonomy in all organizational decisions. A school's organization consists of administration, curriculum, co-curriculum, and student affairs, with staff (teachers), clients (parents and students), and local community collaboration.

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of SBM has had limited success thus far. To improve the implementation and outcomes of SBM, it is necessary to increase the capacity of principals, teachers, and school committees to implement SBM, to improve the staff's ability to make operational and instructional changes, and to develop the capacity of central and local governments to support schools in implementing SBM. The SBM indicator, planning, emphasizes the significance of aspects of the school's vision and mission, changes in the education process, and curriculum program adjustments. Personnel are organized through the assignment of duties and authority by the principal. Implementation necessitates the participation of all school personnel and the review of learning tools, such as instructional materials, lesson plans, and learning media and learning supervision, by school administrators. By implementing SBM, curriculum management and learning processes can be carried out effectively and efficiently, character can be developed, learning achievement can be enhanced, and the quality of education can be enhanced (Amon & Bustami, 2021).

### *Student-Centered Approaches*

Another crucial theme involves insights related to student-centered approaches within the SBM context. Teachers' perspectives on how SBM influences teaching practices, curriculum design, and student engagement are integral to understanding the impact of decentralization. Insights in this theme may highlight the extent to which teachers feel empowered to tailor their instruction to the specific needs of students, incorporate innovative teaching methods, and contribute to a holistic educational experience. Teachers' observations on the direct link between SBM and improved student outcomes provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the decentralized model.

IDI-01 underscored:

*"SBM has been a catalyst for positive changes in my teaching approach. With more autonomy, I can tailor my lessons to meet the specific needs and interests of my students. The flexibility in curriculum decisions under SBM allows for the incorporation of more student-centered activities and projects. This approach not only engages students actively in their learning but also enhances their understanding and application of concepts. SBM has empowered me to prioritize the individual needs of students, making the learning experience more meaningful and student-centered."*

Also, IDI-04 denoted:

*"It's a bit of a mixed experience. While there is room for more student-centered activities, the constraints and guidelines associated with SBM sometimes limit the extent to which I can fully implement these approaches. It's a delicate balance between autonomy and adherence to certain requirements. I believe there's potential for more student-centered learning, but it requires finding the right equilibrium within the SBM framework."*

Furthermore, IDI-10 conveyed:

*"I haven't seen a significant improvement in student-centered approaches. While the concept is there, the reality is that the focus still seems tilted towards meeting standardized requirements. The constraints and expectations of SBM sometimes limit the incorporation of more individualized and student-focused activities. For a true shift to student-centered approaches, there needs to be a reevaluation of the balance between standardized expectations and the flexibility that SBM intends to provide."*

The synthesis of teachers' interview responses on the theme of student-centered approaches within the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) reveals a range of perspectives. Some teachers express a positive impact, noting that SBM has been a catalyst for adopting student-centered methodologies. With increased autonomy, these teachers can tailor their lessons to cater to the specific needs and interests of students, making the learning experience more engaging and meaningful. Others offer a more nuanced view, citing the delicate balance between autonomy and adherence to certain guidelines within the SBM framework, which sometimes limits the full implementation of student-centered approaches. There are also concerns expressed about the persistence of standardized requirements, hindering a complete shift toward more individualized and student-focused activities. The synthesis emphasizes the need for ongoing exploration and refinement to strike the right balance within SBM, ensuring that the intended flexibility truly translates into a more student-centered educational experience.

Indonesian schools have implemented a mandatory school-based management (SBM) policy to enhance education quality in general and school improvement and pupil achievement in particular. A survey was conducted in primary and junior high schools of the Denpasar district municipality in Bali, Indonesia, in light of the paucity of previous research establishing the validity of a link between SBM results and improved school climate and student achievement. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of data confirm that devolving authority to school-level decision-makers has increased participation and commitment, resulting in an enhanced teaching-learning environment (Bandur et al., 2021). Likewise, regarding the topic of school-based management, a number of research has been carried out. Katuuk et al. (2018) conducted research to investigate the challenges associated with putting SBM into practice and principals' levels of management ability.

In 2012, the Department of Education implemented School-based Management in all public schools, despite its existence for decades in the educational systems of countries such as Australia, the United States, Indonesia, and others. One of its objectives is to enhance learning outcomes by encouraging all institutions to continuously develop. Thus, the management framework must consider the unique requirements of the students and the community. However, schools are unable to improve due to obstacles encountered in the implementation of SBM (Leroy, 2013).

Similarly, Ismail and Abdullah (2014) have reached the conclusion that the autonomy and accountability aspects employed in Malaysian autonomous schools will necessitate a more qualified teacher to function as a professional in the classroom. Participation of teachers in decision-making can also increase their motivation to excel in their teaching practices, as well as improve teaching efficacy and effectiveness.

Likewise, Hussein (2014) also addressed the issue of teacher expectations for attaining student aspirational goals in terms of knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual skills, ethics and spirituality, and national identity. Teachers are expected to be adaptable, well-prepared, and committed to the school to an exceptional degree.

The implementation of school-based management has consequently enhanced student learning and achievement. This improvement is attributable to the school's curriculum and teaching management, staff education, community connections, and special services for the benefit of students. On the other hand, limited parent knowledge and absence of participation in the implementation of SBM are among the factors influencing the enhancement of student learning outcomes. In order to cultivate positive learning outcomes for students, it is recommended to encourage greater parental involvement, particularly in school decision-making (Fauzi, 2019).



Moreover, many support the implementation of school-based management in educational institutions because it aims to enhance the teaching-learning process (Chapman et al., 2016). Similarly, it was discovered that the success of learning outcomes depends on the role of instructors, who are the focal point of school reforms and educational innovation. For this reason, teachers are encouraged to be innovative in their classroom teaching practices by being creative in the design and delivery of instructional materials and instruction (Ulfatin, 2016).

On the other hand, the ineffective implementation of SBM, which would result in students' poor academic performance, is responsible for the absence of comprehension among stakeholders. This implies that stakeholders are crucial in providing children with a quality education. The failure of school leaders to inform parents, local barangay entities, and other members of the community about school-based management practices would have a negative impact on student achievement, resulting in poor school performance (Bandur, 2018).

In the Philippines, SBM implementation is prevalent not only in urban institutions, but also in rural schools located in remote locations. In fact, Domingo et al. (2020) investigated some schools in Antipolo City Division that have attained the Developing SBM Level of Practice. The delegation of authority from central offices to local institutions demonstrates that accountability and responsibility are not monopolized but rather shared. It has proved to be essential to the development and efficacy of teaching-learning outcomes, as those closest to the school site and most knowledgeable about its requirements are the ones who plan and make decisions for the school.

Teaching and learning in multicultural K-12 educational settings are predicated on the ability to make sound decisions concerning a variety of requirements. Educators spend a significant amount of time collecting and compiling academic and performance data on students; however, these data must also be effectively applied and utilized to meet urgent educational requirements. Regarding students who struggle and those with disabilities, a collaborative decision-making process is not only preferred, but also necessary due to the numerous complexities these students frequently bring to the classroom, such as varying achievement levels, experiential backgrounds, and knowledge resources (Hoover & Teeters, 2018).

### *Challenges and Opportunities for Professional Growth.*

The insights of teachers also encompass the challenges and opportunities for professional growth associated with SBM implementation. Teachers often encounter both obstacles and avenues for development as they navigate the complexities of decentralized decision-making. This theme explores teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face, such as adapting to new roles, managing increased responsibilities, or addressing resistance to change. Additionally, it delves into the opportunities SBM provides for professional development, leadership cultivation, and skill enhancement. Teachers' insights in this area contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the balance between challenges and opportunities within the SBM framework.

IDI-05 uncovered:

*"SBM has been both challenging and rewarding for my professional growth. The increased responsibilities and autonomy have pushed me out of my comfort zone, presenting challenges that, in turn, became opportunities for growth. Navigating the complexities of SBM has required me to develop new skills, engage in continuous learning, and take on leadership roles within the school. The challenges, while demanding, have been instrumental in fostering my professional development, and I appreciate the opportunities SBM provides for educators to take on more leadership responsibilities and contribute to the overall improvement of the school."*

In addition, IDI-06 highlighted:

*"It's a mixed experience. While SBM has brought about opportunities for professional growth, the challenges can be overwhelming. The increased responsibilities sometimes feel like a steep learning curve, and not all teachers may be equipped to handle these changes smoothly. However, the potential for growth is there if adequate support and targeted professional development opportunities are provided. SBM could be a valuable platform for professional growth, but it needs to be balanced with the right resources and guidance to ensure that all educators can thrive in their evolving roles."*

Further, IDI-09 unveiled:

*"I haven't seen a significant impact on professional growth. While there's talk about increased autonomy, the reality is that the challenges associated with SBM can sometimes overshadow the opportunities. Limited support and unclear pathways for development make it difficult to fully embrace the potential for growth. For SBM to truly enhance professional development, there needs to be a more structured approach to supporting teachers in navigating the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities that arise."*

The synthesis of teachers' interview responses on the theme of challenges and opportunities for professional growth within the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) reflects a diverse range of perspectives. Some teachers express a positive outlook, acknowledging that the increased responsibilities and autonomy under SBM have presented challenges that, in turn, have become valuable opportunities for their professional development. These educators appreciate the chance to develop

new skills, engage in continuous learning, and take on leadership roles. Others offer a more mixed view, highlighting the potential for growth but emphasizing the overwhelming nature of the challenges, especially for those who may not be adequately supported. There are also concerns raised about the limited impact of SBM on professional growth, pointing to the need for a more structured approach to support and resources. The synthesis underscores the importance of addressing challenges while capitalizing on the opportunities for robust professional development within the SBM framework.

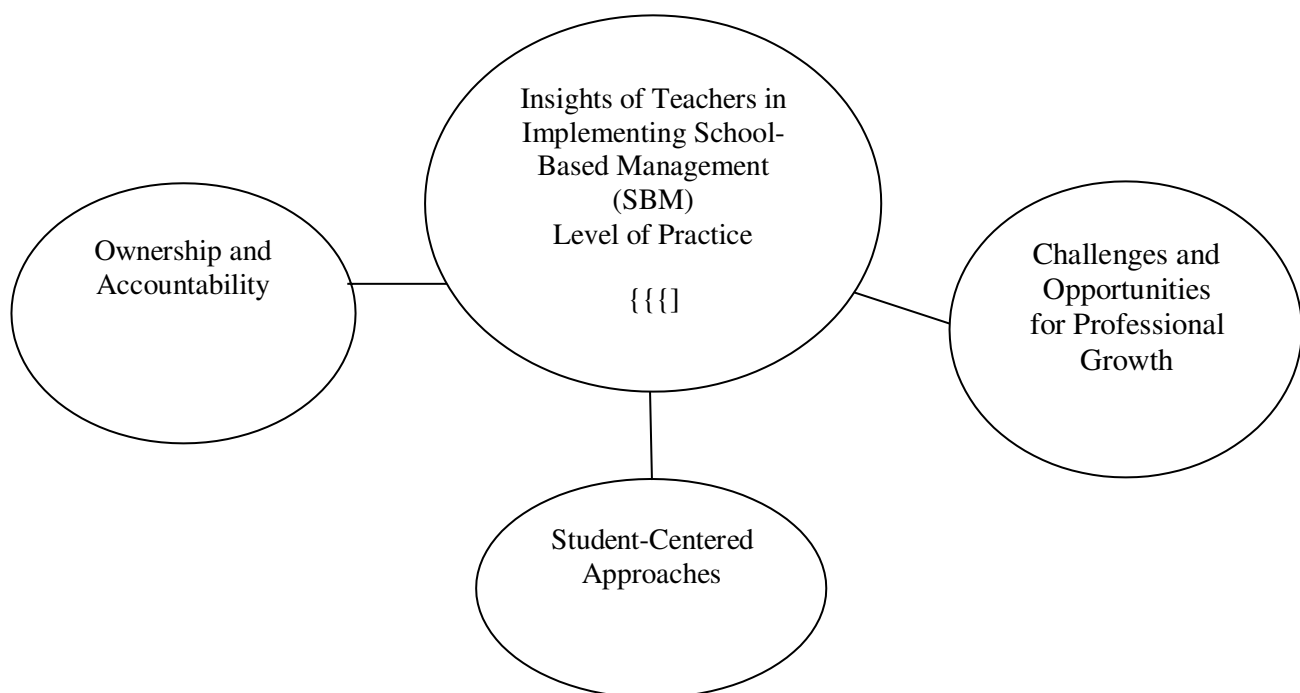
Prasch (2019) identified some of the issues encountered by SBM stakeholders. There is more work for internal and external stakeholders, less efficiency, unequal school performance, a greater need for staff development, confusion regarding new roles and responsibilities, and coordination issues. Schools also encountered a lack of knowledge among stakeholders regarding what SBM is and how it operates; a lack of decision-making skills, communication, trust among stakeholders, and teachers' time commitment; and the unwillingness of some administrators and teachers to delegate decision-making authority to others (Prasch, 2019).

According to research that was carried out by Bala (2017), some of the difficulties that have been faced by the SBM committee in the Northwest Zone of Nigeria include a lack of adequate communication, a lack of members' commitment, and a reluctance on the part of members to attend meetings. These results align with those of Adediran (2010), who discovered a similar set of obstacles in addition to a lack of enthusiasm among members of the SBM committee.

Concerns remain, however, among stakeholders regarding the accountability of teachers for potential abuse or exploitation of the granted autonomy (Ali & Arsayathamby, 2017). Concerns have been raised regarding the possibility that some teachers will be unable to perform or manage with the increased level of autonomy, which demonstrates the significance of and the need for teachers to be physically and mentally ready to be challenged when implementing any new policy.

In a separate study, Kiragu et al. (2013) found that fifty percent of respondents concurred that SBM increased the burden of teachers and other stakeholders. Specific obstacles include a lack of commitment, insufficient personnel, a lack of accountability and transparency, conflict among stakeholders, delays in decision-making, a lack of clear demarcation of duties, a lack of cooperation from stakeholders, a conflict of interest, a lack of competent school administrators, and a lack of goodwill. According to Ayeni and Ibukun (2013), Pushhpanadman (2018), and Kingi (2015), the prevailing and predominate issue is the limited capacity of SBM members.

Other researchers, such as Gamage and Sooksomchitra (2014), Maksymjuk (2016), and Schlegel (2017), discovered in their studies additional challenges, such as inadequate resources in schools, a lack of professional development on leadership for school leaders to implement SBM, confusion among school councils regarding their new roles and responsibilities, coordination difficulties, and low parental engagement.



**Figure 3. Insights of Teachers in Implementing School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Practice**

#### 4. Implications and Future Directions

In this chapter, the summary of the study is presented. From the summary of findings, I drew the implications for future directions.

The aim of this research was to investigate the experiences of elementary teachers while implementing the SBM level of practice in Panabo South 1 District. Additionally, the study explored the coping strategies and insights of teachers, aiming to provide valuable information for others. At this research stage, teachers' experiences with school-based management (SBM) were broadly characterized as their learning and challenging encounters in the context of decentralization in education at the grassroots level. This aligns with the national policy of decentralization initially established by the Philippine Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160) as a strategic response to the emerging challenges in sustainable human development. The objective was to empower local communities, enabling them to be self-sufficient and more effective partners in achieving national goals.

Implemented School-Based Management (SBM) was of paramount importance as it decentralized decision-making processes, empowered individual schools to tailor educational strategies based on their unique needs and contexts. This localized approach fostered a sense of ownership and accountability among teachers and administrators, leading to a more responsive and effective educational system. SBM enhanced the involvement of stakeholders, including parents and community members, in the governance of schools, promoting a collaborative and inclusive educational environment. By decentralizing authority and resources, SBM encouraged innovation, flexibility, and adaptability, allowing schools to address specific challenges and capitalize on local strengths. Ultimately, the implementation of SBM contributed to the overall improvement of educational quality, student performance, and community engagement, aligning with the broader goals of achieving excellence and equity in education.

The qualitative-phenomenological approach offered a valuable lens through which to explore and understand the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM). This research methodology delved into the lived experiences of individuals involved in SBM, focusing on the meanings they ascribed to these experiences. In the context of SBM, employing a qualitative-phenomenological approach allowed researchers to capture the subjective perspectives of teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders, uncovering the nuanced aspects of their involvement in the decentralized decision-making processes. Phenomenology emphasized the exploration of the essence of experiences, aiming to reveal the underlying structures and meanings inherent in individuals' encounters with SBM. Through in-depth interviews and observations, I could identify common themes, patterns, and essential elements that contributed to a richer understanding of how SBM unfolded in specific educational settings. This approach was particularly useful in exploring the intricate dynamics, challenges, and successes within the SBM framework, providing valuable insights for improving its implementation and effectiveness.

Major results revealed three major themes emerge as critical determinants in understanding the experiences of teachers in implementing SBM: empowerment and autonomy, collaboration and communication, and professional development and support. Furthermore, three major themes emerge as integral components of teachers' coping mechanisms within the context of SBM: adaptability and flexibility, collaborative problem-solving, and professional development and training. Finally, the major themes on the insights of teachers in implementing SBM were ownership and accountability, student-centered approaches, and challenges and opportunities for professional growth. Understanding these major themes provides a nuanced perspective on the insights of teachers in implementing School-Based Management.

##### *Implications*

The research implications concerning the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) hold significant relevance for educational policymakers, administrators, and practitioners. As we delve into the findings and insights derived from this study, it becomes evident that the implications extend beyond the immediate context of the research. Firstly, the study sheds light on the effectiveness of SBM in decentralizing decision-making processes and empowering local stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, and parents. This insight calls for careful consideration of the structures and support mechanisms in place to ensure that decentralization translates into meaningful engagement and collaboration. Moreover, the research implications underscore the importance of tailored professional development and support systems to equip educators for their evolving roles within the SBM framework.

As SBM is closely tied to the broader goals of educational quality improvement and community engagement, the study's findings emphasize the need for ongoing evaluation and refinement of SBM policies and practices. These implications have far-reaching consequences, urging educational stakeholders to revisit and optimize the implementation of SBM for sustained positive impacts on the quality and inclusivity of education.

The theme of empowerment and autonomy in implementing School-Based Management (SBM) carries several research implications that can significantly inform educational policies and practices. Firstly, the findings emphasize the positive impact

of increased autonomy on teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders, contributing to a sense of empowerment. This suggests that fostering a culture of autonomy within the SBM framework can lead to more motivated and engaged educators. The research also implies the need for targeted professional development programs that equip educators with the skills necessary to navigate the increased responsibilities that come with autonomy. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of establishing clear guidelines and support mechanisms to ensure that autonomy translates into effective decision-making and positive outcomes. Policymakers can use these implications to refine SBM frameworks, ensuring that empowerment and autonomy are not only granted but effectively harnessed to enhance the overall educational experience and outcomes at the local level.

In addition, the theme of collaboration and communication in the context of implementing School-Based Management (SBM) carries several research implications that hold significance for educational practitioners and policymakers alike. Firstly, the research suggests that fostering a culture of collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders is crucial for the success of SBM. Policymakers can use these findings to emphasize the importance of creating structures that facilitate open communication channels and collaborative decision-making processes. Additionally, the research implies the need for targeted training programs that enhance communication skills and promote effective collaboration within the school community. The findings underscore that successful SBM implementation relies on transparent and inclusive communication practices, emphasizing the importance of shared decision-making. Policymakers can leverage these implications to design policies that prioritize and support collaborative initiatives, fostering a sense of community ownership and engagement in educational governance.

Moreover, the theme of professional development and support in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) carries several research implications that have significant implications for educational stakeholders. Firstly, the research emphasizes the critical role of targeted professional development programs in preparing educators for the challenges and increased responsibilities associated with SBM. Policymakers and administrators can use these findings to advocate for the provision of ongoing training opportunities that address the specific needs arising from decentralized decision-making. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of establishing robust support systems, including mentorship and resources, to assist educators in navigating the complexities of SBM. The findings suggest that investing in the continuous development of educators is essential for the successful implementation of SBM, contributing to a more empowered and capable teaching workforce. Policymakers can leverage these implications to shape policies that prioritize and allocate resources for sustained professional growth, ensuring that educators are well-equipped to thrive within the SBM framework.

Likewise, the theme of adaptability and flexibility in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) carries several research implications that are crucial for shaping effective educational policies and practices. Firstly, the findings underscore the importance of cultivating a culture of adaptability and flexibility within the SBM framework, as educational landscapes continually evolve. Policymakers can use these implications to emphasize the need for structures that allow for agile responses to changing circumstances and emerging challenges. Additionally, the research implies the necessity of professional development programs that equip educators with the skills to navigate and embrace change effectively. The study highlights the importance of fostering a mindset that views challenges as opportunities for growth and improvement within the SBM context. Policymakers can leverage these implications to design policies that promote adaptability, ensuring that the SBM framework remains dynamic, responsive, and capable of addressing the evolving needs of educational institutions and communities.

Consequently, the theme of collaborative problem-solving in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) carries several research implications that are critical for shaping effective educational policies and practices. Firstly, the findings underscore the significance of fostering a culture of collaboration among teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders to address challenges collectively. Policymakers can use these implications to advocate for structures that promote open communication channels and collaborative decision-making processes within the SBM framework. Additionally, the research suggests the need for professional development programs that enhance problem-solving and interpersonal skills to facilitate effective collaboration. The study highlights that successful SBM implementation relies on transparent and inclusive problem-solving practices. Policymakers can leverage these implications to design policies that prioritize and support collaborative initiatives, fostering a sense of community ownership and shared responsibility in addressing educational challenges at the local level.

In addition, the theme of ownership and accountability in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) carries crucial research implications with significant relevance for educational policies and practices. Firstly, the findings emphasize the importance of fostering a sense of ownership among teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders within the SBM framework. Policymakers can use these implications to advocate for structures that empower educators to actively contribute to decision-making processes, promoting a culture of shared responsibility. Additionally, the research suggests that clear guidelines and expectations are essential to establish a robust accountability framework. Policymakers can leverage these implications to design policies that define roles and responsibilities within the SBM context, ensuring transparency and accountability in the decentralized decision-making processes. The study underscores that successful SBM implementation requires a balance between autonomy and accountability, emphasizing the need for policies that encourage ownership while maintaining a clear framework of responsibility.



Finally, the theme of student-centered approaches in the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) carries significant research implications that hold relevance for educational policies and practices. Firstly, the findings emphasize the importance of prioritizing student needs and tailoring educational strategies within the SBM framework. Policymakers can use these implications to advocate for structures that facilitate the incorporation of more individualized and student-focused activities, ensuring that SBM translates into a meaningful and engaging learning experience. Additionally, the research suggests the need for professional development programs that equip educators with the skills to implement effective student-centered methodologies. Policymakers can leverage these implications to design policies that promote a shift towards more personalized learning experiences within the SBM context, aligning educational practices with the diverse needs and interests of students. The study underscores the role of SBM in fostering a student-centric educational environment, emphasizing the importance of continuous adaptation and innovation in response to evolving student needs and learning styles.

### *Future Directions of the Study*

As we consider the future directions of the study on implementing School-Based Management (SBM), it becomes evident that there are several avenues for further exploration and refinement. Firstly, there is a need for longitudinal research to track the sustained impact of SBM on educational outcomes over an extended period. This will provide insights into the long-term effectiveness and potential challenges that may arise as SBM becomes more deeply ingrained in educational systems. Additionally, future research could delve into the specific components of professional development programs that prove most effective in preparing educators for the challenges and opportunities within the SBM framework. Understanding the nuanced aspects of teacher empowerment, collaboration dynamics, and the implementation of student-centered approaches will be crucial for refining policies and practices. Moreover, exploring the role of technology in enhancing SBM processes and communication within school communities could be a promising avenue for future inquiry.

As SBM continues to evolve, examining the experiences of diverse educational contexts and cultural settings will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of its impact. These future directions are essential for guiding educational policymakers, administrators, and practitioners in optimizing SBM frameworks for sustained positive outcomes in diverse educational settings.

**Department of Education.** Future research should focus on providing the Department of Education with comprehensive insights into the long-term impact of School-Based Management (SBM) on educational outcomes. This includes continued assessments of the effectiveness of SBM policies and practices across diverse educational settings. Longitudinal studies can help the department understand the sustained effects of decentralization on student performance, teacher satisfaction, and community engagement. Additionally, research can explore the scalability of successful SBM models to inform nationwide implementation strategies.

**School Administrators.** Future research directions should offer practical guidance to school administrators in enhancing the implementation of SBM. This includes investigations into effective strategies for fostering collaboration and communication among school stakeholders, refining professional development programs tailored to the evolving needs of educators, and exploring innovative approaches to incorporate student-centered methodologies. Research can also address the challenges administrators face in balancing autonomy and accountability within the SBM framework and provide solutions for creating a supportive and adaptive school culture.

**Teachers.** Future research should prioritize the experiences and professional development needs of teachers within the SBM context. This includes in-depth studies on effective coping mechanisms, insights gained, and evolving perspectives on empowerment and autonomy. Research can identify best practices in implementing student-centered approaches and collaborative problem-solving, offering practical strategies to address challenges. Additionally, understanding how technology can support teachers in navigating SBM processes and communication is crucial for future research directions.

**Future Researchers.** Future researchers should explore emerging aspects of SBM, including the integration of technology, innovative models of collaborative decision-making, and the impact of SBM on marginalized communities. Comparative studies across various international educational systems can provide a global perspective on the effectiveness of SBM. Investigating the transferability of successful SBM practices to different contexts and the implications of cultural diversity will contribute to the global knowledge base. Future researchers can also delve into the evolving role of SBM in addressing contemporary challenges such as the integration of sustainability education and the impact of external factors like global crises on the decentralized decision-making processes.

In conclusion, the future directions of the study on implementing School-Based Management (SBM) are poised to significantly contribute to the continuous improvement of educational systems. Through longitudinal research, exploration of effective strategies, and a focus on the experiences of key stakeholders, these future directions aim to provide valuable insights for the Department of Education, school administrators, teachers, and future researchers. The evolving landscape of education



requires a nuanced understanding of how SBM impacts diverse educational contexts, and these future research endeavors are essential for informing evidence-based policies and practices. By addressing challenges, fostering collaboration, refining professional development programs, and exploring innovative approaches, the future directions outlined in this study aim to guide educational stakeholders in optimizing SBM frameworks for sustained positive outcomes, ultimately contributing to the advancement of education on a global scale.

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