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Pedagogical Practices within the School-Based Management Framework at Ura Elementary School

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Abstract

This study examined the pedagogical practices implemented by teachers at Ura Elementary School within the context of the School-Based Management (SBM) framework. Specifically, it aimed to identify SBM-aligned teaching practices, explore teachers' awareness and understanding of SBM principles, examine the influence of school leadership and shared governance on instruction, identify challenges encountered in implementation, and determine the impact of SBM-aligned pedagogy on learner engagement and participation. The study employed a qualitative descriptive research design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving selected teachers and school leaders. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that participants had direct experience with SBM implementation and classroom instruction. Thematic analysis was applied to systematically analyze and interpret the data, with triangulation used to enhance the credibility of the findings. Results revealed that teachers practiced learner-centered and contextualized pedagogy consistent with SBM principles, particularly through differentiated instruction and the use of community-based examples. School leadership and collaborative mechanisms, such as Learning Action Cells and School Improvement Plan-guided activities, were found to support instructional alignment and shared decision-making. However, while teachers demonstrated functional awareness of SBM concepts, their integration into lesson planning and instructional documentation remained largely implicit and informal. Challenges identified included limited resources, time constraints, and inconsistent stakeholder participation. Despite these challenges, SBM-aligned pedagogical practices positively influenced learners' engagement, classroom behavior, and participation. The study concludes that SBM serves as an enabling framework for effective pedagogy, but its instructional impact depends on intentional integration, sustained leadership support, and strengthened alignment between governance processes and classroom practice. The findings provide context-specific insights that may inform instructional improvement and school development initiatives.

Keywords: School-Based Management, pedagogical practices, learner-centered instruction, elementary education, qualitative research

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Introduction

School-Based Management (SBM) has become a central strategy in strengthening the governance and performance of public schools by shifting key decisions closer to where teaching and learning take place. In the Philippine basic education system, SBM is anchored on decentralization and shared governance, recognizing that school leaders, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders can collaboratively improve learning conditions when given clearer roles, responsibility, and accountability. This direction is supported by the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 (Republic Act No. 9155), which reinforces school-level leadership and local participation in managing school affairs to improve educational outcomes. In DepEd's Revised SBM Framework, schools are guided to strengthen leadership and governance, improve resource management, and build accountability mechanisms through tools such as assessment processes and school improvement planning.

While SBM is often discussed in terms of governance structures (e.g., school councils, planning teams, reporting systems), its most important test is how it influences the core work of schools teaching and learning. Pedagogical practices, including instructional planning, classroom strategies, assessment approaches, and learner support, are shaped by the school environment in which teachers operate. When SBM is functional, it can create enabling conditions for teachers: clearer priorities, stronger instructional support, better use of school resources, and more responsive interventions based on local learner needs especially through the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which DepEd identifies as central to SBM implementation. This study therefore focuses on Ura Elementary School to examine how pedagogical practices are enacted within the SBM framework and how governance mechanisms translate into day-to-day classroom realities.

International evidence generally suggests that SBM reforms when accompanied by accountability and meaningful community participation can contribute to improved school functioning and, in some contexts, better learning outcomes. The World Bank notes that accountability-oriented reforms, including SBM, aim to address quality problems that are not solved by resources alone, emphasizing the importance of aligning local decision-making with performance responsibility. Similarly, OECD discussions on school autonomy argue that autonomy tends to be more beneficial when paired with strong accountability structures that guide schools toward improved student performance.

In the Philippine context, DepEd institutionalized SBM through policy instruments that define expectations for school governance and improvement processes. DepEd Order No. 83, s. 2012 provides implementing guidelines for the revised SBM framework and school-level assessment process, emphasizing continuous improvement and stakeholder engagement. DepEd further strengthened school planning through the SIP Guidebook (DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2015), positioning the SIP as an evidence-based, learner-centered roadmap for improving access, quality, and governance. These policies imply that pedagogy should be supported by organized school processes planning, monitoring, and targeted interventions rather than being left to individual teacher effort alone.

Empirical studies in the Philippines also highlight that stakeholder participation and governance processes are key SBM features, but the degree of implementation varies across schools. Cabardo (2016), for instance, examined stakeholder participation in SBM implementation and emphasized that community involvement is a critical factor in school-initiated activities and SBM-related practices. At the systems level, the World Bank's work on assessing SBM in the Philippines underscores the importance of examining how SBM operates on the ground and how it relates to school performance, suggesting that implementation quality and local capacity matter significantly.



Taken together, these sources indicate that SBM is not only a governance reform but a school-improvement mechanism that should shape instructional priorities, classroom support, and teacher practices.

Despite the strong policy foundation and growing literature on SBM, a major gap remains in context-specific research that connects SBM mechanisms directly to classroom pedagogy—especially at the elementary level. Many studies and evaluations focus on SBM compliance, stakeholder participation, or school performance indicators, but provide limited documentation of how SBM structures (such as SIP processes, shared leadership, and accountability mechanisms) actually influence teachers' instructional planning, teaching strategies, and learner engagement in everyday classroom settings. Moreover, SBM implementation varies widely across schools depending on leadership capacity, community participation, and resource conditions, which means school-based evidence is necessary to understand how SBM translates into practice within a particular local context. This study addresses these gaps by examining pedagogical practices within the SBM framework at Ura Elementary School, generating grounded insights that can inform instructional strengthening and school improvement efforts aligned with DepEd's SBM and SIP directions.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the pedagogical practices implemented by teachers at Ura Elementary School within the context of the School-Based Management (SBM) framework. Specifically, it seeks to identify the teaching strategies and instructional approaches used by teachers and determine how these practices align with the principles of SBM, particularly shared decision-making, accountability, and stakeholder participation. The study also aims to explore teachers' awareness and understanding of the SBM framework and how this awareness influences instructional planning and classroom delivery. In addition, it seeks to examine the role of school leadership and collaborative practices in shaping pedagogical decisions at the classroom level. The study further aims to identify the challenges encountered by teachers in implementing effective pedagogy within the SBM framework and to determine the perceived impact of SBM-aligned pedagogical practices on learners' engagement, participation, and learning experiences. Ultimately, the findings of the study are intended to generate context-specific insights that may inform school improvement efforts and contribute to the strengthening of instructional practices at Ura Elementary School.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the pedagogical practices implemented by teachers at Ura Elementary School within the context of the School-Based Management (SBM) framework. This design was appropriate because the study sought to provide an in-depth and context-specific understanding of teachers' instructional practices, awareness of SBM principles, and experiences in implementing pedagogy influenced by school-level governance structures. The qualitative approach allowed for the exploration of meanings, perceptions, and practices as they naturally occurred within the school setting.

The participants of the study consisted of selected elementary teachers and school leaders of Ura Elementary School who were directly involved in classroom instruction and school-based decision-making. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that participants had sufficient experience with SBM implementation and instructional planning. This sampling method enabled the researcher to gather rich and relevant data from individuals who could provide informed insights into the relationship between pedagogy and SBM practices.



Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The interviews focused on teachers' pedagogical strategies, understanding of SBM principles, and perceptions of how SBM influenced their teaching practices. Classroom observations were conducted to examine actual instructional methods, learner engagement, and classroom management practices within SBM-guided contexts. Document analysis included the review of lesson plans, School Improvement Plans (SIP), instructional materials, and other school documents to determine how SBM principles were reflected in instructional planning and implementation.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were systematically coded and categorized to identify recurring patterns and themes related to pedagogical practices, school leadership influence, stakeholder participation, and instructional challenges within the SBM framework. Triangulation of data sources was employed to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study, including securing informed consent from participants, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring that all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

Results/Findings

Based on the thematic analysis of data gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the following themes emerged in response to the research objectives on pedagogical practices within the School-Based Management (SBM) framework at Ura Elementary School.

Theme 1: Pedagogical Practices Shaped by Learner-Centered and Contextualized Instruction

In response to the objective of identifying pedagogical practices aligned with SBM, findings revealed that teachers employed learner-centered and contextualized teaching strategies. Classroom observations showed the use of differentiated instruction, group activities, and examples drawn from learners' community experiences.

One teacher shared,

"Inaangkop po namin ang aralin depende sa kakayahan ng mga bata at sa sitwasyon ng komunidad namin."

This response indicates that teachers exercised instructional autonomy encouraged by SBM, allowing them to tailor lessons to learners' needs. The SBM framework provided flexibility for teachers to design instruction that was responsive rather than rigid, reinforcing its role in supporting localized pedagogy.

Theme 2: School Leadership and Shared Decision-Making as Enablers of Pedagogical Practice

Addressing the objective on the influence of leadership and governance, the findings showed that school leadership and collaborative practices significantly influenced classroom instruction. Teachers reported that meetings, learning action cells (LACs), and SIP-based planning guided their instructional decisions.

One participant stated,



“Malaki ang tulong ng mga meeting at LAC kasi doon napag-uusapan kung paano mapapabuti ang pagtuturo.”

Document analysis confirmed that instructional activities were aligned with priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan. This suggests that shared governance under SBM strengthened coordination between school goals and classroom pedagogy.

Theme 3: Functional Awareness but Limited Instructional Integration of SBM Principles

In relation to teachers’ awareness of SBM, the study found that teachers possessed a basic and functional understanding of SBM concepts such as accountability, participation, and shared responsibility. However, this awareness was not consistently translated into instructional planning.

A teacher explained,

“Alam po namin ang SBM, pero minsan parang requirement lang siya at hindi talaga nasasama sa lesson plan.”

Lesson plans reviewed showed minimal explicit reference to SBM principles. This indicates that while teachers understood SBM at a conceptual level, its pedagogical implications were not always intentionally integrated into classroom instruction.

Theme 4: Challenges in Implementing Pedagogy within the SBM Framework

Addressing the objective on challenges, teachers identified constraints such as limited resources, time pressure, and uneven stakeholder participation. These challenges affected the consistency of SBM-aligned pedagogical practices.

One participant noted,

“May mga plano kami sa pagtuturo pero minsan kulang ang materyales o suporta ng magulang.”

This finding highlights that SBM effectiveness depends not only on teacher initiative but also on adequate support systems and stakeholder engagement, which directly influence instructional quality.

Theme 5: Positive Impact of SBM-Aligned Pedagogy on Learner Engagement and Participation

In response to the objective on learner outcomes, findings revealed that pedagogical practices aligned with SBM positively influenced learner engagement, behavior, and participation. Observations showed that learners were more attentive and collaborative during lessons that used interactive strategies and contextualized activities.

A teacher remarked,

“Mas nagiging aktibo ang mga bata kapag nakikita nilang may kinalaman sa buhay nila ang aralin.”

This suggests that SBM-supported autonomy enabled teachers to design meaningful learning experiences, resulting in improved classroom interaction and learner motivation.



Overall, the findings demonstrate that pedagogical practices at Ura Elementary School were influenced by the SBM framework through instructional autonomy, shared leadership, and school-based planning. While teachers showed commitment to learner-centered pedagogy and recognized the value of SBM, challenges such as limited resources and lack of explicit instructional integration constrained full implementation. Nevertheless, SBM-aligned practices were found to enhance learner engagement and participation, affirming the importance of strengthening the linkage between school governance and classroom pedagogy.

Discussions

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of the School-Based Management (SBM) framework in shaping pedagogical practices at Ura Elementary School. The results demonstrate that SBM has moved beyond being a governance mechanism and has begun to influence classroom-level instruction through learner-centered and contextualized teaching approaches. Teachers' ability to adapt lessons to learners' needs and local contexts reflects the core SBM principle of school autonomy, wherein instructional decisions are made based on actual classroom realities rather than uniform, top-down prescriptions. This supports existing literature asserting that SBM is most effective when it empowers teachers to respond flexibly to learner diversity and community conditions.

The influence of school leadership and shared governance emerged as a critical factor in strengthening pedagogical practices. Collaborative structures such as Learning Action Cells (LACs), planning meetings, and SIP-guided initiatives provided venues for collective reflection and instructional alignment. These findings affirm that effective SBM implementation depends on instructional leadership that prioritizes teaching and learning, echoing studies that emphasize the role of principals and school heads in translating governance reforms into pedagogical improvement. When leadership structures encourage collaboration, teachers are more likely to align classroom practices with school-wide goals.

Despite these strengths, the findings also reveal that teachers' awareness of SBM principles remained largely functional and procedural rather than pedagogically explicit. While teachers understood SBM concepts such as accountability and shared responsibility, these were not consistently reflected in lesson plans and instructional documents. This gap suggests that SBM is often perceived as an administrative requirement rather than an instructional framework, corroborating previous research that notes the tendency of SBM to be implemented at the compliance level without deep integration into classroom practice. This finding underscores the need for clearer instructional guidance on how SBM principles can directly inform pedagogy.

Challenges related to limited resources, time constraints, and inconsistent stakeholder participation further shaped the extent of SBM-aligned pedagogy. Although SBM encourages community involvement, the findings indicate that uneven parental and stakeholder engagement constrained the sustainability of instructional initiatives. This aligns with literature emphasizing that SBM effectiveness is highly dependent on local capacity and support systems. Without sufficient resources and stakeholder commitment, teachers' pedagogical innovations may be difficult to maintain despite supportive governance structures.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the study found that SBM-aligned pedagogical practices positively influenced learner engagement, participation, and classroom behavior. Learners were more attentive and collaborative when lessons were contextualized and interactive, suggesting that governance reforms that empower teachers pedagogically can directly benefit learner outcomes. This reinforces



the view that SBM's ultimate value lies in its capacity to improve teaching and learning, not merely school administration.

Overall, the discussion indicates that while SBM at Ura Elementary School has created enabling conditions for effective pedagogy, its instructional impact remains uneven due to limited intentional integration at the classroom level. Strengthening the linkage between SBM processes and pedagogical practice is therefore essential to ensure that school governance reforms translate into sustained improvements in teaching and learning.

Conclusions

This study concludes that pedagogical practices at Ura Elementary School are meaningfully shaped by the School-Based Management (SBM) framework through localized decision-making, collaborative leadership, and learner-centered instruction. Teachers demonstrated the ability to adapt teaching strategies to learners' needs by contextualizing lessons, employing interactive methods, and drawing from community experiences—practices that reflect the core principles of SBM. School leadership and shared governance mechanisms, particularly through collaborative planning and School Improvement Plan (SIP) implementation, were found to support instructional alignment and coherence at the classroom level. However, the findings also reveal that while teachers possessed functional awareness of SBM concepts, the integration of SBM principles into lesson planning and instructional documentation remained largely implicit and inconsistent. Despite challenges such as limited resources and uneven stakeholder participation, SBM-aligned pedagogical practices positively influenced learner engagement, participation, and classroom behavior. Overall, the study affirms that SBM serves as an enabling framework for effective pedagogy, but its full instructional potential depends on intentional integration, sustained support, and strengthened collaboration between governance structures and classroom practice.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study imply that strengthening the intentional integration of SBM principles into pedagogical practice can further enhance teaching and learning at the school level. Teachers may benefit from explicit guidance on embedding SBM-aligned objectives in lesson planning, instructional strategies, and assessment practices to ensure consistency between governance goals and classroom instruction. The study also underscores the need for sustained professional development that deepens teachers' understanding of SBM not merely as a compliance mechanism but as a pedagogical support system that informs instructional decision-making. For school administrators, the results suggest the importance of reinforcing collaborative leadership, stakeholder engagement, and instructional monitoring to create enabling conditions for effective pedagogy. At the learner level, the positive impact of SBM-aligned practices on engagement and participation highlights the value of contextualized and learner-responsive teaching approaches. Finally, the study implies that future school improvement initiatives should strengthen the linkage between SBM processes and instructional practice to maximize learner outcomes and ensure that governance reforms translate into meaningful classroom-level improvements.

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Conflicts of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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