



COPING WITH COVID-19: EMERGING SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT (SBM) PRACTICES IN THE NEW NORMAL

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Coping With COVID-19: Emerging School-Based Management (SBM)

Practices in the New Normal

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Abstract

Schools-Based Management (SBM), a decentralization concept to empower key stakeholders to actively participate in the decision-making for continuous improvement in the schools, has been relied upon to respond to the challenges of the pandemic. Aimed to operationalize the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BELCP), it endeavored to adopt and adapt to remote and digital-based management systems. The study aimed to determine the emerging SBM practices in the New Normal in public schools in Mountain Province. Using the grounded theory design, the interview was participated by 48 school heads identified through quota sampling. Results reveal the issues and concerns of SBM in the New Normal school environment were poor internet access, restrained school-based activities, constrained implementation of instructional interventions, teachers being overwhelmed with module and AVP-related works, catch-up plans not working, stakeholders not involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation and limited interaction with the stakeholders. Digitalization of instruction, mobile tutorials using community-based resources, e-partnership, and volunteering social services for the learners and parents emerged as SBM Practices in the New Normal school environment. The factors that facilitated the emergence of SBM practices in the New Normal school environment in Mountain Province were adaptive leadership, an innovative environment, and strategic and flexible partnership culture. Hence, functional SBM in the New Normal school environment should center on the digitalization of instruction, mobile tutorials using community-based resources, e-partnership, and providing learners in need with social services.

Keywords: new normal learning environment, digitalization of instruction, mobile tutorial, contextualized SBM model, SBM emerging practices

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Introduction and Rationale

Educational management, in order to cope with the drastic social changes taking place today, has to be dynamic. Quick adaptation to modernistic modalities of educational management is necessary to coexist with the emergence of unforeseen challenges of the global times. Leading factors of these unrelenting social changes like technological advancement, cultural diffusion, and natural disasters are the impetus in the transformation of traditional educational management systems into up-to-date forms.

This scenario of pervasive educational management challenges is forewarned by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2014) stressing that the education sector as a whole will need to respond to increasingly complex, rapid, and often unpredictable developments beyond the sector itself. Hence, UNESCO suggested the need for an aspirational, transformative, and holistic education agenda applicable at all times, mobilizing all countries, irrespective of their development status.

While educational institutions support various technologically-aided educational management systems, the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic demanded the readiness of school managers to extensive innovative and virtual management skills for the continued operationalization and delivery of equitable educational services. The top concern in this global learning crisis (Saavedra, 2020) is the avoidance of widening differences in the learning opportunities among economically, intellectually, and psychologically- diverse families that disproportionately expand to have a larger negative effect on poor children's learning. Rightly so, reliance exclusively on online strategies will imply reaching only children from better-off families. How to manage this global predicament has dragged educational managers including teachers embrace new educational management styles.

In the Philippines, the support to participative educational management has steered the decentralization concept of school management through the institutionalization of the Governance of Basic Education Act (RA 9155, 2001) recognizing the role of the Local Government Units (LGU) and other stakeholders as partners in education service delivery. School-Based Management (SBM) has empowered key stakeholders in the school

communities to actively participate in the decision-making for continuous improvement of the school towards the attainment of higher pupil/student learning outcomes (DepEd Memo 386, 2009).

This management concept obliging the participation of the different stakeholders of the schools in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the different school activities, is aimed to meet the real needs of students in their respective localities and enhance their learning outcomes. With the outbreak of COVID-19 this 2020, the operationalization of the DepEd's Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) becomes the focus of School-Based Management (SBM) (DepEd Order 12, 2020).

At present, the Schools Division of Mountain Province has 28 elementary and secondary schools certified as Level II or Maturing Level in the SBM level of practice. This constitutes around 10% of the 266 public schools in Mountain Province as most of the schools are still working out their SBM appraisal to Level II.

Aligned with the Learning Continuity Operationalization Plan (LCOP) of the Division Office, the management of the school activities this School year across the different SBM domains demands non-traditional methods of implementation. Hence, varying the customary SBM practices among school heads is necessary for the New Normal learning setup.

As the school transitions to the New Normal learning environment, school management has to adopt and adapt to remote and digital-based management systems to ensure the safety and well-being of the learners, teachers, parents and stakeholders. With this, the school-based management practices anchored to the Flexible Learning Delivery Model (MPSDO LCOP, 2020) that advocate non-traditional learning delivery approaches requires innovative managerial schemes applicable under non-traditional conditions.

This resurfacing paradigm of educational management shaped by the onslaught of COVID-19 drawn emerging SBM practices that attend to the local conditions in the communities. These emerging practices attempt to sustain support from parents, the community and, other stakeholders through their non-physical but active involvement in the continuous delivery of quality education despite the limited physical interaction.

This scenario is supported by the Survival-Based Theory (Omalaja, M. et al., 2011) explaining that organizations need to continuously adapt to their competitive environment to survive. Such view ushers the managerial necessity of satisfying the competing demands of stakeholders defined by the different circumstances surrounding them. Thus, educational management practices have to be flexible depending on the needs or demands of learners in a particular circumstance.

Basically, the success of the management practices in the implementation of the new distance learning modalities or blended learning largely depends on the support systems the schools can gain from parents and different stakeholders. This is supported by the Agency Management Theory (Omalaja, et al., 2011) that highlights the underlying important relationship between the stakeholders and the managers in ensuring institutional success. Perceptibly, the planned activities in the implementation of distance learning in the New Normal is dependent on the level of collaboration between the schools and the different stakeholders.

To address diverse problems of schools in the management of the implementation of distance learning in the New Normal environment, assessment of the local situation of school communities is needed. Identification of the issues and concerns in the management of distance learning, appraising the emerging SBM practices to address them, determining the resurfacing factors associated to the sustainability of the emerging SBM practices shall be considered in this study. This study will also determine what SBM model that can be developed to ensure sustainability of the emerging SBM practices in the New Normal learning set up.

Literature Review

The significant role of School-Based Management (SBM) in bridging the gaps caused by drastic social and environmental changes is supported by several theories and studies. With learners as the center of education at all times, Anderson (2020) explained that the aim of management during public health emergencies is to protect students and educators, plan for the continuity of education, and safeguard education sector investment, all of which ultimately contribute to strengthened resilience through education. He suggested that the global education community should synthesize existing research about distance and flexible education interventions in crisis contexts that can be contextualized at the school level, so that the next time epidemic strikes, schools are better prepared to protect students and educators and to continue quality education.

Russel et. al (2020) however, doubts that school measures are effective in Coronavirus outbreak, so he proposed that other less disruptive social distancing interventions in schools require further consideration if restrictive social distancing policies are implemented for long periods.

One important element of School-Based Management is resources. Brown (as cited by Dimmock, 1990) posits that increased resource allocation necessarily increases productivity in the form of learning outcomes. Several evaluation studies note on the effect of SBM. Dimmock and Walker (as cited by Al Kaabi, 2015) found in their review that most studies agreed that SBM provided better opportunities and contexts for building schools cultures in which teachers and principals feel professionally empowered and motivated to improve the management of the schools.

On the reason why School-Based Management tends to fail in most schools as evidenced by the poor performance of learners, Winarti (2010) underscored that two of the challenges of School-Based Management are related with habits and critical thinking. While the scrapes and flows requires education bodies to be critical, the long years of centralized educational system has formed practices in the education bodies. Instead of training them to be curriculum designers, the system seemed to have caused education bodies and

education practitioners to be merely curriculum implementers. The habits of trying to serve the higher hierarchy worsened by the dynamics of globalization that have led to the unification thought has made it even more difficult for people to think critically. People generally assume that thinking critically is identical with questioning the position.

Collaboration is the bloodline of School-Based management. Yu (2005) accounted that at the individual school level, the readiness of school principals, teachers and parents seems to be the core of the problem. Principal's transformational and curriculum leadership and local school seems to be weak as a result of policy makers attempt to work out ways to enhance leadership development for supervisors and middle managers. Future challengers to schools include carrying out of smooth transformation of the present school's management structure to the required incorporated management committees, effective implementation of school-based management.

Kenny & Hymes () summarizes some of the major School Based Management issues: (1) SBM is about embracing a new mindset; (2) authentic and effective SBM results from negotiating certain trends and issues as they apply to specific settings and situations; (3) there is no one model or best way; (4) eight criteria in determining school readiness for SBM include commitment, attitude, purpose, action, leadership, readiness, character and steadfastness; (5) SBM may not be appropriate in some situation; (6) SBM has a rich heritage; and (7) SBM could result in changing the status quo.

Robertson, Wohlstetter, and Mohrman (1995) concluded in their study that School Based Management can be more effective when the conditions associated with high involvement organizations namely: decentralization of power, knowledge and skills, information and rewards are in place. The extent to which these four conditions along the three other factors and instructional guidance system, leadership, and resources-facilitated the implementation of four categories of curriculum and instructional innovations. Data supported the premise that higher levels of reform take place when higher levels of more of these supporting conditions are present at the school. Furthermore, all of these conditions

with the possible exception of resources, appear to be instrumental in facilitating these in innovations.

SBM has undeniably drawn popularity. But while it is not a new concept of management now, Sumintono (2006) averred that it remains superficial in its impact and has failed to fulfill its original intention of improving the quality of Indonesian education. Previous paradigm and practices of management continued to remain.

In Saudi Arabia, AlKaabi (2015) described SBM practices are deemed an approach to improve learning quality, meet students' needs and empower staff. It is through SBM that the participation of staff is encouraged. This participation is related to the areas of effective school leadership, budget allocation, management strategies, staff development, curriculum and instruction and resources.

Research Questions

This study looked into the Emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal in Public Schools in Mountain Province. Specifically, It answered the following questions:

1. What are the issues and concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal school environment encountered by school heads in the public schools in Mountain Province along with the following domains?
 - a. Leadership and governance
 - b. Curriculum and instruction
 - c. Accountability and continuous improvement
 - d. Management of resources
2. What School-Based Management (SBM) Practices emerged to address the issues and concerns encountered by the school heads in the New Normal school environment in the public schools in Mountain Province?
3. What factors facilitated the emergence of School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal school environment in Mountain Province?

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study focused on determining the Emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal in the public schools in Mountain Province. The evaluation of the emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal included identification of the issues and concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal encountered in the public schools, identification of the emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal implemented to address the issues and concerns, determination of the factors associated to the implementation of the emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices, School-Based Management (SBM) model responsive to the New Normal environment. This study is limited to the different public elementary and secondary schools in the 12 schools districts in the Schools Division of Mountain Province.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The qualitative descriptive method was utilized specifically the grounded theory design.

In this study, the issues and concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal environment encountered in the public schools in Mountain Province along the domains of leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction accountability and continuous improvement and management of resources, the emerging SBM practices, the factors associated to the emerging SBM practices was explained. From the processes, actions and interactions, a model responsive to the New Normal environment will be proposed.

Population and/or Sampling

The study used quota sampling wherein four (4) schools were selected as participants in every schools district. One (1) secondary and one (1) elementary school under Level 2 in the SBM practice and one (1) secondary and one (1) elementary under Level 1 in the SBM practice will be selected as participants. There were 48

school-participants in all. The selection of schools from both the central and remote areas facilitated a balanced presentation differing circumstances in this classification of schools.

Data Collection

Field observation checklist and interview guide were the main data gathering tools used in the study to explain the issues and concerns of School-Based Management in the New Normal Environment, the emerging SBM practices and the factors associated to the emerging School-Based Management (SBM) Practices.

As face-to-face interaction shall likely resume in the duration of this study, the researchers utilized the different communication platforms applicable to the concerned participants. Text messaging, group chat, phone call, web call may be utilized where it is appropriate. School visit and one-on-one interview can also be used if it is allowed by the local Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF).

To check the reliability of data collected from the participant's, selected parents were interviewed to corroborate the information drawn from the school heads and teachers. A theoretical explanatory model is proposed based on the derived actions, interactions and social processes generated in the preceding questions.

Data Analysis

Data were processed for analysis using qualitative approach through coding, categorization and thematization. Collected and tabulated responses of the informants were first coded before it was categorized under specific themes. The coding and categorization stage of the shall systematically follow data analysis progression (Creswell, 2007).

The first step was open coding. The researcher formed categories of information about the emerging SBM practices by segmenting the information generated. Within each category, the researcher looked for properties or subcategories, and looked for data to dimensionalize, or show the extreme possibilities.

The second step is the axial coding- the researcher assembles the data in new ways after open coding. In this structured approach, he presents coding paradigm or logic diagram (i.e., a visual model).

Finally, selective coding takes place so that the researcher writes a “story line” that connects the categories. Alternatively, propositions of hypotheses may be specified that state predicted relationships.

Ethical Issues

After the research was approved by the Regional Office through the PPRD, permission to conduct data gathering shall be sought from the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent. The researchers prepared letters to the participants to inform them of the purpose of the study. The researcher seek consent from the different schools through their school heads of their participation in the study. It was indicated in the letter and was presented during the orientation that their identity and responses as participants in the study are treated with utmost confidentiality.

Results and Discussions

This paper presents the situation of the School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal learning environment pursuant to Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 (Republic Act No. 9155) advocating the decentralization of decision-making process from the central office to the schools emphasizing the centrality of the learners and the involvement of the community in the delivery of basis education services.

The first part delves on the issues and concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal school environment along leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, accountability and continuous improvement and management of resources. The second part explores on School-Based Management (SBM) Practices emerged to address the issues and concerns. The third part looks into the factors facilitated the emergence of School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal school environment and the last part probes on the contextualized School-based Management

framework that is responsive to the needs and demands of the New Normal learning environment.

Issues and Concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal School Environment

Leadership and governance

Poor internet access to sustain close communication with stakeholders

Continuous communication with stakeholders is an important concern in an organization at all times. To sustain communication with the different stakeholders when restrictions of social gathering and travel are in place tested the management skills of school heads during the pandemic. While all the 48 schools claimed to have used the social media and the technology in sustaining communication between the stakeholders, they were amenable that not all were reached through this mode of communication. A considerable number of schools in far-flung areas in all the different municipalities belonging to internet-disadvantaged communities were a concern. The interviewed participants related that it is hard to reach some parents through the social media especially those who reside in sitios or barangays with poor or no internet access. In Paracelis, two-way radio was used to disseminate BE information during lockdowns while in Sadanga and the Western Municipalities, the Mando or Bando, a traditional way of disseminating information was used in conveying updates on Brigada Eskwela.

That while the school head readily affirm the schools' utilization of digitalized information dissemination during the pandemic, they admitted that it was confined to important announcements and reminders. And though Facebook and Messenger were claimed to have been used as part of feedbacking mechanism, the school heads were aware that not all are reached and not all emerging needs were reached out through them.

These scenarios during the pandemic are similar with the experiences in Washington D.C. with city government used social media to communicate these service delivery changes with the public. At the same time, city agencies launched broad public communication efforts to promote social distancing (Zeemering, 2021).

Restrained school-based activities & trainings

Planning with the different stakeholders is a fundamental principle in School-Based Management. Accordingly, it promotes higher degree of ownership and commitment to work among the stakeholders. The immobility of people during the pandemic, however, affected the participation of the different stakeholders in the conduct of school-based planning activities. Among the 48 schools interviewed, only three (3) schools declared participation of other stakeholders other than the parents in the conduct of action planning, School-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (SMEA), catch up and re-entry plan to address emerging issues of the pandemic. While all of the schools affirmed conduct of limited face-to-face meetings the parents, such meetings were general orientations focused on Brigada Eskwela and the implementation of remote learning modality.

The school heads admitted that action planning of the different organization SGC, SBO, etc. were not done accordingly due to the intermittent lockdowns in the different municipalities or communities. While the three (3) schools claimed participation of the PTA president in the conduct of SMEA, more than 75% of the schools interviewed also admitted non-inclusion of the stakeholders in making catch-up plans and reentry plans to make programs responsive and relevant to the emerging needs, challenges and opportunities of the Covid pandemic.

School-based training program for teachers was mostly not conducted in the schools. Learning Action Cells (LAC) were claimed to have been conducted but was limited to module and Audio-Visual Presentation (AVP) development. While all the schools claimed participation to virtual trainings and seminars provided by the Division Office, not all the teachers were able to do so due to internet-connectivity problems.

Halting the school activities was a major effect of pandemic to the society. Such challenge, however, have opened opportunities to progressively transition to digital & community-based learning models and provide opportunities to teachers and students to familiarize themselves with new the system needed in the future. Chua (2021) shared the advantages of the pandemic situation saying that concomitant with policies to address health

and well-being for all students were strategies to ensure continuity of learning, student engagement, and innovation in the new learning environment.

Curriculum and instruction

Constrained implementation of school-based instructional interventions

Reading and numeracy problems as well as poor performance of learners across the different subject areas has become more pressing concern during the pandemic. Tutorial interventions to freely attend to them were not readily implemented. Responding to whether they implemented intervention program to improve least mastered competencies, the 48 schools claimed they implemented at least one with reading and numeracy intervention program as they planned to implement. They disclosed however that such intervention program were not fully implemented during the pandemic period. Twenty two (22) of the schools initiated community-based instruction but such was focused to discussion of the lessons contained in the modules. Only Eight (8) schools stated that they managed to implement reading intervention programs with the help of parents, collegians and teacher-retirees through home-based instruction or one-on-one consultation with the teachers in the schools.

Aside from the lockdowns and travel restrictions, the regular printing of bulk modules was pointed as factor in the non-implementation of intervention programs. The teachers claimed that the printing work took much of their time especially those with limited printers at schools. They shared that they felt stressed and pressured when printers malfunction that they could not reproduce the needed number of modules needed weekly. The checking of summative assessments and performance tasks also disturbed the supposed implementation of planned intervention programs specially during the early months the conduct of modular instruction.

“While I wanted very much to conduct remedial reading sessions with my struggling learners, the printing of bulks of modules to be distributed weekly and the checking of summative assessment need to be prioritized”, shared one master teacher in a central school.

Also, based from the report on the preparedness for Small Group Tutorial Instruction (SGBTI), assessment results, which should be done by the master teachers to utilize as a basis for structuring an intervention programs, are rarely analyzed. “Too much module-related work” was the common answer by the interviewees in the different schools.

Evidently, the pandemic has ushered dramatic increase in the workload of teachers, many of whom have negotiated a continuity of learning in adverse circumstances. The novel coronavirus has exacerbated the stresses facing teachers, and as countries continue to navigate periods of remote education, recognising and supporting teacher wellbeing should be a key priority (Dabrowski, 2020).

Teachers being overwhelmed modules and AVP-related works

The implementation of modular as well as digitalized instruction came with the responsibility of development and contextualization of modules and Audio-Visual Presentations (AVP). Handed over to the teachers as a responsibility by area supervisors, the activity was strenuous to the teachers attending to other instructional routines of the modular instruction. Three (3) schools raised that developing several division-produced and quality-assured modules and AVP not to mention the number of training days of training needed to be committed for such endeavor is too much to normally cope with their instructional duties. They also imparted that a more weighty situation is faced by the master teacher as they were the ones used to evaluate developed modules and AVPs in their respective districts and in the Division. As they had to leave their classes just to attend to these duties, the quality of distance learning instruction for their learners was compromised.

The school heads disclosed that their teachers were drawn to sluggishly perform their instructional functions in the school as they had to attend to the division-facilitated module and AVP-making duties.

“They usually complain attending to module and AVP-making but they were afraid to decline in fear that we would be reprimanded. So, they had to prioritize the module work or AVP work assigned to them by the supervisors. In the school level, their co-teachers assume their distribution and retrieval of module works”, school head 17 remarked.

Accountability and continuous improvement

Plan adjustment/Catch up plan activities not working

With the pandemic confining learning at home, it obviously caused decline in the actual performance of the learners. Though reports on the number of “Not meeting expectations” in SY 2020-2021 reached 851 (BELCP, 2021), teachers admitted that it could have been more. The fear that their schools draw the attention of the supervisors and the higher offices due to the number of learners “Not meeting expectations” that they did not reflect the actual performance of their learners. In most cases, they deliberately trimmed down or zeroed out the number of these learners in their reports to the concerned offices. The inconsistent number of failures and the number of learners under frustration level and non-numerates submitted in the Division Office support this. Almost all the teachers interviewed in the 48 schools timidly agreed to this practice.

The school heads and teachers remarked that there was a difficulty implementing the adjustment plan as most of the communities were not yet open for social gathering. Some families were also not yet open minded on freely accommodating tutors at their homes due to the rising cases of Covid 19 contractions in the community. According to the teachers, the demanding works of module printing, module and AVP development, weekly checking of summative assessments, SBM documentation preparation and other ancillary functions of the teacher are significant factors why the adjustment/catch up plan were not effective or not working.

Stakeholders not involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities

The social gathering and travel restrictions affected the participation of the different stakeholders in the planning and in evaluating the SBM activities. The interviewed stakeholders pointed out their non-inclusion during the planning and evaluation of the BE program. The stakeholders especially the business community and other community folks stated that they were being approached only during the conduct of the activities but not during planning and evaluation. They claimed that they could have participated or contributed more in providing needed materials should they were informed during the

planning and evaluation of the activities or undertakings. Other stakeholders also suggested that they should be informed earlier of the activities including the planning so that they can arrange their time to personally attend to such schedules.

The study of Cabaro (2016) titled: Levels of Participation of the School Stakeholders to the Different School-Initiated Activities and the Implementation of School-Based Management, corroborated this finding indicating that stakeholders' answering the call of the schools in terms of the urgent activities that needs their participation such as the coming of visitors and the conduct of evaluation related to school-based management just received a moderate rating. It implies that the limited time of the activity is informed to the stakeholders is a significant factor in their participation to activities.

Management of resources

Limited interaction with stakeholders

The prohibition of inter-barangay or inter-municipal travels as well as social gathering during the height of the pandemic period factored greatly in the decrease of partnership activities as parents and other stakeholders as most of them cannot freely travel to attend to meetings, orientations or assembly activities that physical engagement. As new partnership activities were introduced during the pandemic like module distribution and retrieval, solicitation for health materials & personal protective equipment, etc, partnership activities that required physical interaction decreased. According the school heads, while parents participated in some schools conducted projects like construction of triage and handwashing facilities, there was obviously a decreased in attendance as compared in the past years.

This finding is supported by the result of the study of Pek & Mee (2020) stating although the importance of parental involvement is widely acknowledged in the educational society, some parents still do not get involve effectively in their child's education whether in school or at home during the pandemic.

School-Based Management (SBM) Practices Emerged to Address the Issues and Concerns

Digitalization of instruction in the internet-disadvantaged schools

SBM, even during the pandemic, should uphold the principle that the development of learner is the center of its operations. All the Programs, Projects and Activities (PPEs) should ultimately result to improvement of learning outcomes. Guided by this framework, the different schools took the pandemic situation as an opportunity to introduce innovative instructional platforms to learners. With this, the schools heeded to take on the call for digitalized instruction in the internet-disadvantaged communities. With the TransformEd 2.0 and DepEd MTV projects, the Division pushed to establish hybrid instruction in different 127 elementary and secondary schools in the Province through offline MOODLE, KOTOBEE, Wondershare and Audio Visual Presentations (AVPs). Another seven (7) schools were pilot schools of the HyTeq, a similar blended learning project of the Regional Office in selected schools.

According to the school heads of the pilot schools, the teachers have a difficulty of adapting their innovative pedagogical practices at first but are determined to continuously learn the mechanics of digitalized instruction. Creating contextualized content, interactive formative and summative assessment, AVPs, gamified activities are the features of the offline digitalized platforms. The processes in the establishment of hybrid instruction involved the orientation of the teachers of the different application to be used, procurement of needed ICT equipment through the school MOOE and partnership fund, capacity-building of the teachers in using the gadgets and the different instructional platforms, orientation of the parents and learners about hybrid learning and launching the project with the stakeholders.

Three schools also have introduced facebook, messenger and video-based instruction as an intervention to improve performance of struggling learners in English and Math. Named as Faceboocation and Videomatics, the platform used the social media and AVPs developed to develop the least mastered competencies of slow learners. The

platforms involves the parents and guardians in monitoring the engagement of learners in the digitalized learning.

With the pandemic hampered the physical interaction between the learners and the teachers, digital learning may affect the optimization of the digital learning environment and academic achievements. Students with better self-regulated learning ability can somehow optimize their digital learning environment and be more progressive in terms of academic achievement (Sutarni et. al., 2021)

Mobile tutorial using community-based resources

SBM works when it can acclimatize with circumstances in continuously delivering quality education to learners in the different communities. This is according to Dodgett (1990) emphasizing that the main purpose of effective SBM is to serve the needs of the learners. Hence, SBM during the pandemic should be responsive to the remote learning needs of the learners. With all the 12 municipalities were put under community quarantine, community-based tutorial was operationalized by all the schools. The 48 school-respondents of the study claimed to have reached out to the learners needing instructional assistance in their communities/sitios. In most cases, teachers of the Senior High School specially those in the TVL track bring their classes in the communities in collaboration with the barangay officials and community folks needing skilled services. In Barlig and Tadian 1 districts, Carpentry and Electrical Installation Management (EIM) performance tasks are done in the communities. Houses or building under construction were used as actual laboratories under the close supervision of the teachers.

In a secondary school in Bauko 1, a *Galatis*, a community-based tutorial program for priority learners in Mathematics, is operationalize which uses the Dap-ay for the tutorial activities facilitated by collegians and retired Math teachers. In Tadian and Paracelis, *Galatis di Basa* and *Basanihan*, both a community-based reading programs, are initiated to cater to learners needing reading intervention. The programs are operationalized with the assistance of the barangay officials and parents. With the Small Group Tutorial Instruction

(SGTI), a Division-initiated tutorial program, other schools established home-based tutorial to priority learners by the teachers.

With the *Brigada Pagbasa* institutionalized in the operations of the schools at present after it was launched in the different schools district last year, the community-based reading program was already gaining ground in the all the schools. The program has drawn support from the different organizations especially alumni working abroad and other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). Last year, numerous partner-organizations working abroad and different tertiary school in the region donated books for the Brigada Pagbasa programs in the different schools.

One goal of community-based instruction is forging closer relationship among the learners and teachers which is an element of psychological support program for learners to mitigate effects of the pandemic to children. This concept is supported by the findings of Smythe, et. al. (2021) stating that community-based learning establishes pedagogies and practices that can leverage for more equitable relationships in post-pandemic situation. The authors pointed out that educators should developed a range of inventive and dynamic “pandemic pedagogies” that contribute to more equitable and inclusive social–technology relationships in a post-pandemic future.

e-Partnership

With the social media and technology gaining popularity as tools to facilitate speedier relay of information and accomplishing of business transactions, it is best utilized in adapting to the challenges of pandemic. Text messaging, online orientation and threaded discussions are ways of information dissemination that can be done speedily and remotely through the social media and the technology. All the 48 school participants claimed to have official Facebook pages and email addresses, though 10 of them mostly in Bauko 2 & Sadanga acknowledged to have not regularly updating it due to very poor internet access in their communities. The presence of School Information Officers facilitated the management of these Facebook pages as well as the Chat Groups of parents. In most cases, the class advisers manage an existing group chat where concerns are raised and discussed through

threaded conversations. The school heads shared that during the pandemic, it was through these platforms that concerns and solicitations were vented out as well as acknowledgement letters were sent and updates of school projects were make known.

With most of the schools are located in the far flung areas and a number of the community folks are working in distant places or abroad, the school heads acknowledged the need of establishing a digitalized advocacy and resource generation mechanism that can remotely reach parents from the different locations and other stakeholders in distant municipalities, provinces or even abroad. While social media posts are now a common information dissemination platform among schools since all of them were required to create their Facebook official pages, it usually just caters to posting of short notices and photos. Orientations through webcast, live or in-demand, e-publications and the like are needed systems that can improve the advocacy and resource generation in customizing Brigada Eskwela in the pandemic context. This findings are corroborated by the study of Gruzd & Geortzen (2013) pointing out that social media websites are having a significant impact on how collaborative relationships are formed and information is disseminated throughout society. They provide partners with space for public forum where individuals can discuss topics, exchange information and develop interpersonal relationship. Partnership in the New Normal environment needs this. Also, Erdiaw-Kwasie & Alam (2016) warned that the digital divide is a threat to the performance of rural partnerships, which consequently renders rural development outcomes unsustainable, lopsided and non-participatory. They recommend the need for a more responsive and localized approach to rural development partnerships that can enable disadvantaged groups to participate in today's digitally connected economy and society.

Haircut and nail care services

One of the neglected needs of the learners and teachers- may be trivial but common- having been locked in their communities for more than a year were haircut and nail care services as they could not still freely get out their homes to avail of such services. Teachers with hair cut and nail care skills offered services to the learners and parents. A secondary

school in Bauko 1 offered hair cut services to learners specially the males with overly grown hair. Also, nail care services were offered to female teachers and parents. In other schools, male teachers of the senior high schools conducting home-based tutorial extended same services to learners. The school heads shared that such practice helped the teachers bond with their learners and encourage them to be seriously engaged in accomplishing their modules. In some cases, learners with behavioral problems and parents uncooperative to implementation of modular learning are reached out through these services.

These SBM practice is explained by the study Antisocial Behavior, Academic Failure, and School Climate: A Critical Review (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). It underscored that both antisocial behavior and academic failure are context specific; each occurs within a climate in which conditions can be identified that reasonably predict problematic behavior and can be modified to reduce such behavior. The success of prevention and intervention programs, therefore, hinges on their ability to identify and modify climates in which academic failure and antisocial behavior emerge.

In the study of Chua (2022) entitled: Science, Social Responsibility, and Education: The Experience of Singapore During the COVID-19 Pandemic, he emphasized the importance of social responsibility throughout the pandemic. He mentioned importance of providing social initiatives such as haircutting & hairdressing for the learners as part of home-based activities during the pandemic in Singapore.

Organic farming

With the issuance of DepEd Order No. 12 s. 2020, also known as the Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021, which prioritizes the promotion and protection of learners' mental health and general welfare and in pursuance to observing *Gulayan sa Tahanan* among the learners & parents, at least two schools in Bauko 1 supported organic farming in learners' homes. The project is in collaboration with the Municipal Local Government Unit which provided the seeds and was distributed to parents.

Also, the project is linked with the Solid Waste Management project of the different Barangays in the Municipality. Prior to the launching of the project orientation limited face-to-

face orientation on organic farming was conducted with the parents with the personnel of Agriculture Unit of the MLGU. Monitoring of the project was done by the teachers when they visit learners for home-based tutorials.

The teachers imparted that the project catered not only to promote learners' health but also to develop the gardening skills and waste management awareness of learners which is a learning competency in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) and Social Science subjects. These tripartite conceptual importance of the project is corroborated by the study of Foodtank (2020) which emphasized that home vegetable gardening can not only enhance produce consumption and physical exercise but is also linked to improved emotional wellness.

Factors Facilitated the Emergence of School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal

Adaptive leadership

The open-mindedness of school leaders towards organizational transformation is the foundation of School-Based Management (SBM) in the pandemic context. Lockdowns, travel restriction, no face-to-face classes, no social gathering among parents, etc. calls for something different approach in the delivery of school services. Lest, development of the learners is hampered. The pronouncement that "Learning must continue" (Briones, 2020) calls for leadership initiatives in effectively handling the challenges of the pandemic. Hence, the ability to mobilize the school personnel to handle the new circumstances is necessary.

Among the 48 schools, all of them modified their plans to acclimatize with the pandemic situation. Each of the schools has developed a contextualized/adjusted Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) supported by Annual Improvement Plan (AIP), Annual Procurement Plan (APP) and Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP). They school head stated that their plans were refocused to the implementation of remote learning and Covid 19 prevention among the learners and teachers. Construction of triage and learner cubicles, reproduction of modules, distribution and retrieval of modules, procurement of disinfectants and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), conduct of home-based tutorials, development

of contextualized modules & Audio-Video Presentations (AVP) are the common activities in the plan of the schools.

Upskilling of teachers in the utilization of technology and different digital platforms and orientation of mental wellness and psychosocial support program were activities commonly conducted and participated by the teachers. As a result, the schools scheduled of regular Learning Action Cell (LAC) on these concerns. Trained teacher on ICT and mental health conducted reechoed training through informal mentoring sessions. Other school-based activities like celebrations, competitions and the like were accordingly removed.

Continuous encouragement and reminders by the school heads in adapting to the new activities and consistently accomplishing them were also mentioned by the teachers as factor in the involvement of everyone in the new learning environment. The different activities are evaluated during the conduct of quarterly School Monitoring, Evaluation and Adjustment (SMEA).

This emerging element of School-Based Management during the pandemic is supported by the findings of the study of Bagwel (2021) espousing the idea that as the coronavirus pandemic continues to reshape education, schools have to adapt to a teaching reality that is increasingly more complex and uncertain. School leaders who take an adaptive leadership approach and leverage key leadership practices can support their schools in navigating the challenges of uncertain educational environments in adaptive ways.

Innovative environment

Technology-mediated instruction and community-based learning were innovations implemented by the different schools. Thirty schools of the 48% school-respondents started the implementation of digitalized learning using different platforms like MOODLE, KOTOBEE, Facebook, Messenger, etc. This number is corroborated by the number of schools implementing TransformEd and HyteQ digitalization project of the Division and Regional offices (ITO Report, 2021). Among the 12 Senior High School interviewed, 11 affirmed their conduct of mobile tutorials using community-based resources. The other

school in Tadian district conducted one-on-one consultation sessions in the school with the parents or learners.

Implementation of digitalized learning entailed procurement of supplementary ICT gadget/materials. That while all the 265 elementary and secondary school in the Province were recipients of DCP packages, not all of them are ready for the implementation of digitalized instruction in terms of sufficiency of ICT materials. Some of the schools just received desktop computers which can not be used by learners in distance learning. Hence, availing of supplementary accessories and gadgets like wires, routers and tablets necessary.

Indeed, the migration to digital instruction is inevitable specially during the pandemic period. That while most of the children of today have been surrounded by digital technology since their birth, some are not yet equally equipped with technology. The case of the children in the disadvantaged communities show digital divides still prevail in the society. The study of livari et. al. (2020) highlights the digital transformation initiated by the COVID-19 pandemic in the basic education of the young generation, the variety of digital divides emerging and reinforced, and the possible barriers reported along the way. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has suddenly and abruptly forced schools and education indeed to engage in such a transformation. In this study we examine the digital transformation initiated by the COVID-19 pandemic in the basic education of the young generation, the variety of digital divides emerging and reinforced, and the possible barriers reported along the way.

Strategic & flexible partnership culture

The implementation of digitalized and community-based instruction during the pandemic entailed strong community support system. From the planning phase to implementation and evaluation phases of the program necessitated a flexible partnership program. The need to use of non-traditional advocacy and resource mobilization platforms in addressing the limited physical interaction with the stakeholders and securing local government support to activities not included in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) were necessary deviations to transformational programs in the schools.

Asking support from the LGU to fund hiring of para-teachers, requesting parents or

guardians submit and retrieve the self-learning modules of their children, inviting retirees and education students to act as tutors, soliciting Riso machines and portable printers from LGUs and other organizations, partnering with the PNP and BFP for the delivery of modules and disinfection of classrooms were the new partnership activities initiated by the different schools. In general, the partnership activities of the schools were focused to remote learning implementation and Covid 19 prevention. It was noted that these activities were prioritized in the different schools because they address they were the answers to the problems hampering the very goal during the pandemic that learning should not stop despite the circumstances.

While partnership is indispensable in the survival of an institution specially during the pandemic, it should be strategic and sustainable. The purpose of partnership should be clear between the school and the stakeholders. This essence of partnership is emphasized in the study of Sugiharto and Aminanto (2021) stating that partnership during the pandemic should facilitate means on how to survive, be able to work together, and be synergized in doing business.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Based on the research findings the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The issues and concerns of School-Based Management (SBM) in the New Normal school environment were poor internet access that affected the close communication with stakeholders and restrained school-based activities for Leadership and Governance; Constrained implementation of instructional interventions and teachers being overwhelmed with module and AVP-related works for Curriculum and Instruction; catch up plan does not work and stakeholders not involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities for Continuous improvement; and, limited interaction with the stakeholders for the Management of resources.
2. Digitalization of instruction, mobile tutorial using community-based resources, e-partnership and volunteering social services for the learners and parents emerged as

School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal school environment in the public schools in Mountain Province.

3. The factors facilitated the emergence of School-Based Management (SBM) Practices in the New Normal school environment in Mountain Province were adaptive leadership, innovative environment and strategic and flexible partnership culture.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions the following are recommended:

1. The school heads and the SBM School Coordinators to evaluate compressively the issues and problems in the implementation of the different programs during the pandemic time.
2. Schools to craft a sustainable development plan on digitalization of instruction, community-based mobile tutorials, e-partnership, and social services of school personnel.
3. The schools with SBM level 3 of practice host benchmarking activities highlighting adaptive leadership, innovative environment and strategic and flexible partnership culture.
4. The Division Office to adopt the proposed functional SBM model for the use of school during emergency situations (Appendix B).

Dissemination and Advocacy Plans

The research findings will be disseminated to the teachers, school heads, PTA, Local School Board, and other stakeholders of the Province during teachers' congress and meetings of school heads and Division Management and Advisory Team (DMAT). The study will also be published in the Mountain Province Schools Division Office (MPSDO) Research Journal for wider dissemination of the results of the study. Through these, the instructional leaders and concerned division personnel will be informed of the status of emerging practices of SBM in the New Normal for sustainability. Further, the proponents are to present the results during Regional Research Congress if needed.

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Financial Report

A. Supplies and Materials						
Activity	Item	Unit	Quantity	Estimated Cost	Total	ACTUAL COST
Implementation of the study and Preparation of Research Papers, Instructional Materials/Worksheets, and other documents	A4 Bond Paper	ream	10	250.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
	A4 Folder Tagboard with fastener	pc	20	10.00	200.00	200.00
	Printer Ink Black	bottle	5	300.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
	Printer Ink Cyan	bottle	2	300.00	600.00	600.00
	Printer Ink Magenta	bottle	2	300.00	600.00	600.00
	Printer Ink Yellow	bottle	2	300.00	600.00	600.00
	USB Flash Drive	pc	1	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
B. Domestic Travel Expenses						
Submission of First Tranche Deliverables	Courier		1	400.00	400.00	400.00
Submission of Last Tranche Deliverables	Courier		1	400.00	400.00	400.00
C. Food and other incurred expenses during the conduct of research						
Validation of Instruments	Meals of Validators/ Experts and Proponent/s		10	250.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
D. Reproduction, Printing, and Binding Cost						
E. Communication Expenses for the Implementation / Conduct of the Study						
Virtual Coaching and Orientation	Load of proponent (Smart / Globe/. Internet)	6 hours x 2 days	1	450	450.00	450.00
Data gathering: reliability test of questionnaire - Online Survey (to be given through pasaload)	Load of respondents (37.50 / hour)	1.33 hours	30	50.00	1,500.00	1,500.00

Data gathering: qualitative data (Interview) (to be given through pasaload)	Load of respondents (37.50 / hour)	2.67 hours	120	100.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Implementation of the study - Data Gathering /Collection, Preparation and submission of research papers and other documents	Load of proponent (Smart / Globe/. Internet)	card	12	1,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
F. Other Expenses						
Total					36,250.00	36,250.00

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