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Leadership trends and challenges in school-based management: A case study of Calubian North District, Leyte, Philippines

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the trends and challenges faced by school leaders in the Calubian North District, Calubian, Leyte, focusing on School-Based Management (SBM). Employing a mixed-methods research design, 11 school leaders participated in a survey questionnaire and interviews to achieve the study's objectives. Findings indicate that most school leaders in the Calubian North District are female, married, and in the prime working age. The majority hold doctorate degrees, serve as Principal II, have less than ten years of administrative experience, and have attended national training. Schools 9 and 14 exhibit larger teacher and student populations compared to others in the district. Regarding SBM levels, most schools in the district are classified as Level 1. Trends among school leaders include fostering trust among staff, students, parents, and community partners, effectively managing fiscal, human, and material resources, and enhancing curriculum and instructional resources. Challenges identified through interviews include physical facilities/resources, human resources management, community engagement, and instructional issues. Significant findings show that administrative experience influences SBM levels, while trends among school leaders correlate significantly with SBM effectiveness. In conclusion, the study highlights the proactive engagement of school leaders in fostering stakeholder partnerships. Recommendations include conducting assessments of challenges faced by school leaders and implementing targeted interventions through division program supervisors within the Department of Education.

Keywords: Challenges, Educational administration, School leadership, School-based management, Trends.

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1. Introduction

School leadership has continuously evolved to meet the ever-changing demands of national policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. Despite these changes, one fundamental objective remains constant: the need for schools to raise academic

standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this context, school leadership plays a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes, influencing student achievement, and fostering a collaborative school culture. The development of human capital, particularly through enhancing the skills and competencies of teachers and school leaders, has been recognized as a key driver of educational progress.

Schleicher [1] emphasized that the role of school leaders has transformed significantly in recent decades, particularly concerning accountability, institutional autonomy, and the scope of their responsibilities. These shifts have had profound implications not only for principals and head teachers but also for school leadership teams at various levels. Similarly, Lunenburg and Flrby [2] highlighted that school administrators must navigate an increasingly complex environment, requiring them to address emerging challenges and adapt to new educational demands. Effective leadership is, therefore, not only about overseeing administrative functions but also about ensuring high-quality education, fostering positive relationships within the school community, and implementing policies that promote student success.

As educational leaders continue to guide and safeguard their institutions amid global and local challenges, their role has become even more vital in ensuring resilience and adaptability in schools. The unprecedented disruptions in education, whether due to policy shifts, technological advancements, or unforeseen crises, have underscored the significance of responsive and dynamic leadership. School leaders are now expected to go beyond traditional administrative duties and actively engage in strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and innovative problem-solving.

The researchers have closely observed how school leaders in the Calubian North District, Leyte, undertake their responsibilities with a strong commitment to making a difference in the lives and learning experiences of students. Leadership, in this sense, is not merely an end goal but a means to empower children and young people to learn, achieve, and grow holistically. However, despite their dedication, school leaders often encounter significant challenges, including resource constraints, workforce management issues, and community engagement difficulties, all of which impact school governance and administration.

Given the limited research on School-Based Management (SBM) implementation at the elementary level, this study seeks to explore the prevailing trends and challenges faced by school leaders in the Calubian North District. Specifically, it examines how leadership trends influence SBM levels and practices while identifying the key barriers that hinder effective school management. By addressing these issues, the study aims to provide insights that can inform policies and interventions aimed at strengthening school leadership and enhancing SBM effectiveness.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to examine the trends and challenges faced by school leaders and their relationship with the School-Based Management (SBM) level in the Calubian North District, Calubian, Leyte. Specifically, it sought to:

Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of school leaders in terms of:
 - 1.1 Age,
 - 2 Sex,
 - 1.3 Civil status,
 - 1.4 Educational Attainment,
 - 1.5 Current designation,
 1. Length of administrative experience, and
 - 1.7 Training and seminars attended.
2. Describe the school characteristics, including:
 - 1.1 Number of teachers,
 - 1.2 Number of learners, and
 - 1.3 Classification of schools.
3. Identify and analyze the leadership trends among school leaders in the district
4. Assess the School-Based Management (SBM) Level of the schools in the Calubian North District.
5. Identify and categorize the key challenges encountered by school leaders in implementing SBM
6. Examine the relationship between school leaders' socio-demographic characteristics and SBM Level.
7. Investigate the relationship between leadership trends and SBM Level to determine how leadership practices influence school management effectiveness

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Fiedler's [3] Contingency Theory of Leadership, which posits that a leader's effectiveness depends on how well their leadership style aligns with a specific situation.

Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Leadership is an organizational theory that asserts there is no universal best way to organize a corporation, lead a company, or make decisions. Instead, the most effective course of action depends on both internal and external contexts. This theory is closely related to the situational approach and is commonly referred to as the contingency theory of leadership.

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the trends and challenges faced by school leaders, as well as the School-Based Management (SBM) level in schools within the Calubian North District, Calubian, Leyte.

Specifically, the independent variables include the socio-demographic profile of school leaders (such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, current designation, length of administrative experience, and participation in training and seminars), as well as the profile of the schools (including the number of teachers, number of learners, and school

classification). Additionally, the study examines the trends among school leaders in Calubian North District and the challenges they encounter. The dependent variable in this study is the School-Based Management Level of the schools.

Figure 1 illustrates the relationships between the dependent and independent variables studied.

4. Review of Literature

School leadership plays a critical role in shaping the quality of education, influencing student learning outcomes, and driving school reforms. This section presents a synthesis of relevant literature on the challenges, roles, and effectiveness of school leaders, particularly in relation to School-Based Management (SBM).

5. Challenges Faced by School Leaders

Earley and Greany [4] highlighted that school leaders operate in autonomous yet accountable systems, requiring them to balance multiple responsibilities. They emphasized that while administrative and financial concerns are inevitable, school leaders must primarily focus on professional and pedagogical matters to enhance student learning. Additionally, they asserted that education should not be solely evaluated based on test scores but should also contribute to students' character development, resilience, and well-being.

Cranston [5] described the modern era of school leadership as being dominated by standardized agendas and centralized accountability systems. He argued that school leaders should not merely react to external mandates but should act as proactive-reflexive professionals, leading with vision and adaptability rather than compliance.

Pont et al. [6] reinforced this perspective by stating that school leadership has become a global priority in education policy. They questioned which policies would effectively address the evolving challenges faced by school leaders, emphasizing the increasing complexity of the principal's role.

6. Impact of Leadership on Teaching and Learning

Hattie [7] underscored that the primary reason leadership matters in schools is its influence on teachers and teaching quality. His study concluded that student progress is most significantly affected when highly skilled, inspired, and passionate teachers work collaboratively with effective school leaders. Leadership shapes the teaching-learning environment and organizational structure, which indirectly affects student outcomes.

Knapp et al. [8] similarly emphasized that effective leadership enhances school culture, fosters respect for diversity, and creates a positive learning climate. They asserted that the principal's leadership is a key factor in driving educational reforms and improving student performance.

7. Leadership Qualities and Roles of School Principals

Several studies have identified key characteristics of effective school leaders. Boontim [9] found that the most desirable trait among administrators was a professional attitude in promoting school administration. His study suggested that school leaders must exhibit strong interpersonal skills and the ability to collaborate with both internal and external stakeholders.

Gamage and Sooksomchitra [10] further emphasized the importance of collaborative leadership. They revealed that effective principals engage in discussions with their staff and board members to develop strategic approaches for school improvements. The study also highlighted that delegation of authority is a critical skill, as it fosters active community involvement and shared decision-making, which are essential in SBM implementation.

Lambert [11] echoed these findings, stating that principals must clearly define their leadership roles in the 21st century. He stressed that school leadership influences all aspects of administration, including faculty development, policy implementation, and vision-setting. Principal succession, he noted, impacts the entire school system and requires careful planning.

Flanary and Terehoff [12] also stressed the importance of school principals possessing a clear vision of their roles in an increasingly complex educational landscape. They argued that effective school leaders should positively impact learners, faculty, and the community by managing administrative tasks efficiently, fostering collaboration with teachers and parents, and inspiring a shared vision.

8. Significance of the Literature Review

The reviewed literature provides a strong foundation for understanding the qualities, challenges, and leadership trends among school leaders. It also highlights the relationships between socio-demographic and school profile variables and their influence on School-Based Management (SBM). The insights gained from these studies serve as a valuable anchor in achieving the objectives of the current study.

9. Method

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of school leadership trends, challenges, and School-Based Management (SBM) levels. This design was chosen as it allows for a deeper exploration of research questions by leveraging the strengths of both methods while mitigating their individual limitations. Creswell and Plano Clark [13] emphasized that combining different research techniques enhances the robustness of a study, leading to more reliable and valid findings.

The study was conducted in 11 elementary schools within the Calubian North District, located in the municipality of Calubian, Leyte. Among these, eight are complete elementary schools situated along the municipality's highway, while the remaining three primary schools are located in the uppermost areas bordering the barangays of San Isidro, Leyte.

The respondents of this study were 11 school leaders from the elementary schools in Calubian North District during the school year 2020-2021. To ensure validity and reliability, purposive sampling was employed based on the following criteria: (1) must be a school leader, (2) must have at least five years of administrative experience, and (3) can be of any gender (male or female). This method ensured that the selected respondents had sufficient leadership experience and insights relevant to the study.

Data were collected using semi-structured and standardized survey questionnaires, along with semi-structured interview guide questions. The survey items were adapted from Langdon and Alansari [14] study on Leadership Standards for Public School Principals. The survey questionnaire gathered information on the socio-demographic profile of school leaders, school profiles, leadership trends, and SBM levels, while semi-structured interviews provided deeper insights into the challenges encountered by school heads in the district.

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured approval from the Schools Division Superintendent of Leyte, with an endorsement from the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Once approval was granted, the researcher formally initiated the study by distributing the survey questionnaires to the selected respondents and scheduling interviews. To ensure 100% retrieval of survey questionnaires, the researcher personally collected the responses. The gathered data were systematically coded, categorized, analyzed, and interpreted to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the results.

The collected data were processed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages, and means, were used to analyze the socio-demographic profiles of school leaders, school characteristics, leadership trends, and SBM levels. Additionally, correlational analysis was conducted to determine the significant relationships between and among the study's key variables. Through these methods, the study aimed to generate meaningful insights into the leadership dynamics and SBM implementation in the Calubian North District.

10. Findings and Discussion

This portion includes the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data. Data are presented based on the objectives of the study as follows: socio-demographic profile of school leaders, profile of the school, trends of school leaders in Calubian North District, and School-Based Management Level or performance of the schools.

11. Socio-Demographic Profile of School Leaders

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic profile of school leaders, including age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, current designation, length of administrative experience, and training and seminars attended.

Table 1.

Socio-Demographic Profile of School Leaders.

Variables	f	%
Age		
25-54 years old (prime working age)	9	81.8
55-64 years old (mature working age)	1	9.1
65 years old and over (elderly)	1	9.1
Total	11	100.0
Sex		
Male	1	9.1
Female	10	90.9
Total	11	100.0
Civil Status		
Single	2	18.2
Married	9	81.8
Total	11	100.0
Educational Attainment		
With Master's Units	2	18.2
Master's Degree	2	18.2
With Doctoral Units	3	27.3
Doctoral Degree	4	36.4
Total	11	100.0
Variables	f	%
Current Designation		
Teacher-In-Charge	3	27.3
Head Teacher I	3	27.3
Head Teacher III	1	9.1
Principal I	1	9.1
Principal II	3	27.3
Total	11	100.0
Length of Administrative Experience		
less than 5 years	2	18.2
5 to less than 10 years	6	54.5
10 to less than 15 years	1	9.1
15 years and above	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0
Training/Seminars Attended		
Division Level	2	18.2
Regional Level	1	9.1
National Level	6	54.5
International Level	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0

Age. The data indicate that 81.8% (9 out of 11) of school leaders are within the prime working age range of 25-54 years, while 9.1% (1) belong to the mature working age group (55-64 years), and another 9.1% (1) are aged 65 years and above. This suggests that most school leaders in the Calubian North District are in their most active and productive years.

Sex. The majority of school leaders (90.9%) are female, while only 9.1% are male. This finding indicates a significant female presence in school leadership roles within the district.

Civil Status. Most school leaders (81.8%) are married, while 18.2% are single. This suggests that many school leaders balance both professional and familial responsibilities.

Educational Attainment. The results show that 36.4% of school leaders hold a doctoral degree, 27.3% have earned doctoral units, 18.2% have completed a master's degree, and another 18.2% have earned master's units. These findings indicate a strong commitment among school leaders to pursuing higher education.

Current Designation. The distribution of leadership positions reveals that 27.3% of school leaders hold the position of Principal II, another 27.3% serve as Head Teacher I, 27.3% are Teacher-in-Charge, 9.1% are Principal I, and 9.1% are Head Teacher III. This indicates a diverse range of leadership positions within the district.

Length of Administrative Experience. More than half (54.5%) of the school leaders have administrative experience ranging from 5 to less than 10 years, while 18.2% have served for less than 5 years, 18.2% for 15 years and above, and 9.1% for 10 to less than 15 years. This suggests that many school leaders are still relatively young in their leadership roles.

Training and Seminars Attended. National-level training was the most attended (54.5%), followed by division-level (18.2%), international-level (18.2%), and regional-level (9.1%) training. This implies that school leaders actively engage in professional development to stay updated on educational leadership trends.

According to a UNESCO [15] report, one of the key factors in improving learning outcomes is the presence of school leaders who provide strong support and exert positive influence on students.

12. Profile of the Schools

The school profile was analyzed in terms of the number of teachers, number of learners, and school classification.

Table 2.
Profile of the Schools.

School Name	Number of Teachers		Number of Learners		Classification of Schools			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
School 1	3	3.03	75	3.56	Multi		-	
School 2	6	6.06	100	4.74	-		Mono	
School 3	6	6.06	136	6.46	-		Mono	
School 4	7	7.07	119	5.65	-		Mono	
School 5	6	6.06	131	6.22	-		Mono	
School 6	3	3.03	72	3.42	Multi		-	
School 7	8	8.08	163	7.74	-		Mono	
School 8	7	7.07	130	6.17	-		Mono	
School 9	13	13.13	387	18.38	-		Mono	
School 10	1	1.01	39	1.85	Multi		-	
School 11	7	7.07	145	6.89	-		Mono	
School 12	5	5.05	118	5.6	Multi		-	
School 13	1	1.01	15	0.71	Multi		-	
School 14	14	14.14	289	13.72	-		Mono	
School 15	12	12.12	187	8.89	-		Mono	
Total	99	100.00	2,106	100.00	5	33.3	10	66.7

Number of Teachers. School 14 had the highest number of teachers (14.14%), followed by School 9 (13.13%). Conversely, Schools 10 and 13 had the lowest number of teachers, each with only 1.01%. This suggests that schools with higher student populations require more teachers.

Number of Learners. School 9 recorded the highest student population (18.38%), followed by School 14 (13.72%). In contrast, School 13 had the lowest number of learners (0.71%). This finding indicates that schools in more populated barangays accommodate a greater number of students.

Classification of Schools. Of the 15 schools, 10 were classified as monograde, while 5 were multigrade. The classification appears to be influenced by the number of teachers and students, as indicated by the data.

Weinstein [16] emphasized that poor school leadership can lead to lower student achievement and diminished school quality, reinforcing the importance of effective school management.

13. Trends of School Leadership in Calubian North District

Table 3 presents the key leadership trends among school leaders in the Calubian North District.

Table 3.

Trends of School Leadership in Calubian North District.

Indicators	Mean	Description
Build a trust relationship between staff, learners, parents and community partners.	4.80	Strongly Agree
Manage the fiscal, human, and material resources for learning.	4.80	Strongly Agree
Manage the fiscal, human, and material resources for curriculum and instruction.	4.80	Strongly Agree
Build and sustain productive relationships with community partners.	4.70	Strongly Agree
Communicate vision with to the teachers, parents, learners and other stakeholders.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Promote continuous and suitable school improvement.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Promote positive school culture.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Build a collaborative school environment to learn.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Supervise the instruction and leadership capacity of teachers.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Ensure a system of accountability for every learner's academic and social success.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Ensure that all aspects of schooling meet learners' needs.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Work with other educators to develop the instructional skills of teachers.	4.50	Strongly Agree
Manage the fiscal, human, and material resources for learner safety.	4.50	Strongly Agree
Demonstrate principles of self-awareness among the teachers.	4.50	Strongly Agree
Develop school plans and programs aligned to the national targets and standards.	4.40	Agree
Manage the school facility by applying appropriate models and principles of organization.	4.40	Agree
Ensure that teacher and organizational time is focused on quality instruction.	4.40	Agree
Ensure teacher and organizational time is focused on decision making and problem solving.	4.40	Agree
Formulate a building-level leadership platform grounded in ethical standards and practices.	4.40	Agree
Ensure the integration of technology to support productive systems for learning.	4.40	Agree
Monitor and evaluate progress and revise plans.	4.30	Agree
Work with other educators to develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor learners' progress	4.30	Agree
Work with other educators to develop the leadership capacity of the teachers.	4.30	Agree
Develop the capacity for distributed leadership of school community.	4.30	Agree
Demonstrate reflective practice among the teachers.	4.30	Agree
Analyze the complex issues that affect learners, families, communities, and learning.	4.30	Agree
Use technology to promote and implement school vision.	4.30	Agree
Work with other educators to provide an effective instructional program.	4.20	Agree
Work with other educators to design a curriculum to accommodate diverse learner needs.	4.20	Agree
Work with other educators to design comprehensive professional growth plans for the teachers.	4.20	Agree
Identify and use diverse community resources to improve school programs and meet the needs of all learners.	4.20	Agree
Promote the understanding and appreciation for the community's diverse culture.	4.20	Agree
Promote the cultural, social, and intellectual assets of the school community.	4.20	Agree
Ensure that curricular design, instructional strategies, and learning environments integrate appropriate technologies to maximize learning.	4.20	Agree
Apply technology to enhance parents' and teachers' professional practice and productivity.	4.20	Agree
Use technology to plan and implement comprehensive systems of effective assessment and evaluation.	4.20	Agree
Understand educational research practices that can support school improvement.	3.80	Agree
Understand and promote research-based decisions.	3.70	Agree
Critique research findings and claims that can improve school.	3.60	Agree
Conduct educational research that can improve school.	3.50	Agree
AM	4.34	Agree

The data reveal that the highest-rated leadership practices include building trust relationships with staff, learners, parents, and community partners; managing fiscal, human, and material resources for learning; and managing fiscal, human, and material resources for curriculum and instruction, all of which received the highest mean score of 4.80 (Strongly Agree). These findings suggest that school leaders place significant emphasis on fostering strong partnerships with stakeholders and ensuring effective resource management to support teaching and learning.

Additionally, other highly rated leadership indicators include building and sustaining productive relationships with community partners (4.70), communicating vision with teachers, parents, learners, and stakeholders (4.60), and promoting continuous school improvement (4.60). These results indicate that school leaders actively engage in collaborative decision-making, maintain transparent communication, and work toward sustainable school development.

While most leadership indicators received high ratings, areas related to educational research, such as understanding and promoting research-based decisions (3.70), critiquing research findings (3.60), and conducting educational research to improve schools (3.50), received the lowest mean scores. This suggests that while school leaders excel in stakeholder engagement and resource management, there is a need to enhance their research skills to support data-driven decision-making and evidence-based school improvement.

The findings highlight the strong leadership practices of school heads in fostering collaboration, managing resources, and driving school improvement. These results align with Robison et al. [17], who emphasized the importance of integrating leadership knowledge into research on teaching and effective learning. Moving forward, strengthening research capabilities among school leaders could further enhance their ability to implement innovative educational strategies and policies.

14. School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Schools

Table 4 presents the school-based Management (SBM) levels of schools in the Calubian North District.

Table 4.

School-Based Management (SBM) Level of Schools

Variables	f	%
<i>Validated SBM Level</i>		
Level I	10	90.9
Level II	1	9.10
Total	11	100.0

The data indicate that 90.9% (10 schools) of the schools were validated at SBM Level I, while only 9.1% (1 school) reached Level II. This finding suggests that a majority of the elementary schools in the Calubian North District are still in the early stages of SBM implementation and need to make further improvements to achieve higher validation levels.

Reaching a higher SBM level requires enhanced governance, stakeholder engagement, and resource mobilization to strengthen school-based decision-making processes. Schools at Level I often demonstrate basic compliance with SBM principles but may require more structured and sustainable efforts in participatory governance, curriculum development, and resource management to progress to higher validation levels. In contrast, Level II schools exhibit more developed management systems and a stronger culture of shared leadership, reflecting greater autonomy and accountability in school operations.

This trend highlights the need for capacity-building initiatives for school heads and teachers, intensified stakeholder involvement, and continuous assessment of school processes to meet the standards of higher SBM levels. As Pont et al. [6] emphasized, countries must develop new forms of school leadership that can effectively respond to evolving educational landscapes. Strengthening school-based governance in the Calubian North District will be essential in fostering more effective and sustainable school leadership, ultimately improving the quality of education in the region.

15. Challenges Faced by School Leaders

The challenges encountered by school leaders in Calubian North District were determined through interviews, revealing four major areas of concern: physical facilities/resources, human resources, community engagement, and instruction. These challenges highlight the complexities of school leadership in ensuring effective educational management, resource allocation, and stakeholder collaboration.

Physical Facilities/Resources. School leaders reported that insufficient infrastructure and resources posed significant barriers to effective school management. The shortage of classrooms and essential facilities was frequently cited, with some leaders resorting to makeshift solutions such as constructing temporary buildings for kindergarten pupils and requesting additional buildings due to the demolition of aging classrooms. Additionally, a lack of water supply further compounded these difficulties, affecting both hygiene and learning conditions.

Financial constraints were another major challenge. Schools lacked allocated funds for various projects and programs, forcing leaders to seek assistance from barangay officials, rely on PTA contributions, and conduct fundraising activities like mini pageants to support school initiatives. The impact of natural calamities also emerged as a pressing issue, with some schools experiencing damaged infrastructure, such as perimeter fences, after typhoons. These concerns reflect the need for increased financial support and disaster-resilient infrastructure to ensure the continuous and safe delivery of education.

Human Resources. Managing human resources was another significant challenge for school leaders. They encountered difficulties in personnel management, staffing, and maintaining positive working relationships with teachers. Some leaders struggled with teachers exhibiting diverse personalities and backgrounds, resistance to authority, and interpersonal conflicts.

Statements such as "some teachers think they are better than the school head" indicate the complexities of maintaining professionalism and unity within the faculty. Additionally, a lack of teaching personnel was a recurring concern, leading to an increased workload for existing staff and potentially affecting instructional quality. Addressing these challenges requires improved teacher recruitment, professional development programs, and leadership strategies to foster a positive work environment.

Community Engagement. School leaders also faced challenges in engaging and collaborating with community stakeholders, particularly parents and local officials. While some leaders successfully sought funding from local government units to provide necessary equipment, others struggled with parents who did not prioritize their children's education. Ensuring active community involvement in school affairs remains a challenge, as maintaining strong relationships with parents and local leaders is crucial for sustaining school programs. Strengthening parental education initiatives and fostering a culture of shared responsibility between schools and the community could help address this issue.

Instruction. Instructional challenges, particularly during the pandemic, were among the most critical issues faced by school leaders. The shift to modular learning created significant difficulties in lesson delivery, especially for learners whose parents had limited educational backgrounds and were unable to assist with home-based learning. School leaders and teachers also faced time constraints in conducting home visitations, making it difficult to provide adequate support to struggling students. These challenges highlight the urgent need for alternative instructional strategies, teacher training in remote education, and stronger parental involvement in facilitating student learning.

The varied concerns and challenges faced by school leaders in Calubian North District reflect the complexities of school management in resource-limited environments. These difficulties may directly affect the implementation of school programs, the quality of instruction, and overall student learning outcomes. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts between school leaders, teachers, parents, and policymakers to ensure that schools are equipped with the necessary resources, strong leadership, and an engaged community to support learners effectively.

16. Relationship of Variables

This section explores the significant relationships between the socio-demographic profile of school leaders and their respective School-Based Management (SBM) levels, as well as other tested variables. By examining these relationships, we aim to uncover factors that might influence the performance and success of SBM within the district.

Socio-demographic profile and School-Based Management Level. Table 5 presents the analysis of the relationship between the socio-demographic profile of school leaders and their SBM levels.

Table 5.

Significant Relationship between the Socio-Demographic Profile of School Leaders and School-Based Management Level.

	Variable	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	School-Based Management Level	0.577	0.081	Accept H_{01}
Sex		0.111	0.76	Accept H_{01}
Civil Status		0.167	0.645	Accept H_{01}
Educational Attainment		0.365	0.299	Accept H_{01}
Current Designation		0.422	0.225	Accept H_{01}
Length of Administrative Experience		0.271*	0.036	Reject H_{01}
Level of Training / Seminars Attended		0.062	0.864	Accept H_{01}

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Seven variables were tested for correlation: age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, current designation, length of administrative experience, and level of training/seminars attended. The findings show that for most variables, the p-values were greater than the alpha value of 0.05, indicating no significant relationship with SBM performance. However, length of administrative experience stood out, with a p-value of 0.036, which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This suggests that the length of administrative experience is significantly related to the SBM level of school leaders.

The r-value of 0.271 indicates a minimal positive relationship between administrative experience and SBM level. This means that, as the length of administrative experience increases, the SBM level tends to increase slightly as well. The positive correlation suggests that experienced school leaders may be more adept at implementing and managing SBM practices, possibly due to their accumulated knowledge and familiarity with the challenges of school management.

In contrast, other socio-demographic variables such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, current designation, and level of training or seminars attended did not show any significant relationships with SBM levels. The findings related to these variables suggest that these factors do not directly influence the effectiveness of SBM practices in the district. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted for these variables, implying that they do not have a statistically significant impact on SBM performance.

The results underscore the importance of administrative experience in shaping the effectiveness of SBM implementation. Experienced school leaders may have developed stronger leadership skills, a better understanding of resource management, and a more comprehensive approach to community engagement—factors crucial for effective SBM.

Trends of school leaders and School-Based Management Level. The results presented in Table 6 examine the significant relationship between the trends of school leaders and the level of School-Based Management (SBM) in schools.

Table 6.

Significant Relationship between the Trends of School Leaders and School-Based Management Level.

Variable		r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Trends of School Leaders	School-Based Management Level	0.348*	0.017	Reject H ₀₃

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation between the trends of school leaders and the SBM level produced a p-value of 0.017, which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which posited that there is no significant relationship between the trends of school leaders and SBM level, was rejected. This outcome indicates a statistically significant association, suggesting that the leadership practices and trends exhibited by school leaders directly influence the SBM level of the school.

The r-value of 0.348 suggests a moderate positive correlation between the trends of school leaders and SBM level. This implies that as school leaders exhibit stronger and more effective leadership trends, the SBM level of the school is likely to improve. The positive correlation indicates that leadership behaviors such as building trust, managing resources effectively, fostering community engagement, and focusing on instructional quality directly contribute to the successful implementation and progression of SBM practices.

This finding supports the argument made by Pont et al. [6] who emphasized that school leaders face a dual challenge: they must not only support and retrain current school principals but also prepare and train future generations of leaders. The trends of school leaders, which include strategies for building trust, enhancing collaboration, and promoting continuous improvement, are integral to strengthening SBM at the school level. This highlights the importance of ongoing leadership development and the need for training programs that equip school leaders with the skills necessary to meet evolving educational demands.

Ultimately, the relationship between leadership trends and SBM levels underscores the critical role that school leadership plays in fostering a school environment where SBM practices can thrive, leading to improved educational outcomes.

17. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, school leadership trends in the Calubian North District revolve around fostering trust-based relationships with staff, learners, parents, and community partners; effectively managing fiscal, human, and material resources for learning; and overseeing resources for curriculum and instruction. However, school leaders also face challenges related to physical facilities, human resources, community engagement, and instructional delivery, as reflected in their School-Based Management (SBM) level.

Despite these challenges, the study concludes that school leaders in the Calubian North District demonstrate a strong commitment to collaboration and stakeholder engagement, which serves as a foundation for effective school management and continuous improvement.

18. Recommendation

In light of the study's results, it is recommended that school leaders continue strengthening their partnerships with stakeholders to enhance support for school-initiated programs and projects, ensuring their successful implementation. By sustaining collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders, school leaders may also strive for a higher level of School-Based Management (SBM) validation, further improving school governance and operations. Additionally, the Department of Education, through division program supervisors, should conduct assessments to identify and address the specific challenges faced by school leaders, providing necessary interventions to support their roles effectively. Lastly, further research may be conducted on the trends and challenges of school leaders in other schools, districts, divisions, or regions to expand the study's scope, generate more comprehensive data, and establish more valid and reliable findings.

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