School-Community Partnerships in Bulan District

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Abstract: *The study aimed to determine the practices of the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships and involvement of the stakeholders in Bulan Districts for school year 2018-2019. It used the descriptive-survey method and devised a questionnaire for gathering the primary data. The respondents include all the school heads in the Bulan Districts. The statistical tools utilized were frequency count, percentage, weighted mean and ranking. The extent of practices of the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships along engaging stakeholders' participation is highly practiced with an overall weighted mean of 4.31. The holding of PTCA meetings is very highly practiced with weighted mean of 4.93. Relative to fund utilization and transparency, the school heads very highly practiced the putting up of transparency board and posting of financial reports for transparency with weighted mean of 4.95. In terms of school environment, the provision of security guard in the school, the conduct of monthly monitoring and inspection of the classrooms and other facilities, assistance provided by the community in the repair of damaged furniture and fixtures, and installation of streetlights around the school are very highly practiced by the school heads with weighted means of 4.90. The stakeholders are very highly involved in knowing the Department of Education orders and memoranda with weighted mean of 4.88. Likewise, they are very highly involved as to regularly participating in planning, implementation and evaluation of school programs with weighted mean of 4.88. Moreover, the barangay officials are very highly involved in allocating financial assistance to the school from their IRA with weighted mean of 4.83. Evidently, the community is very much involved in providing assistance to the school in the repair of furniture and fixtures with weighted mean of 4.90. The mechanisms identified by the school heads in nurturing school-community relations in terms of engaging stakeholders' participation are the following: the commendations and compliments are given to the stakeholders (f=56); their involvement to the various school's activities (f=48); and good attitudes towards each other are developed (f=48). There are three foremost challenges encountered by the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships along engaging stakeholders' participation. They are the non-observance of the time on task (f=56), limited attendance of teachers to seminars for their professional growth (f=50), and non-transparency of the implementation of school development plan (f=48). Relative to fund utilization and transparency, the lack of transparency on school's achievements (f=54), the prioritization of the pupil's needs in spending the MOOE is compromised (f=51), and non-transparency of MOOE in the school (f=43). Relative to school environment, the holding of PTCA is irregular (f=59), inadequate practice of progressive and consultative leadership (f=54), and non-sustained involvement of the stakeholders in the school activities (f=51).An action plan was designed that may improve the practices of the school heads in nurturing the school-community partnerships.*

Keywords: School-Community Partnerships

1. Introduction

The school as a social institution and agent of socialization needs to have a good relationship with immediate and far communities. Symbiotic relationship always exists between the school and the community which lead to the success of the two. Thus, the learners who become economically productive sustainable livelihoods are evidences of good quality education. Also, they contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual well-being. The school is a community which produces better and productive citizenry. In fact, a well-educated nation is composed of a well-educated society.

In addition, the integration of communities and schools goes beyond solely planning for out-of-school time. It is a true supportive, reciprocal integration of community support for schools, and their programs and schools providing a sort of sustenance for communities. School community relationship assist in the integration of approaches to address the needs of communities and "the idea that the multiple and interrelated problems that require multiple and interrelated solutions" (Michigan State Board of Education, 2002). The basic idea behind school community relationship is to integrate community problems into the school curriculum. Hence, the whole question of school community relationship should be seen as that of placing schools as integral part of the society. Therefore, it is the duty schools on one hand and communities on the other to see that all about schools and communities blend into one whole picture (National Teachers Institute, 2000).

In the Philippines, the school administrators, principals and school heads are sanctioned to discover new avenues on getting the attention and support of its stakeholders. However, when a regular grade six pupil, or any elementary grader is asked about what community involvement activities they usually know, or be involved in, most of the time, they will reply field trip or tree planting. It is therefore along the above premises that this study aspired to answer the how and ways of maximizing community involvement in the attainment of school goals. It aims to help develop the confidence to explore issues and ideas critically, willingness to try new things, and take managed risks in performing its noble goal of serving the community at most. (Soliman, 2005).

Furthermore, the community has played a vital role in shaping and molding the educational system of the Philippines. Its contribution to the educational system in producing meaningful and productive citizens can never be denied. This is mainly due to the fact that when the school and the community have learned to cooperate with one another, many opportunities will arise to unite their efforts and materials on projects for community development (Sanders 2010).

Pursuant to Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 6, s.2012 entitled Guidelines in the Establishment and Implementation of Agency Strategic Performance Management System, the Department of Education hereby creates the Performance Management Team to institutionalize the Results-Based Performance Management System. It seeks to link individual performance

with the Department's organizational vision, mission, and strategic goals.

In line with this Philosophy, DepEd implements a Results-Based Performance Management System (DepEd, RPMS 2014). It is a shared undertaking between the superior and employee that allows an open discussion of job expectations, Key Results Areas, Objectives and how these align to overall department goals. It provides avenue for agreement on standard of performances and behaviors which lead to professional and personal growth in the organization. One of its Key Result Areas pertains to Parents' Involvement and Community Partnership.

In effect, to encourage local initiatives for the improvement of schools and learning centers and to provide the means by which these standards may be achieved, Republic Act No. 9155 also knownas Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 came to be. It is based on the national policy of decentralization originally set by the Philippine Local Government Code of 1991 as a response to the new challenges for sustainable human development by enabling local communities to become self-reliant and more effective partners in the attainment of national goals (Basic Education Act of 2001).

The DepEd Memo No. 240, s.2005 dated August 17, 2005 titled Schools First Initiative through Peer Accreditation for Public High Schools came in to encourage community involvement. With the theme "The Community, Building and Nourishing the Schools: Translating Initiative to Reality", the agency recognizes the important role that the community play in the development of the country in general. The Department of Education shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality basic education and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all shall take into account regional and sectoral needs and conditions and shall encourage local planning in the development of educational policies and programs.

Hence, the school heads in Bulan District heed to the calling of the national government through its DepEd that school-community has to be forged in order to attain its goal. The stakeholders are highly active in participating in the activities initiated by the school specifically the Brigada Eskwela as reflected in the annual reports submitted to the Division Office. However, there are schools which are not receptive to including communities in schools while some schools have an open-door attitude to communities being involved in school programs and activities.

For this reason, the researcher was encouraged to conduct this research with the intention of knowing the reasons and finding out other challenges usually encountered by the school heads. A cordial relationship between the school and community is a pre-requisite for achieving a meaningful educational objective in the community and nation at large (Gital, 2009). Further, it should be noted that community's values, ideas, norms and beliefs are to be perpetuated by the school being a social institution and at the same time, the learners in the school come from the community (Aminu, 2006). Therefore, it is against this background that this study intends to know the school heads' practices in fostering school-community partnership and involvement.

2. Research Questions

The study determined the practices of school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships and involvement of the stakeholders in Bulan District for school year 2018-2019.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following problems:

1) What are the practices of school heads and its extent in nurturing school-community partnerships along:
   a) Engaging stakeholders' participation;
   b) Fund utilization and transparency; and
   c) School environment?
2) What is the involvement of the stakeholders in school-community partnership along the identified variables?
3) What are the mechanisms for sustainable school-community partnership along the identified variables?
4) What are the difficulties and challenges in nurturing school-community partnership?
5) What could be proposed based on the results of the study?

3. Methodology

This study determined the practices of the school heads in nurturing school community partnership and involvement of the stakeholders in Bulan District for School Year 2018-2019.This study used descriptive-survey method of research since questionnaire was utilized in gathering the data. The researcher selected 61 school heads that composed of principals, head teachers and teacher-in-charge as the primary respondents of the study. The statistical tools utilized were the weighted mean, frequency, and rank.

The Sample
The respondents of this study were the sixty-one (61) school heads consisted of principals, head teachers and teachers-in-charge. They were selected as primary respondents because they provided substantial data needed by the respondents. A total enumeration was used as methods in determining the respondents because it commensurate the equal number of public elementary schools in the district. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents in this study.

Table 1: The Respondents

District	F	%
District 1	15	24.6
District 2	15	24.6
District 3	15	24.6
District 4	16	26.2
Total	**61**	**100.0**

From the table, it was noticed that there were 15 school heads or 24.6% were assigned in each of the District 1, 2, and 3. On the other hand, 16 or 26.2% of the school heads came from District 4.

The Instrument
The researcher utilized both questionnaire and unstructured interview as relevant research tools to gather the needed data

for this study. Questionnaire were self-constructed and administered to all sampled study participants. Regarding self-construction of the questionnaire, items were structured into four parts based on research objectives. Part I covered the practices of school heads and its extent in nurturing school-community partnerships along Engaging stakeholders' participation; Fund utilization and transparency; and School environment. Part II includes the involvement of the stakeholders in school-community partnership along the identified variables. Then, Part III encompasses the mechanisms for sustainable school-community partnership along the identified variables and Part IV contains the difficulties and challenges in nurturing school-community partnership.

As regards questionnaire items, the researcher used five Likert scales, which required an individual participant to respond to a series of statements in questionnaire by indicating whether he/she very highly practiced, or highly practiced, or moderately practiced, or less practiced, or least practiced. Validity of research instrument was ascertained by discussing and checking the questionnaire with panelists, and then the instrument was passed onto research adviser for further assessment and consideration before use.

Data Collection Procedures
To gather the data needed in this study, the following procedures were done by the researcher:
Primarily, the researcher asked permission from the Schools Division Superintendent in the province of Sorsogon. Upon approval of the letter on February 19, 2019, the researcher proceeded to the Public Schools District Supervisors of Bulan Districts, the Principals, head teachers and teacher-in-charge of the aforementioned districts to seek approval of the administration of questionnaire. The letters were duly signed by the researcher's adviser and the dean of Sorsogon State College Graduate Studies before these were distributed. Then, the instrument was pilot tested through a dry run to 10 non-respondents from the nearby schools before use so as to determine validity, reliability, and feasibility. A 100% retrieval rate of the questionnaire was attained by the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedures
The data collected were organized and analyzed using the appropriate statistical tools. The weighted mean was employed to present practices of the school heads and its extent in nurturing school-community partnerships along engaging stakeholders' participation, fund utilization and transparency, and school environment. The scale below was used in describing the extent of practices:

4.50 – 5.00	Very highly practiced
3.50 – 4.49	Highly practiced
2.50 – 3.49	Moderately practiced
1.50 – 2.49	Less practiced
1.00 – 1.49	Least practiced

Also, the weighted mean was utilized in identifying the involvement of the stakeholders in school-community partnership. In order to interpret the degree of involvement, the scale below was employed:

4.50 – 5.00	Very highly involved
3.50 – 4.49	Highly involved
2.50 – 3.49	Moderately involved
1.50 – 2.49	Less involved
1.00 – 1.49	Least involved

Then, the frequency and rank were used to determine the mechanisms for sustainable school-community partnership. Likewise, the frequency and rank were employed in knowing the difficulties and challenges in nurturing school-community partnership.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Findings

Based on the data collected, the following are the findings of the study:

1) The extent of practices of the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships along engaging stakeholders' participation is highly practiced with an overall weighted mean of 4.31. The holding of PTCA meetings is very highly practiced with weighted mean of 4.93. Relative to fund utilization and transparency, the putting up of transparency board and posting of financial reports for transparency were very highly practiced with weighted mean of 4.95. In terms of school environment, the provision of security guard in the school, the conduct of monthly monitoring and inspection of the classrooms and other facilities, assistance provided by the community in the repair of damaged furniture and fixtures, and installation of streetlights around the school are very highly practiced by the school heads with weighted mean of 4.90.

2) The stakeholders are very highly involved in knowing the DepEd orders and memoranda with weighted mean of 4.88. Also, they are very highly involved in regularly participating in planning, implementation and evaluation of school programs with weighted mean of 4.88. Further, the barangay officials are very highly involved in allocating financial assistance to the school from their IRA with weighted mean of 4.83. Apparently, the community is very much involved in providing assistance to the school in the repair of furniture and fixtures with weighted mean of 4.90.

3) The mechanisms identified by the school heads in nurturing school-community relations in terms of engaging stakeholders' participation are commendations and compliments are given to the stakeholders (f=56). The action of transparency on school's achievements (f=53) for fund utilization and transparency. Then, the prioritization of the pupils' needs in spending MOOE in terms of school environment (f=56).

4) The three foremost challenges encountered by the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships along engaging stakeholders' participation are the non-observance of the time on task (f=56), limited attendance of teachers to seminars for their professional growth (f=50), and non-transparency of the implementation of school development plan (f=48). Relative to fund utilization and transparency, the lack of transparency on school's achievements (f=54), the prioritization of the

pupil's needs in spending the MOOE is compromised (f=51), and non-transparency of MOOE in the school (f=43).
5) Relative to school environment, the holding of PTCA is irregular (f=59), inadequate practice of progressive and consultative leadership (f=54), and non-sustained involvement of the stakeholders in the school activities (f=51).
6) An action plan maybe designed that will improve the practices of the school heads in nurturing the school-community partnerships.

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions:

1) The fund utilization and transparency are very highly practiced whereas the engagement of stakeholders' participation and school environment are highly practiced by the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships.
2) The stakeholders are very much involved in giving their support to the school and in fund utilization and transparency. However, they are highly involved in the school environment.
3) The mechanisms mostly employed by the school heads are the giving of commendation and compliments to the stakeholders, transparent reporting of school activities, and prioritizing the pupils' needs in spending their MOOE.
4) The foremost challenges encountered by the schools in nurturing school-community partnerships are the punctuality on task is not properly observed, lack of transparency on school's achievements, and irregular holding of PTCA meetings.
5) An action plan was designed in order to improve the practices of the school heads in nurturing school-community partnerships.

6. Recommendations

In the light of foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations were offered:

1) The school heads may be provided the opportunities to improve their practices on engaging stakeholders' participation and school environment by sending them to various seminars and trainings.
2) The school heads may revitalize the involvement of the stakeholders by providing them programs that will capture and nurture their support.
3) The mechanisms employed by the school heads in sustaining school-community partnerships be maintained and reviewed to further improve the school-community relations.
4) The challenges identified by the school heads be given attention and if possible be addressed by the concerned individuals.
5) The proposed action plan be implemented and submitted to the Division Office for possible adoption if found feasible.

6) Further studies may be conducted to supplement the findings revealed in this study and the inclusion of other variables not previously included.

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