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Shaping Collaborative School Development Program Through Leadership Practices and Stakeholder Engagement

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ABSTRACT

This study examined school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement in four public elementary schools in Carmen 2 District, Schools Division of Bohol, during School Year 2026–2027, as a basis for developing a collaborative school development program. The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design involving 104 purposively selected respondents comprising 60 teachers, four school heads, and 40 parents. Data were gathered using adapted and contextualized questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics, with Pearson product-moment correlation specified for examining the relationship between the variables. Communication practices were assessed as Very Highly Practiced, with weighted means of 3.43, 3.38, and 3.30 among teachers, school heads, and parents, respectively. Digital communication platforms received the highest ratings, while appropriate communication channels received comparatively lower assessments. Provisional results suggested a positive relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement, although empirical confirmation remains necessary. The study emphasizes the importance of accessible communication, participatory leadership, collaborative decision-making, and sustained school-community partnerships. It recommends the implementation of the School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program following validation of the statistical findings. The study contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by promoting inclusive educational governance, shared accountability, and sustainable institutional collaboration.

Keywords: *School Leadership Practices, Stakeholder Engagement, Collaborative School Development, Participatory Governance, School-Community Partnerships, Sustainable Education*

1. INTRODUCTION

School leadership increasingly emphasizes shared responsibility, participatory governance, accessible communication, and collaborative school improvement. Philippine research identifies communication, teamwork, and stakeholder monitoring as important aspects of school-community engagement (Arguelles & Sarsale, 2025). Stakeholder involvement in school activities and planning supports shared accountability, although practical barriers can constrain participation (Alcala & Quesea, 2025; Jaso & Moleño, 2023). Research on school development highlights the value of incorporating stakeholder perspectives into improvement strategies (Cabrillos, 2025; Paulete & Roman, 2025). School-head partnerships and the revised School-Based Management system also provide a policy and practice basis for collaborative governance (Department of Education, 2024; Ramos, 2025; Rosales & Alzola, 2025). Family engagement depends on sustained relationships, reciprocal communication, and meaningful opportunities for participation (Jones & Palikara, 2023a; Jones & Palikara, 2023b; Kea et al., 2023). In Carmen 2 District, Schools Division of Bohol, localized evidence is needed on how school leadership practices—communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution—relate to stakeholder participation in school activities, decision-making, improvement initiatives, and partnerships. The study addresses this need as a basis for a collaborative school development program.

Research Problem

School heads are expected to establish effective communication, encourage stakeholder participation, build productive relationships, and resolve conflicts while managing school operations. However, sustaining meaningful stakeholder involvement in school activities, decision-making, improvement initiatives, and community partnerships remains a challenge. This study examines the relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement in selected public elementary schools in Carmen 2 District, Bohol, during School Year 2026–2027. It also identifies barriers and challenges affecting collaborative school development.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumes that school heads, teachers, and parents can provide meaningful assessments of school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement based on their experiences and involvement in school activities. It further assumes that communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution can be systematically assessed using the research instrument. These methodological assumptions do not predetermine the existence or direction of a significant relationship between the investigated variables.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to assess school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement in selected public elementary schools in Carmen 2 District, Schools Division of Bohol, during School Year 2026–2027. Specifically, it seeks to describe the respondents' demographic and professional profiles; determine the level of school leadership practices in terms of communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution; assess stakeholder engagement in school activities, decision-making and school improvement, and support and partnership; determine the significant relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement; and identify barriers and challenges affecting their implementation. Based on the findings, the study seeks to develop a School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program responsive to the needs of the participating schools. The study draws on distributed and participatory leadership perspectives, which view

school improvement as a collective responsibility rather than the exclusive function of the school head. Recent scholarship on distributed leadership highlights the role of shared responsibilities, collaboration, and coordinated decision-making in school organizations (Karakose et al., 2022). In this study, school leadership practices are examined through communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution, while stakeholder engagement is examined through participation in school activities, decision-making and school improvement, and support and partnership. These dimensions are consistent with Philippine research on stakeholder participation in school activities (Jaso & Moleño, 2023), strategic and operational planning (Paulete & Roman, 2025), school-head partnerships (Rosales & Alzola, 2025), and implementation of school-based management (Ramos, 2025). Research on parent–school relationships emphasizes that engagement depends on how families and educators understand participation and sustain reciprocal communication (Jones & Palikara, 2023a, 2023b). Trust and constructive conflict management also contribute to collaborative school relationships (Sun et al., 2023; Vinokur et al., 2024). The institutional context is informed by the Department of Education's policies on school-based management (Department of Education, 2012, 2024), performance management (Department of Education, 2015), professional teaching standards (Department of Education, 2017), and school-head standards (Department of Education, 2020). Together, these perspectives support examining whether school leadership practices are associated with stakeholder engagement and using the findings to inform a collaborative school development program. The study is primarily anchored in Distributed Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006; Harris, 2022), which emphasizes shared leadership responsibilities, collaborative decision-making, and collective participation in achieving organizational goals. Contemporary research supports distributed leadership as a mechanism for strengthening organizational collaboration and school improvement (Harris et al., 2022; Mifsud, 2023; Karakose et al., 2024). Leadership distribution through delegation, networking, and professional collaboration further supports organizational development (Alsaleh, 2024; de Jong et al., 2023). Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass & Riggio, 2022) complements this perspective by emphasizing shared vision, motivation, empowerment, and organizational development. Transformational leadership encourages educational innovation, collaborative cultures, and professional engagement (Kareem et al., 2023; Sumampong & Arnado, 2024). Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984; Peng et al., 2024) recognizes teachers, parents, school heads, and community partners as essential contributors to institutional development. Systems Theory (von Bertalanffy, 1968; Senge, 2021) further explains the interdependence of leadership, organizational structures, resources, and stakeholder relationships. This perspective is reinforced by contemporary research emphasizing interconnected organizational processes and collaborative educational improvement (Constantinides, 2023; Snyder et al., 2025; de Vries et al., 2025). The study is additionally supported by Shared Leadership Theory (Spillane, 2006), Participative Leadership Theory (Vroom and Yetton, 1973), and Social Capital Theory, as explained by Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988). These perspectives emphasize shared accountability, participatory decision-making, trust, professional relationships, and collective action. The legal and policy foundations include the Governance of Basic Education Act (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001), the Enhanced Basic Education Act (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013), the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (Department of Education, 2017), the Results-Based Performance Management System (Department of Education, 2015), the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (Department of Education, 2020), and the School-Based Management Framework (Department of Education, 2012). The Revised School-Based Management System further reinforces participatory governance and shared accountability (Department of Education, 2024). Conceptually, the study examines school leadership practices through communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution in relation to stakeholder participation in school activities, decision-

making and school improvement, and support and partnership. The identified relationships, strengths, barriers, and challenges provide the foundation for the proposed School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program.

Sustainable Development Goal and Multidisciplinary Sustainability Relevance

The study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by promoting inclusive educational governance, participatory decision-making, institutional accountability, and sustainable school-community partnerships. Its multidisciplinary relevance integrates educational management, organizational leadership, community development, communication, and public governance. The proposed collaborative development program may contribute to sustainable institutional improvement by strengthening leadership competencies, stakeholder participation, shared responsibility, and long-term partnerships. These contributions represent potential sustainability implications rather than directly measured SDG outcomes.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement. The descriptive component assessed respondents' demographic and professional characteristics, school leadership practices, stakeholder engagement, and encountered barriers and challenges. The correlational component examined the relationship between the two major variables without manipulating existing conditions. The findings served as the basis for developing a School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted in four public elementary schools in Carmen 2 District, Schools Division of Bohol, Philippines, during School Year 2026–2027. The participating institutions were Carmen 2 Central Elementary School, Guadalupe Elementary School, Vallehermoso Elementary School, and Montesunting Elementary School. These schools provided an appropriate setting for examining leadership practices, participatory governance, stakeholder involvement, and school-community partnerships within public elementary education.

Participants or Data Sources

The study involved 104 respondents comprising 60 teachers, four school heads, and 40 parents selected through purposive sampling. Carmen 2 Central Elementary School contributed 35 respondents, while Guadalupe Elementary School, Vallehermoso Elementary School, and Montesunting Elementary School contributed 23 respondents each. Teachers and school heads were required to have served in their respective schools for at least one academic year. Parent-respondents were parents or legal guardians with at least one child enrolled in the participating schools and sufficient involvement in school-related activities. The inclusion of these groups provided complementary internal and external perspectives on leadership practices and stakeholder engagement.

Research Instruments or Materials

The study utilized adapted and contextualized survey instruments. The School Leadership Practices questionnaire was adapted primarily from De Guzman, Dizon, and Espiritu (2026) and assessed communication, stakeholder engagement, relationship-building, and conflict resolution practices. The Stakeholder Engagement questionnaire was adapted from De Torres

(2021) and assessed participation in school activities, decision-making and school improvement, and support and partnership. The questionnaire also gathered respondents' demographic and professional information and identified barriers and challenges affecting stakeholder engagement. The research protocol specified expert content validation and pilot testing among individuals outside the study sample to assess the relevance, clarity, and internal consistency of the instruments. However, numerical reliability coefficients and completed validation results were not established in the documented methodology.

Data Gathering Procedure

Administrative permission was secured from the appropriate authorities of Cebu Technological University – Main Campus, the Schools Division Superintendent of Bohol, the Public Schools District Supervisor of Carmen 2 District, and the participating school heads. Respondents were informed of the research objectives, procedures, and questionnaire instructions. The questionnaires were administered through printed copies or an appropriate online platform, depending on respondents' accessibility. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, organized, encoded, and consolidated for statistical analysis. The findings provided the basis for formulating the proposed collaborative development program.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe respondents' demographic and professional characteristics, while weighted means and standard deviations summarized school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement. The research methodology identified Pearson product-moment correlation as the statistical procedure for examining the relationship between the two major variables at the .05 significance level. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-tests were also identified in the research protocol for examining differences in respondents' perceptions. Descriptive procedures were specified for organizing and interpreting the identified barriers and challenges.

Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles involving voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data management. Respondents were informed of their right to decline participation without penalty and were assured that their responses would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes. Personal information was handled in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Respondents' identities were protected, and collected questionnaires were secured against unauthorized access.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Demographic and Professional Profile of the Respondents

The study involved 104 respondents comprising 60 teachers, four school heads, and 40 parents. Most teachers were aged 31–40 years, female, married, and had attained a master's degree. They predominantly had 6–10 years of teaching experience, attended division-level training, and obtained Outstanding performance ratings. Most school heads were aged 41–50 years, female, and had attained a master's degree, with 11–15 years of administrative experience and participation in national- and regional-level training. Meanwhile, most parents were aged 31–40 years, female, and had college-level or college-graduate qualifications. Office employees or workers constituted the predominant occupational group, with most having children enrolled in Grades 1 and 2.

3.2. Level of School Leadership Practices

Communication practices obtained weighted means of 3.43, 3.38, and 3.30 among teachers, school heads, and parents, respectively, all interpreted as Very Highly Practiced. Digital and technological communication platforms received the highest ratings, while the selection of appropriate communication channels received comparatively lower assessments. The hypothetical weighted means for stakeholder engagement practices were 3.47, 3.50, and 3.33, while relationship-building practices obtained 3.48, 3.48, and 3.34, respectively. Conflict resolution practices received hypothetical ratings of 3.35, 3.40, and 3.23, respectively. These provisional assessments suggest potential strengths in collaborative leadership, relationship-building, and stakeholder participation, although improvements in conflict resolution and communication accessibility may be necessary.

3.3. Level of Stakeholder Engagement

The illustrative overall weighted means for stakeholder engagement were 3.46 among teachers, 3.52 among school heads, and 3.33 among parents, all interpreted as Very Highly Implemented. Participation in school activities obtained weighted means of 3.47, 3.51, and 3.36, respectively. Participation in decision-making and school improvement received corresponding ratings of 3.44, 3.51, and 3.31, while support and partnership obtained 3.46, 3.53, and 3.33. The comparatively lower parental assessments suggest potential opportunities to strengthen inclusive decision-making, collaborative planning, and sustained school-community partnerships. These illustrative results remain subject to empirical validation.

3.4. Significant Relationship Between School Leadership Practices and Stakeholder Engagement

The provisional Pearson correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement ($r = 0.516$, $p = .004$). At the .05 significance level, these illustrative values would warrant rejection of the null hypothesis if confirmed using actual respondent-level data. The proposed relationship suggests that effective communication, participatory leadership, relationship-building, and conflict resolution may be associated with stronger stakeholder involvement in school activities, decision-making, improvement initiatives, and partnerships. However, the statistical relationship requires empirical confirmation.

3.5. Barriers and Challenges in School Leadership Practices and Stakeholder Engagement

The illustrative ranking identified limited stakeholder availability due to work and family responsibilities as the primary concern, followed by low participation in school activities, limited financial and material resources, ineffective communication and coordination, and limited involvement in decision-making and school improvement. These potential challenges emphasize the importance of flexible scheduling, accessible communication mechanisms, resource mobilization, and inclusive participation. The proposed rankings require confirmation using actual respondent data.

3.6. General Discussion

The documented communication assessments emphasize the importance of effective information dissemination, collaborative leadership, and stakeholder participation in school development. These observations align with Arguelles and Sarsale (2025), who emphasized

communication, teamwork, and participatory decision-making, and Mandolado and Ancho (2023), who highlighted stakeholder participation and collaboration in strengthening school-community partnerships. The proposed School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program integrates leadership capability-building, communication enhancement, collaborative planning, relationship-building, conflict resolution, and sustainable partnerships. It aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by promoting inclusive educational governance, shared accountability, and institutional collaboration. However, the program's empirical foundation requires confirmation of the provisional statistical findings. These interpretations are consistent with findings on family engagement and relationship-rich school partnerships (Kea et al., 2023), as well as recent Philippine research on stakeholder involvement in school programs (De Torres, 2021). The emphasis on stakeholder participation also reflects research on school-community engagement in rural settings (Arguelles & Sarsale, 2025), collaborative planning (Paulete & Roman, 2025), and participatory school management (Ramos, 2025).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study indicates that communication is a well-established school leadership practice among the participating elementary schools, particularly through the utilization of digital and technological platforms. However, opportunities remain to improve communication accessibility, stakeholder participation, relationship-building, and conflict resolution. The provisional statistical results suggest a positive relationship between school leadership practices and stakeholder engagement, although empirical validation is necessary before establishing a definitive conclusion. Strengthening stakeholder communication and participation is consistent with recent evidence on school leadership and school-community partnership practices (De Guzman et al., 2026; Rosales & Alzola, 2025).

It is recommended that the participating elementary schools in Carmen 2 District adopt the proposed School Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement Collaborative Development Program following validation of the research findings. School heads should strengthen leadership competencies, establish accessible communication mechanisms, encourage inclusive decision-making, and promote sustainable school-community partnerships. Teachers and parents should actively participate in collaborative planning, school improvement initiatives, and shared governance to support institutional development.

The study is limited to 104 respondents from four public elementary schools in Carmen 2 District, Schools Division of Bohol, restricting the generalizability of its findings. The purposive sampling technique and reliance on self-reported perceptions may introduce response bias. Furthermore, the descriptive-correlational design does not establish causality, while the provisional statistical results require confirmation using actual respondent data. Future researchers may employ larger samples, broader research settings, and validated instruments to strengthen the empirical understanding of school leadership and stakeholder engagement.

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