



# Total Quality Management and School-Based Management Practices of School Principals: Their Implications to School Leadership and Improvement

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## Abstract

*Anchored on the Process Improvement Theory of Edward Deming (Hoy & Miskel, 2001) Total Quality Management (TQM) is powerful in responding to the nation's educational and social predicaments, whereas to accelerate the decentralization of educational management and upgrading the quality of schools is the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM). These two educational practices empower leaders and foster excellence. Hence, this study determined the implementation level of TQM and SBM practices of principals representing the CALABARZON Region and their implications to school leadership and improvement. Descriptive method involving the collection of data to test the hypotheses and to counter the specific questions posited was utilized. Principals and teachers in the secondary schools from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon were selected employing the Stratified sampling technique. Weighted Mean, Pearson R, and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis were applied to analyze the problems. The results confirmed that most of the TQM and SBM practices have significant impact to school leadership and improvement in high, average, and low performing schools in the CALABARZON Region, thus, the null hypothesis that TQM and SBM have no significant impact to school leadership and improvement was partially sustained.*

**Keywords:** Total quality management, School-based management, School leadership, Improvement, Practices.

## Introduction

The Philippine educational system today including that in CALABARZON have undergone continued criticisms for inefficient performance and non-quality output, specifically in the basic education, and so the Department of Education is facing challenges achieving quality and excellence performance both in the elementary and the secondary level. Consequently, the ineffectiveness and incompetence of school principals to address these predicaments may result in the degradation of quality education.

Republic Act 9155 better known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 envisions the school head as both an instructional leader and administrative manager being the prime movers in the implementation of DepEd programs. The school heads' competencies and capacities are reflected to the extent of how programs are implemented, in the same way that the ineffectiveness and incompetence of school principals in executing practices reduce the integrity and quality of the school performance<sup>1</sup>.

Anchored on the Process Improvement Theory of Edward Deming Total Quality Management (TQM) refers to an approach to organizational performance improvement that is distinguished by its key word "total" emphasizing a holistic or

total approach to the school's improvement program<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, School-Based Management is powerful in responding to the nation's educational and social predicaments, thus, to accelerate the decentralization of educational management and upgrading the quality of schools is the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM)<sup>1</sup>. These two educational practices empower and foster excellence among educational leaders.

**Purpose of the Study:** Quality education can be achieved through quality management of schools. Accordingly, if quality management is to succeed in public schools all its components should be deeply involved towards excellence.

This study primarily aimed at determining the extent of implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) and School-Based Management (SBM) practices of principals among selected public secondary schools in the CALABARZON Region and their implications to school leadership and improvement.

It specifically uncovered the level of principals implementation of TQM in terms of leadership, focus on clientele, commitment to change and continuous improvement, decision-making based on data, professional learning, teamwork and focus on the system.

It also sought to find the status of principals' implementation of SBM practices in terms of school leadership, internal stakeholders' participation, external stakeholders' participation, school improvement process, school-based resources and school performance accountability.

This study finally determined if TQM and SBM practices of principals singly or in combination have significant implications to school leadership and improvement.

## Methodology

Sixty (60) teachers and six (6) principals from selected public secondary schools along the CALABARZON Region were included in the study. The schools were classified according to performance level based on the 2012 - 2013 National Achievement Test as the primary criteria for classifying the school performance categorized as high, average, and low.

The participants were selected using the stratified random sampling technique to achieve greater precision. It was made sure that the strata were chosen from the same or similar stratum as possible with respect to the characteristic of interest to obtain better coverage of the population.

Questionnaire checklist was used to gather necessary information/data from the groups of respondents (the principals and teachers). Prior to the gathering of data the instruments

were content validated and established the reliability prior to the conduct of the study. TQM practices of principals were assessed within the frame of seven (7) parameters namely: leadership, focus on the clientele, commitment to change and continuous improvement, decision-making based on data, professional learning, teamwork, and focus on the system. The SBM practices were determined on six (6) parameters such as: school leadership, internal stakeholders' participation; external stakeholders' participation; school improvement process; SBM resources; and school performance accountability.

The research method was descriptive since it involved collection of data to determine the nature and degree of existing conditions. Moreover, it is correlational as it attempted to determine the extent to which different relevant variables are relevantly related with each other<sup>3</sup>.

Questionnaires were used to gather the necessary data from the teacher and the principal respondents. The respondents were requested to check their choice among a, b, or c which determined the school's level of implementation. The following statistical tools were applied: Weighted mean, Pearson r, and stepwise multiple regression.

## Results and Discussion

The corresponding analysis and interpretation of the tabulated data are presented in the following tables.

Table-1

**Level of principals' implementation of TQM with respect to leadership, focus on the clientele, commitment to change and continuous improvement, decision-making based on data, professional learning, teamwork, and focus on the system**

	High Performing School			Average Performing School			Low Performing School			Average		
	X	SD	VI	X	SD	I	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI
Leadership	4.63	.52	E	4.54	.59	E	3.94	.61	VG	4.37	.57	E
Focus on the Clientele	4.48	.53	E	4.28	.67	E	3.90	.53	VG	4.22	.58	E
Commitment to Change & Continuous Improvement	4.43	.54	E	4.24	.68	E	4.38	.50	E	4.35	.57	E
Decision Making based on Data	4.45	.52	E	4.22	.58	E	4.08	.54	VG	4.25	.47	E
Professional Learning	4.55	.44	E	4.52	.48	E	4.46	.49	E	4.54	.47	E
Teamwork	4.60	.48	E	4.42	.59	E	4.22	.48	E	4.41	.52	E
Focus on the System	4.45	.53	E	4.32	.58	E	4.40	.49	E	4.39	.52	E
Legend:	Scale			Range			Description			Verbal Interpretation		
	5	4.20-5.00			practiced 98%-100%			Excellent (E)				
	4	3.40 – 4.19			practiced 91% – 95%			Very Good (VG)				
	3	2.60 – 3.39			practiced 86% - 85%			Good (G)				
	2	1.80 – 2.59			practiced 81% – 85%			Fair (F)				
	1	1.00 – 1.79			practiced 75%-80%			Poor				

TQM in this study is the practice of holistic leadership or total approach to the schools' improvement programs. As depicted on the table, the principals' implementation of TQM Practices was rated excellent. This implies that the principals were able to provide a culture that entails quality in all aspects of the schools' operations and a holistic or total approach to the schools' improvement program.

In view of that, Ralph et al cited that total quality management is all about excellence. It is defined as total quality because of i. Satisfying the stakeholders; ii. Satisfying the specific needs of the end users; and iii. Satisfying the needs of the members of the organization, which are made possible with the upstream and downstream of the enterprise partners<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, leaders according to Leithwood and Riehl are those who consistently work with clienteles to guide and influence them to achieve their goals<sup>5</sup>. They are people tasked with various roles in the institution to provide direction and influence persons to achieve the school's ultimate goal. This may mean that leaders should have a continuous passion for improvement by also expressing cooperation towards achieving a common goal.

Senge also contends that quality oriented schools believe that there is always room for improvement in meeting stakeholders' expectations<sup>6</sup>. The above findings can also be related with what Kerzner emphasized that what differentiates TQM from other

management theories and improvement is the stakeholders satisfaction<sup>7</sup>.

School-Based Management refers to the application of decentralization more especially among the decision-making authority from central, regional, and division levels down to the least school or cluster of schools.

It can be gleaned in the table that the status of the principals' implementation of SBM was on Level II or the "progressive" level which meant that there was an intensified mobilization of resources and maximized efforts of the school to achieve desired learning outcomes.

As cited by DepEd, the objectives of SBM are: i. empowering the head of the school in leadership of teachers and students towards the process of continuous improvement; ii. supporting the delivery of quality education services; iii. establish partnership with the communities and LGUs, and iv. institutionalize participatory and knowledge-based continuous school improvement process. SBM provides the main tool for continuous improvement of the school<sup>1</sup>.

Moreover according to De Grauwe SBM is a system of an efficient management and quality improvement in education<sup>8</sup>. DepEd purports that school community partnership under SBM is any relationship established between and among educators, students, families, and a community at large to work together in bringing about better and improved school performance<sup>9</sup>.

**Table-2**  
**Status of the Principals' Implementation of SBM in terms of school leadership, internal stakeholders' participation, external stakeholders' participation, school-based resources, and school performance accountability**

	High Performing School			Average Performing School			Low Performing School			Average		
	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI
School Leadership	2.23	.76	P	2.0	.75	P	1.94	1.00	P	2.06	.84	P
Internal Stakeholders' Participation	1.98	.80	P	1.91	.71	P	.86	.69	P	1.92	.73	P
External Stakeholders' Participation	2.00	.88	P	2.08	.75	P	2.00	.75	P	2.03	.79	P
School Improvement Process	2.13	.97	P	2.04	.91	P	1.96	.75	P	2.04	.88	P
School-Based Resources	1.67	.70	P	1.80	.70	P	1.96	.70	P	1.81	.70	P
School Performance Accountability	2.06	.65	P	1.95	.66	P	1.89	.65	P	1.96	.66	P
Legend: Item	Range		Level		Verbal Interpretation							
c	2.34 – 3.00		III		Mature (M)							
b	1.67 – 2.33		II		Progressive (P)							
a	1.00 – 1.66		I		Standard (S)							

**Table-3**  
**The Level of School Leadership and Improvement**

	High Performing School			Average Performing School			Low Performing School			Average		
	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI	X	SD	VI
Student Dev't	4.21	.68	E	4.18	.73	VG	4.10	.79	VG	4.16	.73	VG
Staff Dev't	4.38	.65	E	4.34	.68	E	4.20	.78	E	4.31	.70	E
Physical Plant Dev't	4.42	.70	E	4.22	.82	E	4.11	.84	E	4.25	.79	E

**Table-4**  
**Effect of TQM and SBM practices to School Leadership and Improvement in terms of Student Development**

TQM	Beta	t-value	p-value	VI
Leadership	0.17	2.09	0.04	Significant
Professional Learning	0.39	4.75	0.00	Significant
SBM	Beta	t-value	p-value	VI
School Leadership	0.61	2.57	0.02	Significant
Internal Stakeholders' Participation	0.78	3.34	0.01	Significant
External Stakeholders' Participation	-0.48	-2.44	0.03	Significant

F-value = 6.35, R-Sq (Adj) = 72.1%, P-Value = 0.00

The findings revealed that pertaining to the level of school leadership and improvement, the principals were excellent in staff development and physical plant development while very good in student development. However, in terms of the high performing schools, the principals were excellent in student development. This shows that student development depends much on the performance of the leader on particular and of the school system, in general. Relatively, Fullan stated that educational leadership is an essential advocacy of the principal since establishing an effective school, teaching and learning should be their highest priority<sup>10</sup>. Education administrators should accept and implement the role in such a way that the school is efficiently managed. By successfully performing the role of a manager, an administrator can help others to improve their attitude towards high contribution to the school; thus explains why some schools are more effective than others.

In 2005 Mukhopadhyay pointed out that far beyond the intellectual aspect is the school's development of an ethos to ensure continuous students' transformation and learning towards holistic development<sup>11</sup>.

As reflected on the table, some of the TQM and SBM practices significantly affect school leadership and improvement in terms of student development. This implies that the principals ensure

that the schools provide venue for student development programs and activities like integration camp, remedial classes, student government and financial assistance.

According to Mukhopadhyay students are the primary stakeholders of schools and therefore, should be the main recipients or beneficiaries of educational perks<sup>11</sup>. They should develop an ethos to sustain authentic learning and students transformation for holistic development over intellectual aspects. The principals therefore, as school leaders, should be operating to the highest possible standards which places on them moral and professional imperatives.

"Much research has demonstrated that quality of education depends primarily on the ways schools are managed, more than on abundance of available resources, and the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by quality of leadership provided by the head teacher" according to Starr and Oakley<sup>12</sup>.

Fredriksson also said that increased quality awareness among teachers, including development of their collaborative work cultures in relation to supporting learning conditions among students contribute greatly in improving excellence in education<sup>13</sup>.

Moreover, according to Sioson parental involvement in many tasks that need to be done in school proved to be very useful in improving the students' academic performance<sup>14</sup>.

The results showed that some of the TQM and SBM practices significantly affect school leadership and improvement in terms of staff development. The results imply that that the principals are integrating some programs and activities for staff

development such as conducting SLAC sessions in preparation for newly launched programs and projects; encouraging teachers to pursue their master's degree; facilitating seminars to enhance teacher's skills; organizing seminars and trainings about the new trends in education; and conduct benchmarking to performing schools to adopt innovative techniques and strategies in teaching.

**Table-5**  
**Effect of TQM and SBM practices to School Leadership and Improvement in terms of Staff Development**

TQM	Beta	t-value	p-value	VI
Leadership	1.01	7.54	0.00	Significant
Focus on the Clientele/Stakeholder	-0.82	-4.23	0.00	Significant
Commitment to Change & Continuous Improvement	-1.84	-4.22	0.00	Significant
Decision-Making Based on Data	-0.94	-3.18	0.01	Significant
Professional Learning	2.71	4.45	0.00	Significant
Focus on the System	2.11	6.57	0.00	Significant
SBM	Beta	t-value	p-value	Significant
School Leadership	1.08	7.79	0.00	Significant
School Improvement Process	0.64	2.68	0.02	Significant
School Performance Accountability	-0.80	-3.84	0.00	Significant

F-value = 28.42, R – Sq (Adj) = 93.0%, P-value = 0.00

**Table-6**  
**Effect of TQM and SBM practices to School Leadership and Improvement**

TQM	Beta	t-value	p value	VI
Leadership	0.96	4.30	0.00	Significant
Focus on the Clientele/Stakeholder	-2.06	-6.35	0.00	Significant
Decision-Making Based on Data	1.21	2.47	0.03	Significant
Professional Learning	-2.66	-6.20	0.00	Significant
SBM				
School Leadership	0.75	3.27	0.01	Significant
School-Based Resources	-0.68	-2.59	0.02	Significant

F-value = 14.05, R-Sq (Adj) = 86.3%, P-Value = 0.00

Relatively, Fullan disclosed that simplification of the schools' organizational structure is an initial aspect in quality education which focused on the persons most close to the students, who is the teacher, who at the same time are most significant facilitators to students' learning experience<sup>10</sup>. Yet, it is the quality of formal leadership structure which determines teacher's motivation and the quality of teaching in the classrooms. This is preceding quality of teaching in which has powerful influence on students' motivation and achievements.

It can be deduced from the table that some of the TQM and SBM practices significantly affect school leadership and improvement in terms of physical plant development. This means that the principals ensure the availability and functionality of infrastructures and sufficient supply to address the demand of the school clientele. They were also much concerned about the suitability and safety of the school premises.

As stated in Montgomery Survey of School Environment (SSE) for School Year (2004-2005), commonly the work environment (workplace) is divided into two namely: physical and psychological environments which were found out to increase teachers' (workers) and organizations' effectiveness.

## Conclusion

TQM practices with respect to leadership, focus on the clientele/stakeholder, commitment to change and continuous improvement, decision-making based on data, professional learning and focus on the system were found to have relationship to school leadership and improvement in terms of staff development. Likewise, SBM practices with respect to school leadership, school improvement process and school performance accountability were found to have relationship to school leadership and improvement in terms of staff development.

In terms of physical plant development, TQM practices like leadership, focus on the clientele/stakeholder, decision making based on data and professional learning were found to have relationship to school leadership and improvement. Moreover, school leadership and improvement was affected singly or in combination by some of the SBM practices like school leadership and school-based resources.

**Recommendations:** In view of the findings and conclusions presented, the following recommendations are considered like retooling of teachers and principals in the public schools which is seen relevant more specifically with regard to satisfying customers and systems process; hence, they will be equipped with appropriate skills in the utilization of the systems process toward the successful implementation of TQM. The retooling may be in the form of seminar/workshops, while programs for customers should be catered for adoption to the changing needs of students and the environment.

Since SBM has been implemented already over the years, and principals were disclosed to be placed only on the level of implementation, it is suggested that principals take refresher seminar on SBM, for re-engineering so that weak areas in the implementation of SBM may be addressed. Moreover, transformation plan may also be re-designed for more effective and efficient implementation of TQM & SBM in the high, average, and low performing secondary schools in the CALABARZON Region, Philippines.

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