THE EFFECTS OF DECENTRALISATION ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN
SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Science

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BSc

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College of Design and Social Context
RMIT University

December 2017
DECLARATION

I certify that, except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Ronaldo Bucud
December 2017
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Finally to God, my Father, who taught me to walk in His love and to always build bridges so ‘that all may be one.’
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRR</td>
<td>Implementing Rules and Regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBIC</td>
<td>Japan Bank for International Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRT</td>
<td>Key Reform Thrust</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGU</td>
<td>Local Government Unit</td>
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<td>LSB</td>
<td>Local School Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOOE</td>
<td>Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>Mean Percentage Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCTL</td>
<td>National College of Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEAP</td>
<td>National Educators Academy of the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPSBE</td>
<td>National Program Support for Basic Education</td>
</tr>
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<td>NORAD</td>
<td>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PASBE</td>
<td>Philippine Accreditation System for Accreditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHP</td>
<td>Philippine Peso</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRODED</td>
<td>Program for Decentralised Education Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS1</td>
<td>Rural School 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>RS2</td>
<td>Rural School 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Republic Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA9155</td>
<td>Republic Act 9155 – Governance of Basic Education Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>School Based Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEDIP</td>
<td>Secondary Education Development Improvement Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEF</td>
<td>Special Education Fund</td>
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<td>SFI</td>
<td>Schools First Initiative</td>
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<td>School Governing Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIP</td>
<td>School Improvement Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPHERE</td>
<td>Support for Philippine Basic Education Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRIVE</td>
<td>Strengthening Implementation of Visayas Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEEP</td>
<td>Third Elementary Education Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>TESDA</td>
<td>Technical Education and Skills Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1</td>
<td>Urban School 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US2</td>
<td>Urban School 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>WCEFA</td>
<td>World Council for Education for All</td>
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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of education decentralisation on the practice of community participation in the Philippines.

Decentralisation, as an institutional reform initiative in education, is a complex and contested concept resulting in a wide range of responses that addresses system-wide issues to improve access and quality of education. It had been a consistent theme in education reform in recent decades and its introduction brought about several permutations in application and meaning that have achieved mixed results.

In the Philippines, education decentralisation began 16 years ago with the enactment of Republic Act 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001. One of the major strategies the Philippines adopted to operationalise RA9155 was the introduction of School Based Management (SBM). This was evident in the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) as one of its key reform thrusts. SBM implementation in the Philippines involves, amongst other things, the engagement of the community in school management through the establishment of a School Governing Council. Although globally there have been extensive studies to determine the effects of decentralisation on community engagement, efforts to study its effects in the context of the Philippines' basic education governance have been negligible. Recognising this gap, the study's main research question is: How has decentralisation affected the practice of community participation in SBM in the Philippines?

To answer this, the study examined three interrelated areas, namely: stakeholders’ understanding, quality and depth of community participation, and emerging forms of participation in school management. The study is significant in that it casts a light on the practice of community participation in SBM in the Philippines’ context and helps provide educators pertinent information on how to strengthen and maximise the inherent
potential of engaging the community in school management. The study employed qualitative interpretive research methodology to develop case studies through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and a review of internal Department of Education documents. Four study sites were selected for the study.

Based on the research findings and analysis, the study concluded that education decentralisation in the Philippines provided the necessary legal framework and mechanisms to promote community participation within a decentralised education management context. However, changes in the pattern of community participation after the enactment of RA9155 have been limited and school sites have yet to fully maximise this potential to develop and harness school-community partnerships that are productive and mutually benefiting mechanisms to both the school and the community.

Finally, the study proposes a conceptual framework on school-community partnerships as its contribution to the ongoing and evolving discourse on school-community partnerships in general and supports the continuous strengthening and deepening of participation in schools in the Philippines, in particular.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Because basic learning needs are complex and diverse, meeting them requires multi-sectoral strategies and actions which are integral to overall development efforts. Many partners must join with education authorities, teachers, and other educational personnel in developing basic education if it is to be seen, once again, as the responsibility of the entire society. This implies the active involvement of a wide range of partners: families, teachers, communities, private enterprises (including those involved in information and communication), government and non-governmental organizations, institutions, etc. in planning, managing and evaluating the many forms of basic education.

(World Conference on Education for All, 1990, p. 54)

1.0. Background

Decentralisation has been a consistent theme in education reform discourse in recent decades. Advocates argue that it leads to greater autonomy and flexibility, organisational effectiveness and productivity, responsiveness to local needs, and less bureaucratic decision-making that brings about greater transparency and accountability (Astiz et. al 2002). Apart from the benefits of institutional efficiency, decentralisation is also undertaken to diffuse political dissent and democratise and stabilise governance mechanisms (Zajda and Gamage 2009; Lauglo 1995; Abulencia 2013) and as a means for political consolidation (Bray 2001). Several
developed and developing countries have implemented and adapted decentralisation approaches with varying results and degrees of success (Zajda and Gamage 2009; Lauglo 1995).

Australia, particularly the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), played a significant role in developing and informing the present-day concept and application of decentralisation in education with the introduction of school-based management (SBM). The ACT Initiative, as this was known (Zajda and Gamage 2009), was a result of the efforts of like-minded citizens, who were concerned with the bureaucratic model of the school system. The report (Currie 1967) from this initiative recommended the devolution of education governance to a school governing body composed of representatives from various education stakeholders – teachers, community, parents, students (in the case of secondary schools), with the principal as an ex-officio member. Extensive public support, particularly from the print media, enabled the establishment of school boards in 1974 in the ACT. This initiative was then pursued at a national scale and, by 1988 all Australian states and territories had adopted SBM models which were supported by legislation (Zajda and Gamage 2009). By the late 1980s, a number of developed countries (New Zealand, England, Canada, Japan, and Hong Kong) and developing countries (Thailand, Indonesia, South Africa, and several African nations) had implemented a form of school-based management aligned with the principles of the ACT initiative (Zajda and Gamage 2009; Bray 2001).

A common feature of decentralisation efforts, globally, is their emphasis on engaging the wider community in school management with the view of improving responsiveness, transparency and strengthening accountability in education (San Antonio and Gamage 2007; Epstein 1995; Shaeffer 1994; Saito 2003). The drive to engage stakeholders in educational delivery and management was motivated by the need to search for more inclusive, multi-sectoral and innovative approaches
that provide a plausible alternative to traditional, more centralised and less inclusive approaches to address growing global educational issues of access to and quality of education (WCEFA 1990). Studies have demonstrated the profound benefits of engaging the community in achieving school effectiveness and improvement (San Antonio and Gamage 2007; Shaeffer 1994; West-Burnham 2003; Caldwell 2005; Bray 2001).

Although decentralisation does not guarantee community participation (Maley 2002), it does offer an enabling environment that provides the necessary conditions to allow community participation in school based management to develop and deepen. In recent decades, community participation has emerged as a significant and invaluable aspect of school management with the skills of engaging stakeholders and sustaining meaningful partnerships, a critical competence expected of every school leader (West-Burnham 2003; Sergiovanni 1994; Shaeffer 1992; San Antonio and Gamage, 2007).

Community partnership in education is not a new strategy. Communities and schools have traditionally collaborated in education delivery and have worked within their means to address local education needs. However, the recognition of the critical role of community engagement in addressing the widening and deepening global educational issues strengthened with the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All in 1990. At the core of this international framework for action is a renewed commitment towards forging genuine partnerships for education when it acknowledged that:
National, regional and local educational authorities have a unique obligation to provide basic education for all, but they cannot be expected to supply every human, financial or organizational requirement for this task. New and revitalized partnerships at all levels will be necessary.

(Article XI, World Conference on Education for All, 1990)

In the Philippines, community participation had always been an inherent aspect of Filipino culture. Engraved in the Filipino psyche is the concept of ‘bayanihan’ (derived from the Filipino term ‘bayan’ meaning town or country) which refers to the spirit of unity among townsfolk to attain common goals. Most schools have been established primarily as a result of ‘bayanihan’ – a concerted effort by the community to educate the youth. However, although the community was at the forefront of establishing a school, they were relegated to the margins in its actual management as this function was directed by a centralised bureaucracy at the national level since the 1920s (Abulencia 2013).

In 1991, decentralisation began to take root and form in the Philippines with the passage of Republic Act 7160- The Local Government Code of the Philippines. Its passage resulted in the devolution of key national government functions to local government units. Despite the push for decentralisation in the country, the Department of Education, during this period, maintained its central authority over the conduct of basic education functions (Abulencia 2013).

Decentralisation of the Philippine education sector was a slow process (Luz 2008) which gained momentum in 2001 with the enactment of Republic Act 9155- the Governance of Basic Education Act of the Philippines. This Act clearly stipulates that
the law is anchored on the principles of shared governance, accountability and transparency, on the process of democratic consultation and in broadening linkages for effective governance (Section 5, 2001). This provision was reinforced in Section 1.2 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations when it stated that ‘the parents and the community shall be encouraged for active involvement in the education of the child. The participation, coordination between and among the schools, the local school boards, the Parent Teachers Associations must be maximized’ (RA9155 IRR 2002, p. 1).

Since its enactment, several initiatives both at the policy and project levels have been undertaken to facilitate decentralization and create opportunities for community engagement in school management. One of the Department’s key thrusts was the introduction of school based management and the empowerment of local stakeholders in support of continuous school improvements through School Governing Councils which were intended to act as the primary mechanism for community participation in school management.

Globally, the effects of community participation in education have been extensively studied (see Abbas 2012; Bender, et.al 2003; Bray 2001; Bjork 2007; Lewis, et.al 2004; Mfum-Mensah 2004), however, studies that have investigated its impact in the context of the Philippines’ basic education governance (see Khattri et.al. 2012; Abulencia 2013; The World Bank 2013; Capuno 2009) have generally focused on quantifying the benefits of SBM and its impact on educational performance indicators. Also, while these studies cite community participation as one of the critical factors in realising the benefits of a decentralised governance of education, no purposive study had been undertaken to determine the impact of decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school management in the country. This study endeavours to address this gap.
1.1. Purpose and Significance of the Study

The study examined how the adoption of decentralisation as a strategy in education reform affected community participation in school management in the Philippines by investigating three interrelated areas of inquiry, namely: [1] stakeholders’ understanding (conceptual) of decentralisation and the role of community participation in school management, in particular and in education governance, in general; [2] quality and depth (substance) of stakeholder participation; and [3] emerging forms or modalities (structural) of community participation in education in the country.

The findings from this study contribute to:

- establishing an understanding of the practice of community participation in school-based management within a decentralized environment in the Philippines;
- providing new knowledge that will inform efforts to review the existing legal framework, implementing rules and regulations and other attendant processes and procedures (e.g. SBM Accountability Model, SGC Manual, SGC Manual, School-Community Partnership);
- providing advice to educators on how to strengthen and maximise the inherent potential of engaging the community in school management; and
- providing advice to the wider community on how to strengthen and maximise the school to enable it to act as a responsible and productive entity within the wider community.
This study is of personal significance as I worked with the Department of Education in the Philippines in the Secondary Education Development Improvement Project (SEDIP)\(^1\) and with the National Educators’ Academy of the Philippines in area of education decentralisation, school-based management, and school improvement planning between 2003 to 2008.

1.2. Limitations and Delimitations

The introduction of educational decentralisation in the Philippines is confined to the public school system and as such, an apparent limitation of the study is the exclusion of private, sectarian and non-sectarian schools and university laboratory schools which do not fall within the direct administrative authority of the Department of Education.

Another limitation involves the selection of potential research sites. A conscious decision was made to focus on schools that have relied mainly, if not entirely, on government support and assistance in implementing school based management initiatives. In so doing, the research investigates the capacity of the Department and the national government to deliver and support education decentralisation.

This does not, in any way, undervalue the experience of and discount the significance of the insights and learning that could be drawn from the experiences of schools who were recipients of bilaterally-funded development assistance projects in implementing SBM (such as in school improvement planning, needs-driven school improvement projects, etc.) Learning drawn from these projects will be used, wherever applicable, as benchmarks in the research.

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\(^1\) SEDIP is a foreign-assisted development project funded by the Asian Development Bank and the Japan Bank for International Development assisting 15 disadvantaged Schools Divisions of the Department of Education
Another delimiting factor is security. Regions, Divisions and Schools located in areas classified as security risk by the Australian government have been excluded from the project for personal safety concerns.

Finally, while I fluently speak Tagalog, which is the primary regional language spoken in Region IVA – CALABARZON, my cultural insight may be limited by the lack of understanding of the Ilokano dialect which is the predominantly spoken dialect in Region 1 – Ilocos Region where two of the four school sites are located.

1.3. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised in the following chapters:

Chapter 2 provides a broad discussion of the socio-political and cultural landscape of the Philippines with particular focus on the country’s educational system, education decentralisation efforts and the challenges the educational system face. It examines the historical context within which decentralisation and community participation have been developed and undertaken and the challenges of education decentralisation in the country.

Building on this broad discussion, Chapter 3 presents a critical review of the literature surrounding participation in general and community participation in school management in particular. This chapter begins with a discussion of the motivations and assumptions, typologies and challenges of decentralisation and its application within the context of education. Thereafter, the chapter discusses the diversity of meaning and assumptions that surround the mutually related concepts of community and participation. In addition, it also presents several participation frameworks, their associated complexities when applied within the educational
context and the pivotal role of school leadership in education decentralisation efforts. The chapter concludes with the discussion of how the forgoing literature informed the research framework.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology and design. It begins by establishing a basis for adopting qualitative approaches and methodologies and then discusses the research’s framework and questions. The choice of case study as the research’s primary methodology is explained in terms of the need to provide contextual depth into the practice of community participation within the real-life context of school management in the Philippines. It then proceeds to discuss the research’s unit of analysis and other methodologies utilised in the research such as interviews, focus group discussion, and review of extant literature. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research variables, the process of selecting the research sites, profile of respondents and the procedures involved in collecting and analysing the research data.

Thereafter, the findings are thematically organised and presented in Chapter 5 to 7 following the main areas of inquiry of the research with the analysis incorporated into each of these themes to facilitate continuity and flow. Chapter 5 focuses on the area of quality and depth of participation by examining changes in the stakeholders’ patterns of participation in school management after the introduction of RA9155. Chapter 6 focuses on the area of forms and modalities of stakeholder participation in school management examining the various mechanism of participation of external stakeholders in school based management in the country. Chapter 7 focuses on the area of stakeholders’ understanding of participation in school management by studying stakeholders’ prevailing understanding and views of community, and community participation in school based management and how these perceptions guided their behaviours.
Common themes that emerged from the four research sites are outlined and presented in Chapter 8 with the view of deepening the analysis in each of the research areas of inquiry. The chapter likewise reviews these findings against the literature on decentralisation and community participation in education management.

The thesis concludes in Chapter 9 with a discussion of the conclusions in the three areas of inquiry and the overall research question. Contributions of the research are also discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of future directions.

1.4. Summary

This chapter provided the research background and discussed the gap that the research attempted to address. It also provided an overview of its purpose, significance, and limitations and discussed how the thesis is structured and organised.
2.0. Introduction

This chapter situates the research within the context of the Philippines with the aim of providing a broad understanding of circumstances that shaped current social and educational realities and a background from which to situate and understand the research findings. It begins with an overview of the country’s socio-economic, political and cultural profile and thereafter focuses on the structure and governance of the country’s educational system. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the government’s efforts and the challenges faced in decentralising education governance.

2.1. The Philippines: A General Profile

The Philippines is an archipelago situated in the Southeast Asian region, with islands clustered into three main geographical areas: Luzon (in the north), Mindanao (in the south), and Visayas (in the central area). It is bounded on the west by the West Philippine Sea and on the east by the Pacific Ocean (see Figure 2.1).

According to the 2015 Census of Population conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority the country’s population is 100.98 million with an annual growth rate of
1.72%. Together with an additional 12 million Filipinos living or working overseas, the Philippines is considered to be the seventh most populous nation in Asia and 12<sup>th</sup> in the world. The Philippines has one of the highest birth rates in Asia (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017 Factbook).

### 2.1.1. Political Profile

The Philippines is politically subdivided into 16 Regions, 81 Provinces, 1,490 Municipalities, 144 Cities, and 42,028 Barangays<sup>2</sup> (Department of Interior and Local Government 2010, LGU Facts and Figures section). The country has a presidential form of government, where the President, the head of state, is popularly elected for a single six-year term. The President and the Cabinet form the executive branch of government while a bicameral Congress forms the legislative branch of government. The legislative branch consists of the House of Representatives (composed of elected legislative district representatives) and the Senate (composed of nationally elected representatives). The Chief Justice and 14 Associate Justices oversee the judicial branch of government.

### 2.1.2. Economic Profile

The economy has steadily shifted from being agriculture-based to services and manufacturing oriented. Key country exports include semiconductors, electronic

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<sup>2</sup>The barangay is the basic political unit in the Philippines comparable to the concept of a village or suburb.
products, garments, coconut oils and fruits (BBC News Asia, 2014 Philippine Country Profile). With a significant population overseas, the economy is heavily reliant on overseas remittances. According to Llanto (2015), the economy has been performing ‘creditably’ despite natural disasters and a persistent global economic slowdown. The Philippines’ economic performance in 2014 was a stark contrast to most of its Asian neighbours including Indonesia and China (Noble 2015) which experienced slower economic growth. According to Schnabel (2016, para. 23), the country’s 7% GDP in the second quarter of 2016 capped ‘the stellar economic performance of the Aquino administration that helped boost the country’s credit rating.’

In 2015, the Philippine Statistics Authority reported a 3.6% drop in the incidence of poverty from 2012 to 2015 while the proportion of Filipinos whose incomes fall below the food threshold recorded a 2.3% drop in the same period. According to this report, on average, there is a 24.6% income shortfall or an additional monthly income of Php 2,230 (AUD 58.68) needed for a family of five to move out of poverty in 2015.

Economic development across the country is uneven with Luzon, more specifically Metro Manila, gaining most from economic growth (Lewis 2013). According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2016), while poverty incidence varies across regions and provinces, the poverty gap between urban and rural is substantially widening. Rural areas underperform and register higher rates of underemployment than urban areas. Urban poverty has increased largely due to rural migrants searching for better economic opportunities (Dy-Liacco 2014). Efforts by the national government to distribute economic growth and benefits are stalled by political turmoil and insurgencies in Southern Philippines (The Economist 2012).

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3 All conversions calculated based on foreign exchange rate of 1 AUD= Php 38 as of 02 December 2017
2.1.3. Cultural Profile

The Philippines is a confluence of Malay, Spanish and American influences. Several of its current political (e.g. the barangay, a Malay concept of geographical subdivision) and cultural (e.g. the fiesta, a form of community celebration handed down by the Spaniards) practices are evidence of the country's deep colonial past. As a race, Filipinos are stereotypically known for their hospitality and happy disposition and are characterised by their resilience and laid-back temperament (Gregorio and Defensor 2011).

Filipino and English are the official languages and these are used as the primary medium of instruction and communication, with 19 other recognised regional languages in use. These regional languages are spoken by various ethnic groups in the Philippines with Tagalog being the dominant regional language followed by Cebuano and Ilokano (Ethnic Groups of the Philippines 2011).

2.2. Overview of the Philippine Basic Education System

Education has always been valued in Philippine society. It is a widely accepted belief among Filipinos that education is a means out of the cycle of poverty that opens opportunities for a better future. The 1987 Philippine Constitution resonates this collective societal value when it stipulated in Article XIV that the 'state shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.'

The provision and delivery of basic education services in the Philippines is a state function supported by the national government. Batas Pambansa 232-The

According to the Education Act of 1982, the Philippine educational system, aims to:

- Provide for a broad general education that will assist each individual in society to attain his/her potential as a human being and enhance the range and quality of the individual and the group;
- Help the individual participate in the basic functions of society and acquire the essential educational foundation for his/her development into a productive and versatile citizen;
- Train the nation’s manpower in the middle-level skills required for national development;
- Develop the high-level professional skills that will provide leadership for the nation advance knowledge through research, and apply new knowledge for improving the quality of human life; and
- Respond effectively to changing needs and conditions through a system of educational planning and evaluation.

Public investment in basic education has steadily increased since 1987. By law, the education portfolio receives the largest allocation in the annual national budget. In the 2016 fiscal year, the Department of Education received Php 435.9 billion, a 15.4% increase from the 2015 budget, and the budget among Philippine departments and agencies (Philippine Official Gazette 2015).

2.2.1. Governance and Administration
Prior to 2001, the administration and management of education in the Philippines was the sole responsibility of the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS). As a result, DECS became the largest government bureaucracy in the country (Luz 2008; De Guzman 2003). In 1992, a recommendation by the Congressional Education Committee (EDCOM) ushered in broad reforms in the country’s educational system to make the governance of education more focused and delimited. One of the major EDCOM recommendations was the ‘trifocalisation’ of education which led to the division of DECS into three separate government entities. These were: the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for tertiary and graduate education, the Technical Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for technical-vocational and middle-level education, and the Department of Education (DepEd) for basic education. Early Childhood education was assigned to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (CHED, 2013 Rationalization Plan).

DepEd has four levels of governance – central, regional, divisional (province/city) and district/school each performing distinct yet interrelated functions in carrying out the mandate of managing basic education in the Philippines. DepEd oversees 38,503 public elementary schools, 7,748 public secondary schools operating in 214 Division Offices within 17 Regional centres (DepEd, 2013 Factsheet).
In December 2011, DepEd embarked on a rationalisation plan in response to Executive Order 366 which directed the rationalisation of agencies under the executive branch with the view of ‘transforming the bureaucracy into an efficient and results-oriented structure.’ (EO 366 s2004, p.1). In 2013, after 3 years of intensive consultations, the Department’s rationalisation plan was approved by the Department of Budget and Management (DO 52, s2015). According to DO 52, s2015, the approved organisational structure (see Figure 2.2) is reflective of the Department’s core educational functions and is consistent with the principles of decentralisation and shared governance as enshrined in RA 9155.

2.2.2. Basic Education Structure and Curriculum

Prior to the implementation of the K to 12 basic education program, the Philippines had the shortest educational cycle in Asia and was one of three remaining countries...
in the world that adhered to a 10-year basic education cycle (Bautista, et al. 2008). Of the 10 years, six years were spent in elementary education and four in secondary education (Clark 2004). A parallel non-formal system is implemented alongside the formal basic education called the alternative learning system. Early childhood and pre-school education are not part of the formal education system and are primarily delivered by private institutions, non-governmental organisations and local government units through day care centres at the barangay level.

The introduction of the K to 12 program was a major shift in basic education cycle to ‘decongest the academic workload and give ample time for students to master the competencies required by the curriculum while maintaining a more balanced approach to learner development’ (Presidential Communications Development & Strategic Planning Office 2012, The K to 12 Basic Education Program section). The curriculum (see Figure 2.3) integrates one year of kindergarten education, six years of elementary education, six years of secondary education which is subdivided into four years of junior and two years of senior high school education (RA 10533 Sec 4).

![Figure 2.3. The Philippines’ K to 12 Program](http://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/k-12/)

The Philippine basic education curriculum is competency-based and is largely determined and set by the Central Office. The Department encourages the indigenisation of the curriculum through the incorporation of local mores and
traditions, consequently demanding more creativity and innovation in teaching and learning. One of the key thrusts of the current curriculum is the use of the student’s first language in instruction through the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education program that hopes to strengthen the foundation for learning the two national languages. Filipino and English are introduced as languages of instruction from Grade 4 (Presidential Communications Development & Strategic Planning Office 2012, The K to12 Basic Education Program section).

2.2.3. Challenges

Several innovations prior to the introduction of the k to 12 reforms, according to Bautista, et al (2008) have failed to produce the ‘transformative effect’ that the Department had hoped they would generate. For years, educators and development agencies decried the deteriorating state of education in the country (Luz 2008; World Bank 2013) for a number of reasons but none more so than the dismal test results at both national and international levels and the discouraging results of education performance indicators.

In the 2003 Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) report, the Philippines ranked 23rd out of 25 participating countries in Grade 4 Math and 41st out of 45 participating countries in Grade 8 Math. The same trends were observed in Science where the country ranked fifth from the bottom of the pool of participating countries (Gonzales, et al. 2004). The results from the National Achievement Test, a nationally developed standardized examination administered to both elementary and secondary students, mirror these results where learner mastery in key subjects in the curriculum

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<th>Subjects</th>
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<th>Secondary</th>
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<td>66.47</td>
<td>46.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>40.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>66.27</td>
<td>51.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>66.79</td>
<td>48.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education
fall below the national standard of 75 mean percentage score in 2013 (see Table 2.1).

The basic education efficiency indicators also reveal a downward trend. The 2012-2013 elementary Participation Rate is 95.24%, a decrease of 1.78% from the previous year. Drop-out Rate is at 6.38%, an increase of 0.09% from the previous year. In secondary schools, the Participation Rate is even lower (64.61%), down by 0.22% from the previous year.

The secondary dropout rate was 7.82%, an increase of 0.03% from the previous year (DepEd, 2013 Factsheet) (see Table 2.2).

A study conducted by the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (2007), cites underinvestment in basic education as a critical contributing factor to the deteriorating state of basic education in the country. Although the education portfolio receives the largest allocation in the national budget, high population growth has aggravated the problem. In 2011, government spending on education was only Php 24.97 (approximately AUD$ 0.66) per student undertaking basic education. Undeniably, the lack of resources precipitated related issues such as lack of teaching personnel (which affects class sizes), lack of suitable learning facilities (e.g., classrooms, libraries, laboratories, etc.), and limited amounts of learning and teaching materials and equipment (e.g., textbooks, microscopes, etc.). This impacted on the ability of Filipinos to gain access to quality basic education. The funding shortage compelled the Department to look for alternative funding sources.

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Table 2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHILIPPINE BASIC EDUCATION SECTOR EFFICIENCY FIGURES   SY 2012-13</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation Rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort Survival Rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-out Rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education

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4 This is based on an AUD to Philippines conversion rate of AUD$ 1 = Php 38.09
to augment the education budget including private partnerships and bilateral aid arrangements.

Cognisant of the growing issues in the provision of quality education in the country, the EDCOM recommended several strategies including curricular, structural, organisational, and cultural initiatives to address these issues (The Congressional Commission on Education 1983). One of its structural recommendations was the introduction of School Based Management. This was corroborated by recommendations from two other reviews: the Philippine Education Sector Study (PESS) and the Presidential Commission on Educational Reform (PCER) conducted in 1998 and 2000, respectively. These studies recommended decentralization to address gaps in educational financing and the promotion of school based management as an approach to improve sector efficiency and management by widening avenues for local participation, improve community ownership and accountability for the management of basic education in their locality (SEAMEO INNOTECH 2012).

2.3. An Overview of Education Decentralisation Efforts in the Philippines

The enactment of the Local Government Code of the Philippines enabled the devolution of several national functions onto local government units (LGU). Specifically in education, the law mandated the:

- Constitution of a Special Education Fund (SEF) that is drawn and accrues from a 1% levy on Real Property (Chapter V, Section 235) which is used to fund construction, repair and maintenance of public school facilities, establish and maintain extension classes, or to fund sports activities;
• Creation of the Local School Board at the local level that manages the SEF, acts as an advisory body in matters pertaining to education within the locality, and recommends changes in the name of schools within the territorial jurisdiction of the LGU; and
• LGUs, specifically the Sangguniang Barangay (Barangay Council), to assist in establishing non-formal learning centres.

2.3.1. Policy Reforms

The first policy articulation of decentralisation in education governance in the Philippines was Republic Act 9155 in 2001, which is a framework of governance for basic education and a policy establishing authority and accountability for education governance. In many respects, RA9155 was considered to be a landmark legislation providing the legal foundation for:

• decentralising decision making to the school level when it encouraged local initiatives for improving the quality of basic education by empowering the schools and learning centres to make decisions on what is best for the learners they serve;
• decentralising fiscal management and to formulate a system that enables equitable allocation of resources;
• rationalising the Department structure to make it responsive to a decentralised model of education governance; and
• opening avenues for the meaningful engagement of stakeholders at appropriate levels of education governance.
Two of the significant initiatives undertaken by the Department to implement RA9155 were the Schools First Initiative (SFI) in 2005 and the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) implemented from 2005 to 2011.

Grounded on the principles and ideals of Education for All, SFI was a purposive response to implement RA9155 by engaging the community and all education stakeholders in school management to address the education crisis in the Philippines. What was significant about this policy document was the Department’s recognition of the profound and historical effects of low investments in education (Department of Education 2005). The policy document also recognised that the centralised and hierarchical nature of the education bureaucracy, the short-lived Department leadership, the short-term planning, and the isolation of the school from the community have aggravated the already grim education situation. To avert this crisis, SFI proposed to increase public investment in education and to encourage local governance of education by establishing mechanisms whereby education professionals and the community are able to interact and work productively to address education issues (DepEd 2005).

SFI provided the necessary and critical policy cover for the conceptualisation and implementation of the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) (SGC Manual, DepEd 2009). BESRA was a package of policy reforms which was expected to create critical regulatory, institutional, structural, financial, cultural, physical and informational conditions affecting basic education provision, access and delivery to further accelerate, broaden, deepen and sustain the education effort started by the Schools First Initiative. Ultimately, it sought to reengineer the basic education sector to achieve the EFA objectives of the country by 2015. In order to achieve this, BESRA focused on policy actions in five key reform thrusts that looked into: [1] increasing support to attain learning outcomes, [2] enabling teachers to enhance their contribution to learning outcomes, [3] improving outcomes from
complementary systems such as early childhood education and alternative learning system, and [4] changing the Department’s institutional culture (DepEd 2005).

The fifth key reform thrust centred on empowering local stakeholders to support continuous school improvement. BESRA (2005) recognised schools as community-based social institutions, and as such acknowledged the value of involving key education stakeholders in driving improvement initiatives at the school level.

### 2.3.2. Decentralisation Reform Initiatives in the Philippines

Several institutional and project-based efforts have been implemented by the Department to facilitate, support and strengthen good management practices in a decentralised education environment. This section discusses the significant initiatives, at the project and institutional levels, by the Department that supported decentralisation as an educational reform strategy.

#### 2.3.2.1. Project-Based Interventions

While several externally funded decentralisation-related initiatives were subsequently implemented following the enactment of RA9155, the Department had implemented decentralisation efforts prior to its passage in 2001 (see Table 2.3).

The Program for Decentralised Education (PROCED), implemented from 1983-1989, was funded by the International Bank for Rural Reconstruction and Development – World Bank. PROCED was part of a 10-year program to revitalise elementary education through the provision of textbooks, instructional materials, curriculum development, teacher training, and the establishment of Regional Education Learning Centres in DepEd-administered regions. One of the significant legacies of PROCED was the establishment of the National Education Learning Center which
was later renamed the National Educator’s Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) in Administrative Order 282 (1992). NEAP was established to provide strategic human resource development programs to the Department by establishing synergistic partnerships and linkages, promoting intellectual inquiry into innovative strategies in educational management, and by becoming a venue and a forum for individual and institutional academic exchange (NEAP, 2015 About NEAP).

From 1996 to 2006, the World Bank funded the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) a development assistance package for the elementary education sector while from 1989-2006 ADB and JBIC funded the Secondary Education Development Improvement Project (SEDIP), a development assistance package for the secondary education sector. Apart from traditional forms of development assistance, both TEEP and SEDIP trialled school improvement planning (SIP) processes and provided funding opportunities to schools to address school priority improvement areas identified in their SIP (Abulencia 2013).

The Basic Education Assistance to Mindanao (BEAM) project implemented from 2002 to 2012 and the Strengthening Implementation of Visayas Education (STRIVE) project undertaken from 2005 to 2011 are regionally-based development assistance packages funded by the Commonwealth of Australia (Australia Philippines Development Cooperation Program 2013-2014). BEAM’s overall aim was to support the attainment of peace and development in the Southern Philippines by improving access to and quality of basic education in Southern and Central Mindanao. BEAM expanded support to Muslim education, contributed training programs on decentralised education management, and promoted the development of National Competency-Based Teaching Standards. STRIVE, on the other hand, was a package of development assistance in the Visayas. Similar to the scheme implemented by TEEP and SEDIP, STRIVE trialled a funding mechanism - Support Options for Basic Education that expanded the role of the wider community in
identifying and addressing issues related to access. STRIVE contributed to the establishment of the Electronic Basic Education Information System and served as benchmark for the organisational restructuring recently undertaken by the Department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TITLE</th>
<th>FUNDING AGENCY</th>
<th>PERIOD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP)</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>1996-2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralisation of Basic Education Management in the Philippines</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Friendly School (CFS)</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>2001-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Learning Support Service (PLSS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1990-1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education Assistance to Mindanao (BEAM)</td>
<td>AusAid</td>
<td>2002-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of the Quality of Basic Education (IQPE)</td>
<td>Government of Spain</td>
<td>2006-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Program Support for Basic Education (NPSBE)</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Philippine Education Reform</td>
<td>AusAid</td>
<td>2007-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Performance Incentive Partnership (EPIP)</td>
<td>AusAid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3 Decentralisation-Related Projects in the Philippines
Source: Department of Education

From 2007 to 2011, three complementary projects - the National Program Support for Basic Education (NPSBE) funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development-World Bank, the Support for Philippine Education Reform (SPHERE) and the Education Performance Incentive Partnership (EPIP) both funded by the Commonwealth of Australia – were designed and undertaken specifically to support the implementation of the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda.
Intentionally or otherwise, these externally-funded development projects served as avenues (Mateo pers comm. 2014) to trial innovations in decentralised education management in the country. Several of these initiatives have subsequently been introduced more broadly by the Department.

2.3.2.2. Institutional Interventions

One of the critical institutional initiatives in decentralised education management is DECS Order 230, series 1999 which outlined the Department’s definition of decentralisation. It defined decentralisation as the:

- promotion of school-based management and community-based literacy programs;
- transfer of authority and decision-making from the central and regional offices to the provincial (divisions) and schools;
- sharing of education management responsibilities with other stakeholders such as the local government units (LGUs), parent-teacher-community associations (PTCAs), and NGOs and
- devolution of education functions.

In this context, the Department transferred several national functions to other levels of education governance: the ranking and hiring of teachers was transferred to the Division Offices (DO, 16, s2005), salary disbursement was transferred to the Regional Office (DO 87, s1994) and the management of the MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses) budget to schools (DO 12, s2014). The MOOE budget is proportional to a school’s enrolment.
The Department consistently supported the introduction of school based management as a model of decentralised education management at the local level. Being at the forefront of the delivery of educational services, it recognised the pivotal role of the school and the value of sharing management responsibilities and accountabilities with education stakeholders in achieving access to and improving the quality of education. Towards this end, BESRA proposed the creation of School Governing Councils (SGCs) which, by intent, support the operational leadership of the school head in undertaking school improvement initiatives. Additionally, a School Based Management (SBM) accountability model was introduced in 2009 which outlined the SBM dimensions and defined the scale of development practice that serve to measure progression of schools towards becoming self-directed and self-enhancing. The Assessment of SBM practices is a self-administered, evidence-based assessment of the level of SBM practice of schools that facilitates identification of measures that would enable the schools to attain and sustain a mature level of SBM practice. Recently, the Department initiated a review of the SBM Framework, assessment tools and processes, taking into consideration current best SBM practices across the regions. The output was a revised SBM Framework which incorporated the Philippine Accreditation System for Basic Education as a component of the SBM framework (DO 83, s2012).

A participatory approach to school improvement planning was also institutionalised by incorporating learning gained from project-based interventions like TEEP, SEDIP and BEAM. The School Improvement Planning process required the constitution of a school planning team that engaged school stakeholders to prepare the school improvement plan. The Department also introduced the Principal-led School Building Program (DM 252, s2006) that enabled the school head to supervise the construction, rehabilitation and acceptance of school facilities and engage the PTA in the monitoring of school building projects within their school.
The Adopt-a-School program is another institutional initiative that encourages private institutions to support public education by upgrading and modernising public schools in the country (RA 8525, 1998). Adopting companies receive incentives (e.g. tax, reputational incentives) for participation in the program. An offshoot of this initiative is Brigada Eskwela that engages all school stakeholders to assist in school preparation two weeks before the opening of the school year.

2.3.3. Challenges to Decentralisation

An evaluation of the institutional reforms in the Department of Education by the Human Development Network (2008) revealed some significant challenges to education decentralisation in the country.

One of these challenges was the project-based approach adopted for introducing decentralised management practices in the Department. While admittedly several of the current Department decentralised education management practices have their origins from project-based interventions, there were concerns about the Department’s ability to institutionalise and mainstream project-tested interventions. In addition, there were concerns about the Department’s “ownership” of these project outputs (as these initiatives were undertaken outside of the Department mainstream) and about the capacity of the Department to scale-up and introduce these project initiatives more broadly in the Department (Bautista, et.al 2008).

Another challenge is the Department’s organisational culture - ‘resistance to institutional change appears to be the rule rather than the exception in the Department’ (Bautista, et.al 2008 p. 57). The hierarchical culture of the Department poses another challenge to decentralisation. According to the report, DepEd has a pervasive ‘No Memo, No Action’ attitude that stifles the ability of lower level units to
independently act without explicit instructions from the national office, and to think outside the box. This was corroborated by former DepEd Undersecretary Luz (2008) when he said that:

_The DepEd bureaucracy lives by the DepEd Memo. This is so ingrained in the system that administrators and school heads will wait for [it] rather than act on their own. A common joke made: A principal will wait for a DepEd Memo on ‘principal empowerment’ before he will act on an issue._

A further critical barrier is continuity in leadership and direction. Frequent leadership changes bring changes to policy and direction (Luz 2008). Since 2001, there have been nine Department Secretaries all exercising varying degrees of support to decentralisation initiatives.

Despite these challenges, the Department has exercised consistency in pursuing the decentralisation of basic education governance—from lobbying for the enactment of RA9155, to pilot-testing decentralisation initiatives, to launching the Schools First Initiative, up to the conception and implementation of BESRA (Mateo 2014). A study conducted by SEAMEO-INNOTECH on decentralised education management practices in Southeast Asia (2012) noted that the political commitment from both the national and local levels to pursue school-based management as an educational reform strategy had been a major factor in institutionalising practices in decentralised education management in the Philippines.

**2.4. Summary**

This chapter outlined the socio-political-economic-cultural realities in the Philippines and how these conditions influenced educational decisions and directions. It also
outlined the numerous efforts of the Department of Education to improve the state of basic education in the country to reach international standards, by decentralising governance and delivery of basic education, by rationalising the organisation structure of the Department, and by introducing several initiatives to support wider participation of stakeholders in improving the delivery of quality basic education in the country. The next chapter situates the research in the broader discourse of decentralisation, participation, governance and highlights how these concepts are applied in the context of education and in school-community partnerships.
CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW: DECENTRALISATION, GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

3.0. Introduction

Within the concept of community participation in school based management, it is important to consider the mutually related notions of decentralisation and participation and how they impact on the scope and quality of community-school partnerships in education reform. Recognising this, the chapter is divided into the three key ideas of decentralisation, participation and governance.

Firstly, I review the theoretical discourses that underpin decentralisation initiatives and the rationale for adopting decentralisation as an educational reform strategy and highlight the mutuality of decentralisation and participation. The section concludes with a discussion of the challenges of employing decentralisation as a reform strategy. The next section provides a broad overview of the theories and the themes that underpin approaches to participation. It also examines the concepts of power, voice and ownership and how these relate to participation and concludes with a presentation of several frameworks of participation and the benefits and challenges in utilising participation strategies in reform initiatives. The third section presents a broad discussion of governance – its definition, levels and
principles of good governance. The last section discusses the application of decentralisation, participation and governance as strategies in educational reform and the attendant challenges of stakeholder engagement in a decentralised education management environment. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the research's conceptual framework and identifies how literature around decentralisation, participation and governance had informed the development of the research framework.

3.1. An Overview of Decentralisation

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, education has been recognised as an immutable human right and for the pivotal role it plays in realising other human rights (Craissati et.al. 2007). This belief regarding the right of every individual to access quality education stimulated several international initiatives such as the 1990 Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990) and the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum: Education for All (UNESCO, 2000). These international gatherings focused on global educational issues and underscored the need for state and civil society to work together on innovative approaches to eradicate illiteracy and achieve universal access to quality basic education.

Traditional approaches where authority and decision-making had been centralised at the national level, had fallen below expectations (Bjork 2007) compelling the international community to look for alternative approaches in education reform. In an attempt to address the centralised nature of education governance, decentralisation was introduced as a key feature of institutional reform to help address issues relating to access and quality of education (King & Ozler 1998).
While decentralisation denotes both a condition and process (Lauglo 1995), Conyers (1986) argues that decentralisation should be viewed more as processes of change. According to Craissati, et al. (2007 p.8) decentralisation ‘alludes to a deliberate approach that is initiated at the apex of hierarchies’ where authority and responsibility over public functions are transferred to sub-national units of government or to the private sector (Conyers 1986; Litvack and Seddon 1999; Rondinelli 1989; Saito 2003). Decentralisation is a set of policies and measures that may cover all aspects of development which may lead to political and developmental improvements (Litvack and Seddon 1999; Saito 2003). Countries have adopted decentralisation measures to strengthen democratic governance, improve overall government efficiency, improve the responsiveness of government and provide services that are tailored to community needs, encourage initiative and innovation, widen the sphere of stakeholder participation in governance, improve the quality of decision making and planning, and strengthen accountability and promote transparency (Conyers 1986; Shaeffer 1994; Saito 2003; Litvack and Seddon 1999).

3.1.1. Rationale for Decentralisation

Several rationales had been proposed to support the adoption of decentralisation as a reform initiative. One school of thought, supported by neo-liberal advocates, was for the reduction of the role of what it labels as ‘the interventionist state’ and the expansion of the role of the free market to allow market forces to drive efficiency. Based on this rationale, people are treated as consumers of goods and services whose needs are better served by the private sector or a decentralised government bureaucracy and not by an inefficient, highly centralised government that is detached from and indifferent to the needs of its constituents. In this rationale, the state has the role of an enabler - creating an environment that facilitates free-market and free choice (Wade 1990).
Another school of thought is advocated by anarcho-communitarians. According to Bardhan (1996), anarcho-communitarians, being largely opposed to the dominant role of the state and the market, emphasise the role of civil society and all forms of associations rather than the institution of the state. This view favours mobilising, empowering and allowing local actors to take an active role in shaping the outcome of development rather than surrendering this responsibility to an elitist-controlled market and a highly centralised state (Osei-Kufuor and Bakare 2013). People are viewed as bearers of civil, political and social rights that strive for collective rather than individualistic/self-centred wellbeing (Canel 2001). Those who take this view assert that the goal of decentralisation is to broaden the space for participation.

Despite this apparent divergence in thought, both rationales converge on several critical points. First, both rationales agree that politics and a strong political commitment drives decentralisation reform and both imply the need to transform the roles of the state and civil society to better respond to changing societal conditions (De Grauwe 2005; Taylor 2011; Osborne and Gaebler 1992).

Second, both rationales recognise that some degree and form of participation is imperative for decentralisation reform to be successful. According to Litvack and Seddon (1995 p15), ‘decentralisation and participation have a symbiotic relationship.’ The process of decentralisation can enhance opportunities for participation and usher in the establishment of mechanisms to stimulate and strengthen local participation even where there is an obvious absence of local level participation (Osei-Kufuor and Bakare 2013; Litvack and Seddon 1999).

Third, an informed and active civil society is necessary in the reform process as the quality of participation and decision-making occurring at the local levels impact on
the processes and goals of decentralisation. Both paradigms highlight the need for the establishment of effective communication channels and mechanisms to facilitate information sharing between and among stakeholders.

Lastly, both rationales agree that decentralisation is a context-specific process. Decentralisation objectives and processes should be informed by an in-depth analysis of the contextual nuances of the environment in which they are introduced (Shaeffer 1994; Conyers 1986). And because country circumstances differ, strategists (Osei-Kufluor and Bakare 2013; Litvack and Seddon 1999; Conyers 1986) caution against disregarding contextual complexities and oversimplifying the process of decentralisation. Kemmerer (cited in Bray 2001) supported this view when he identified four critical factors that may affect decentralisation outcomes, namely the:

- social, economic, and cultural context;
- political support from national leaders and local elites;
- adequate planning and management; and
- scope of reform.

3.1.2. Challenges to Decentralisation

Despite the strong arguments for decentralisation, several issues persist that challenge its perceived theoretical advantages.

Both proponents and critics of decentralisation agree that there can never truly be a decentralised system and that some form of centralisation exists even as functions are transferred to lower levels of governance (Conyers 1986; Caldwell, 2005; Zajda and Gamage 2009). Centralisation and decentralisation are not either-or conditions and the challenge is to find the delicate balance between centralisation and
decentralisation (Bray 2001; Caldwell 2005; Bjork 2007; Daun 2009; Litvack and Seddon 1999; Zajda and Gamage 2009). Moreover, there is an inherent tension between centralisation and decentralisation as these concepts are grounded on different and diverging value sets (Caldwell 2005).

Another concern revolves around interjurisdictional and interpersonal equity. Some fear that since localities are inequitably endowed with resources decentralisation could amplify local disparities and promote greater inequality (Litvack and Seddon 1999).

Control is another aspect that requires serious consideration. The process should be able to determine what functions to decentralise, at which level of governance and in what form these functions will be transferred. According to Wise (1977), decentralisation policies often fail because policy makers tend to hyperrationalise - wanting to appear to share authority without, in fact, surrendering authority thus making the change initiative more procedural than substantive (p.106). According to Webster (1992),

*Decentralisation in itself does not necessarily involve devolution of power; the extension of the state outwards and downwards can just as well serve the objective of consolidating the power of the central state as it can serve the objective of devolving power away from the centre* (p.130).

Cook (2007) observed that often there is a manifest gap between the legal mandate and the way decentralisation is operationalised. Despite noble intentions, governments fail to realise the extent of ‘system-wide change that decentralisation entails’ (Wohlstetter 1995, p.1). This led Hanson (2006) to suggest that
decentralisation may not always be the appropriate intervention when weighed against the contextual realities of a country.

Finally, decentralisation, as an approach to institutional reform, is a systemic change intervention that challenges and transforms organisational culture and the mechanisms of governance (Faguet 2014). The transfer of authority and responsibility and the reality of power displacement may create passive resistance from within the national/central offices often becoming a major impediment to decentralisation efforts (Hanson 2006; Cook 2007).

3.2. Participation: Concept and Challenges

Decentralisation is not merely a dispersion of control and responsibilities from the centre to the periphery. Decentralisation, both as a process and an end, requires the engagement of and commitment from the units receiving these responsibilities (Conyers 1986; Litvack and Seddon 1999). Hence, integral to clarifying the underlying motives and processes of decentralisation is understanding the concept of participation.

3.2.1. Understanding Participation

The etymology of participation – from the Latin word ‘participatio’ (Oxford Dictionary Online 2017) meaning to partake or share in common with others - is simple yet powerful. The act of participation itself acknowledges the need to go beyond and work for something larger than oneself. It recognises that when people participate, they not only share something of themselves (e.g. skills, knowledge, experience, etc.) that others could partake of, but also receive the same measure from others. From its simple etymological meaning, participation has since
metamorphosed into a malleable term to conform and support sectoral interests (White 1996; Cornwall 2008).

Participation is not a new concept in development rhetoric and practice (NORAD 2013). According to Claridge (2004, p19), participation represents a ‘move from the global, aspatial, top-down strategies that dominated early development initiatives to more locally-sensitive methodologies.’ In recent decades, participation discourse experienced a renewed resurgence resulting from reactions to the influence of market-based policies that fostered individualism and competitiveness. The emergence of the concepts of social capital, networks, mutuality, participatory governance, and empowerment in the language of development policy to help address social, political and economic exclusion have been encouraging developments in the political landscape (Taylor 2011). In recent years, participation in development has transitioned from operational engagement in implementation to strategic engagement in policy development (Gaventa and Barret 2012).

Taylor (2011) noted four major themes that underpinned participation policies across various periods each with their inherent value sets, ideologies, assumptions and strategies. The first theme outlined by Taylor (2011) is built around a deficient community model that highlights the inadequacies and inabilitys of the community to productively engage in the economic-political-cultural spheres of society. This theme perceives the community as the target of change and as such utilises community renewal, capacity building and community regeneration as participation strategies.

The second participation theme is built around an inadequate state model drawing attention to the shortcomings and deficiencies of the state in delivering public services. This theme is anchored on the notion that the administration and delivery
of services is improved when it is sensitive and aligned to community needs. Policy initiatives under this theme work towards engaging the communities in the delivery of public services by decentralising functions and accountabilities across various levels. However, strategies under this umbrella were, at times, exploited to reassert state legitimacy in the light of mounting pressures to improve the delivery of public services.

The third theme is borne out of the structural and economic failures of society and is generally built on Marxist ideology that follows a power-based/transformative model. It is built around the premise that the poor had suffered because of development (Holcombe 1995) and that the way for the disenfranchised to be heard is to build a broad-based movement (through community organising, conscientisation, community action, and coalition building) for structural and economic change.

The final theme is modelled after a neo-liberalist-market approach that focuses on the failure of governments and the rise of the free market. Under this theme, communities are treated as consumers who are bestowed with the power of preference. Strategies under this theme include consumer empowerment and privatisation.

A number of inferences could be drawn from these foregoing themes.

First, that participation is context-specific. Participation does not exist in a vacuum and the application of participatory approaches and strategies require purposive and systematic assessment and consideration of the historical, cultural, economic, social and political nuances and an analysis of the existing mechanisms for participation and the factors that affect participation within a given society (Shaeffer 1994; Lawrence and Deagan 2001).
Second, the meaning and adoption of participation varies across sectors. Pelling (cited in Claridge 2004), argued that participation is an ideologically contested concept which produces competing meanings, applications and expectations (Mohan and Stokke 2000). Participation has evolved into a ‘malleable concept’ (Cornwall 2008 p 269) which can be used to confirm or create an appearance of authenticity to any initiative. Governments have capitalised on participation approaches to extend their control and legitimise their position in the development arena. Communities, on the other hand, have utilised participation approaches to voice their concerns and engage the state to act. Participation can be used, therefore, for its transformative benefits but can also be used to entrench control and inequality (White 1996).

Third, participation is both a means and an end, which is a corollary to the previous inference. Depending on how participation is perceived and on one’s ideological position, participation can either be instrumental (means) or transformative (end) (Nelson and Wright 1995).

Fourth, participation is a choice. While there may be external factors that can facilitate it, participation does not come about on its own. It is a conscious act and decision by individuals, groups, or communities which led Bernard (in Shaeffer 1994, p7) to suggest that people participate to the extent that they ‘choose, cognitively, affectively, and physically, to engage in establishing, implementing, and evaluating both the overall direction of a programme and its operational details. Choice, in this context, implies not merely an agreement to follow but an active decision to assume responsibility in considering the rationale, implications and potential outcomes of the programme.’
They are, therefore, ‘creators and full-fledged partners in development’ (Kouassivi cited in Shaeffer 1994 p.15).

3.2.2. Participation and the Concepts of Power, Ownership and Voice

To better understand the concept of participation it is also important to understand the stakeholder’s ability to express one’s opinions (voice), to influence and negotiate (power) and to build accountability (ownership).

3.2.2.1. Participation and Power

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defines participation as giving people constant ‘access to decision-making and power’ (UNDP 1993, p 21).

Inherent in the participation processes is the negotiation of power. Taylor (2011) suggested two paradigms about power, namely where power is understood to be finite and the other where power is understood to be fluid.

Those who perceive power as finite, hold the view that power is held by certain groups or sections of society and its perpetuation is undertaken through the production and accumulation of wealth and through social conditioning. For them, to be empowered means to remove this power from those groups who hold it in society. On the other hand, those who hold the view that power is fluid contend that power is not vested on to a certain group but rather rests with every human being. It also contends that the accumulation of power is a product of the interaction between and among players in society. They argue, that to empower, power needs not be surrendered but rather shared and by doing so expand power exponentially. However, both these paradigms have been criticised - the former for its pessimistic and deterministic view of power and the latter for its failure to
recognise the inequalities of power distribution in society and the role of those vested with power to propagate or curtail ideas.

Winstanley (1995) and Hart et.al. (1997), offered a more practical way of looking at the various dimensions of power by differentiating between different types of power based on the level of stakeholder involvement. Strategic power (called ‘arm’s length power’ by Winstanley) involves the ability to set policy direction, standards, and targets that revolve around the long-term direction of an organisation. Operational power, on the other hand, pertains to decisions that revolve around the day-to-day delivery of the organisation’s mission. Operational decisions therefore are more short-term and tactical. Winstanley further identified two additional types of power: Comprehensive power where stakeholders participate both in the strategic and operational decisions and Disempowerment, which represents no real power, either strategic or operational.

3.2.2.2. Voice and Ownership in Participation

Power is reflected in people’s ability to articulate their concerns and their ability to negotiate and be accountable for development initiatives that affect them and their community. Voice is the ability to articulate preference, opinions and views (Rocha Menocal and Sharma 2008) Having voice is essential for effective participation as it enables the public to influence how policies are developed, how services are implemented, to demand organisations or the state to act responsibly and ultimately to influence the final outcome of an intervention (Paul, 1992). Gopakumar (1997, p282) corroborated this when he said that ‘there could be no better way to gauge performance than the ‘voice’ provided by the end user.’ Effective voice, therefore, is participation (NORAD 2013).
Enabling and facilitating voice involves providing access to pertinent and critical information about the services, developing the people’s capabilities in expression, instituting mechanisms for participation, providing a system of incentives, and enabling a culture of responsiveness and accountability (NORAD, 2013; Andrews and Shah 2002). If used effectively, voice becomes a critical factor that improves transparency and accountability in participation.

Another factor that improves transparency and accountability is ownership (Flint and Natrup 2014). According to NORAD (2013), there is no common definition of ownership in literature. It, however, suggests two identifiable perspectives of ownership, namely: ownership as ‘commitment’ to the intervention and ownership as having ‘control’ over the intervention. When applied to participation efforts, ownership by commitment implies a gradual building up of ownership of interventions while ownership by control requires ownership as a pre-condition for programme implementation.

According to De Renzio, Whitfield and Bergamaschi (2008, p2.), ‘Ownership is often used by donors to mean commitment to policies, regardless of how those policies were chosen. This contrasts with ownership defined as the degree of control recipient governments are able to exercise over policy design and implementation. Finding from our research is that while many aid agency officials start out with a commitment to ownership defined as control over policies, as soon as there is some disagreement over policy choices they tend to fall back on a definition of ownership as commitment to their preferred policies.’

An understanding of the relationship of power, voice and ownership, therefore, is critical when espousing participation in development.
3.2.3. Frameworks of Participation

Several typologies of participation (see Pretty 1995; White 1996; Choguill 1996; Wilcox 1999; Burns et.al, 1994; Skinner 1995; Cornwall 2008) have been offered to represent the different levels and gradations of participation largely based on the classical participation framework conceptualised by Amstein in 1969 (Claridge 2004; NORAD 2013).

Amstein (1969) offered a model to understand participation through the Ladder of Citizen Participation which is anchored on the negotiation of power (Figure 3.1). The eight-rung ladder is divided into three levels with manipulation and therapy comprising the bottom levels called Non-participation. This is followed by the next three rungs – informing, consultation, and placation – grouped under Tokenism. The last level called Citizen Power has partnership, delegated power, and citizen control as the stronger forms of participation. This model, according to Bray (2001), is significant as it ‘distinguishes partnership from the weaker forms of participation’ (p.18) and shows the upper and lower limits of partnership’ (p.19) which helps expand the concept of participation.
Building on Arnstein’s framework, White (1996) proposed a participation typology that highlights and distinguishes the motivation of recipients and implementing agencies when promoting participation (Figure 3.2). A significant insight from White’s (1996) typology is that participation does not always serve the best interest of the poor (p.12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Participation</th>
<th>What participation means to implementing agencies</th>
<th>What participation means to those on the receiving?</th>
<th>What participation is for</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Legitimisation</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Display</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
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<td>Representative</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Leverage</td>
<td>Voice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Means/Ends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.1. Ladder of Citizen Participation
Source: Arnstein, S 1969

Figure 3.2. White’s Typology of Participation
Source: White, S 1996

However, several development practitioners have questioned Arnstein’s participation framework. In a critique of Arnstein’s typology as being too ‘urban’, Choguill (1996) re-conceptualised the ladder of participation to consider the realities and constraints faced by underdeveloped countries, arguing that apart from the objective of empowerment, underdeveloped communities need the efficient delivery of public services. Other development practitioners (Collins and Ison, 2006; Tritter and McCallum 2006) have questioned Arnstein’s assumption arguing that power, at times, is not the reason why people engage. Moreover, Arnstein’s linear representation of participation belies the complexity, dynamic nature of participation in practice (Tritter and McCallum 2006). According to Collins and Ison (2006), this linear representation of participation does not emphasise the
significance of feedback in development practice and fails to recognise that, at times, people do not want to participate at all.

Claridge (2004) suggested that stronger participation strategies are not necessarily better than weaker forms of participation arguing that participation, being a context-specific process should be appropriate to the context upon which it is applied. Cromwell (2008) added that we

Need to pay closer attention to who is participating, in what and for whose benefit. Vagueness about what participation means may have helped the promise of public involvement gain purchase, but it may be time for more... clarity through specificity if the call for participation is to realise its democratising promise. (p.269)

3.2.4. Community Participation

Community participation is a process whereby communities and individuals are actively engaged in the process of decision-making in matters that affect their lives (Burns, et. al 2004; Paul 1987). According to Mansuri and Rao (2012), community participation can either be organic or induced.

Organic participation is reflective of collective action organised from within the community by local leaders to give voice to community concerns and demand meaningful changes. Organic participation is a slow process that is informed by the communities’ history and culture, intrinsic capabilities and capacities, degree of nationalism, existing political and social conditions, among others. Examples of organic participation include the civil rights movements in the United States and
South Africa and the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Mansuri and Rao (2012) argue that organic participation is sustainable because of its endogenous character.

In contrast, induced participation is exogenous, meaning an externally-initiated civic action more often through government-managed development interventions. This form of participation is premised on the inability of communities for self-organisation and agency. Decentralisation is a form of induced participation. Some countries have effectively induced participation by creating public spaces for participation similar to the participatory budgeting process, which was institutionalised in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

According to Mansuri and Rao (2012), organic and induced participation can overlap. Governments may capitalise and build on small-scale endogenously-initiated initiatives such as in the case of Educación con Participación de la Comunidad in El Salvador where the government built on education initiatives of the community.

Burns et. al. (2004) suggest that implementers of externally induced community development efforts, more often, misconstrue participation with consultation. Community participation, according to them, ‘means that communities are playing an active part and have a significant degree of power and influence (p 6)’ to direct development intervention that address public concerns.

3.2.5. The Benefits, Costs, Challenges and Risks of Participation

The pervasiveness of participation in development literature and its universal adoption as a key strategy in human development can be attributed to the belief that participation can:
• Empower and build commitment among people and communities to achieve greater command and influence over decisions that affect their lives (Andrews and Shah 2002; Taylor 2011; Mansuri and Rao 2012);

• Ease the burden of development by generating more resources from a wide array of stakeholders (San Antonio 2008; Shaeffer 1994; Mansuri and Rao 2012);

• Strengthen state legitimacy by making the communities equally accountable for social responsibilities thus projecting an image of an inclusive government (Shaeffer 1994; Taylor 2011; Somerville 2005);

• Help ensure sustainability of development initiatives by ensuring responsiveness to community needs (Andrews and Shah 2002; Shaeffer 1994); and

• Build the institutional and professional capacity of the community by developing competencies that allows them to share in the governance and management of initiatives. (Chambers 1994; Shaeffer 1994; Taylor 2011; Mansuri and Rao 2012)

However, participation does not come with any guarantees. It is a process that is fraught with uncertainties, challenges, risks and frustrations. Participation strategies may be burdensome and may attract unwarranted cost whose impact may be insignificant in terms of improving the overall quality of life of the community (Brownlea 1987; Bude 1989; Shaeffer 1994). Others argue that communities may not be able to bear the added expense associated with participation that may require them to match government assistance. Moreover, compelling communities to match government resources may be perceived as a co-opting practice for communities to accept the terms of an initiative or else face losing the funds to other communities who have the financial capacity and willingness to match their requirements (Chambers 1994; White, 1996). Inversely, governments may also find the cost of utilising participation strategies financially straining as the process of
engaging the wider community requires substantial investment in time and resources.

Being a context-specific process, the application of participatory strategies may become onerous given the diverse character of most disadvantaged communities. Social stratification across religious and ethnic lines, incompatible interests and differing value sets, among others, pose serious challenges to community mobilisation efforts (Shaeffer 1994). Even when communities are open to working together, participation requires a certain level of competence from residents to be able to negotiate the political arena. This may be a major impediment to community members who may not have the experience or possess the confidence to manage the processes of governance, and the intricacies of political negotiation and alliance building.

An attendant point to this is whose capabilities to build? The introduction of participatory processes risks empowering the “wrong” segments of the community e.g. corrupt local elite, etc. causing more inequality and muting the voices that should have been amplified by its adoption in the first place (Abraham and Platteau in Mansuri and Rao 2012).

Another source of potential frustration, according to Shaeffer (1994), is that, at times, initial goals and expectations of participation are prone to adjustments and may oftentimes be left unmet as they are undertaken in the social arena and are therefore prone to externalities. Moreover, the lack of quantifiable measures of participation outcomes means that success is easy to claim but difficult to substantiate. Participation then becomes a frustrating, rather than liberating and empowering, experience (Eyben and Ladbury 1995).
Finally, the pervasive adoption of participation for the sake of projecting an image of social responsibility has weakened the transformative power of participation and reduced it to a public relations strategy (Anderson 1998) or as an aesthetic label (Chambers 1994) to development initiatives. According to Shaeffer (1994), when governments use participation for its symbolic function, participation runs the risk of being system-maintaining rather than system-transforming (Mohan and Stokke 2000).

Despite these challenges, the adoption of participatory approaches had pushed the boundaries of political engagement and enabled stakeholders to become more committed to a development that is inclusive and responsive to the community (NORAD 2013).

3.3. An Overview of Governance

Another key concept related to participation is governance. Recently, governance gained stature in development literature due to the extensive evidence on the role it serves in eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development (Anan 1998) and in improving overall societal well-being (Graham, et.al. 2003; KAS 2011).

3.3.1. Governance Defined

Simply defined, governance is a societal or organisational process by which decisions are made (UNESCAP 2009). Expounding this concept, Graham et. al. (2003, p.2) argued that, ‘governance is more about the strategic aspect of steering: the larger decisions about direction and roles’. In governance, it is important to identify the mechanisms of how power is exercised, of how formal and informal stakeholders articulate their views, in what capacity and areas stakeholders are
involved in the decision-making process, and the mechanisms of how strategic decisions are reached and implemented (UNDP 2010).

Graham et. al. (2003) caution against equating governance with government. Governance is an interaction of various formal and informal actors in development to decide on matters of public concern. In this light, ‘governance’ is broader than the concept of ‘government.’ By democratising the process of decision-making, there is no expectation for governments to solely address public concerns.

3.3.2. Principles of Governance

According to Marshall et. al. (2000), the elements of an effective governance model require: [1] creating enablers that facilitate participation and collaboration from a diverse group of citizens; [2] instituting performance measures that define expectations and tracks and analyses performance; and [3] carrying out policy decisions and committing resources to implement these decisions. The application of the governance concepts need to take into account the mission, direction and culture of an organisation (Cornforth, 2003; Widmer & Houchin 2000) which led Bradshaw et. al (2007, p.3) to argue that there is ‘no ideal way of conceptualising governance.’

UNESCAP (2009) outlines five principles of good governance (Figure 3.3), namely: [1] Legitimacy and Voice (instituting inclusive mechanisms that encourage expression and participation and promote consensual decision-making), [2] Direction (providing clear, long term vision), [3] Performance (being responsive to the needs of the in a cost-effective manner), [4] Accountability (instituting mechanisms and standards that promote responsibility for decisions and that facilitate the flow of information) and [5] Fairness (instituting mechanisms within the purview of the law that enable everyone especially the marginalised to participate). In addition, the
Australian Public Sector Commission (2007) incorporated Stewardship (utilising opportunities in enhancing entrusted public assets) as another principle in public sector governance.

Extensive development-related literature had espoused the invaluable connection between participation and governance and the role these two concepts play in promoting development processes that are ethical, inclusive, and sustainable.

3.3.3. Local or Community Governance

In the interest of broadening the democratic space, communities, according to Andrews and Shah (2002), should play an active role in the governance process. Community governance, according to Gates (1999) came about as a response to people’s disenfranchisement and distrust of government officials to represent and act on the their interests and to the growing diversification of communities which ushered in a renewed interest in making community concerns known to provide real inputs in policy development. It was also noted that community governance was necessary where responsibilities and authorities have shifted from the national to local levels such as in decentralisation (Gates 1999; Somerville 2005).
Community governance, according to Somerville (2005, p. 120) is the process of decision-making that takes place in the community that involves giving the right to participate in and wherever possible determine issues affecting the community through direct control and through such institutions as a neighbourhood forum or community councils.

Terms such as community participation, local governance, and participatory governance have been interchangeably used with community governance (Totikidis, et. al 2005).

Community governance necessitates government to provide the necessary conditions for community stakeholders to work together to help the community reach collective objectives and meet common challenges. The key is collaboration in the midst of diversity. As community governance requires a new approach to governing, governments are called to adapt and modify the way they lead and govern or else risk further alienation and disenfranchisement from communities they govern. There is evidence to suggest that engaging the community in community governance mechanism produces greater benefit for the community – public perceptions are transformed and accountability and transparency are improved.

3.4. Decentralisation, Participation and Governance in Education

Given the failures of a centralised system of education, the theoretical advantages of decentralisation appealed to governments seeking ways to address educational management and delivery issues (McLean and King 1999; Karlsen 2000). While there is only limited empirical evidence that directly correlates decentralisation with improving educational performance (Bjork 2007; Sackney & Dibski 1994), the
adoption of decentralisation as an education reform strategy has been a growing trend internationally. Financial institutions, like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have advocated the adoption of this strategy by making decentralisation an integral component of its Structural Adjustment Programme (Saito 2003; Hanson 2006; Caldwell 2005).

3.4.1. School Based Management

According to Zajda and Gamage (2009), decentralisation in education can be defined as the process of transferring responsibility concerning the distribution and the use of resources by the central government to local schools or what Caldwell (2005) referred to as School Based Management (SBM). The application of decentralisation in the education sector reflects both neo-liberalist and anarcho-communitarian rationales – where opportunities for participation and ownership by key players at the local level have broadened while concurrently maintaining a conservative culture of efficiency, economies of scale and education standards which support the manpower requirements of a global economy (Zajda and Gamage 2009).

The debate on the utilisation of decentralisation in education reform revolves largely on what level of organisational hierarchy controls the various functions in the delivery of educational services. Although this is an ongoing debate, there is growing consensus that some levels are better-equipped and positioned than others to lead the delivery of an area given the nature and scope of the responsibilities (Litvack and Seddon 1999). And although there may be disagreements with the overall framework and rationale, motivations, and perceived advantages of education decentralisation, there is consensus on the critical role of schools in education decentralisation (Caldwell 2005; Leithwood and Menzies 1998).
SBM, according to Caldwell (2005), is a strategy that relies on the transfer of authority from the central government to the school level. Malen et. al. (cited in The World Bank, 2007 p.2) expound this definition by highlighting the school as the primary unit of improvement and its reliance on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained. SBM, as a form of decentralisation at the school level, assumes that greater decision making is done at the school level within the purview of a larger national framework. These decisions may be in the areas of teaching and learning (organisation of curriculum, instructional methodology), administration and personnel management, planning and structures and resources generation, allocation and utilisation (Caldwell 2005; Papagianis, et.al. 1992). SBM reforms are shaped by a country’s national goals and by its social, economic, cultural, and political contexts. SBM approaches differ across countries depending on the ideological paradigm that shaped the decentralisation policy, on the degree of autonomy given for transferred responsibilities; and the level of the responsibilities transferred (World Bank, 2007; Caldwell 2005). This led Cook (2007) to conclude that all forms of SBM are unique.

Caldwell (2005, p.3) outlined a number of reasons behind the adoption of SBM:

- demand for less control and uniformity and associated demand for greater freedom and differentiation;
- interest in reducing the size and, therefore, cost of maintaining a large central bureaucracy;
- realisation that different schools have different mixes of student needs requiring different patterns of response that cannot be determined centrally, hence the need for a capacity at the school level to make decisions to respond to these needs
- desire to achieve higher levels of professionalism at the school level through the involvement of teachers in decision-making; and
• commitment to empowerment of the community

Adopting SBM necessitates having to work with parents, learners and the community to realise these objective and maximise the potential that SBM may offer.

3.4.2 Community Participation and the Delivery of Educational Services

Both the 1990 Jomtien and 2000 Dakar Conferences challenged the ubiquitous role of the state in education and exposed the limitations of a centralised model of education governance. Governments often lack the necessary financial resources which impacts on their ability to provide quality education. Shaeffer (1994) asserts that bureaucratic and centralised governance has given rise to governments that are unresponsiveness to the complexities and magnitude of educational issues and to the changing and growing needs of the communities.

Establishing school-community partnerships is anchored on extensive and sound research (Bray 2001; Shaeffer 1994; Epstein 1995; Reimers 1997; West-Burnham 2003; Caldwell 2005; Zadja and Gamage 2009; San Antonio 2008; King and Ozler 1998) which had supported the need for, and the establishment of, meaningful partnerships with education stakeholders not only to allow non-educators to share the responsibility of educational delivery but also make education more relevant and responsive to the needs of the students, in particular and the wider community, in general.

3.4.3. Participation Frameworks in Education

Several frameworks for participation in education offer perspectives on why stakeholders should be engaged in education delivery. Those are discussed in this section.
3.4.3.1. The Rights-Based Approach

The United Nations Children’s Education Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) proposed the rights-based approach anchored on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1988) which declares that children have the right to education. The approach was a reaction to the failure of need-based and service delivery approaches to provide universal access to quality education.

Its conceptual framework highlights a holistic approach to education that underscores the right of every human being to education. The approach is built on three pillars: [1] the right of every child access to education, [2] the right to quality education, and [3] the respect for human rights in education (UNICEF 2007). It calls on the state, communities, parents, civil society, and international community to work collaboratively to realise and safeguard the right of every human being to quality education. In this framework, the state is singled-out to provide firm leadership and political will in establishing an enabling framework and environment that allows all stakeholders to collaborate with the view of achieving the three pillars.

3.4.3.2. Epstein’s Overlapping Spheres of Influence

Emphasising the crucial role of the school, family and community in student learning, Epstein (1995) offers a theoretical framework called the Overlapping Spheres of Influence which provides a guide towards partnerships in education at the school level (Figure 3.4). The framework recognises that children learn and grow in three
major environments – the family, the community and the school. Thus, establishing a partnership between these three environments is essential for providing opportunities that allow children to achieve their best. At the heart of these overlapping spheres are the learners, the reason for the interaction and partnership.

Epstein’s (1995) framework is based on the principle that the quality of partnership and interaction of these three overlapping spheres creates initiatives that positively influence student learning which in turn enables the student to succeed. Therefore, actions between and among the three environments may draw the overlapping spheres closer or push them apart. For this framework, partnership happens at an institutional (e.g. school inviting the community to participate in Brigada Eskwela) or at an individual level (e.g. a parent-teacher conference to discuss a child’s academic performance) and interactions between the spheres may occur within a single environment or between multiple environments. Epstein (1995) identifies six types of involvement as a result of the interaction of these spheres, namely: Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making and Collaborating with Community.

Figure 3.4. Epstein’s Overlapping Spheres of Influence
Source: Epstein J., 1995
However, the framework begs the question: what creates quality partnership? What are the elements of quality partnership? The notion of partnership, according to Bray (2001) implies shared decision-making which is anchored on the concept of power. Several participation analysts (Arnstein 1969; Shaeffer 1994; Reimers 1997) assert that partnership is a much stronger form of participation which is based on shared understanding, shared values, and on mutual respect and trust coupled with the willingness and openness of both the community and school to invest in expanding and harnessing this democratic space.

3.4.3.3. Shaeffer’s and Reimers’ Participation Frameworks in Education

Shaeffer (1994) adapted Arnstein’s ladder to education and proposed a seven-rung ladder where participation was differentiated from involvement and mere use of the service (Figure 3.5). Shaeffer differentiated various gradations of involvement and participation. Building on this work, Reimers (1997) applied Shaeffer’s levels of participation to more concrete areas in school management where potential collaboration could happen (Figure 3.6).
Reimers built on Schaffer’s Ladder of Participation in Education by reconceptualising the ladder into a matrix. By doing this, Reimers transformed the ladder to become a practical tool for assessing stakeholder participation in school based management and in identifying learning gaps to help build the competence of stakeholders to engage productively in school management. Both Schaefer and Reimers differentiated involvement from participation and suggested participation as a much stronger form of engagement.

Although the literature surrounding school-community partnerships is extensive, it is important to note that these studies had been predominantly undertaken by educators. Thus, their findings come from an educator’s worldview of participation and the role communities play in the delivery of educational services. They may therefore, lack a holistic appreciation of the intrinsic relationship of education with other sectors in society (Shaeffer 1994).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Roles / Educ Functions</th>
<th>Use of the Service</th>
<th>Contribution of Resources</th>
<th>Attendance at Meetings</th>
<th>Consultation on Issues</th>
<th>Involvement in Delivery</th>
<th>Delegated Power and Decision Making</th>
<th>‘Real Power’ and Decision-making at every stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designing Policy</td>
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<td>Mobilising resources</td>
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<td>Curriculum Development</td>
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<td>Teacher Hiring &amp; Firing</td>
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<td>Building &amp; Maintenance</td>
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However, some educators (West-Burnham, et.al. 2007; Shaeffer 1994; Reimers 1997; San Antonio 2008; Sergiovanni 1994; Comb and Bailey 1993; Benson 1996) have and are continually pushing the boundaries of the school-community partnerships discourse and have argued the need for a more holistic, symbiotic approach. They also recognised the need for schools and the education system, at large, to be more receptive to change and embrace the communities as partners in the delivery of educational service. West-Burnham, et.al. (2007) suggests that there is a 'symbiotic link between schools and their communities; and therefore a shared purpose: the nurturing of young lives' (p. 10).

Combs and Bailey (1992) suggest that the school, as the largest, most visible and organised social institution in the community should be more involved in its development. Benson (1996) expanded this concept by suggesting that community development should be one of the goals of school-community partnerships on the basis that the effective partnerships require healthy communities. Shaeffer (1994) captures this concept succinctly:

one of the several challenges to education managers and planners is to understand the importance of broad participation in development and see their task not merely to broaden and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their own sector's delivery system but also to assist and collaborate with other sectors and other actors. (p.9).
3.4.4. Communities and Schools

Numerous studies have given credence to the effectiveness of community engagement in school management. While it is common for communities and stakeholders to assist in resource generation and mobilisation activities, several countries have engaged the community beyond mere resource generation and mobilisation activities into other aspects of school management.

3.4.4.1. School Operations

In the 1980s, communities in El Salvador took over school operations when they realised that government funding assistance was not forthcoming. By 1988, more than a thousand community-operated schools were established. Building on the success of this concept, the government later introduced Educación con Participación de la Comunidad and gave funding assistance to legally associated community groups called Asociaciónes Comunales para la Educación (Community Education Associations) (Shaeffer 1994)

In the non-formal primary education (NFPE) program in Bangladesh, communities were involved in deciding the location of the NFPE learning centres and the appropriateness of the NFPE curriculum to the community (Nath, et. al 1999)

3.4.4.2. School Planning

In India, through the PROPEL program and in Indonesia through the COPLANER program, communities assisted in planning-related activities such as the conduct of community surveys to determine and prioritise community needs and in the conduct
of monitoring activities (Nielsen and Cummings 2014). Particularly in Indonesia, the community assists in the preparation of plans to deliver education services in the community (Bjork 2007).

In the Philippines, the government supported the inclusion of the community as part of the school planning committee tasked with the preparation of the school improvement (DepEd Order 44, s2015).

3.4.4.3. School Management

In Indonesia and Thailand, the community assists the head teacher/master in budget preparation and allocation. In Mali, communities are given full control over budgeting in the basic school level (lower elementary) (Bray, 2001).

In Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, and Kenya, both the parents and communities are involved in ensuring the enrolment of school-aged children. Specifically in Vietnam, parents conduct family visits to address student retention concerns. In Papua New Guinea, parents are also involved in maintaining school discipline and students assist in school management. In Columbia, student bodies assist teachers in managing student attendance and in welcoming school visitors.

3.4.4.4. Curriculum Development and Instructional Delivery

Part of the responsibilities transferred to the local communities in Indonesia was the preservation of the local culture. To ensure this, a community panel is constituted to provide feedback to determine the syllabus. In Guatemala, community workshops are held with the intention of gathering information that will be integrated in the
curriculum. In India, communities are consulted on the relevance and usefulness of the curriculum.

In relation to instructional delivery, parents in Vietnam assist teachers in preparing teaching aids and by organising field trips and other extra-curricular activities. Communities also provide feedback to teachers on instructional delivery.

In Chile, the community youth were employed as monitors in grade four Math and Language, while in Columbia, parents and community residents are asked to teach specialised subjects such as local crafts, trade and history. In Uganda, through the MINDSACROSS program, pupils were involved in curriculum development and were asked to write short stories which were later integrated in their textbooks (Namuddu, 1992)

While recognising the invaluable and significant contribution of communities in various areas of school activities and management, this research focuses on the communities’ participation and contribution in school governance. This is anchored on the strategic value of school governance and the pivotal role it plays in establishing mechanisms that promote stakeholder engagement and improve transparency and accountability in a decentralised school management context.

3.4.5. School Governance Mechanisms

In several countries, structures such as parent associations, school boards, management committees, site councils, governance or advisory councils, are constituted as formal stakeholder participation mechanisms in school management. Some have been legally incorporated such as in Papua New Guinea, Thailand and
Indonesia (Bray 2001), while others, like in the Philippines, have been encouraged through official department memorandum and communication.

The creation of these structures at the school level is a response to the growing trend in decentralising education governance that provides a mechanism that allows those closest to the schools to participate in decision-making activities and influence the direction and quality of education delivered at the community (Sanders 2003; Sergiovanni 1994).

Whether these structures are legally mandated or widely encouraged, membership to these committees has largely been voluntary with a wide range of education stakeholders e.g. community members, parents, learners, teachers, school heads, and local government officials given representation in these structures. These structures perform a variety of functions ranging from advisory, to oversight, to direct involvement in school operations mostly within the confines of nationally-prescribed set of duties and responsibilities (Khan 2006).

The centrality of governance in schools should be underscored as participation in school governance (e.g. developing school policies, determining priority programs, setting school targets, managing and accounting of school finances) has wide-ranging effect on other areas of the school’s functions (Shaeffer 1994). Furthermore, when stakeholders are allowed to participate in shaping the direction of their school, it builds confidence, commitment, strengthens ownership, transparency and accountability and improves democratic governance (Gregg 1989; Shaeffer 1994; San Antonio 2008). This then becomes empowering both at the individual and group levels.

However, the adoption of participatory strategies and mechanisms can be very confronting when stakeholders navigate the complexities of collaboratively working
with people with diverse interests. The school committee, being the primary participation structure in schools, can become a microcosm of the societal and community dynamics of participation where covert dimensions of power can be exercised and displayed even through a seemingly innocuous activity such as agenda setting or through the more rigorous process of partnership management where inequalities, interests and differences are negotiated towards a common objective (Leithwood and Menzies 1998).

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Head Teacher</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Learners</th>
<th>Govt Officials</th>
<th>Community Members</th>
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Figure 3.7. Participation in School Management Councils in Selected Asian Countries
Source: Khan F, 2006

In studying stakeholders’ participation in school management committees (SMC) in terms of their socio-economic status (SES), gender composition and decisions they made, Khan (2006) observed that SMC composition was varied and participation tended to be dominated by well-educated, affluent community residents with lesser representation from lower SES residents. Figure 3.7 presents SMC composition in selected Asian countries studied. Surveying SMC experiences of 20 countries, Khan
(2005) determined that SMC decisions were largely confined to administrative functions with some occasional decisions in the area of pedagogy and curriculum.

3.4.6. The Role of School Leadership

School leadership plays a significant and critical role in narrowing or broadening participation in school mechanisms, in deepening the breadth of community participation in management and in establishing inclusive governance mechanisms in schools (Sanders 2003).

There is extensive evidence-based research that documents and attests to the effects and value of leadership in improving school effectiveness and efficiency (Leithwood and Riehl 2003; Bush and Glover 2003). Hands (2010) in her study of school-community partnerships noted that the leadership of the school head ‘is an essential element in developing partnerships within the school, in part because school leaders establish priorities for their schools, allocate resources, and influence school culture.’ (p.198). San Antonio (2008) in his study with secondary schools in the Philippines, observed that participatory school administration leadership and management greatly improved stakeholder engagement in advisory councils. Niemann and Kotze (2006), in a study in South African schools found the correlation between organisational culture and school leadership suggesting that organisational culture is ‘influenced by the actions of leaders and is thus embedded and strengthened by effective leadership’ (p. 611).

These studies have established the centrality of the functions - providing direction and exercising influence (Leithwood and Riehl 2003; Hands 2010; San Antonio 2008; Niemann and Kotze 2006; Pont, et. al. 2008)- in school leadership. According to Yukl (2002 p.3), ‘most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or
group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation.’ Pont, et. al (2008) in a study conducted among OECD countries, underscored the importance of the term ‘intentional’ and suggested that the process of influencing should be purposive and be informed by school’s strategic direction. Reflecting on Yukl’s definition on leadership, Bush and Glover (2003) highlights that leadership may not necessarily be vested on an individual but can also be vested in groups or organisations. Furthermore, Leithwood and Riehl (2003, p.1) suggested that within the purview of these central leadership functions:

- Leaders do not merely impose goals on followers but work with others to create a sense of purpose and direction;
- Leaders primarily work through and with other people and help establish the conditions that enable other to be effective; and
- Leadership is more a function than a role suggesting that leadership as a set of functions that may be performed by different persons, not necessarily just the school head.

Literature on school leadership attempts to differentiate between leadership and management. Primarily, management is associated with maintaining the system while leadership is associated with shaping change (Cuban 1988). Recognising the unique predicament of school heads, Dimmock (1999, p. 449) explains that:

Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration).
In the light of the enormous pressures placed on schools to provide access to quality education for all, school heads are challenged to rethink their leadership approaches and adapt their leadership styles in order to establish and sustain mechanisms that promote inclusion and participation in a decentralised school management context. There is growing consensus among educators (Harris 2002; Leithwood 2001; Ogawa and Bossert 1995; Neuman and Simmons 2000; Copland 2001; Sergiovanni 1984; Pont, et.al. 2008) of the need for a more distributed style of leadership that capitalises on the collective competence of school stakeholders rather than that of an individual. This view supports the concept of the fluidity of power as suggested by Taylor (2011) where power is vested among stakeholders.

Harris (2002, p.11) maintains that for schools ‘to cope with the unprecedented rate of change in education requires... establishing new models of leadership that locate power with the many rather than the few’ (Harris 2002, p.11). Copland (2001) corroborates this point when he suggested that participative leadership could ease the burden of school heads and lessen expectations of the school head as a ‘superhead’ (p.6). Thus, the school leader is in a strategic position to decide between utilising participation either for its symbolic or transformative value (Mohan and Stokke 2000).

3.4.7. Challenges to Participation in Education

When decentralisation and community participation are undertaken as strategies in educational delivery, several issues arise with respect to the level and depth of engagement that communities are allowed in school management.
One critical issue that stems from the introduction of community participation is the lack of a shared understanding and definition of what the term community mean in the context of the school. Both Daun (2009) and Bray (2001) highlighted the ambiguity and perceptual differences of stakeholders’ understanding of this term. In defining the ‘community,’ Bray (2001) raised critical questions that highlighted its ambiguity - is ‘community’ defined by geographical boundaries or ethnic/cultural lines? Is it the parents and students with the school administrators and educators that comprise the community? Defining and clarifying the boundaries of the term community is imperative if the school is to build and harness partnerships to realise its educational goals in a decentralised management of education.

When community participation is incorporated in education decentralisation, either as a strategy to improve educational outcomes or for its transformative value, several layers of complexity – which relates to autonomy, control and accountability - are added (Leithwood and Menzies 1998; The World Bank 2007). Questions such as what functions are decentralised, how responsibilities are defined, and who is ultimately accountable for school outcomes need to be clarified as tensions can arise when these are debated and negotiated. Moreover, prescribing a single, ‘one size-fits all’ and at times artificial model or mechanism of participation contravenes the need to examine existing participation mechanisms, current community understanding, existing community structures and power relations, etc. and build on existing mechanisms of participation in the community.

Another concern is the competence of the recipients of the devolved functions to deliver decentralisation initiatives (The World Bank 2007; Wohlstetter 1995). While decentralisation may precipitate a new perspective in educational governance, recipients of the devolved functions may resist the change and the attendant responsibilities and accountabilities as they may feel ill-equipped or lack the confidence to participate in school management.
Another critical factor is school leadership (Sanders 2003; Hands 2010). School leaders are in a strategic position to influence the breadth, depth and manner of how communities participate in school management. They may limit the participation of community stakeholders to trivial school concerns perceiving their lack of competence to assist in addressing teaching-learning issues as burdensome or in general may see community participation as an unnecessary exercise to school management (World Bank 2007; Cook 2007). Moreover, the school may perceive community participation merely as a management tool rather than an evolutionary process that may benefit both the community and the school (Walt cited in Shaeffer, 1994). On the other hand, school heads (more so those who rose from the teaching ranks) may also be ill-equipped to perform their role in a decentralised education environment that may prevent them from expanding participation in school management fearing that this may expose their lack of competence in the new requirements of their role.

The level and extent of participation is not only a function of leadership but also a function of perception that influences stakeholders’ decision to engage. Perceptions are developed, moulded and refined through experience. Community engagement in schools had largely been confined within resource-extractive activities and this has undoubtedly contributed to a universal perception of school-community partnerships being ‘school centric’ rather than a reciprocal and mutually-benefitting relationship (Shaeffer 1994). Due largely to the influence of a market-based economy, communities, nowadays, are more perceptive, demanding and are more inclined to challenge mechanisms that do not promote accountability and transparency. They expect schools to deliver their stated mission and be good stewards of the resources they generate.
Lastly, although community participation is a crucial aspect of decentralisation and SBM, it does not guarantee community participation (Maley 2002). What decentralisation offers is an enabling environment that provides the necessary conditions to allow community partnership in school management to develop. It is therefore incumbent on education stakeholders to maximise the potential of community participation within the context of a decentralised education management.

3.5. Summary

By exploring the approaches and challenges that shape strategies for decentralisation and participation, this chapter established the relationship between these two broad concepts and ascertained the pivotal role of the school in education reform. This chapter also highlighted significant challenges for Philippine schools in adopting decentralisation and participation in educational reform.

While the adoption of decentralisation, via SBM, may deliver gains for the school and the educational system in general, it challenges schools to bring together a diverse cross-section of the community to work towards a common objective of educating the youth in the community. When education stakeholders are engaged in the delivery of educational services, it is implicitly assumed that:

- Stakeholders have available resources (financial, human, etc.) and are willing to share these resources to support education-related initiatives;
• Stakeholders recognise the invaluable role of the school in the community and the benefits that may accrue to the community due to the school’s presence;

• Stakeholder possess a desired level of maturity, willingness and competence to commit and engage productively in school management that may extend beyond traditionally ascribed roles; and

• The school and the stakeholders are on an even power footing to influence decision making at the school level.

3.6. The Research Framework

The preceding discussions on education decentralisation, participation, governance, the various participation models advocated by Epstein (1995), and her concept of Overlapping Spheres of Influence, Shaeffer (1994) and Reimer’s (1997) participation frameworks in school management, West-Burnham’s (2003), Benson’s (1996) and Sergiovanni’s (1994) argument of the symbiotic relationship between the school and the community, provide the necessary scaffolding in studying changes in practices in community participation in a decentralised education management environment.

In this light, the research’s conceptual framework (Figure 3.8) explores education stakeholders’ understanding (conceptual), behaviours and attitudes towards community participation in school based management, examines changes (substance) in the depth and quality of community participation and examines the various mechanisms and processes (structural) that facilitate community participation and partnerships to deepen in a decentralised education management environment.
Recognising that these areas of inquiry overlap in practice, the research explored how stakeholder perceptions and understanding (conceptual) influenced the extent and depth of their participation (substance) and how institutionalised and formalised involvement through provision of broader opportunities for involvement (e.g. School Governing Council (SGC)) (structural) influenced stakeholders’ understanding of community participation in school management (conceptual) and widen opportunities for participation of the community (substance). The research also examined how other levels of education governance (e.g. Division, Regional and National) influenced how internal stakeholders practised and maximised community participation in school based management.

Chapter 4 discusses in greater detail the research framework and design.
CHAPTER 4
THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN

4.0. Introduction

Recent trends in educational management highlight the value of forging and harnessing genuine school-community partnerships (Sergiovanni 1994, West-Burnham et.al. 2003, Schaeffer 1994; San Antonio 2008; 2011; Epstein 1995). This focus is relevant to the introduction of decentralisation as an educational reform strategy where the people were encouraged to make critical decisions enabling educational improvements to occur and work (Lewis, 2006; Shaffer, 1994; Leithwood and Menzies 1995). Although there have been concerns over decentralisation as an educational reform strategy, these concerns do not undervalue the potential of genuine school-community partnerships in schools (Caldwell, 2005; Schaeffer 1994) which were encompassed in the Philippines’ Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 or RA9155 when it encouraged shared governance in school management.

The purpose of this research was to analyse how the adoption of decentralisation as a strategy in education reform affected community participation in school management in the Philippines by investigating three interrelated areas of inquiry, namely:
• stakeholders’ understanding (conceptual) of community within the context of the decentralisation policy and the role of community participation in school management;
• the quality and depth (substance) of stakeholder participation; and
• emerging forms or modalities (structural) of participation in education in the country.

This chapter explains the research design, the procedures for site selection and provides a brief background of the selected research study sites. It concludes with a discussion of the procedures for data analysis and reporting.

4.1. The Research Design

The research was underpinned by a constructivist epistemology and adopted an interpretivist methodology. In an interpretivist perspective, knowledge is generated from the social process and interaction between and among actors within a given context. Furthermore, the study was grounded on the belief that people’s perceptions and experiences are shaped by existing historical, social, cultural and political realities (Okitsu 2011) and that qualitative data captures the evolutionary and dynamic nature of community participation in school management which allows for contextual depth (Elliot & Timulak 2005).

4.1.1. Research Questions and Framework

The central research question was: **How has decentralisation affected the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines?** In order to respond to this question, the research examined three interrelated areas:
[1] Understanding (Conceptual) of community participation in school based management (SBM) which examined stakeholders’ perception of community and of community participation in school management and how it influenced the level of their involvement in school management. It responded to the question: What were stakeholders’ concepts of community and views about the role of community participation in SBM?

[2] The Quality and Depth (Substance) of community participation in SBM which studied the quality and depth of community participation in school management and examined changes in the patterns of community participation in school management by comparing external stakeholders’ participation before and after the enactment of RA9155. In this area, the socio-economic situations of stakeholders were also examined against the level and quality of their involvement in school management. It responded to the question: Have there been changes in the patterns of community participation in school management after the enactment of RA9155?

[3] The Forms/Modalities (Structural) of community participation in SBM including both formal avenues and informal mechanisms of participation in school management. Significant attention was given to the School Governing Council. It responded to the question: What were the various avenues (formal and informal) by which the community/stakeholders participated in school management?

The research framework draws from the various participation models in school management advocated by Epstein (1995), Schaeffer (1994) and Reimer (1997), West-Burnham’s (2003) view of the critical role of the school head in harnessing school-community partnerships and on Benson (1996) and Sergiovanni’s (1994) argument that schools do not and cannot exist in isolation from the communities they serve.
Recognising that these areas of inquiry overlap in practice, the research studied how stakeholder perceptions and understanding (conceptual) influenced the extent and depth of their participation (substance) and how institutionalised and formalised involvement through provision of broader opportunities for involvement in participation mechanisms (structural) influenced stakeholders’ understanding of community participation in school management (conceptual) and widen opportunities for participation of the community (substance). The research likewise examined the impact and influence of other levels of the educational governance structure [i.e. National, Region, Division] on the manner with which school education stakeholders interpreted and understood the law and Department policies.

Although the study recognised the invaluable contribution of stakeholders in various aspects of school operations and management, the study mainly focused on the role of stakeholders in school governance and their ability to influence strategic educational decisions.

4.1.2. The Research Theoretical Propositions

Theoretical propositions were utilised in the data analysis. Theoretical propositions, according to Yin (2009), are the preferred strategy of analysis in case study research. These propositions were informed by literature, my professional experience of working with the Department and based on the initial insights drawn from the pilot study (Trochim 1989). The research framework and procedures were developed in consideration of these theoretical propositions.

The overall theoretical proposition is that productive school-community partnerships are a reciprocal relationship (West-Burnham, et.al. 2007) built on a mutual recognition of the value of education and on the collective appreciation by
education stakeholders of the critical role of the school as a community institution (Schaeffer 1994; San Antonio 2008). For each area of inquiry the following theoretical propositions were identified:

- Stakeholders’ understanding of the importance of community participation influenced their level of engagement in school based management (Conceptual);
- Changes in the pattern of community participation in school governance is nominal as parents and community engagement is still confined within resource generation/mobilisation activities (Substance); and
- The SGC was constituted for compliance and did not function as originally envisioned by the Department (Structural).

4.1.3. Unit of Analysis

The School Governing Council (SGC) was adopted as the research’s unit of analysis, being the formal and Department-initiated mechanism through which the community participates in school management in the Philippines. Data was collected from individual members of the SGC with the purview of enriching the study’s understanding of the dynamics within the SGC.

In the Philippine education context, the SGC is expected to be an avenue where various education stakeholders participate and collaborate in school improvement processes towards improving the school learning outcomes. The SGC is tasked to (SGC Manual, Department of Education 2009, p.14):

- Determine school policies that pertain to student welfare, discipline and well-being;
• Develop and implement the school improvement plan (SIP);
• Monitor and evaluate SIP implementation;
• Report progress of SIP implementation to the community and education officials; and
• Manage council resources.

Other stakeholders (e.g. Divisional, Regional and Central Offices, Local Government Units) were interviewed to provide better understanding of the contextual landscape within which the SGC operated.

4.1.4. Research Methodologies and Instrument Development

The study was an interpretive inquiry with case research as its primary approach. The case study approach is an empirical inquiry wherein an in-depth investigation is conducted on a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Bhattacherjee 2012; Yin 2009). While the case study approach is recognised for its value of providing contextual depth, there are concerns regarding its validity, reliability and generalisability or what Kelliher (2005, p.1) refers to as research legitimisation. Cognisant of this, I took purposive steps to address these concerns.

To improve the research’s ability to generalise, multiple case studies were undertaken. According to Bhattacherjee (2012, p.95), ‘multiple case design is appropriate for establishing generalizability of inferences and for developing richer and more nuanced interpretations of a phenomenon.’ To improve the external validity of the research, the study sites were selected within the same geographical region (i.e. urban schools and rural schools within the same region). Research participants were asked to review the transcriptions and draft case study reports for completeness and accuracy as another measure to improve research validity. A
A chain of evidence was maintained to increase the reliability of the information in the case study (Yin 2009).

Data from the multiple case studies were collected through semi-structured key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and documents analysis. Employing several data gathering techniques allowed for data triangulation (Bhattacherjee 2012) which improved the reliability of the research. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with SGC members and with key personnel from the Central, Regional and Divisional officials of DepEd, while focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with various stakeholders at the School, Division and Regional levels with the view of enriching data collected from key informant semi-structured interviews.

During instrument development, the following were undertaken to facilitate the construction of the data gathering guides:

- Identification of questions per area of inquiry that ensured that research questions were aligned to the research’s areas of inquiry;
- Matching research questions against research respondents that determined primary and secondary sources of information; and
- Development of a coding structure.

Based on these, the interview and FGD guides were prepared and designed for each individual or group of respondents to provide structure to the data gathering process and ensure the collection of critical information. Codes were incorporated in the guides to facilitate data collation and analysis and ensure the research’s chain of evidence. Interview and FGD guides were translated to Filipino, the universally spoken language across the country.
Pilot-testing was incorporated as a critical activity in the study’s preparatory phase to provide an opportunity to test the research design and procedures in actual conditions in the Philippines. Specifically, this was conducted to: [1] determine the appropriateness of the research methodology and instruments; [2] identify gaps and areas for improvement in the research design; [3] determine potential administrative and logistical issues and identify resource requirements in the conduct of the main study.

The pilot testing resulted in several changes in the research design and procedures. One of the major changes was on the research framework. It was expanded to reflect how interpretation of Department policies and directives by other levels of the structure impact on the way SGCs understood and operated as a council.

The pilot study also confirmed the effectiveness of a qualitative approach in providing contextual depth to the study. Interviews and focus group discussions were effective in allowing the researcher to probe respondents’ perceptions and understanding about the research topic. During the actual conduct of the data gathering, these methodologies accorded the researcher the facility to switch from a structured to a less structured approach that reflected the direction of the interview or the focus groups discussion. In particular, the focus groups allowed for a candid and honest discussion of the research questions and also as a way of observing interaction between respondents.

The pilot study identified gaps in the data collected. A significant data gap was demographic information (e.g. population, migration, socio-economic and cultural activities, etc.) about the locality where the school is located. As a result, questions to determine the socio-economic situation of the community were incorporated in the interview guide for barangay officials and a copy of the community’s socio-economic profile was requested.
Another data gap was the changes in pattern of stakeholder involvement in school management over time. This was largely attributed to the type of respondents who participated during the pilot as most were involved in the school after the enactment of RA9155. To address this, teacher respondents with varying lengths of service in the Department, as well as present and past parents, were invited to participate in the research. By doing this, the study benefitted from the breadth of knowledge and experience of the respondents. A corollary concern was the ambiguity of some of the terms used (e.g. school based management, decentralisation, etc.) and the similarity of responses generated from different questions by the respondents. To address these concerns, the questions were either revisited, rephrased or removed entirely from the list of questions. In some cases, alternate questions were prepared and added to the instruments (see Appendix 1 for Sample of Data Gathering Instrument).

The pilot study identified some procedural and logistical concerns including the respondents’ availability for the data gathering sessions, the availability of pertinent documents that may substantiate claims made by the respondents, and the choice of an appropriate venue to conduct the interviews and FDG sessions. A formal communication was sent to all study sites outlining the following measures to address the above concerns:

- Sites were given the latitude to schedule the interviews and FGDs taking into consideration the respondents’ availabilities within the period of data gathering for the site;
- A list of respondents was provided to allow the schools to coordinate with them regarding their willingness to participate and availability during the conduct of the research; and
A detailed discussion of the areas of inquiry and relevant documents was provided to allow for sufficient lead time for respondents to collect the necessary supporting evidence (see Appendix 2 for Possible Document Requirements).

Overall, the pilot study provided critical conceptual feedback on the framework and design of the research and practical feedback to improve the conduct of the study.

4.2. Site Recruitment and Selection

The selection of study sites utilised theoretical sampling. According to Bhattacherjee (2012), with theoretical sampling, case sites are chosen based on their ability to fit the nature of the research questions rather than on statistical considerations. In addition, she suggested that, study sites should also represent dissimilar types to increase variance in observation (e.g. weak and strong). This process of selecting potential study sites was corroborated by Yin (2009 p.54) who suggested using ‘replication logic instead of a sampling logic.’

The school sites were identified and selected based on their level of stakeholder participation and economic classification of the community where they are located.
Based on these variables, four school categories were identified: High Stakeholder Participation in an Urban Environment; Low Stakeholder Participation in an Urban Environment; High Stakeholder Participation in a Rural Environment; and Low Stakeholder Participation in a Rural Environment (Figure 4.1). Regional and Divisional site selection was indirect and was a function of which unit exercised jurisdictional supervision over the selected school sites.

To determine the level of stakeholder participation, the study utilised the SBM Scale of Practice designed by the Department of Education in 2009 to assess the extent of SBM practices of schools. This evidenced-based, self-administered assessment determines the schools’ level of maturity in SBM practice across six dimensions\(^5\) (Department of Education 2009, A Manual on the Assessment of SBM Practices). Only the SBM dimensions and indicators that pertained to stakeholder participation were used to determine the level of participation. Additional information pertaining to stakeholder engagement not covered by the SBM assessment were asked (e.g. implementation of SBM funds, etc.) were requested from school sites consequently factored in the determination of the level of stakeholder participation in schools.

\(^5\) A recent review of the SBM Scale of Practice by the Department recommended the amalgamation of these dimensions into four areas.
The other site selection variable was the economic classification of the locality (e.g. urban or rural). The operational definition by the Philippines’ National Statistics Coordinating Board (NCSB) was adopted in determining the economic classification of the locality. Following the NCSB definition (2004), a locality is considered urban if a barangay has:

- a population size of 5,000 or more, then a barangay is considered urban, or
- at least one establishment with a minimum of 100 employees, a barangay is considered urban, or
- five or more establishments with a minimum of 10 employees, and 5 or more facilities within the two-kilometre radius from the barangay hall, then a barangay is considered urban.

According to the NCSB (2004), a locality is considered rural if it does not meet the above conditions.

In keeping with the research’s focus on examining the Department’s institutional capacity to deliver and support education decentralisation, Regions, Divisions and Schools that received development assistance from bilateral projects were excluded from the recruitment and selection process. However, as these regions/divisions/schools have extensive experience in undertaking SBM, these experiences were used, whenever applicable, as a baseline for comparison.

The selection of the study sites followed a staged approach. After gaining permission to conduct the research from the Department, Regions were invited to participate in the research (see Appendix 3 for the Permission Letter from the Department of Education). A total of six regions were invited to participate in the research. To ensure confidence of the Department in the research’s selection and recruitment procedure, the designated Department point person for the research
participated in selecting the Regional site. A project information pack was sent to all Divisions within the selected Region together with an invitation to participate in the research (see Appendix 4 for a Sample of the Letter of Invitation to Participate). Then schools within the administrative jurisdiction of the participating Divisions were invited to take part in the research.

Schools were provided with a project information pack that outlined salient information (e.g. research objectives, rights of participants, etc) about the research (see Appendix 5 for a Sample of the Project Information Pack in English and Filipino). Schools were also asked to complete a pre-selection questionnaire designed to facilitate the process for site selection. It allowed for an initial assessment of the level and extent of stakeholder participation that occurred within the schools by incorporating, among other things, the dimensions and elements of the SBM Scale of Practice that pertain to stakeholder participation (see Appendix 6 for the Pre-Selection Questionnaire).

A total of 33 Division offices and 1,958 schools were invited to participate in the research. The selection of the study sites was conducted in two rounds. The first round was conducted in Region IVA – CALABARZON and the second round in Region I- Ilocos. Since no schools met the urban category from the first selection round a second round of recruitment and selection was conducted. Overall, the recruitment and selection was conducted over 15 months.

To select the school sites, participating schools were initially grouped according to the economic classification of their locality and thereafter ranked based on the results of the pre-selection questionnaire following a weighted ranking process to determine the level of stakeholder participation. Schools with the highest and lowest rank in terms of the level of stakeholder participation in each of the economic categories were selected. The selection and confirmation of the final four school
sites was coordinated with the regional directors of Regions I and IVA. The Divisions who exercise administrative jurisdiction over the selected school sites were consequently selected as Division sites. The outcome of the selection and confirmation of the research sites was formally communicated to the DepEd Central Office, Regional, Division Offices and the selected schools (see Appendix 7 for the Sample Letter of Confirmation of Selection as a Research Site).

Protocols were observed to ensure that informed consent was granted by the Department. This helped establish good working relationship with the Department to facilitate access to pertinent information and ease in coordination with the Regional offices and school sites and in building and ensuring confidence in the research.

4.3. The Study Sites

This section provides an overview of the selected study sites of the research.

4.3.1. Department of Education Region I and the City Division

Region 1 or the Ilocos Region is situated in the northwest coast of the island of Luzon. It is composed of 4 Provinces (Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte), 9 cities, 116 municipalities and 3,265 barangays (Department of Interior and Local Government 2010, LGU Facts and Figures section) (Figure 4.2). The region is bounded by the Central Luzon Region in the south, in the east by the Cordillera Administrative Region and the Cagayan Valley and in the west by the South China Sea/West Philippine Sea. The City of San Fernando, La Union is its regional centre (Philippine Islands 2015, Ilocos Region).
The majority of the population speak Ilokano, which is the third most widely spoken regional language in the Philippines. A sizeable majority of the population also speak ‘Pangasinense’ a language belonging to the Malayo-Polynesian family. Economic activity in the region centres on agro-industry in the southern parts, particularly in Pangasinan and on agriculture predominantly in the northern parts of the region (Philippine Islands 2015, Ilocos Region).

The two urban school sites are located in a city in Region 1. The city where the two urban school sites are located is a component city in one of the provinces in Region I.

The City is a second class city with a total annual income of Php 757,385,525 (AUD 21,038,564.04) for CY2016. Based on the 2010 census conducted by the National Statistics Office, its total population was 125,451 and was projected to reach 134,509 in 2016. It has a population growth rate of 1.18%. The average household size is five.

The City’s main economic activity is agro-industrial with rice and corn as its major produce. Urban School 1, located in the city centre, was selected to represent the High Stakeholder Participation-Urban Environment category, while Urban School 2, located in a barangay adjacent to the town centre, was selected to represent the Low Stakeholder Participation-Urban Environment category. Both the barangays, where the urban schools are located are highly urbanised communities.
The City Division, which exercises administrative supervision over these two schools, is a medium-sized Division that oversees 45 elementary schools and 21 national high schools. The City Division is under the administrative supervision of DepEd Region 1.

The Department of Education- Region 1 oversees 13 Divisions, 2,395 Elementary Schools and 531 Secondary Schools and the learning needs of 1,034,209 students. Of this, 93,371 are enrolled in kindergarten in public schools, 629,442 are enrolled in Elementary and 311,396 are secondary students (Department of Education Region 1, 2011 Facts and Figures).

In school year 2010-2011, the overall results for the National Achievement Test in elementary was 69.35 mean percentage score (mps) which is below the expected 75 mps. Elementary pupils performed weakest in Science with a score of 62 mps, followed by English at 66.36 mps. In the secondary level, the overall result is 45.10 mps with student performance in Science weakest at 37.11 mps followed by Maths and English registering an mps of 40.36 and 44.30 respectively (Department of Education Region 1, 2011 Facts and Figures).

4.3.2. Urban School 1 (Urban Environment-High Stakeholder Participation)

Urban School 1 (US1) is the biggest elementary school in this City Division and the only public elementary school located in the city centre. It has a total enrolment of 3,778 in the school year 2016-2017. Apart from the regular classes from kindergarten to Grade 6, US1 offers Special Science classes for high performing pupils in Maths and Science and Special Education Classes for the Gifted, the Talented and Fast Learners. It is the only public elementary school in the city that offers Special Classes for Children with Special Needs (e.g. visually impaired, hearing-impaired, learning difficulties, intellectual disabilities).
It has 103 teaching staff. The teacher to pupil ratio is 1:45 while the textbook to student ratio is 1:1. It has 92 classrooms which are complemented by other learning facilities (e.g. gymnasium, library, music room, computer room) that support the holistic development of the pupils.

In the school year 2015-2016, the school received a total of Php 1,655,000.00 (AUD 43,552.63) from the national government as part of its Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE)\(^6\). This fund is augmented by voluntary financial contributions from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA contributes towards payment of school utilities and supports other school infrastructure projects such as a covered walk-way to provide safe access for pupils especially during the rainy season.

US1 is one of the most recognised elementary schools in Region 1. In the recent National Achievement Test (SY2013-2014), it achieved an average mean percentage score of 87.8 which was above the national standard of 75. US1 was a recipient of funding assistance from both private and international funding agencies.

Based on the recent results of the SBM Assessment conducted by the Department of Education, the school was assessed to be at the Maturing level of SBM practice which affirms the school’s ability to ‘introduce and sustain continuous improvements that significantly improve performance and learning outcomes that integrates wider community participation’ [Department of Education, SBM Assessment Manual 2009].

\(^6\) The MOOE is a fund allocated for public elementary and secondary schools that can be utilized for activities and other necessities (e.g. water, electricity, etc.) to support school learning programs and help maintain a safe and healthy learning environment [Department of Education, 2015]. MOOE is calculated based on the number of learners.
4.3.3. Urban School 2 (Urban Environment-Low Stakeholder Participation)

Urban School 2 (US2) is the biggest secondary school in this City and the only public secondary school in the barangay where it is located. It has a total enrolment of 3,626 in the school year 2016-2017. Apart from the regular classes from Grade 7 to 12, US2 offers Special Science classes with special programs in Science and Technology and Science, Technology and Engineering. It also offers a Special Program for the Arts, Special Education programs that cater to Fast Learners and Hearing Impaired, Special Program in Sport and the Open High School. The curriculum is delivered by academic departments headed by a Head Teacher which provides academic guidance and supervision to subject-specific teachers.

It has 192 teaching and non-teaching personnel. The teacher to pupil ratio is 1:45 while the textbook to student ratio is 1:1. It has 116 classrooms which are complemented by other learning facilities (e.g. gymnasium, library, music room, computer room) that support the holistic development of the students. The classroom-student ratio is 1:31. Currently, the school is experiencing a massive influx of infrastructure-related investment from the Department and several other agencies like the Philippine Gaming Corporation.

In 2016, the school received a total of Php 4,416,000.00 (AUD 116,210.52) from the national government as part of its Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE). In addition, special funds amounting to Php 270,000.00 (AUD 7,105.26) were allocated to the school for special education programs. These funds were augmented by voluntary financial contributions (Php 1,760,000 or AUD 46,315) from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), COOP funds (Php 85,000 or AUD 2,236), club funds (Php 88,000 or AUD 2,315.78), and from donations (Php 50,000 or AUD 1,315).
In the 2013-2014 National Achievement Test, US2 achieved a cumulative average mean percentage score of 50.6 which was below the national standard of 75. Math had the lowest results at 42.1 mps while English had the highest at 56.2.

These outcomes are supported by findings from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory, a reading comprehension test to determine reading competence of students administered to Grades 7-10 students. Test results showed that 3,048 students were assessed to be at the lowest level referred to as ‘frustration level’ of reading comprehension. Despite this, several students have competed in various competitions and received numerous awards and citations at the Division and Regional levels.

Based on the recent results of the SBM Assessment conducted by the Department of Education, the school was assessed to be at the Maturing level of SBM practice which affirms the school’s ability to ‘introduce and sustain continuous improvements that significantly improve performance and learning outcomes that integrates wider community participation’ [Department of Education, SBM Assessment Manual 2009].

4.3.4. Department of Education Region IV-A and the Provincial Division
CALABARZON, as this region is commonly referred to, is the second most densely populated region in the country (Philippine Islands 2015, CALABARZON Region). The region is located in the Southern Tagalog mainland and comprises the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon from which the regional acronym was derived. The Region comprises 18 cities, 124 municipalities, and 4,011 barangays (Department of Interior and Local Government 2010, LGU Facts and Figures section). The region is situated in the Southwest region in the island of Luzon. It is bounded in the southeast by the Bicol Region and in the northwest by Metro Manila and the province of Bulacan. The Region has seen a rise in urbanization in recent years due to its proximity to Manila, the nation’s capital. Its economy is built on agriculture and a growing manufacturing industry (Philippine Islands 2015, CALABARZON Region). The two rural study sites are located in a province in Region IV-A.

The Province where the selected rural sites are located is a first class province with an annual regular income of Php 1,736,639,187 (AUD 45,701.03). Based on the National Statistics Office census, the total population of the Province in 2010 was 1,987,030 of which 665,311 lived in urbanised areas while 1,321,719 lived in rural areas. Rural School 1 and Rural School 2 were selected as two of the four research study sites representing the categories of Rural Environment– High Stakeholder Participation and Rural Environment – Low Stakeholder Participation, respectively.
Rural School 2 is located in the town centre of a fourth class island municipality in this Province. In 2015, the Municipality was estimated to have 13,546 residents (Department of Interior and Local Government, 2013) in 12 barangays. Its total internal revenue allocation is Php 67,816,343 (AUD 1,784.64). Rural School 1 is located in a rural farming community in a first class inland municipality in this Province. The Municipality is an acknowledged heritage centre of the Province. In 2015, the inland Municipality was estimated to have 148,980 residents (Department of Interior and Local Government, 2013) in 34 barangays. Its internal revenue allocation in 2016 was Php 234,157,716 (AUD 6,162.04). Both barangays where the two rural schools sites are located are considered rural barangays. Both these schools are under the administrative supervision of the Provincial Division.

The Provincial Division is considered a very large Division that oversees 846 elementary schools and 192 national high schools. The Division is under the administrative supervision of DepEd Region IV-A. The overall results for the National Achievement Test (NAT) in Grade 6 in this Division in 2014 was 56.63 which was below the expected 75 mps. A similar pattern was observed in the NAT results in the secondary level. The overall NAT results for 2014 in fourth year was 40.66 mps which is 34.34 mps below the national standard of 75 mps. NAT results for both the elementary and secondary levels have steadily decreased since 2010.

The Department of Education in CALABARZON is situated in Cainta, Rizal Province. It overseas 20 Division Offices, 2,730 Elementary schools, 662 Secondary schools looking after 2,562,164 students. Of this total, 1,818,590 are in elementary while 743,574 are in secondary schooling (Department of Education Region 4A CALABARZON, 2012 Master List of Schools).

**4.3.5. Rural School 1 (Rural Environment-High Stakeholder Participation)**
Rural School 1 (RS1) is located in the rural farming community in an inland municipality in this Province. The school offers the Department of Education prescribed basic education curriculum from kindergarten to Grade 6. It has 381 students in the school year 2016-2017 and 12 teaching personnel funded by the national government. The teacher-pupil ratio is 1:32. A new head teacher was recently appointed to provide administrative and instructional leadership to the school.

The school has 10 classrooms. Each classroom is fitted with a DVD player and has gender-specific toilets. There are 13 computers in the school for pupil use. However, due to its remote location, the school does not have access to the internet. The school lacks a dedicated science room and other support facilities such as a functional library and basic facilities such as access to tap water. Manual forced pumps are, however, available in the school. In the current school year, it received a total of Php 252,000.00 (AUD 6,631.57) as part of its MOOE.

In the 2014-2015 National Achievement Test, RS1 achieved 75.24 mps which was above the national standard of 75. Science had the lowest results at 68.63 mps while Maths the highest at 81.50.

Based on the recent results of the SBM Assessment conducted by the Department of Education, the school was assessed to be at the Developing level of SBM practice which affirms the school’s ability to ‘Develop structures and mechanisms with acceptable level and extent of community participation and impact on learning outcomes.’ (Department of Education, SBM Assessment Manual 2009).

4.3.6. Rural School 2 (Rural Environment-Low Stakeholder Participation)
Rural School 2 (RS2) is located in town centre in the fifth class island municipality in this Province. It is one of four secondary schools servicing the population of the Municipality. It has an enrolment of 326 in the school year 2016-2017 and 12 teaching personnel funded by the national government. The teacher-pupil ratio is 1:27 while the learner: textbook and learner: seat ratios are 1:1.

Apart from the 12 regular classrooms, the school has an unfinished covered gym, a classroom that was converted into a library facility. Currently there are 37 computers for student use. However due to its remote location, the school does not have access to the internet. The school received a total of Php 80,000.00 (AUD 2,105.26) in MOOE.

In the 2014-2015 National Achievement Test, RS2 achieved 36.68 mps which is below the national standard of 75. Maths had the lowest results at 25.24 mps while Filipino had the highest at 56.32.

Based on the recent results of the SBM Assessment conducted by the Department of Education, the school was assessed to be at the Developing level of SBM practice which affirms the school's ability to ‘Develop structures and mechanisms with acceptable level and extent of community participation and impact on learning outcomes.’ (Department of Education, SBM Assessment Manual 2009).

### 4.4. Data Production

Prior to production phase, a formal communication explaining the research was sent to all research sites. This was accompanied by a research information pack which contained salient information about the research, a list of potential respondents, an interview/FGD scheduler, a detailed explanation of the areas of inquiry and a list of
potential documents that may be requested during the conduct of the research. At this stage, I communicated with the designated point persons for each of the Regions and Divisions.

Data came from the following key informants (Table 4.2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>• Assistant Secretary for Programs and Projects&lt;br&gt;• Assistant Secretary for Planning&lt;br&gt;• Director – School Effectiveness Division&lt;br&gt;• Director – Planning and Policy&lt;br&gt;• Director, EDPITAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Office</td>
<td>• Field Technical Assistance Division Personnel&lt;br&gt;• Regional Director or representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Office</td>
<td>• School Governance and Operations Division Personnel&lt;br&gt;• Schools Division Superintendent or representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>• School Head&lt;br&gt;• SGC Members&lt;br&gt;• Teachers&lt;br&gt;• Parents&lt;br&gt;• Community&lt;br&gt;• Local Government Officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Respondents</td>
<td>• Former DepEd Project Consultants&lt;br&gt;• Former Director, NEAP&lt;br&gt;• Former Regional Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2. List of Key Research Respondents

Qualitative, interpretivist approaches often produce voluminous data which necessitates the development of procedures to organise and manage the data for analysis and interpretation. To manage the data, collected data from different study sites via different methodologies were registered in a data log. This assisted in tracking data collection activities and helped ensure data reliability. Recorded interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed in Filipino and later translated to English to assist in data analysis.

A chain of evidence was likewise maintained to increase the reliability of the information in the case study (Yin 2009). In the preparation of the data gathering
guides all research questions were properly coded following the research coding structure. To ensure that research information is traceable, the same coding mechanism was utilised to organise and group information generated from research respondents.

A documents log, containing the name of the document, the owner of the document, the type of document, and short description of the document, was created to organise all relevant documents collected from various levels of the Department (e.g. Central, Regional, Division, School) and from external stakeholders. The coding structure was used in labelling and organising pertinent documents collected from the study sites.

4.4.1. Profile of Respondents

A total of 108 respondents participated in the research. 70% (76 respondents) were from the school level, 11% (12 respondents) were from the Division offices, 10% (11 respondents) were from the Regional Offices, 5% (5 respondents) were from the Central office and 4% (3 respondents) were former Department staff or project consultants. Table 4.3 provides a breakdown of respondents per level.

Of the total number of respondents at the school level, 67% are female while 33% are male respondents. 45% of respondents indicated that they are currently undertaking postgraduate studies while 16% indicated having already completed their postgraduate degree. 22% indicated an undergraduate degree as their highest level of education while 12% indicated having a high school qualification.
Table 4.3. Breakdown of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Secretary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors/Section Chief</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Director</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Staff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Division Superintendent</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Chief</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Staff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Head</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/Barangay/LGU</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Department Staff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Department Consultants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research adopted the definition of external and internal stakeholders by the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) (2017). NCTL (2017) defines internal respondents as those who directly produce or utilise the education services (e.g. school head, teachers, and learners) while external stakeholders as those who have an interest in the service but do not necessarily produce or utilise it (e.g. parents, community, and barangay/LGU officials). Following this definition, 62% of respondents were internal stakeholders while 38% were external stakeholders. The majority of external respondents are either currently employed or have retired from government service or from private companies while external stakeholders.

91% of the respondents live within the city or barangay where the school is located while 9% reside in neighbouring towns or barangays. 30% of respondents have children or grandchildren studying in the study sites. Table 4.4 provides a breakdown of the disaggregated demographic information of respondents at the school level:
Table 4.4. Demographic Breakdown of Respondents per School Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Disaggregation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents per School Site</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US1</td>
<td>US2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Stakeholder</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Distribution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Educational Attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Postgraduate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Current</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Undergraduate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Vocational</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed High School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Incomplete</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Current</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Current</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Municipality/City</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of Municipality/ City</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children in School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All respondents were fluent in English and Filipino, which were the languages used during the interviews and focus group discussions.

4.4.1. Ethical Considerations

The field work commenced at the Division offices, it then proceeded to the schools, Regional offices and finally the Central Office. Each session began with a presentation of the research overview—its objectives, participants' rights, benefits or risks of participation, etc. – to assist participants in making an informed decision about participating in the research. These points were reiterated at the start of each formal interview and FGD session.
Following RMIT Human Ethics Procedures (see Appendix 8 for the RMIT CHEAN Approval Letter), participants were required to sign a consent form to indicate their willingness to participate in the research and for the proceedings to be audio-recorded (see Appendix 9 for the Participant Consent Form in English and Filipino). Additional permission from parents or legal guardians of potential student participants was required to enable them to participate in the study. Parents/Legal guardians were given the prerogative to observe the conduct of the interview or FGD. No pictures of respondents were taken as part of the research.

Homogenous groupings were organised for the FGD sessions to ensure free, uninhibited, and unguarded discussion. Participants were reassured of their right to stop the audio-recording and to withdraw at any point in the data gathering sessions. Participants were also encouraged to ask for clarification during the interview/FGD sessions and questions were rephrased when necessary to ensure participants' understanding of the research questions.

The data gathering phase concluded with a presentation of the initial findings at the Regional Office.

4.5. Data Analysis and Reporting

Data analysis was conducted at two levels – within individual case studies (to determine data themes, categories and connections per study site) across case studies (to determine data themes, categories and sections between and among study sites).

4.5.1 First Level Analysis – Within Individual Case Study Sites
In the first level analysis (within individual case studies), the pattern-matching logic was adopted as the mode of analysis. This process required comparing two patterns to support theory-testing in each individual case study (Hak and Dul 2009; Almutairi et. al. 2014). Testing requires the comparison of an “observed pattern” against an “expected pattern” (theoretical propositions) and deciding whether these patterns match (which results in the confirmation of the theoretical proposition) or do not match (resulting in the negation of the theoretical proposition and the identification of alternative explanation).

For each area of inquiry, patterns were identified following an inductive/deductive approach. In addition, collected documents were chronologically organised to assist in determining changes in Department priorities, policies and rhetoric; and to aid in determining how these changes correlate to the changes in patterns of participation at the school level. Specifically, in the area of substance, data was also organised chronologically (before and after the enactment of RA9155) and thereafter compared and contrasted with Schaeffter (1994) and Reimers’ (1997) participation frameworks to inform the process of pattern identification.

Department documents pertinent to the study were reviewed and analysed. Particular attention was undertaken in analysing RA9155, the legal framework for shared education governance, Department Orders and Memorandums that are relevant to school based management and shared governance, Department manuals that provide operational and practical information in implementing SBM and Department reports. Figure 4.4 provides a graphical representation of the data analysis framework adopted in the research.
The initial activity in the pattern matching process was the identification of emerging patterns or themes from the data. According to Hak and Dul (2009), a pattern is any arrangement of objects or entities. Although patterns were initially identified under each of the initially pre-determined categories or areas of inquiry of the research, an inductive approach was utilised to ensure that the process of categorisation was not constraint by pre-determined categories. In doing this, we were able to consider the context and nuances of the data. Given the iterative nature of the process, new (sub)categories were formed resulting from continuous re-examination of the data.

Empirically-discovered patterns emerging from the various data gathering methods were then compared against the predicted research propositions outlined in the research. When empirically-observed patterns match with the predicted research
To determine whether the school met the theoretical proposition in the area of quality and depth of participation, areas of participation were initially identified and organised in a table of Changes in the Pattern of Participation and were, thereafter, mapped and applied against Reimers’ Matrix of Dimensions and Degrees of Community Participation in Education.

In analysing the findings, the research introduced modifications to Reimers’ Participation matrix to reflect research findings. The list of education functions was expanded and renamed Education/Management to incorporate management functions where stakeholders participated. Thus, the matrix became more reflective of the changes and the level of community engagement before and after the introduction of RA9155 in the school.

In the area of form and modalities of participation, the research outlined Department expectations as contained in Department Orders/Memorandum in terms of organisation and functions of the various participation mechanisms (e.g. SGC and PTA) and reviewed and analysed these against research findings across the research school sites.

In the area of understanding of community and the role of community participation in school based management, the research reviewed and analysed stakeholders’ general concept of community, their perception of the community as indicated in the implementing rules and regulations of RA9155, and their views on the reasons why stakeholders participate in school based management by examining the observable manifestations and expressions of these views. This was done by
determining areas of recurring stakeholder engagement, determining areas of frequent school-external stakeholder disagreements and a review of the application of policies, tools and mechanism for participation at the school level.

Data collected from each study site were coded in a manner which allowed the research to maintain its chain of evidence. A combination of numerical and colour-coding schemes was used. The following coding structure codes were used for de-identifying respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Head/Head Teacher/TIC</td>
<td>SH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students/Pupil</td>
<td>STD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>TCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>PRNT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barangay</td>
<td>BRGY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Governing Council</td>
<td>SGC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Research Coding Structure for Respondents

The research findings and analysis at the first-level analysis form part of the case reports for each of the study sites. Each report provides a detailed discussion of the findings and analysis for each of research sites. Findings were presented following the areas of inquiry and analysed against the theoretical proposition for each area of inquiry.

The case reports have not been appended to the thesis as the substantive findings across all the four schools sites are discussed in detail in Chapters 5-7. Elements of good practice coming from each of the research sites that allows insights into the practice of community participation in school based management are provided in Chapter 8.

4.5.2 Second Level Analysis – Across Case Study Sites
The second level analysis is across study sites. This was conducted by determining common themes and patterns across study sites. From the themes and categories, I undertook integrative interpretations (Marshall and Rossman, 1999) and determined how these common themes and patterns support and deepen the analysis of each areas of inquiry of the research.

4.6. Summary

This chapter outlined the research design and framework. It discussed its interpretivist perspective and the use of the case study approach to conduct an in-depth study of the practice of community participation in school based management in the Philippines. Drawing from the literature, the pilot study and my professional experience, several theoretical propositions were identified as a way to analyse research findings. Analysis was conducted at two levels – within individual case sites and across case sites. Pattern matching logic was used at the first level analysis where patterns from the research findings were validated against the theoretical propositions while common themes across study sites that support main propositions in each area of inquiry were used to conduct the second level analysis.

Chapters 5-8 present the research findings and analysis. A thematic approach, following the research’s areas of inquiry, was adopted to present and organise the research findings in Chapters 5-7 while Chapter 8 outlines the common themes emerging across the four school sites. The presentation of the research findings incorporates the substantive analysis to ensure continuity and flow. A decision was made to change the order of presentation of the areas of inquiry (instead of Understanding-Quality-Form to Quality-Form-Understanding) to accord the reader a better context and to facilitate understanding of the findings and analysis.
The thematic chapters begin with the area of inquiry around the quality and depth of community participation (Chapter 5) focusing on the changes in the patterns in community participation. This is followed by the area of inquiry on forms and modalities of participation (Chapter 6) focusing on the mechanism of participation at the school level. The last area of inquiry (Chapter 7) centres on discussing stakeholders’ understanding and concept of community and perception of the role of community participation in school management and in determining congruence between stakeholders’ perception and action.
CHAPTER 5
QUALITY AND DEPTH OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

5.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key research findings and analysis related to quality and depth of community participation which explored and examined the changes in the patterns of community participation in school management comparing participation after the enactment of RA9155, the factors that affect community participation and the overall effect of community engagement in school based management in the research school sites.

The chapter begins with a presentation of the research findings within this area and concludes with an analysis of the findings against the theoretical proposition under this area of inquiry.
5.1. Changes in the Patterns of Community Participation in SBM

All respondents recognised that external stakeholders were already participating in the schools prior to the introduction of RA9155. Involvement was mainly in the mobilisation (human and financial) and augmentation of limited school resources:

Yes, they (community) contribute then and even now (in resource mobilisation efforts). They have similar programs that they implemented before which they implement now (e.g. popularity contests.) (SHU1)

For example we come up with income generating projects e.g. popularity contest they involve themselves. We were able to raise funds to repair our classrooms, the construction of reading sheds, the procurement of a siren and a sound system, the procurement of learning material/equipment (karaoke) (SHU2)

The community helps the school most especially in giving contributions. (PRT1R1)

We have been participating in the school even before the enactment of the law. When they (school) ask our help regarding school problems like peace and order. There were a lot of incidence of theft, we work with the school to resolve their issues. And if they need monetary assistance, we also provide them. (BRGY1U2)

The majority of internal respondents maintained that, prior to RA9155, external stakeholders' involvement in the school was largely confined to attending school programs and activities (e.g. card day, graduation, information sessions) organised
by the school. Respondent SHU1 summed this up when he stated that: ‘They only get to be involved when the teacher or principal calls them.’ In particular, teachers from the urban school sites observed that prior to RA9155, parents only supported and implemented school-wide projects and that initiatives at the homeroom level were left to the teachers to address.

While all respondents acknowledged the presence of community involvement in the school even before the introduction RA9155, they observed that its introduction had opened opportunities for greater community participation in school management. This led respondent SHU1 to suggest that: ‘Their participation (community and parents) have now increased and the involvement of the community in the school has widened.’

Internal respondents from rural sites observed a significant change in external stakeholders’ attitude towards their participation in school. According to them, prior to the introduction of RA9155 external stakeholders were less invested and engaged, with respondent SHR1 suggesting that ‘Previously, (parents) were not too eager to know what is happening in school. They were just content with bringing and picking up their children from school.’ This view was shared by respondents TCH2R1 and TCH1R1 who noted that ‘Even if you invite them to attend school meetings, sometimes they do not attend.’ Respondent BRGY1R1 reasoned that parents perceive the meeting as a way for schools to request for monetary contribution. Furthermore, the respondent said that ‘It was really different then. In the past, a lot of parents did not value education that is why a lot of children then were not able to complete their studies. You could hear a lot of parents saying that their children will just marry anyway. And parents who allowed their children to complete their studies were motivated of the potential (economic) return to the family.’
Internal respondents acknowledged that participation in resource generation and resource augmentation activities and attendance at school programs had persisted even after the enactment of RA9155. Respondent PRT1FU2 commented that now a lot of parents have moved away from providing manual labour, opting more for direct financial assistance stating that: ‘Before, during my first year of teaching (1987), parents participated through manual labour only and not much on the financial aspect... they do repairs. There are parents who volunteer.’

Apart from resource mobilisation and generation activities, respondents suggested that external stakeholders’ participation after RA9155 had expanded into other areas such as in: support to school operations, support to teaching and learning, involvement in school improvement planning, networking with others stakeholders, and resolving school issues.

**Support to School Operations**

The majority of external stakeholders argued that they supported school operations. The barangay respondents from both urban and rural sites suggested that unlike before, they now secure school premises even in the evenings, asking Civilian Volunteer Officers to conduct regular perimeter check of school premises and enforce ordinances e.g. curfew. Barangay respondents from the urban sites also maintained that they are actively monitoring business establishments operating within close proximity of the schools (with specific attention to computer rental/gaming shops) to ensure that they do not admit learners students during school hours. A barangay respondent from an urban site stated that: ‘We enforce the law to support the school like the no smoking among minors, no internet use during school hours’ (BRGY1U1). If business operators were found violating this, their business permits were not renewed.
In addition, an external respondent from an urban site said that they were involved in the advocacy campaign for the K to 12 program and in the bidding process for construction of school facilities (e.g. rain walk).

**Teaching and Learning Support**

Respondents from the secondary school sites commented that the community, specifically business establishments, were engaged as work placement sites for on-the-job training of Senior High School students via a formal memorandum of understanding between the school and the business establishments.

In addition, several respondents said that community professionals were occasionally tapped as resource persons to discuss certain topics in the curriculum. Urban community respondents corroborated this when they stated that they deliver information sessions that educate students on pertinent community issues such as substance abuse when they stated that: ‘What the police force does is that we assist the schools in educating the students about substance abuse and crime.’(CMMTY2U2). According to them, these sessions resonated positively with the students.

In RS1, the school introduced an initiative involving parents assisting in classroom management. In US1, parents were asked to assist as “story tellers” during the school’s reading comprehension project.

**School Improvement Planning**

Another area where significant change occurred in external stakeholders’ participation was in school improvement planning. Largely observed in urban sites,
external stakeholders participated in the vision and mission setting exercise and in several planning consultation workshops. Respondents stated that:

The difference is in their involvement in the crafting of the SIP. Before we just inform them of our plans but now they all get involved for them to see the needs of the school. (SHU1)

As for me, I am involved in planning where the school identifies issues and the projects that can be done to address these issues. (PRT2U1F)

In the planning of our school improvement. In our deliberations. When we updated our SIP we call them – SGC, barangay officials, etc.’ (SHU2)

This view was supported by external stakeholders citing their involvement in problem identification and solutions identification stages of the preparation of the SIP.

**Networking with other stakeholders**

Another area of involvement nominated by external stakeholders was linkages and networking with parents, politicians and other agencies to support the school. Several school buildings and facilities (e.g. covered court, gym, etc.) were constructed because of the networking efforts of external stakeholders.

**Resolution of school issues**

An SGC respondent from an urban school site shared their involvement in addressing school project implementation issues which, at one point, resulted in the termination
of the services of the contracted project engineer. Barangay respondents also said that they had been involved in mediating school conflicts.

The following is a summary table of the changes in the pattern of external stakeholders’ participation in the four school sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Participation</th>
<th>School Sites</th>
<th>Details of Activities</th>
<th>Occurrence Pre</th>
<th>Occurrence Post</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US1</td>
<td>US2</td>
<td>RS1</td>
<td>RS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Mobilisation (Financial)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource Mobilisation (Human)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at School Activities</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Areas of Participation</td>
<td>School Sites</td>
<td>Details of Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US1 US2 RS1 RS2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre 9155 Post 9155</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Physical Improvement</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>• The Supreme Student/Pupil Government implemented school improvement projects (e.g., waste segregation, hand washing area, parks, school letter blocks, identifying school policies e.g., public display of affection, etc.)</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents/Community funded construction of drinking fountains, gym, water tanks, etc.</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>• Professionals from the community were tapped as resource persons to deliver topics linked to the curriculum e.g., blood typing, dengue awareness, etc.</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents were tapped as story tellers in a reading comprehension project funded and implemented by a local company in the community</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Through a Memorandum of Agreement, community business establishments agree as work placements for senior high school students</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Participation as Parent of the Day to assist in maintaining classroom discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Improvement Planning</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
<td>• Consultation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Problem Identification</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Solutions Identification</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification of priority improvement areas</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Providing feedback of perceived school issues to management</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking and Linkaging</td>
<td>✔ ✔</td>
<td>• Parents were asked to discussing concerns with other parents regarding their children’s performance/behaviour in school programs</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Linkaging with other government agencies (e.g. PAGCOR), business sector and the alumni</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents were asked to enforce school policies e.g. traffic management, no loitering in school ground during school hours</td>
<td>✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Several explanations were given for these changes in community participation after the introduction of RA9155. Specifically in urban school sites, teacher respondents attributed this to the increased awareness of external stakeholders’ role in school and in their children’s education stating that: ‘Before it was the teachers who approached (the parents), now parents take the initiative to ask what we need in the classroom.’ Other respondents suggested that this was a result of better communication between the school and education stakeholders. Respondent BRYGY1U1, on the other hand, attributed this to the school head’s inclusive style of management:

### Table 5.1. Changes in the Patterns of Participation in the Research Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Participation</th>
<th>School Sites</th>
<th>Details of Activities</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US1</td>
<td>US2</td>
<td>RS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring and Firing of Personnel</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Project Implementation &amp; Monitoring</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Formulation &amp; Implementation</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Parents were involved in terminating the services of the project engineer contracted to oversee the construction of the rain walk.
- The barangay mediated and resolved a conflict between the teacher and learners.
- Assisted in disseminating information about the K to 12 program to parents and community.
- Participation in Bidding process.
- Monitoring project implementation.
- Project adjustments (e.g., termination of project engineer).
- Involvement by signing the form and student-at-risk interventions.
- Involvement with the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in the school in addressing issues like bullying.
- Formulation of school policies e.g. No smoking policy, bullying, etc.
Our relationship with the past administration was not that good. But now our relationship with the current school head is friendly and (he is) more approachable. And if he has something to tell us, he makes it a point to see us and not wait the next time we come to the school. That did not happen in the past. And the current principal will ask our opinion, that is his approach... and not because he is the head of school is we follow his opinion.

The majority of respondents from the rural sites, on the other hand, suggested that this change of behaviour may have been a direct result of the school’s purposive effort to establish and harness good relationship with the community. Respondent SHR2 stated ‘This was the first thing I asked the teachers to do was to establish a very good relationship with them because they are our partners. I encouraged the teachers to develop projects where parents feel they are engaged, not to put any boundaries to our relationship with them, be open to their suggestions, and make purposive efforts to act on what they say.’ In addition, he also suggested that parents’ renewed engagement in the school might be a function of an increased awareness of their role in their children’s education. Respondent TCH1R2 corroborated this view but added that it may also be because of the various information sessions sponsored by the Department where parental involvement was constantly emphasised.

Offering her views regarding the change of behaviour, respondent PRT2R2 suggested that ‘In the past, parents’ priority was to ensure that their family subsist. Unlike now, there are more government agencies that are willing to help families (e.g. 4Ps program of the government) and the school.’ Teacher respondents from

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7 The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a human development measure of the Philippine government that provides conditional cash grants to the poorest of the poor, to improve the health, nutrition, and the education of children aged 0-18. It is patterned after the conditional cash transfer (CCT) schemes in...
the rural sites also suggested that engagement improved because the community recognised the effect/impact of their participation (e.g. improved school facilities).

5.2. Challenges Faced and Strategies Adopted

The majority of respondents suggested that voluntary contributions are a significant challenge to stakeholders’ participation in school management. Teacher respondents from the urban sites argued that there were instances where voluntary donations from parents were doubled which respondents believed was a financial burden on the parents. Respondent TCH1U1 cited that: ‘There was a time when the school PTA implemented a project at the same time that each grade level was implementing their respective homeroom project.’

Related to this was the perception that attending school meetings meant donating. According to respondent SHR2, ‘This is the very thing I am trying to avoid... I would like to change their perception that every time they come to school we only ask for donations. I have asked the teachers instead to focus more on discussing students’ performance and to leave the projects or contributions to the PTA officers.’ SHR2 argued that he could not blame the parents. Furthermore, he also recognised that perceptual changes in this regard will take time and small initiatives such as centralising parent contributions will help facilitate this change. He also argued that it is not only parents’ perceptions that need to change but also that of the teachers citing instances of some teachers’ refusal to follow this directive.

There was also division among parents: some saw donations as being exorbitant while others see them as reasonable. Respondent BRGY1R1 related an instance about contributions regarding graduation where parents, through the year-level

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Latin American and African countries, which have lifted millions of people around the world from poverty. [http://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/programs/conditional-cash-transfer/]
assembly, had agreed on a specific amount. Parents have started collecting the contribution when a dissenting parent took the issue to the media. The respondent said that:

because of this, the graduation program was cancelled; the children marched without their graduation toga. This was a sad day for the parents who were expecting a beautiful program for their children. Every year, we always make sure that we make this a momentous celebration but for that year, we were not able to do so because a parent complained.

Another challenge cited by respondents was managing external stakeholders’ expectations. Several respondents argued that the increased awareness and participation of the parents and the community had placed unwanted pressure on internal stakeholders in managing and meeting external stakeholders’ expectations. Teacher respondents from the urban sites argued that this had, on a number of occasions, led to disagreements between the school and the parents regarding the implementation of school safety policies such as the No ID-No Entry and use of car stickers, however, the tension had been mitigated through discussion of the benefits of these policies during homeroom PTA meetings.

A teacher respondent from the urban sites mentioned that, sometimes, parents expected additional points to be awarded towards their children’s marks because of their participation. She said: ‘I already experienced it – when a parent asked me if points will be given to his child.’ Another teacher respondent supported this view when she said: ‘They (parents) do not explicitly say it, but you could sense it in the way they participate.’ Another teacher from the rural sites shared the challenges of teaching where you reside saying that ‘Whether we accept it or not while at school we are authority but as soon as we step out into the community you can hear
comments like "Oh that is ---, s/he is just the child of ---." This was supported by another teacher when she said that ‘It was like that then. I also experienced being told by a parent, “Beware, I know who you are”.’ However, another teacher respondent said that this attitude is slowly changing, ‘Unlike before where parents want to dictate what we need to do, parents now have learnt to respect us especially when they hear their children relate how happy they are with their teachers.’

Attitudes and personality differences were other challenges cited by several respondents. A parent respondent from the urban sites cited personality differences between PTA officials which forced her to resign from her post in the PTA. Indifference was another major challenge cited by an internal respondent from one of the rural sites. According to respondent SHR1, ‘Their (community) minds are not too open on how they could help in school improvement. There may be instances where they think that it is just an inconvenience to come to the school.’ However, being recently appointed to the post, the respondent recognises that this could not be forced and she is hopeful that in time and with patience perceptions will change and community engagement will improve in their school.

Another challenge mentioned by internal respondents is that, at times, parents encroach on the role of the teachers and the school. Teacher respondents said that: ‘For example in school projects, at times they want their suggestions to be followed. If there are classroom projects, sometimes they challenge you and propose an alternative. And there are times that they contradict the classroom rules you’ve instituted.’ This was corroborated by internal stakeholders from the rural sites arguing,

There are parents that instruct you that things should be done this way or another way and at times I feel they think they know better than us.
It is not to say that we do not appreciate suggestions but it is just in the way they talk to you ... you know when they are suggesting and when you are being directed to do something.

Other teacher respondents offered an explanation for this attitude suggesting that this attitude may be due to external stakeholders heightened awareness and understanding of policies and laws that govern education, better understanding of child protection and their rights, and belief that they were largely instrumental in school improvement.

Another challenge experienced only in the rural sites was the lack of proper handover procedures to enable new school heads to sustain external stakeholders’ engagement efforts in the school. One of the school heads from a rural site highlighted the difficulties of being in a caretaker position, ‘I am limited by what I could undertake because I fear that the new principal would not appreciate and understand the initiatives I introduced. That is why I am hesitant to act on anything because my position is not certain.’ When queried if the school direction changes with the change in school head, he argued that it does happen saying that ‘Because people are different. I understand that different people have different platforms and that is the reason for my hesitancy.’

Finally, one of the major challenges to community participation was around transparency and accountability in the utilisation and reporting of financial donations. These incidents were said to have occurred in both urban school sites and were corroborated by several external and internal respondents. Urban respondents maintained that such issue had negatively affected community participation in their respective schools.
There had been accusations of corruption and fund malversation between the school leadership and the PTA officers. In one of the urban school sites, this was compounded by internal divisions among school personnel, when an internal respondent argued that some teachers took a partisan approach to the issue suggesting they ‘connived’ with the parents. In addition, since the donations were held by the PTA treasurer, these were occasionally used to extend financial assistance to teachers through loans. According to respondent SHU2, it came to a point where the PTA Treasurer was already holding teachers’ bank cards during pay periods.

Respondent SHU2 said that, in their school, ‘There are some parents that have vested interest in the money of the PTA. They do not want the principal to interfere; they do not like (school) projects to be presented. I experienced these kinds of officers.’ He attributed this attitude, partly to the provisions contained in the Department PTA policy: ‘The PTA could spend the money without the involvement of the principal. And if you try to get involved they do not listen to you because of that policy of the DepEd that the principal should not interfere. There was really a trial and error by the Department in terms of implementing the PTA in the schools.’

In order to mitigate and prevent this situation from recurring, the school leadership and PTA Board of Directors in both the urban schools instituted several mechanisms (such as regular financial accounting and reporting, using a ledger system for receipts, posting of financial on the transparency board, etc.) to uphold transparency, accountability and restore parents’ trust. And as a result of these measures, a parent respondent from one of the urban school sites stated that: ‘We came out better because of the unity of the parents and with the help of the teachers and school head.’
Nevertheless financial issue persisted in US2. Given the inability of the PTA treasurer to physically collect donations from each class, the school head and the PTA authorised the homeroom teachers to collect the donations. However, this approach opened avenues for teachers’ misuse of funds. Some teachers were unable to remit donations to the PTA treasurer, while other teachers falsified liquidation reports for procured homeroom learning equipment using the collected PTA funds.

In response, additional control measures were instituted by the PTA and the school head to ensure that collected contributions were deposited daily in the PTA bank account. In addition, through a regular classroom competition, homeroom parents were able to report on missing classroom equipment. According to the school head, although they still experience occasional financial management issues, overall the control measures instituted to manage the PTA funds were successful in mitigating these issues in US2. The school head likewise suggested that he ‘became a very strong school head because of these experiences’ while the external respondents shared that these efforts resulted to ‘good camaraderie between parents, students and the school administration.’

5.3. Factors that Affected Community Participation

Several factors were identified by respondents that facilitated or hindered community participation in their respective schools.

5.3.1. Hindering Factors to Community Participation

One of the critical factors cited by respondents was around financial contributions and the economic capacity of external stakeholders to provide financial assistance to augment limited school resources. A teacher from one of the urban sites argued
that ‘It seems not fair at times. For example with popularity contest, this is just an added burden on the parents considering that there are too many school projects which are simultaneously implemented and the economic situation of parents are not the same.’ An external respondent supported this view when she said, ‘Many parents subsist on hand to mouth existence.’

Several respondents from rural sites suggested that, although parents may be willing to attend school activities, they tend to forego this because of economic reasons (e.g. need to earn a living, during harvest season, go fishing, etc.) One parent respondent (PRT2R1) stated that: ‘For me, earning a living is the number one (factor that affects participation). A good example is today. If I was rostered to work in the morning I would not be able to attend (this interview). I was able to attend because I was rostered in the evening.’ A teacher respondent from one of the urban sites jokingly stated that: ‘That is why in our province, the PTA is referred to as Pinag Tikil na Aten (referring to being financially choked from the contributions).’

A related point raised by respondents was time. According to SHR2, ‘We could not ask our stakeholders to help the school for extended periods because they need to work. They complain if they stay for a school activity that extends for the whole day because they have to leave work in their farm or fishing, or copra. This is really a significant factor why sometimes we are unable to form a quorum during meetings.’ This view was corroborated by teacher respondents from the rural and urban sites when they suggested that participation is affected by the fact that life is hard in the community.

Teacher respondents mentioned the lingering perception that school meetings equate to contribution and that at times, parents cannot afford to make the needed contribution. Teacher respondents from the rural sites said that parents perceive school meetings as an inconvenience and see no value in attending
because whether or not they attend, they will still be compelled to contribute financially. Finally, an internal respondent from the rural sites suggested that transparency (or the lack of it) affects participation in school management: ‘when they (external stakeholders) do not see where their contributions went or no detailed financial report was provided this is where they start questioning or doubting their assistance to the school.’

Another factor mentioned by external respondents was misunderstanding and the ‘laissez-faire’ attitude of parents and the community. The SGC respondent said that ‘Misunderstanding and the lack of humility are barriers to effective participation.’ Another point raised by a parent from the rural sites is the “bahala na” (come what may) attitude in the community suggesting that parents will agree to decisions made during the meeting whether or not they attend it.

5.3.2. Facilitating Factors to Community Participation

Both internal and external respondents saw feeling valued and recognised as a factor that facilitated participation. Teacher respondents from one urban site argued that ‘At times parents are already satisfied that they participate (in school), they feel proud with the fact that their opinion was heard and their side clarified.’ This perception of being valued was supported by a barangay respondent from the same urban site when she said that ‘They always give us importance and time to attend our BCPC\(^8\) meeting and (we) appreciate that a lot.’

This remark from the barangay respondent raised another facilitating factor; the school’s reciprocating the generosity of their stakeholders. The barangay respondent commented positively on the school head making time to attend barangay meetings and support barangay initiatives. In addition, barangay

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\(^8\) Barangay Child Protection Council
respondents also highlighted the inclusive and consultative management style of the school head as a critical factor in sustained community engagement. They said that: ‘He asks us what we think is the best thing to do. That is his approach. He does not insist his opinion just because he is the head of school. He will approach the barangay.’ They also added the school head’s ability to exercise flexibility was another facilitating factor and that he made it a point of regularly calling on and communicating with the barangay officials.

However, another barangay respondent from US2 said that the reverse happened in their case, noting that they were not even invited to school programs or activities. When asked why he thinks the school did this, he suggested that ‘Probably they think they can stand on their own even without the barangay. This school has sufficient resources.’ He also said that this is changing and the school is now gradually involving them.

Internal respondents believed that external stakeholders’ participation in schools had improved because of the ability of the school and stakeholders to learn from their experience (e.g. difficulties in financial management, contributions) and institute practical measures that promoted transparency and increased accountability.

In addition, respondent SHR1 argued that the ability to think outside of the box and motivate were significant in sustaining external stakeholders’ engagement in the school. Based on her experience, she believes that the school needs to think of creative ways to motivate parents to attend school meetings possibly coupling the meeting with livelihood training programs to encourage parents to attend meetings.

External respondents also believe that generally, there was willingness in the community, more specifically with the parents, to help the school. Their idea was
that this will not only help their children but also future generations of community youth who will attend the school. The ability of external stakeholders to empathise with the difficulties of the teachers and the school was another contributing factor. A parent respondent stated that ‘I used to be a classroom teacher and I understand the plight of a teacher, I was a principal and PSDS and therefore I know their plight.’

Communication was another facilitating factor cited by respondents. Several internal respondents suggested that communication played a critical role in maintaining parent engagement. For teachers this means keeping parents informed of their children’s academic progress while for the school heads it is anchored on managing expectations and ensuring clarity. Respondents stated:

*If you are unable to communicate and explain what you intend to convey, parents tend to interpret things differently and perceive agreements or decisions made during the meeting differently.* (SHR1)

*Giving them importance whatever things they do ... we should praise them.* (SHU2)

### 5.4. Overall Effect of Community Participation in School-Based Management

While there were several challenges to community participation in all the school sites, respondents collectively believed community participation had generally been positive and advantageous to the school. Respondents stated:

*Very positive. They helped in the improvement in our school (physical) and even in the learning of our children.* (SHR2)
The projects are being undertaken because of the good camaraderie of the parents, teachers, students, administrators. Very open, transparency, the understanding, good PR. (PRT3U2)

They help us immensely. Their skills are valuable which you could not secure if you do not have resources to pay for them. (SHR1)

They are our partners in the development of the school – not only in the physical aspect but also in ensuring the delivery of quality education. It just so happened that now we did focus on the physical improvements but we hope to start with the improvement in the quality of education. (SHR2)

In addition, all respondents agreed that improvements and developments in their respective schools were because of the continued external stakeholders’ engagement. Respondent TCH4U1 summed this when she said: ‘Because they are our partners in building up the progress of the school especially when it comes to facilities for the learning of our students.’

Although all external respondents expressed a positive view of community participation, some teacher respondents raised some disadvantages suggesting that parents, at times, overstep and impinge on school operations/management.

5.5. Analysing Findings against the Theoretical Propositions in the area of Quality and Depth of Community Participation in SBM
This section reviews and analyses the research findings to determine if these confirm or negate the theoretical proposition that states: *Changes in the pattern of community participation in school governance is nominal as parents and community engagement is still confined within resource extractive activities.*

I used Reimers’ Matrix of Dimensions and Degrees of Community Participation in Education to determine whether changes in the pattern of external stakeholder engagement were nominal or otherwise. Modifications to Reimers’ Matrix were introduced to better reflect the research findings and highlight changes to the level of community engagement before and after the introduction of RA9155 in the school. Table 5.2 provides an overall picture of the changes in the pattern of participation across the four school sites.

Data in Tables 5.2 (outlining Reimers’ original list of education functions) and 5.3 (outlining additional education functions) indicate that changes in the patterns of external stakeholders’ participation after the enactment of RA9155 were varied across the four school sites. Furthermore, it suggests that, more than their rural counterparts, external stakeholder in the urban school sites widened their sphere of participation and deepened their level of involvement after the enactment of RA9155. Although the community and parents are still involved in traditionally-ascribed activities like resource generation and mobilisation and attendance at school programs/activities, their sphere of involvement had widened to include involvement in some aspects of the school improvement planning process, the management (implementation and monitoring and evaluation) of school projects, conflict resolution, networking, curriculum delivery and advocacy activities.

However, this was not observed in the rural school sites. The data suggests that, apart from the recent initiative of RS1 to involve parents in activities related to classroom management, external stakeholders’ level of involvement in the rural sites had not
expanded nor deepened after the enactment of RA9155 and their involvement is still largely confined within traditional areas of participation.

Indeed, the data suggests that RS1, selected to represent the High Stakeholder Participation-Rural setting category, seemed to have regressed relative to community engagement in school management. When questioned about this, SHR1 suggested that the team who previously completed the assessment might have arbitrarily completed and had not fully understood the indicators in previous SBM assessment, the primary mechanism utilised by the research to determine the level of stakeholder participation.

Therefore, evaluating the data against the theoretical proposition under this area, it appears that external stakeholders’ participation in rural schools had been nominal thus confirming the theoretical proposition under this research area while external stakeholders’ participation in urban school had expanded to other areas of school based management thus negating the theoretical proposition.

So what caused these changes to occur in the urban school sites?

The leadership and management style of the school head was cited as a factor that facilitated greater external stakeholders’ participation in these schools. This was corroborated by several internal and external urban respondents when they highlighted the inclusive and consultative management style of the current school head as a critical factor in sustained community engagement. An external respondent stated that ‘He (referring to US1 principal) asks us what we think is the best thing to do, that is his approach. He does not insist his opinion just because he is the head of school. He will approach the barangay.’ (BRGYF1URB). They also mentioned the school head’s ability to exercise flexibility as another facilitating factor. According to external respondents, the school head makes it a point to regularly call on and
communicate with the barangay officials. This view was supported by a barangay respondent when she said that ‘They always give us importance and time to attend our BCPC meeting and appreciate that a lot’ (BRGYF1URB).

The ability of the school head to negotiate through the issues and work with the PTA to address recurring financial management issues and institutionalise appropriate mechanism to build transparency and accountability in managing parents’ voluntary contribution had contributed towards regaining trust in the school. Specifically in US2, the ability to unify school factions and lead by example reflects the school head’s adaptive management style and ability for introspection. As a direct result of the school heads’ personal efficacy and managerial competence, several urban respondents argued that external stakeholders felt valued and recognised.

External stakeholders’ appreciation of the role of the school in the community and a collective sense of responsibility for the children was another factor suggested by urban respondents. Parent respondents argued that the barangay and the school are the two most important community institutions that work towards the development and betterment of the school, in particular and the community, in general. Several external respondents expressed a sense of shared responsibility to assist the school in providing access to quality education in the community borne-out of a collective acceptance of the limitations of government to provide for all school needs. Parents, in particular, felt morally bound to extend assistance to the school as they see their efforts directly impacting their children’s education. A parent respondent said ‘Therefore when the community help the school, they in turn also help the children.’

The ability of external stakeholders to empathise with the difficulties of the school and its administration was another contributing factor that facilitated participation in the school. This was specifically observed in US2 where this was corroborated by the current PTA president who used to work as the District Supervisor in the Division.
Finally, the performance record of US1 and the extensive educational services offered by both the schools was another contributing factor to these changes in stakeholder participation. Parent respondents commented that ‘The community is perceived to have good stature through the performance of its school... they win competitions (local and international). And when that happens, [people] realise how good the barangay is and the extent of support that it extended to the school.’ (PRTF2U2)

While findings in the urban sites suggest that community participation in school based management had expanded, this need to be reviewed against its significance in influencing strategic school decisions. From the education/management areas where the community was involved, it was only in school improvement planning (in both urban schools) and school policy formulation and implementation (only in US2) where this strategic influence may have been exercised. Therefore, these areas of school management warrant further scrutiny to determine if participation in these areas had allowed external stakeholders to significantly influence the strategic direction and initiatives of the school.

According to some internal respondents, the initial school improvement planning cycles were done out of compliance and no actual planning was undertaken. Although the process has since changed and external stakeholders had been involved in the vision/mission sharing exercises (in US1) and in planning consultation activities/workshops (in both urban schools), participation had not extended to other aspects such as in data analysis, problem identification, school priorities identification and in identifying appropriate school interventions, where stakeholders could have participated in the process of deciding the strategic priorities of the school. Table 5.3 outlines the level of stakeholders’ (external and teachers) participation in relation to the preparation of the school improvement plan based on accounts from urban respondent.
Based on respondents’ accounts, it appears that teachers from both urban and rural school sites benefitted more than external stakeholders from the enactment of RA9155 as it significantly widened their participation in the conduct, preparation and finalisation of the school improvement plan, in identifying homeroom issues and negotiating for resources to improve the teaching and learning environment in the classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Stages</th>
<th>Stakeholders’ Level of Participation in SIP Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Data Gathering and Analysis</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Situational Analysis</td>
<td>Yes – analysis was presented for confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vision/Mission Setting and Values Identification</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Goal Setting</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Priority Improvement Area Identification</td>
<td>Yes – presentation of priority improvement areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work Implementation Plan Preparation</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Write-up</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3. Stakeholders’ Level of Participation in SIP Preparation in Urban School Sites

However, the same could not be entirely said of external stakeholders’ involvement in school policy formulation in US2 where involvement in this area was suggested. Depending on the type of policy, external stakeholders from US2 were engaged differently. For policies mandated by the Department of Education, their engagement was limited to policy implementation (e.g. child protection policy). This view was maintained by a teacher respondent stating that ‘They are not involved in crafting the policy itself because we just adopted the child protection policy and handbook. They are involved in the committee when we tap them to help resolve some issues.’ For school-specific policies (e.g. school safety, school uniform, and no-smoking) they were
heavily involved from issue identification, policy formulation to implementation when an SGC respondent stated ‘The student welfare – the security policy, we did that. Also with the no smoking policy.’ However, no documentary evidence was provided to support this claim.

So while external stakeholders from the urban schools had been involved in a wider spectrum of school management functions, their participation in strategic functions was still limited and were largely meant to ‘rubber stamp’ school initiatives.

5.6. Summary

The introduction of RA9155 and school based management provided an overarching policy framework to engage a wide range of education stakeholders in a decentralised education management system in the Philippines. Overall, research findings suggest that, in general, community attitude and participation improved after the enactment of RA9155 and all schools have shown improvement in community participation when assessed against resource mobilisation and generation efforts such as in Brigada Eskwela.

While overall attitude and community participation in the areas of resource mobilisation and generation, attendance to school programs and school physical improvement had improved, the broadening and depth of participation in other areas of school management was mixed across the research school sites. Findings indicate that (see Tables 5.2 and 5.3), more than their rural counterparts, urban school sites experience of community participation had changed from ‘Mere use of the service’ to between ‘Involvement through consultation (or feedback)’ and ‘Participation in the delivery of a service as a partner with other actors’ (utilising Reimers’ participation scale) reflecting a modest change in community participation in school management expanding in
other areas of school management such as in school improvement planning and school policy formulation and implementation. Moreover, community influence over strategic decisions in these areas of management had been limited.

Therefore, to answer the theoretical proposition: **Changes in the pattern of community participation in school governance is nominal as parents and community engagement is still confined within resource extractive activities**, it seems that urban schools negate, while rural schools confirm the proposition under the research area of quality and depth of participation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION/ MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>REIMERS’ LEVELS OF DEGREES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEFORE THE ENACTMENT OF RA9155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mere use of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involvement through attendance and receipt of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOLS</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Policy</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mob resources- School wide</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mob resources- Homeroom</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum development (local)</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment of Salaries</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building construction/ maintenance</td>
<td>US1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.3. Changes in the Patterns of Participation in SBM of External Stakeholders in Respondent Sites Using Reimers’ Matrix of Dimensions and Degrees of Community Participation in Education (Modified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADDITIONAL EDUCATION/MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>REIMERS’ LEVELS OF DEGREES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION BEFORE THE ENACTMENT OF RA9155</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>REIMERS’ LEVELS OF DEGREES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF RA9155</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mere use of the service</strong></td>
<td><strong>Involvement through contribution of resources, materials &amp; labour</strong></td>
<td><strong>Involvement through attendance and receipt of information</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participation in the delivery of a service as a partner with other actors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participation as implementer of delegated power</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance to School Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Planning</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum Delivery</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Policy Implementation</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Networking/Linkaging</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Construction</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Proj. Implem</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Monitoring</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Resolution</strong></td>
<td><strong>US1</strong></td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Education/Management functions identified only in US1
CHAPTER 6
FORMS AND MODALITIES OF PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS

6.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key research findings and analysis related to the forms and modalities of participation in schools which examined formal and informal mechanisms of participation in the schools. Here, the School Governing Council (SGC) was studied in detail in terms of its organisation and functionality as a unit of analysis. Other formal and informal mechanisms of participation at the school were identified apart from the SGC as part of the data gathering process.

The chapter firstly presents the research findings regarding respondents' perception of the role and importance of the SGC, the composition, organisation and functionality of the SGC. Thereafter, it discusses other mechanisms of stakeholder participation in the school with specific attention to the Parent Teacher Association. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the findings against the theoretical proposition under this area of inquiry.
6.1. Perception on the Role and Importance of the School Governing Council

Although most respondents have heard about the SGC, most claim little to no understanding of the role, function and importance of the SGC in school based management. An external respondent from an urban site stated that ‘We were never informed about the SGC. I only learnt about it when I saw their name in an invitation letter from a barangay requesting financial assistance for their fiesta. It was only when I saw the program that I’ve learnt about the SGC.’ The majority of the respondents who claim knowledge of the SGC perceive its role and function as being similar to that of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). However a few internal stakeholders held a broader view of the SGC function and recognised its strategic contribution in school based management. Some of these respondents stated that:

‘The SGC is broader because its membership is from the community, from the local government. Compared to the PTA whose membership is school-based.’ (TCH1U1)

‘(Their) Involvement (is) in planning. They do not do financing unlike the PTA. They also attend school activities.’ (SHU2)

‘I read that we are responsible for preparing the SIP... in school policy.’ (SGC2U2)

An SGC respondent from one of the urban sites suggested that this confusion may have resulted from a lack of orientation regarding the respective functions of the PTA and the SGC.
6.2. Organisation and Composition of the SGC

The SGC was organised in all school sites following Department guidelines which require the SGC to be organised through an election process held by the schools. The election process follows the steps of awareness building, nomination, election and installation. The Manual also suggests an interim procedure prior to the election process where individuals from the community are invited to gain better understanding of council work and functions in school governance before a formal election process is undertaken.

Research findings were that, except for US2 were an election was held, membership in the SGC was mainly by invitation of the school. Parents, local government units, religious groups and community residents were invited to participate in the council. According to several respondents, in most cases, PTA officers were asked to be members of the council for ease of coordination.

Specifically in US2, an election was held to determine the membership of the SGC. However, no barangay representative was elected to the council. In both urban school sites, teachers were assigned to sub-committees in line with the nature of their additional tasks as teachers. No modifications were introduced to the SGC structure and composition.

In one urban site, there was a perception that some SGC positions were irrelevant; an SGC respondent (SGC3U2) said, 'I am the (SGC) auditor but the SGC does not have funds so I don’t really have anything to audit.'

When asked about assistance from the Division in setting-up the council, three of the school sites maintained not receiving any assistance from their Division offices (e.g.
orientation, etc.). Even in the school site where Division support was said to have been provided, respondents offered contradictory claims of assistance received.

6.3. Functionality of the SGC

According to respondents from three (US, RS1, and RS2) school sites, the SGC did not function as outlined by the Department (for SGC functions, refer to Section 4.1.3 in Chapter 4).

TCH1R2 attributed this to the lack of clarity around the SGC concept stating ‘There was insufficient information because members did not know it was organised, why they were involved… it was like having instant coffee, everything was just so sudden. And there was no follow-up after the seminar. As if it was only done out of compliance.’ In one of the urban sites, the school head and the SGC president corroborated this claim and added that the convening of meetings was dependent on if and when the school head felt that they were warranted. In addition, teacher respondents from the urban sites suggested that it may have been difficult to organise SGC meetings because of logistical challenges (e.g. finding a suitable schedule among officers, etc.).

However, this was not the case in US2. Respondents suggested that the SGC functioned and held regular bi-annual meetings. According to SGC respondents, agenda items discussed during regular meetings were on school/student safety and welfare, student absenteeism, school uniform for the Senior High School, among other areas of concern. Whenever necessary, the SGC invited other stakeholders such as barangay officials, students and school personnel to provide pertinent information or feedback to inform SGC decisions and school policy formulation efforts. While the officers were engaged in the SGC, the same could not be said of
SGC members with some SGC respondents claiming limited understanding of their roles in their respective committees.

According to the SGC respondents, issues were thoroughly discussed and deliberated before a decision was put to a majority vote. Some significant decisions made by the SGC were on the school uniform for each high school cohort, the installation of an electronic ID system and the no smoking policy. According to the principal, the SGC also assisted in networking: ‘Sometimes we need to contact a high ranking official and they (SGC) contact them to solicit their support. They serve as the medium. Our sound system and air-conditioning units in the library were all solicited by the SGC.’

All the respondents cited time and scheduling as the primary hindrances to SGC functionality. An SGC officer also suggested lack of documentation procedures as another hindrance. A facilitating factor is the good relationship between the school and the SGC officers.

6.4. The Parent Teacher Association

All respondents suggested that an existing mechanism where education stakeholders (specifically the parents) participated was through the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). Although DO 54, s2009, does not clearly outline the functions of the PTA, we can glean from the department order the PTA is an organisation that:

- Provides a forum for the discussion and issues and their solutions related to the total school program;
- Ensures the full cooperation of the parents in the implementation of school programs;
• Collects voluntary contributions from the parents/guardian members to fund and sustain its operations and the implementation of programs and projects exclusively for the benefit of the students and the school where it operates; and

• Submits audited financial reports.

According to the DO 54, s2009, the PTA should be organised within 15 days from the start of the school year at the homeroom/classroom level. The PTA Board of Directors and Officers are indirectly elected from the assembly of elected homeroom presidents.

There was consensus among respondents that the PTA was a better organised, functional structure/mechanism for participation in school than the SGC. Respondent TCH4U2 maintained this when she said, ‘The PTA is number 1 in helping the school’ and a PTA respondent said, ‘We support them financially and morally.’ This view was corroborated by a parent respondent from one of the rural sites who said that ‘The PTA helps in the development and improvement of the school. We help in a lot of things like in maintaining the cleanliness of the school which we do monthly.’ Internal respondents, specifically teachers, felt that the parents were more invested in the school because their children/grandchildren were primary users of school services. In addition, the PTA had been mandated by a Department Order and had been in existence far longer than the SGC and had, historically been a driving force for continuous school improvement. They also noted that coordination with the PTA was easier than that of the SGC because they could easily speak to the parents when they bring or collect their children from school.

6.5. Other Mechanisms of Participation in the School
Another participation mechanism suggested by learner respondents is the Supreme Pupil/Student Governments where learners participate in improving pupil/student life at school. According to learner respondents, as a council they had initiated several school projects such as in waste segregation, addressing bullying and pupil/student absenteeism, school physical improvements (e.g. hand wash facilities, parks, letter blocks, etc.), enforcement of school policies (e.g. tardiness, uniform policy) and in policy formulation (e.g. public display of affection).

Some of the school sites, more so urban schools, were able to establish partnership arrangements with not-for-profit organisations (e.g. AMWAY Philippines) and with funding agencies (e.g. Korean International Cooperation Agency, LOGOFIND/World Bank)

Another form of partnership specifically for secondary high schools is between business establishments who commit and agree to become work placement sites for senior high school students. This partnership is covered by a Memorandum of Understanding between the school and the business owners.

Other mechanisms of participation in these schools were in the form of involvement by the local government units, government agencies (e.g. Philippine National Police, etc.) and the alumni, the police, religious groups and business establishments in school activities such as the Brigada Eskwela. Also, benevolent individuals conduct medical missions or feeding programs in the school such as in RS1.

**6.6. Analysing Findings against the Theoretical Propositions in the area of Forms and Modalities of Participation in School Based Management**
This section analyses the findings against the theoretical proposition for this area of inquiry which states that: The SGC was constituted for compliance and did not function as originally envisioned by the Department.

Findings in this research area were varied across all school sites. Of the four school sites, the SGC was functional only in one school site (Table 6.1 summarises findings about the SGC and the PTA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Sites</th>
<th>School Governing Council</th>
<th>Parent Teacher Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organised</td>
<td>Functionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Functional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1 Summary of Findings on the SGC and the PTA

The SGCs in US1, RS1 and RS2 were constituted out of compliance and did not function as a mechanism for participation in these schools. Thereby confirming the theoretical proposition under this area of inquiry in these schools.

This could be attributed to the lack of clarity around the role and function of the SGC which was supported by several respondents when they perceived the SGC as similar to the Parent Teacher Association was observed to be a more functional mechanism in these schools (see Table 6.1). The presence of an alternative, better organised, more functional mechanism such as the PTA may have reinforced the view of the SGC as a redundant mechanism for participation in these schools.

Several teacher respondents also commented on overlap in the leadership of the SGC and the PTA. A teacher from one of the urban school sites said that ‘Most of
them (SGC officer/members) are members and officers of the PTA as well that is why there seems to be an overlap' (TCH3U1). Related to this was the perception that, the SGC, unlike the PTA, could not undertake resource generation activities which were seen as valuable given scarce school resources.

Another contributing factor was that the establishment of the SGC was not from a Department Order but rather part of a Department Memorandum (which in Department culture carries less weight) to introduce and encourage the utilisation of several Department-prepared SBM materials. Furthermore, the Department did no consistent monitoring of the SGC implementation which, in retrospect, may have helped institutionalise this mechanism.

US2 was the exception. According to respondents, the School Governing Council was organised, held meetings and was a functional school mechanism. Extant school documents such as minutes and photographs of meeting provide proof of the functionality of the SGC. According to SGC respondents, they were instrumental in formulating several school policies around school uniform and safety. Based on these accounts, we could therefore conclude that experience in US2 negates the theoretical proposition under this area of inquiry.

The functionality of the SGC may be attributed to the creation of an SBM Office, a school-initiated structure that facilitates and supports SBM implementation and activities in the school. One internal respondent suggested that the office regularly follows-up on council members to ensure attendance and quorum. In addition, the SBM unit serves as the repository of all SBM-related documentation in the school.

However, when asked what the major accomplishments of the SGC mechanism were to date, respondents had varying opinions. One SGC respondent outlined the
various policies around student welfare and safety, while the school head stated ‘Almost the same as the PTA... similar to what the PTA is doing.’

6.6.1. The SGC Functionality: Assessing Actual Experience against Expectations

Another way to explore and determine the extent of US2’s SGC functionality is by revisiting its expected functions outlined in its Constitution and By-Laws (2015). The SGC Constitution and By-Laws of US2 were consistent with the suggested Constitution and By-Laws suggested in the SGC Manual prepared by the Department. Outlined in the school’s Constitution and By-Laws (p. 6), the SGC is vested with the power to:

- Endorse the SIP together with the school head;
- Be informed of school-based MOOE and SEF funds allocated to the school
- Approve school-level policies
- Resolve school-level matters
- Approve official school profile (basic data set describing the school operations

Moreover, the SGC is expected to perform the following functions:

- Involve the community in the governance of the school (e.g. providing forum for the involvement of parents and the school community, ascertaining local educational needs and attitudes, and ensuring that community’s cultural and social diversity are identified and considered;
- Set the broad direction of the school;
- Conduct strategic planning for the school;
- Monitor and review the SIP;
• Raise money for the school-related purpose; and
• Exercise its functions in accordance with legislation, administration and instructions and the constitution

As some of these stated powers and functions are ministerial, this review focuses on the strategic powers and functions outlined in its Constitution and By-Laws. Reviewing the research findings in US2 against these functions, the SGC was involved in the formulation of school-level policies (e.g. school uniform), in resolving school-related matters (e.g. safety, traffic) and their involvement in SIP preparation particularly during the vision and mission sharing exercise. However, the other functions (e.g. involving the community in the governance of the school, setting the broad direction of the school, conducting strategic planning for the school, monitoring and reviewing the SIP) have not been performed considering that at the time of the data production phase schools were undergoing SIP re-planning which could have accorded the school an opportunity to engage stakeholders more extensively in the SIP planning process. Furthermore in the conduct of the SIP, it was evident on extant school documents that teachers, more than external stakeholders, were extensively involved in all aspects of its preparation. Hence, while the SGC in this school was better organised and functional relative to the other school sites, its functionality was still limited.

This may be attributed to the lack of school-level structural and procedural mechanisms to perform these functions. The SGC does not have a dedicated structure to undertake these strategic functions. The school planning team seems to function independent of the SGC and there is no committee to lead the SIP monitoring and evaluation process. Another contributing factor could be that SGC officers do not seem to have a solid grasp of the functions and powers of the SGC
as one of the SGC respondents stated during the focus group discussion ‘I read somewhere that we (SGC) should prepare the SIP... develop policies.’

Moreover, if the SGC is to become a broader forum for parents and the community participation, it needs to work collaboratively with other organisations within the school and the community. However, during the conduct of the focus group discussion with external stakeholders in US2, it was observed that there seemed to be confusion by PTA respondents regarding the nature and function of the SGC, as a PTA respondent inquired about their functions stating ‘Is the policy given by you? Is it coming from your brain? This statement further confirms a lack of understanding of the SGC as a participation mechanism at the school level and highlights the absence of interaction between these two school organisations.

6.7. Summary

The School Governing Council which was intended as a broad-based mechanism for community participation was in most cases only constituted out of compliance and findings suggest that no purposive effort was made to make this participation mechanism functional in the majority of school sites. Therefore, it is not possible to draw any reasonable conclusions about the effectiveness of this mechanism as a vehicle for meaningful community participation in school based management, at this stage.

However, the Parent Teacher Association was functional and was observed to be a better organised participation mechanism for external stakeholders, specifically parents. Therefore, in response to the theoretical proposition in this area, it seems that in US1, RS1 and RS2 the SGC was constituted out of compliance and was not a functioning mechanism of participation for external stakeholders which confirms this theoretical proposition. US2, however, negates the theoretical proposition as the
SGC was observed to be functional (however limited) mechanism of participation in the school.
CHAPTER 7
STAKEHOLDERS’ CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY AND PERCEPTION OF THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

7.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the key research findings and analysis related to stakeholder’s concept of community and investigates their beliefs and perceptions of the mutual roles of the school and the community in school based management, in particular and in the community’s development, in general.

In analysing the congruence between perception and action, attention is given to how internal stakeholders’ (e.g. the school head and teachers) perceptions about the community and the role of the community/parents in school based management influenced their behaviour and actions to widen and deepen external stakeholders’ sphere of engagement in school management.
The chapter begins with a presentation of the research findings on the respondents’ concept of community, perception of the reasons for the adoption of community participation in SBM, of the role of the school in the community, the role of the community in school, and the perceived factors that impact on community participation in SBM. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the findings against the theoretical proposition for this area of inquiry.

7.1. Concept of Community

When asked about their concept of community, the majority of respondents from the urban study sites defined the community in spatial terms describing it as a ‘place where people live... with different culture and diversity.’ (TCHU1F). The majority of rural study site respondents, on the other hand, suggest that community begins with the family stating that:

For me, the community begins with the family which is the smallest unit of the community. Because everything that is good in the community begins at the family. (SHR2)

The family as part of the community... because it is in the family where children’s habits are formed. It is in the community where children’s values and attitudes are initially formed. (SHR1)

All respondents had an inclusive view and included in their description of community the people, groups or institutions outside of the school and within the wider barangay that comprise it when they stated that:

Everyone in the community. Also the parents. Government officials... both those who avail of the service and those who don’t. (SHU1)
The community is composed of different people – educated or not. (PRTU1)

Several respondents went further to describe the elements that make a good community suggesting that it is one where people, groups, and institutions care, respect each other and work together (bayanihan) towards unifying the community.

When asked how they understood the term ‘community’ within the context of the decentralisation policy, there were differing opinions. Internal and external respondents from US2 and RS2 held a common view of the term ‘community’ in the context of the decentralisation policy as beyond those who availed of or delivered the educational service. For them, it encompasses the local government units, non-government agencies, other line agencies and the businesses within the community as well. One internal respondent captured this view succinctly when he said ‘Yes it is the wider community beyond the school. We do not refer to the community as the school only.’ (SHU2)

However, internal and external respondents from US1 and RS1 expressed diverging views. Internal stakeholders’ concept of community was beyond those who availed and delivered the educational service, stating:

This Republic Act is empowerment. I think they are the parents, barangay officials. Even the students are included in that concept of community. (SHU1)
I think the LGU. And also families and even NGOs within the community. Even the church is needed in the holistic development of the child. (TCHUU2)

It is the wider community.. it is everyone. Because the school was placed within the community. (SHR1)

External stakeholders from these two schools, on the other hand, had an exclusive view and understood it to mean only those who were working in or were availing of the services of the school (school head, teachers, learners, parents) or to mean only people with authority (e.g. barangay officials, various government agencies.) saying:

Only the parents, teachers and pupils. Only those who are within the school. (SGCU1)

Majority are parents (the people who avail of the services of the school. (PRTU1F)

Overall, respondents from all school sites collectively held an inclusive concept of community. However, when applied to the decentralisation policy, respondents had mixed views.

7.2. Perception of the Critical Relationships in Education

Respondents were also asked who they believed formed the critical relationships they needed to establish to deliver educational services within the community. Parents, teachers and the community/barangay have been equally named by all
respondents as the most critical followed by the school head and the learners. The following table outlines the critical stakeholders identified by respondents across the four sites and the reasons why these stakeholders were critical to the delivery of educational services. The ranking of stakeholders was based on a frequency count of responses across all school sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Selected Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parents      | 1    | • They are their children’s first teachers. Parents were perceived to be primarily responsible for the holistic development of their children. They motivate the children to attend school. It is their responsibility to support their children – to guide them to become the best.  
• They provide the love and guidance that children need and help mould the children in developing good values and good manners. They are partners of the school in ensuring the performance of the students. They can reinforce learning gained in school at home.  
• There was expectation to extend financial assistance to school projects that help nurture and develop the children. They provide (financial, moral) the students’ needs and they guide them.  
• The parents and teachers are partners in educating the children. The parents and the school need to work closely together for the children which respondents believe will motivate students to come to school regularly.  
• They help in the school improvement. |
| Teachers     | 1    | • They were perceived to be the second parent of the children. They have the students in their care for 8 hours and they can provide guidance to the children.  
• They motivate the children to achieve and be more responsible.  
• They deliver the educational content that developed professionals for the community.  
• We belong to one institution and we help each other. Experienced teachers become mentors to others in clarifying the curriculum, sharing teaching and classroom management strategies. Recognition that teachers can share good teaching practices with co-teachers. Experienced teachers mentor other teachers. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Selected Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Community**<sup>9</sup> | 1    | • Internal stakeholders viewed the community as a critical relationship primarily for its ability to provide financial support towards improving school facilities that support educational outcomes. They recognised the government’s inability to provide for all school needs and look towards the community to bridge this financial gap.  
• They are valuable partners in improving the school, in implementing school programs and projects. We could not exist without them.  
• Enforce community ordinances e.g. curfew to compel students to stay home and study  
• They provide feedback on the performance of the school |
| **School Head**   | 2    | • Provide leadership and guidance in instruction and school management  
• They were expected to manage competing priorities of the school (e.g. completing paperwork, teaching, etc.)  
• The principal has a broader appreciation of the school’s situation and works towards ensuring that school needs were addressed. |
| **Learners**      | 2    | • Respondents perceived the pupils as the primary clients of the school. They are at the heart of the learning process and the school/teachers are just there to motivate and facilitate learning  
• Internal stakeholders, in particular, saw the need to support and care for them and to create an environment that enabled the pupils to comfortably approach and discuss their concerns with them  
• Establish effective teaching and learning relationships with them to gain their trust thus improving their academic performance |

Table 7.1. List of Critical Stakeholders in the Research Sites

Other stakeholders such as Department of Education officials, the Church, Alumni, and not-for-profit organisations were also identified as education stakeholders but were not consistently cited across the school sites as critical stakeholders.

<sup>9</sup> Community are non-parents or guardians of students e.g. barangay officials, community residents, etc.
7.3. Understanding the Value of Community Participation as a Strategy for Education Reform

There was consensus among respondents that education is a shared responsibility and accountability of education stakeholders. Furthermore, they argued that a reciprocal relationship exists between the school and the community:

Yes, really there is great value in the engagement of the community in the school. As I have mentioned, the school could not exist without the community. Because their children are being educated in the school. There really is value in that. (TCH1U2)

The formation of our children happens in the school. Therefore, the parents and the barangay should unite for the development of the school. (PRTU1F)

That should really be the case that they (school and community) should be united because the improvement of a school rests on the community. That is why they need to establish good working relationship. (CMMTYR1)

In addition, respondents suggested that this engagement strategy was adopted to augment limited school resources. Internal stakeholders recognise the financial shortcomings of the national government and look towards the community to augment those limited resources to deliver educational services in the community. Respondent TCH1U1 maintained that ‘the government could not provide all school needs.’ Similar views were expressed by other internal respondents:
Without the community the school cannot stand by itself; the school needs the community. We could not provide for all the financial needs of the school. (SHR1)

Regarding the support they could give to the school since our government could not give all that we need in the school. (SHU2)

Parent contributions were also deemed instrumental in procuring learning materials and equipment (e.g. electric fans, projectors, books, welding facilities; etc.) which improved the teaching and learning environment in the classrooms:

They (parents) provide us resources (e.g. projectors, etc.) in order for us to teach. This seems to be automatic on the parents just so long it benefits their children. (TCH1U1)

If there are projects by teachers in their classrooms, I encourage parents to help out to meet the needs of the class. (PRT3U1F)

We need their help... like when they volunteer their services (e.g. during Brigada Eskwela) we no longer need to hire anyone to help maintain the premises. (SHR1)

In addition, parents from US1 maintained that, apart from supporting teaching and learning, they provide funds to cover payment for school utilities (e.g. water and electricity).

Internal respondents recognised other benefits arising from community engagement. Teacher respondents suggested that with parents taking responsibility
for collecting voluntary donations or soliciting financial assistance, their non-
teaching workload had substantially diminished allowing them more time to focus
more on teaching and learning. They said that: ‘Our work became less because
we no longer need to solicit (resources) but instead it is now done by PTA.’ They
also maintained that the community’s participation and involvement in the school
ascertains their tenure and continuous allocation of national funds when they
suggested that: ‘One advantage is the enrolment of learners because it is the
community that provides the learners which affects MOOE and the number of
teachers, etc.’

The majority of teacher respondents also maintained that they could not implement
school programs and projects without the approval of the community. They stated
that, at times, they are unable to implement school projects despite having the
necessary funds to support its implementation because of community resistance.

While external respondents recognise that their support augments the financial
deficiency of the government to fully provide for the delivery of basic education in
their locality, they frame their participation in school from a much deeper sense of
responsibility and for the strategic value and long-term impact of their engagement
in the school, in particular and in the community, in general.

Community respondents from the urban school sites suggested that the school is
strategically positioned to address issues (e.g. substance abuse) affecting the
community. This was corroborated by parent respondents when they suggested
that the school serves as a unifying mechanism where common belief systems are
introduced to the community (e.g. cooperation, teamwork) and where learners are
taught the value of unity in the midst of diversity. Given this strategic position, the
community, according to external respondents, should make a purposive effort to participate in the school.

Furthermore, external respondents argued that the ultimate purpose and intention of engaging the community is the positive impact that this engagement has on the learners, which then flows to the community. They said:

The school can help the community a lot that is why it is important that we do not neglect the school. (PRTF1U1)

Therefore, when the community helps the school, they in turn help the children. (PRTRF3)

A community respondent from one of the rural schools believed that there is higher reason for utilising community participation as strategy in school based management: ‘First and foremost, probably to help the community understand the value of education. … and make the community realise that the education of the children in the community is not only the responsibility of DepEd or the teachers but rather a shared responsibility of everyone and the bigger responsibility belongs to the community.’

7.4. Perceived Roles of the Community in the School

There was consensus among respondents that communities have a critical role to play in schools. Respondents said that the community participated in various aspects of school management such as in: resource generation and mobilisation, enforcement of community ordinances; and provision of timely feedback and consent.
Resource Generation/Resource Mobilisation (Human and Financial)

The majority of respondents identified resource generation and mobilisation as one area of greatest contribution by external stakeholders. All respondents recognised the external stakeholders' financial support to improve the school facilities (e.g. path walk, drainage, water and drinking facilities, covered gym, flag poles, etc.) to implement school projects (e.g. athletic meet, reading program, feeding program, etc.) and to procure learning facilities/equipment (e.g. projectors, electric fans, welding equipment, generators, etc.) that address not only the physical aspects of the school but also improving the academic performance of learners. Respondents highlighted their contribution during Brigada Eskwela, an annual Department-wide initiative to prepare for school opening.

Respondents also noted that external stakeholders organise resource generation activities (e.g. popularity contest, etc.) or provide manual labour for school repairs and maintenance. External respondents also noted their provision of human resources to support the school e.g. the designation of Public Order and Safety Officers by the Barangay to maintain school safety; the provision of resource persons by the Philippine National Police to conduct the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program. This was corroborated by several teacher respondents suggesting that the community have assisted in implementing school projects and in lending their technical expertise on certain topics in the curriculum (e.g. nutrition, blood typing, etc.).

Enforcement of Community Ordinances
External respondents, more so the barangay, argued that one of their critical responsibility is to enforce barangay ordinances that support school operations.

Yes (enforcing) the no smoking and drinking among minors, checking what the sari-sari stores\(^\text{10}\) within 100 metres of the school are selling (e.g. junk food, cigarettes, liquor. (BRGYU1)

We also help the school with the safety of the students. We do enforce a curfew on students in the barangay. (BRGYR2)

Parents also said that it is their collective responsibility to pay attention to school-aged children who loiter during school hours and encourage them to return to school.

If they have concern, the community could help in calling out this behaviour and encouraging the child to return to school. It should be the responsibility of the community to inform the parents of their child’s behaviour. (PRTU3F)

**Provision of timely feedback and consent**

Respondents suggested that external stakeholders provide appropriate and timely feedback to school management. They pointed out that there have been occasions where they took the initiative to advise the principal regarding observations they made. For example ‘Like the security guard house needed repair. I am very open when something needs to be done. They need to forgive me but I

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\(^{10}\) Sari-Sari stores are small neighborhood convenience stores in the Philippines. The literal translation of the word ‘sari-sari’ is variety.
A teacher respondent from one of the urban sites likewise suggested that the community provided timely feedback to improve school projects and overall performance. A teacher respondent from one of the rural sites maintained that they need external stakeholder’s approval to undertake school projects stating ‘I remember that every time we have a new program our previous principal calls for a meeting to discuss the elements of the new program to gain their approval. Once we receive their approval, only then do we implement it. That is why I believe that they are really involved in school management.’

Other areas of involvement cited by respondents were in values formation, school planning and networking. Finally, parent respondents noted that they, together with the local government units, have always been heavily involved in the school; had it not been through the perseverance of community residents the school sites would not exist.

7.5. Perceived Roles of the School in the Community

All respondents believed that the school has a critical role in the community. The majority of respondents argued that the primary role of the school is to meet the children’s educational needs and mould them into productive and independent members of the community. TCH1U1 summarised this point: ‘We contribute immensely to the community because the school moulds the future leaders of the community.’ And a good education, according to the respondents is critical if a child is to succeed in life: ‘And we know that a child is unable to do anything if he does not complete his studies. And he will not be able to get his Diploma if he does not attend school. We have a slogan that ‘education is the solution.’ There will be
no professionals if there is no school.’ Furthermore, community respondents saw the school as an extension of the community where the foundation established at home is reinforced and strengthened by the school.

Apart from the provision of educational services in the community, respondents also cited the involvement in: community cultural and social activities, community services and assistance to community projects, allowing use of school facilities, and during political elections.

**Participation in cultural and social activities of the community**

All teacher respondents maintained that the school participated in community cultural/social activities (e.g. parade, popularity contests, during the town/community fiestas, Christmas gift giving, etc.). A teacher respondent from one of the urban school sites stated: ‘In our town during fiesta we are there to support the program of our LGUs. We do have a give and take relationship. It is not always that it is only the school that receives (from the community, we do help out.’

(TCHFURB1)

An external stakeholder suggested that school staff undertake community services for staff promotion. This was corroborated by respondent SHU2 when he said: ‘These are also used in promotion of the teachers. So as a teacher you could not be promoted if you do not work. Community service is part of the pie, meaning it is part of the function of the teacher or department head and principal.’

**Extending community services and assistance to community projects**

Several stakeholders said that the school regularly conducts community service activities (e.g tree planting, coastal clean-up, community clean-up drives, medical
services, outreach program to the orphanage, etc.) in the community. At times, they also assist in the implementation of community-related projects (e.g. Tulungan sa Purok, waste segregation, etc.)

**Use of School Facilities**

Respondents commented that the schools allow the use of its facilities to serve as evacuation centres in times of calamities and natural disasters for adversely affected community residents. There were instances where one of the rural school sites was used by the barangay to hold community services work e.g. medical mission.

**Participation during political elections**

According to teachers, the community utilises the school as polling precincts during elections. In addition, teachers act as election canvassers tasked with ensuring the orderly conduct of election and the canvassing of election returns.

Other areas such as the integration of community thrusts (e.g. waste segregation, etc.) in lessons and the provision of continuing education (e.g. livelihood seminars) to community residents were also identified as part of the school’s role in the community.

7.6. Analysing Findings against the Theoretical Propositions in the area of Stakeholders’ Understanding of Community Participation in SBM

The theoretical proposition for this area of inquiry is: *Stakeholders’ understanding of the importance of community and community participation influenced their level of engagement in school based management.*
To determine whether school sites confirm or negate this theoretical proposition, observable patterns of behaviour that exhibit congruence between belief/perception and action were identified by:

- revisiting the areas of external stakeholders’ participation in school based management and determine, based on respondents’ accounts, areas where there was observable frequency and depth of engagement;
- examining the nature of disagreements between internal and external stakeholders and perceived hindrances to external stakeholder participation;
- examining the application of participation mechanisms (e.g. school improvement planning); and
- reviewing pertinent school documents (e.g. school improvement plan) with the objective of assessing, triangulating and confirming findings against the theoretical proposition under understanding.

Finally, this section examines how these perceptions and views have impacted on external stakeholders’ engagement in school based management.

7.6.1. **Overarching Concept of Community and Community Participation: A Summary**

Overall there was consistency in respondents’ concept of community from all school sites suggesting that the ‘community’ extends beyond internal stakeholders - an inclusive concept that encompasses both direct and indirect users of the educational services delivered by the school (see Table 7.2). However, respondents’ concept of community as applied within the context of the decentralisation policy varied. While most respondent schools embraced an ‘inclusive’ perception of the community, external respondents from US1 held an ‘exclusive’ view of community suggesting that
only internal stakeholders and the parents form the ‘community’ in the decentralisation policy.

The research found consensus on the significance and role of the community in enabling the school to continually deliver quality basic education (see Table 7.2). However, internal and external stakeholders’ views regarding their motivation for engagement differed. Internal stakeholders viewed community participation from a resource-deficient state model of participation (Taylor, 2011) that draws attention to the government’s shortcomings in delivering public services. Respondent TCH1U1 maintained that ‘First and foremost government could not provide for all school needs. We also need the support/partnership of the community because everyone has a shared responsibility for children’s effective learning.’ This was corroborated by another respondent suggesting, ‘Our government could not give all that we need in the school. So we need to consult with them, present to them the priority projects of the school.’ The purpose of the organisation (PTA) is to finance the needs of the schools that the government could not provide.’ (SHU2)

External stakeholders’ motivation, on the other hand, emanates from a deeper sense of responsibility. While they acknowledged the financial shortcomings of government, they view their involvement as an investment not only on their children but also for the entire community arguing that:

The barangay plays a huge role in the school because these are the two institutions (school and barangay) in developing the community. It is important for the barangay not to neglect the school. (PRTF3U1)

We are willing to help the school because we want it to improve not only for the sake of our children but for future generations. (PRT1R1)
It is definitely good that we have a school in the community because if there is none there will be no way our children will become educated. That is why I am happy to help the school. (BRGY1R2)

Table 7.2 summarises the respondents’ perceptions under the area of understanding:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Concept of Community</th>
<th>Concept of Community in Decentralisation Policy</th>
<th>Reason for Community Participation in School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal Respondents</td>
<td>External Respondents</td>
<td>Internal Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US2</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS1</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS2</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2. Summary of Research Findings in the Area of Understanding

The next section discusses whether internal stakeholders’ perceptions guided or influenced the manner and areas in which they have engaged external stakeholders. Specific attention is given to internal stakeholders as they represent the primary engager and motivator of external stakeholders – the school.

7.6.2. Determining Areas of Frequent and Consistent Engagement

Table 7.3 summarises the changes in participation of external stakeholders in the four school sites and based on respondents’ accounts indicates areas where stakeholders were frequently and consistently engaged:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Participation</th>
<th>School Sites</th>
<th>Details of Activities</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US1 US2 RS1 RS2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Mobilisation (Financial)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• For school-wide projects (fund raising activities e.g. popularity contests, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Brigada Eskwela – education stakeholders provide financial assistance to procure materials e.g. paint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• For homeroom projects (fund-raising and procurement of learning equipment and materials)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Barangay assistance (e.g. faucets, mowing equipment, generator, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Covering payment of school utilities (e.g. water, electricity)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Mobilisation (Human)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Stakeholders provide manpower to prepare the school for the school opening (refurbishing school buildings, gardening, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• City government assigned two police officers class days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Barangay designated POSO/CVO to maintain school safety</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Payment of salary of non-teaching staff (e.g. cleaners, utility, security guards, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at School Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Information dissemination</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Participation in school programs (e.g. graduation)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Attended parent-teacher meetings/card day</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Attended PTA meetings to discuss school issues</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Physical Improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Supreme Student/Pupil Government implemented school improvement projects (e.g. waste segregation, hand washing area, parks, school letter blocks, identifying school policies e.g. public display of affection, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents/Community funded construction of school facilities (e.g. drinking fountains, gym, water tanks, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Participation</td>
<td>School Sites</td>
<td>Details of Activities</td>
<td>Occurrence</td>
<td>Frequency of Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Teaching and Learning**   | US1 US2 RS1 RS2 | - Professionals from the community were tapped as resource persons to deliver topics linked to the curriculum e.g. blood typing, dengue awareness, etc.  
- Parents were tapped as story tellers in a reading comprehension project funded and implemented by a local company in the community  
- Through a Memorandum of Agreement, community business establishments agree as work placements for senior high school students  
- Participation as Parent of the Day to assist in maintaining classroom discipline | Pre 9155   | Post 9155 | Occasional |
| **School Improvement Planning** | US1 US2     | - Consultation  
- Problem Identification  
- Solutions Identification  
- Identification of priority improvement areas  
- Providing feedback of perceived school issues to management | Recurring  | Recurring | Recurring |
| **Networking and Linkaging** | US1 US2     | - Parents were asked to discuss concerns with other parents regarding their children’s performance/behaviour in school programs  
- Linkaging with other government agencies [e.g. PAGCOR], business sector and the alumni  
- Parents were asked to enforce school policies e.g. traffic management, no loitering in school ground during school hours | Occasional  | Occasional | Occasional |
<p>| <strong>Hiring and Firing of Personnel</strong> | US1 US2     | - Parents were involved in terminating the services of the project engineer contracted to oversee the construction of the rain walk | Occasional  | Occasional | Occasional |
| <strong>Conflict Resolution</strong>     | US1         | - The barangay mediated and resolved a conflict between a teacher and learners. | Occasional  | Occasional | Occasional |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Participation</th>
<th>School Sites</th>
<th>Details of Activities</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency of Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>US1 US2 RS1 RS2</td>
<td>• Assisted in disseminating information about the K to 12 program to parents and community</td>
<td>Post 9155</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Project Implementation &amp; Monitoring</td>
<td>US1</td>
<td>• Participation in Bidding process</td>
<td>Pre 9155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitoring project implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Project adjustments (e.g. termination of project engineer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>US2 RS2</td>
<td>• Involvement by signing the form and student-at-risk interventions</td>
<td>Post 9155</td>
<td>Recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Formulation &amp; Implementation</td>
<td>US1 RS1</td>
<td>• Involvement with the implement of the Child Protection Policy in the school in addressing issues like bullying</td>
<td>Pre 9155</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Formulation of school policies e.g. No smoking policy, bullying, etc.</td>
<td>Post 9155</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3 Changes in the Patterns of Participation with Frequency of Engagement in the Research Sites

From Table 7.3, it is evident that, in all four school sites, the areas for frequent external stakeholders engagement were resource mobilisation (financial and human), attendance to school programs/activities, and in school physical improvement. Engagement in these areas of school management had occurred prior to and have persisted after the introduction of RA9155.

Thus, external stakeholders’ involvement in the schools is consistent with internal stakeholders’ perceptions of the reasons underpinning community participation in school based management which is premised on a resource-deficient state model.

However, school improvement planning was another area of recurring external stakeholder engagement across both urban schools. It is worth examining, therefore, with greater detail the extent and level of external stakeholder engagement in the preparation of the school improvement plan.
The Department advocated a participatory planning process through the introduction of a multi-stakeholder School Planning Team tasked to oversee the various stages of the preparation of the School Improvement Plan. Based on respondents' accounts, although external stakeholders were involved in vision and mission setting in US1, stakeholders' participation in both the urban school sites were generally confined to involvement in planning-related consultation workshops. Based on internal stakeholder’s accounts about the SIP process it was the teachers who exercised substantial influence in driving SIP preparation. Hence, although community involvement in the planning process had considerably changed from mere compliance, external stakeholders are still unable to participate in decision-making processes and exercise substantial influence over the school’s strategic direction.

While external stakeholders’ involvement in the area of planning does not determine with certainty that internal stakeholders’ are motivated by their resource-deficient state perspective of community participation this was made apparent during the review of the school improvement plans of the two urban respondent schools. Furthermore, the estimated financial requirement to support the implementation of the current SIP for both urban schools is Php 6,185,825 (AUD 162,784.86) and approximately Php 2,413,000 (AUD 63,500.00) of this is expected to be provided by external stakeholders (parents, local government units, etc.). Given this, it seems that the involvement of external stakeholders in the planning process was in part intended to raise stakeholders’ awareness of the extent of the financial shortfall affecting the ability of the school to meet its goals with the view of facilitating and generating support from stakeholders to implement planned interventions and attain planned objectives.

In the rural school sites, participation of external stakeholders in the planning process was practically non-existent. Based on internal respondents’ accounts, they updated their plans without the involvement of the parents and the community due to the tight
submission timelines. They also shared that previous attempts at SIP preparation were, at times, a ‘copy and paste’ exercise where they borrowed another school’s SIP and they ‘copied’ it with minor modifications. Similar to their urban counterparts, teachers were heavily engaged in plan preparation and that consultation sessions were also held to advise external stakeholders of the issues, programs and projects of the school.

7.6.3. Analysing the Nature of Disagreements between Internal and External Stakeholders

The critical and major conflicts experienced by the schools were generally in the area of financial management in urban respondent schools which further illustrates the areas of frequent engagement of external stakeholders in school management. While urban schools were able to learn from experience and successfully address and mitigate these issues by instituting measures that ensure and strengthen financial management, transparency, and accountability, these issues are also within the purview of resource mobilisation and generation. This also supports the view that external stakeholders were largely engaged in resource mobilisation which is again anchored on a resource-deficient state perception.

In addition, while there were no suggested financial management-related conflicts in rural sites, both rural schools suggested that the lingering perception of school meetings being equated to voluntary donations had been a significant impediment to participation. Both these cases, therefore, support the congruence of internal stakeholders’ perception with their actions.

7.6.4. Determining Impact of Internal Stakeholders’ Perceptions on External Stakeholders’ Perceptions and Engagement
A related issue is how views and subsequent actions of internal stakeholders shaped the way external stakeholders perceive and value their participation in the school.

Years of recurring and constant engagement in resource generation and mobilisation, both at the school and homeroom levels, have forged and reinforced external stakeholders’ views that the value of their participation in school management is limited within this area. This is in spite of the introduction of and their exposure to school based management concepts and practices since 2001. This view was corroborated by external respondents who maintained that their role in school based management was mainly in the area of resource augmentation, mobilisation and generation. A parent respondent from one of the urban schools succinctly captured this when she said that ‘I just have to say what it is. I think (we get involved) only in the financial aspect.’ This view was shared by external respondents from the rural sites when they suggested that their involvement was confined only to provision of financial and manpower resources.

Given their stature in the community and their educational and professional accomplishments, most external respondents have generally been passive actors in school-community partnerships and almost always took a deferential attitude towards school authority. Despite this, external respondents are willing to participate in other areas of school management as suggested by another external respondent: ‘If the principal sees it fit to call the attention of the parents and the community, I believe we should.’

7.7. **Summary**
Based on internal stakeholders’ manifested behaviours and actions together (areas of recurring stakeholder participation, the nature of major disagreements between stakeholders, application of participation mechanisms and school documents) it seems that external stakeholders’ engagement, in all research sites, was anchored on and aligned with internal stakeholders’ perceptions and beliefs of the role and value of community participation in school based management thus confirming the theoretical proposition under the research area of understanding.
CHAPTER 8
EMERGING ISSUES AND ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

8.0. Introduction

Following from the analysis of findings against the theoretical propositions for each research area of inquiry in the previous chapters, this chapter discusses the common themes that emerged across the four school sites to further substantiate findings and broaden the research analysis. These themes are analysed in the light of the discourses on education decentralisation, participation and governance. The chapter also offers research-informed examples of effective practices to provide a concrete perspective of the various themes.

8.1. The Dual Role of the School in the Context of Decentralisation

A recurring theme drawn from the research findings was the collective view of respondents that schools were established because of the initiative of the community acting collectively to address the need to provide quality basic education services to the barangay. This primarily explains external stakeholders’ overarching view of shared responsibility and predisposition to support the school in the delivery of basic
educational services in the community (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, there was general agreement among respondents of the critical role of the school in the community. More than its ability to provide and deliver quality basic education services, it was perceived to be a unifying mechanism where different community values are introduced. These arguments are manifest in external stakeholders’ view of the dual role of the school – as a ‘government entity’ with reporting accountabilities across the education governance structure and as a ‘community institution’ that is expected to take a purposive and active role in shaping and developing the community. This enhanced understanding of the school’s role impacts on several aspects of the Department’s decentralisation efforts in the country.

8.1.1. Impact on education decentralisation efforts

Several decentralisation proponents (Shaeffer 1994; Conyers 1986; Osei-Kufluor and Adeolu 2013; Litvack and Seddon 1999; Kemmerer 1994; Cook 2007) argue that the effectiveness of decentralisation initiatives requires a nuanced understanding and appreciation of the context in which it is introduced. While education decentralisation efforts in the Philippines were predominantly aimed at distributing administrative responsibilities across the education bureaucracy it does not accurately represent the accountabilities of schools owing to this duality of their roles. Unlike the other levels of education governance, schools need to fulfil their sectoral responsibilities and organisational accountabilities of delivering basic education, and meet societal and community expectations partly because of their historical links to the community. As community institutions, they are expected to be
proactive and productive contributors to the community. Apart from their upward relationships and accountabilities, schools, therefore, have lateral and downward relationships and accountabilities as well (see Figure 8.1) consistent with Hooge, et. al’s (2012) suggestion of the schools' multiple accountabilities.

Moreover, an additional consideration is that decentralisation, in the Philippine context, while anchored on building shared responsibility, accountability and engagement of education stakeholders, is a Department-sponsored, externally-induced process that is distant and removed from the community’s experience. This is consistent with Mansuri and Rao’s (2012) argument that community participation in school governance can either be organic (internally-initiated) or induced (externally-initiated) while arguing for organic participation as a more sustainable approach because of its endogenous character. Furthermore, this concurs with Maley’s (2002) argument that decentralisation does not guarantee participation necessitating an intent from the school to actively induce stakeholder engagement.

These enhanced understandings impact, not only, on the mechanisms and systems that allow schools to continually and effectively perform transferred functions and responsibilities but also on the ability of these mechanism and systems to enable schools to reframe and transform an externally induced process to one that becomes inherent and organic to the community. Facilitating acceptance and ownership is critical in the light of the objectives of shared governance and democratic consultation as enshrined in RA9155. The apparent difficulties of stakeholders in US1, RS1 and RS2 (see Chapter 6) in understanding the rationale behind the SGC and in sustaining the functionality of this mechanism were a case in point in the research.
8.1.2. A re-conceptualisation of school-community partnership

The findings indicate that education decentralisation in the Philippines is not merely about devolving or transferring responsibilities but is a purposive effort to build shared responsibility and accountability among education stakeholders to improve learning outcomes. Encouraging and developing shared responsibility and accountability necessitates a re-conceptualisation of the school-community partnership as a productive and mutually benefitting participation model anchored on a broader recognition of the critical position and role of the school in the community and not solely based on its resource-deficient status. West Burnham, et. al. (2007) frames this as the social context of education – that given the objective of shared responsibility and accountability for learning outcomes - the school recognises the more significant, wide-ranging social and personal factors that affect learner performance.

Several educators (Sergiovanni, 1994; West-Burnham, et. al. 2007, Combs and Bailey 1992; Epstein 1995) have advocated for the proactive role of schools in undertaking community building efforts, arguing for a purposive effort from the school to work and contribute towards its regeneration as an integral part of school based management efforts. Benson (1996) suggested that all schools require robust communities to create an enduring partnership to improve learning outcomes that promote sustainable and inclusive community development. Shaeffer (1994) also supported this view when he encouraged schools to work with other sectors in community development efforts (see Box 1 for the experience of RS2 in working with the community).

The Department actively advocates for communities to share in school governance and become partners in improving educational outcomes. Sharing in governance demands a departure from a tokenistic approach to participation (participation by consultation) which was evident in all school sites, towards an approach that
purposively and actively engages external stakeholders in the substantive and strategic aspects of school management. This supports the view of Burns et.al (2004) that externally-induced initiatives, more often, misconstrue participation with consultation.

However, if the Department expects communities to share in governance, the inverse - where the school participates in community governance - should also be expected. This supports the views of Combs and Bailey (1992), Benson (1996) and Shaeffer (1994) who espoused the view of schools as active participants in their community’s development.

**BOX 1**

**ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Located in an island municipality, RS2 had been involved in several community activities that raise awareness on environmental preservation and protection in the community such as in proper waster segregation and the annual community coastal clean-up.

The school’s determined involvement in community efforts was rewarded during last year’s Brigada Eskwela when various community sectors overwhelmingly supported efforts to help prepare the school for the opening of the academic year. As a consequence, RS2 was recognised for its efforts in Brigada Eskwela at the Regional level.

The school, as a non-politically aligned community institution, is in a unique and pivotal position to facilitate productive social interaction and become a unifying mechanism providing avenues where social interaction happens, trust is built and community social cohesion is achieved (Claridge 2004). Taking a more proactive role in community development and governance will generate goodwill towards the school, which it could, in turn, take advantage to improve shared responsibility for learning outcomes, thus gaining the ability to fulfil both its sectoral and societal responsibilities.
Finally, research findings also reveal the need to invest in developing, harnessing and nurturing the partnership which was evident in the changes on the level of external stakeholder engagement in school based management in US2 (changing from low stakeholder engagement to high stakeholder engagement) and RS1 (changing from high stakeholder engagement to low stakeholder engagement). Thus, education partners should continually assess school participation policies and mechanisms with the view of determining their effectiveness not only to facilitate agency and voice of education stakeholders to participate within the context of decentralised education management but likewise to recognise and celebrate areas of effective practices in school-community partnerships. This substantiates Brownlea’s (1987), Bude’s (1989), and Shaeffer’s (1994) assertion of the unwarranted cost of participation and the needed investment in terms of time and resources in making the partnership work.

8.2. School and Community Capacities in Managing the Partnership

Other common threads that emerged from the research findings are on the school’s organisational capacity to manage community expectations and on the competence and capacity of external stakeholders to participate in school based management that were evident in the ability of education stakeholders to manage the partnership (e.g. power and voice) between the school and the community.

8.2.1. Internal School Capacity

Increased teacher involvement in key areas of school management (such as in school improvement planning, management of school projects, etc.) was observed in all school sites (see Chapter 5). Findings are that teachers, apart from their primary teaching duties, were involved in various stages of the school improvement planning (see Table 5.3), were appointed to various school cross-functional committees, and
were entrusted leadership positions in school projects. This involvement of teachers in key areas of school management improved their competence in non-teaching functions and helped create a sense of shared responsibility in the school. This supports Wohlstetters’ (1995) and Caldwell’s (2005) findings that providing more opportunities for teacher-led decisions is one of the conditions that make SBM work better at the school level. (see Box 2 for the experience of US2 in this area).

BOX 2
GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF TEACHERS IN SBM INITIATIVES

Teachers were heavily involved in the implementation of several school-based management initiatives in US2. With the support of the school head, they were the driving force behind the preparation of their school’s improvement plan. Being a large school, planning was initiated at the Department level, which then informed the school-wide SIP ensuring that teachers had a say in informing the new school priorities.

In addition, teachers are also instrumental in managing the SBM Office, a school-level structure set-up to oversee SBM-related initiatives at the school.

However, while teacher participation in various areas of school management opened opportunities for skills enhancement, according to the teachers, this placed a strain on their ability to perform their primary teaching and learning function which was evident in schools with a small complement of teaching personnel such as in RS1 and RS2. In addition, it was observed that teachers were, at times, co-opted to occupy vacated positions as some teacher respondents had no knowledge of some of the non-teaching committee or tasks assigned to them.

Another theme observed in the majority of the schools was teachers’ perception that external stakeholders tend to ‘overstep’ and impinge on their responsibilities in the school (see Chapter 5). The examples of overstepping suggested by teachers were primarily about roles that were outside of the ‘traditional’ areas of engagement by
external stakeholders in school-based management (e.g. classroom discipline, on classroom project implementation).

Notwithstanding the context and the manner with which these opinions were expressed, the ability to articulate and lend voice to opinions, according to Paul (1992) is critical in effective participation. It is through this that external stakeholders shape policy and inform and/or influence the delivery of educational services in the community. According to Rocha Menocal and Sharma (2008), the ability to voice opinion is an expression of the external stakeholders’ innate power to articulate their concerns regarding a service, which, in the Philippine context, most believe will be their means to alleviate poverty. Hence, it is disconcerting when external stakeholders’ ability to articulate or voice opinions is labelled as ‘overstepping’ because it manifests profound concerns over how internal stakeholders view community engagement within the context of decentralised education management.

First, this perception is an indication of the internal capacity\footnote{Capacity is defined in this research as both capability (knowledge, skills, attitudes) and systems/mechanism/processes that enable individuals or organisations to effectively perform their responsibilities/mission.} of the school to manage community engagement. Education decentralisation and an appreciation of the dual role of the school in the community place undue pressure on the teachers who had not been adequately prepared to manage community engagement and expectations. The introduction of decentralisation and the greater engagement of stakeholders in education management exposes the lack of internal school capacity to manage participation and community empowerment that necessitates the development of new sets of competence in internal stakeholders. This finding concurs with Caldwell’s (2005, p.18) view that ‘capability building in the successful experience of school-based management’ is critical.
Second, it exposes the implicit boundaries placed on external stakeholders’ participation in schools, which goes to the core of shared governance, responsibility, and accountability. Decentralisation is a change process that opens avenues for greater participation of education stakeholders in school management. Therefore, schools cannot act as if it is just ‘business as usual’ (Wohlstetter (1995 p. 23) and go about performing their tasks unmindful of the changes in the way the Department conducts and delivers its business. When external stakeholders are asked to share in the responsibility and accountability of improving learning outcomes of the community youth, schools should be proactive and expect increased external stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, expecting external stakeholders to share accountability for improving school learning outcomes given that they have partial to no control over the school’s strategic direction is unreasonable and unrealistic.

Gibson and Woolcock (2008) suggest that ‘empowerment is a fundamentally conflictual process’ (p. 153) in which communities may challenge the long-standing views and practices of school management at the school. Therefore, employing community participation requires a degree of openness, competence from the school (and the education sector, in general) and a rethinking of current organisational processes to better manage and facilitate community interest and engagement channelling these into productive results for the school and the community. This confirms Cook’s (2007) view of the manifest gap between expectation (as indicated in the legal mandate) and actual undertaking of decentralisation and Wohlstetter’s (1995) view of the ‘extent of system-wide changes that decentralisation entails’ (p.1).

Finally, it is reflective of the value that internal stakeholders place on the ability of external stakeholder to participate in the more substantive areas of management in the school. Internal stakeholders’ view of overstepping may come from an understanding that external stakeholders do not have the qualifications or experience
to lend their opinions on matters around teaching and learning which leads us to the succeeding point about the capacity of external stakeholders when accorded broader opportunities for participation in school based management.

8.2.2. External Stakeholders’ Capacity

A frequent concern across all schools was the limited time that external stakeholders have to productively engage with the school due to work commitments (see Chapter 5) which is consistent with Brownlea’s (1987), Bude’s (1989) and Shaeffer’s (1994) view which highlights the unwarranted cost of participation.

The other concern is the deferential attitude of stakeholders which reflects their level of competence and confidence to actively engage in school participation mechanisms. Similar to the teachers, external stakeholders may not have the necessary preparation or experience to engage in school-community participation mechanisms such as the PTA or SGC, especially in rural sites where disparities between the educational attainments of internal and external school stakeholders are evident. While external stakeholders from urban school sites still exhibited a degree of deference to school leadership, they seem to engage better in productive discussions, had the confidence to question, and influence the conversation and discussions with the school leadership and competently articulate their views and in a limited capacity contribute to the process of school governance. This exemplifies Mansuri and Rao’s (2012) argument of communities needing to develop the ‘capacity to engage’ (p.91) to navigate the democratic space, manage the processes of governance, and the intricacies of political negotiation and alliance building. However, to enable external stakeholders to participate and enable agency, they need to have ready access to pertinent and relevant information that would make them informed participants in the decision-making process as was the case in constitution of the SGC in all the schools sites. This
confirms Andrew and Shah’s (2002) and NORAD’s (2013) views that access to pertinent and critical information enables voice and agency thus improving transparency and accountability in participation.

8.3. The Impact of Culture (Organisational and Community)

Community and organisational culture was another recurring theme that affected community participation in school-based management. Culture is defined as a particular community’s or organisation’s ideas, customs, values, norms, and standards of behaviour that influences the manner by which they interact to achieve goals (Niemann and Kotze (2006); Chatman and Jehn, 1994). Findings indicate that both community and organisational culture played a significant role in the way stakeholders acted or behaved with respect to community participation in the school (see Chapter 7).

8.3.1. Community culture and its impact on participation in SBM

The majority of respondents shared that several prevailing community beliefs have either worked for or against improving engagement and participation in school-based management. All respondents consistently cited the culture of ‘bayanihan’ as an element of Filipino culture that was predominantly used to encourage participation in school activities (see Chapter 1 and Chapter 7). As mentioned previously, ‘bayanihan’ (derived from the Filipino term ‘bayan’ meaning town or country) refers to the spirit of community unity among townfolks to attain common goals. Respondents recognised that it was the spirit of bayanihan that moved the community to work towards establishing schools in their localities and it is the same spirit that continually motivates the community to work with and for the betterment of the school. This confirms Collins and Ison’s (2006) and Tritter and McCallum’s (2006) view, when they critiqued Arnstein’s
(1969) Ladder of Participation, that power is not always the reason why people participate (see Box 3 for the experience of RS1 with ‘Bayanihan’).

While bayanihan brings out the positive aspects of the community that facilitate active participation, other attitudes such as the “bahala na” (come what may) and the attitude of deference to authority challenge the school’s capacity to engage the community in school based management (see Chapter 5). Schools need to find a balance in taking advantage of these values or face the repercussion of exploiting these values which may end up being counterproductive. For example, there was the lingering perception of school meetings as veiled efforts to generate more donations to the school, which considerably affected participation in all school sites (see Section 5.2).

**BOX 3**

**BAYANIHAN IN ACTION**

RS2 is situated in a remote rural farming community and is the only public elementary school in the barangay.

The school was initially located on the far end of the barangay and initially offered Grades 1-4 classes. When the need for new facilities to accommodate the incoming Grade 5 students was apparent, barangay officials sought the assistance of one of the affluent families in the community to donate a portion of their land to accommodate the growing school population.

Through the persistence of community leaders, the family agreed to allocate part of the land to the school. To this date, the family extends assistance to the school by providing school supplies, sponsoring pupils, and conducting medical mission.

Given the dual role of the school (e.g. sectoral and societal), understanding community culture is critical in: contextualising the introduction and application of management practices in a decentralised education environment, identifying mechanisms and strategies to engage and enhance community participation in school based management, and enabling the school to engage in community development efforts, specifically in shaping or re-shaping community culture.
8.3.2. Organisational culture and its impact on community participation in SBM

Organisational culture was observed to have affected community participation in school based management. One of the recurring incidents observed in both the supervising Division offices was their seeming partiality to ‘form’ more than ‘substance’ and to ‘compliance’ more than ‘understanding.’ This was evident in the school improvement planning process where the supervising units of the Division Offices were more concerned on the grammar, style and format of the SIP rather than on the process, its substance and overall integrity. While style and format is important for readability and maintaining standards, this overemphasis had led to a ‘cut and paste’ culture of SIP preparation which all respondent schools alluded to having done at one point. A culture of compliance was also observed in the establishment of the SGC where most respondent schools admitted constituting this mechanism merely out of compliance and in the non-utilisation of SBM assessment results to inform planning (see Chapter 6).

These practices are reflective of the school’s and Division offices’ lack of understanding and appreciation of underpinning motivations behind the introduction of participatory approaches to school governance. In addition, they highlight the value that internal stakeholders place on the ability of external stakeholders to participate in the governance process and influence the strategic priorities of the school within the context of decentralised education management.

Organisational culture, according to Parker and Bradley (2000, p.125), is ‘central to the change process and to the attainment of strategic objectives.’ Following this proposition, culture is central to the implementation and application of decentralisation/school based management, as change interventions to education
reform and to the attainment of the objectives of shared governance in a decentralised education management context. An understanding of prevailing organisational culture also enables the schools and other levels of education hierarchy to undertake an informed process of evaluating suitable strategies in developing and harnessing stronger school-community partnerships in school-based management. This, therefore, emphasises Faguet’s (2014) point of decentralisation, being a systemic change intervention that challenges and transforms organisational culture and the mechanisms of governance.

8.4. The Critical Role of the School Head

Finally, one of the significant themes that emerged from the research is the pivotal role of the school head in widening or limiting the sphere of community participation in school management within a decentralised education context. This was apparent in the urban schools when respondents noted the school heads’ inclusive management style and openness to collaborate with external stakeholders and that SGC meetings were dependent on the school head. This was also evident in the involvement of external stakeholders during the SIP preparation process where schools engaged their stakeholders in varying aspects of the planning process (see Box 1 for the experience of US1 in the area of school leadership).

**BOX 4**

**AN INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE**

After facing serious financial management issues that eroded external stakeholder’s trust on the school leadership, the new school leadership in US1 made purposeful efforts to restore external stakeholders’ confidence on the school.

More than just the mechanisms that were instituted to mitigate future financial management issues, the school head’s inclusive style of leadership and management had facilitated rebuilding process. External stakeholders highlighted the school head’s openness to work with them stating that:

*‘But now our relationship with the current school head is friendly and (he is) more approachable. And if he has something to tell us, he makes it a point to see us and not wait the next time we come to the school. That did not happen in the past. And the current principal will ask our opinion, that is his approach... and not because he is the head of school is we follow his opinion.’*
While findings under this theme are consistent with Epstein’s participation framework of overlapping spheres\textsuperscript{12} of influence (see Figure 3.4) they also broaden her work on school-community partnership by underscoring the significant and influential role of the school head in widening and limiting stakeholders’ sphere of engagement and participation in school based management.

Hence, while shared responsibility from all stakeholders is encouraged to ensure the education of the youth in the community, there is a greater expectation on the school head to engage, grow and sustain the partnership between the school and community to enable stakeholders to share in the responsibility of education governance. The school head, being the school leader, has the onerous task of championing and creating a culture that maximises the potentials and benefits of broader participation of external stakeholders in school based management. This confirms both Hands’ (2010) and San Antonio’s (2008) proposition of the pivotal nature of the role of school heads in a decentralised education management system.

The significance that is placed in the school head’s role affirms the need to ensure the competence of school heads to lead and take a central role in facilitating and strengthening school-community partnerships in a decentralised management environment which confirms Caldwell’s (2005) and Pont, et. Al’s (2008) view of professionalising school leadership. It was evident from the research that some school

\textsuperscript{12} The framework recognises that children learn and grow in three major environments – the family, the community and the school. Thus, establishing a partnership between these three environments is essential for providing opportunities that allow children to achieve their best.
heads lack the necessary theoretical and practical preparation for the position and that attendance to continuing professional development on school-based management does not necessarily translate to actual application of learning at the school. Being in this critical position and the primary recipient of professional development on school-based management, other education stakeholders therefore, are reliant on the depth of knowledge, skills and experience of the school head. For example, school heads were observed to have influenced the manner and depth with which external stakeholders were engaged in the school and had shaped the way in which they value their engagement within the context of decentralised education management. Teacher’s understanding of school-based management as ‘school head’s empowerment’ also supports this view. This supports several education proponent’s (Leithwood and Riehl 2003; Hands 2010; San Antonio 2008; Pont, et. al. 2008, Yukl 2002) views about the centrality and significance of the process of influencing as a leadership function. Furthermore, this also confirms Niemann and Kotze’s (2006) findings that highlights the significant role of the school head in influencing organisational culture that embrace and support change in management practices within the context of decentralised education management.

In the light of the ‘deferent’ disposition of both internal and external stakeholders, the school head is in a strategic position to influence and shape stakeholders’ views on community participation in a decentralised education environment without the prospect of being questioned.

Reliance on the school head highlights another significant and recurring finding across all school sites: that while education decentralisation in the Philippines was meant to redistribute authority and responsibility, the process had inadvertently centralised authority and influence at the school level onto the school head. This supports the view of several decentralisation proponents (Bray 2001; Caldwell 2005; Bjork 2007; Daun
2009; Litvack and Seddon1999; Zajda and Gamage 2009) that centralisation could exist within the context of decentralisation and thus there is a need to find a balance between centralisation and decentralisation. Moreover, the finding also supports the view posited by Harris (2002), Leithwood (2001), Ogawa and Bossert (1995), Neuman and Simmons (2000), Copland (2001), Sergiovanni (1984), and Pont, et.al. (2008) of the importance of a move towards a distributive leadership style that builds on the principle of shared accountability which recognises and capitalises on the diverse competence of all education stakeholders to perform leadership functions within a decentralised education management environment.

8.5. Summary

This chapter outlined the common themes in the research findings across all the research sites which have broadened and deepened the initial analysis undertaken in each area of inquiry in Chapters 5 to 7.

The dual role of the school (both as sectoral and community institutions) has ramifications for the ability of schools to effectively deliver educational services within the context of decentralised education management. This realisation also highlights the need to re-conceptualise school-community partnerships anchored on a broader recognition of the critical position and role of the school in the community and not solely based on its resource-deficient status.

Another element identified was on the capacity of education stakeholders to manage the engagement and productively contribute to strengthening and deepening the partnership between the school and community. Community culture can work for or against stakeholder participation in school based management. Similarly, prevailing organisational practices and culture within the Department can influence how
community participation is valued and maximised in a decentralised education management context. It was shown that the school head has a crucial and pivotal role, being the school leader, to change school culture, expand, limit or deepen community participation in school based management.

After analysing the research findings, the next chapter discusses the overall theoretical propositions, the research’s contribution to the school-community discourse and future directions that the Department may undertake to build, enhance and sustain community participation in school based management.
9.0. Introduction

The chapter addresses the main research question and each of the areas of inquiry of the research. Thereafter, it discusses the research’s contribution to the continuing discourse on school-community partnerships by way of a conceptual framework based on the research findings and analysis.

Finally, the chapter outlines future directions that may be undertaken as a way to further broaden and deepen community participation within the context of decentralised education management in the Philippines.

9.1. Overview of the Research Framework and Methodologies

The main research question was: How has decentralisation affected the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines? In order to respond to this question, the research examined three interrelated areas:
• Stakeholders’ understanding of community and community participation in SBM which examined prevailing perceptions of community and understanding of the reasons for adopting this strategy in education decentralisation;

• Quality and substance of community participation which studied the changes in the pattern of community participation before and after the introduction of RA9155; and

• Forms and modalities of participation in schools which examined mechanisms of participation in the school, specifically focusing on the functionality of the SGC.

Four school sites were selected as research sites each representing the following variables: Urban Environment – High Participation, Urban Environment – Low Participation, Rural Environment – High Participation, and Rural Environment – Low Participation.

The case analysis approach was used as the main research methodology with semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as tools for data gathering. Analysis was done on two levels. In the first level analysis, findings were examined using the pattern-matching process where empirically found theoretical propositions were analysed against predicted propositions (see Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of the research methods and analysis). The analysis process either confirmed or negated these theoretical propositions and explanations were offered to provide rationale for the results. In the second level analysis, common themes that emerged from the research sites were identified and analysed to further substantiate and explain findings in the first level.
9.2. Conclusions to the Research Areas of Inquiry

This section discusses the conclusions in each of the areas of inquiry based on research findings and analysis.

9.2.1 Quality and Substance of Community Participation in SBM

In the inquiry area of quality and substance of community participation, the research examined changes in the pattern of community participation in SBM after the introduction of RA9155. This area of inquiry responded to the following question and theoretical proposition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theoretical Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have there been changes in the pattern of community participation in school management after the enactment of RA9155?</td>
<td>Changes in the pattern of community participation in school governance is nominal as parents and community engagement is still confined within resource generation/mobilisation activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine these changes, the research utilised Reimers’ Matrix of Dimensions and Degrees of Community Participation in Education. Modifications to Reimers’ matrix were introduced to reflect the research findings and highlight the changes to the level of community engagement before and after the introduction of RA9155 in the schools. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 provide an overall picture of the changes in the pattern of participation across the four school sites.

Research findings suggested that, overall, community attitude and engagement improved after the enactment of RA9155. According to the majority of respondents, although participation in resource mobilisation and generation was evident prior to the
enactment of RA9155, involvement in this area had improved as reflected in efforts in Brigada Eskwela, a national initiative to prepare (e.g. building maintenance and repairs, gardening, etc.) the school before the start of the school year. However, participation in other areas of school management had been mixed across the schools. Findings indicate that, more than their rural counterparts, urban school sites had changed from ‘mere use of the service’ to between ‘involvement through consultation (or feedback)’ and ‘participation in the delivery of a service as a partner with other actors’ following Reimers’ scale in other areas of school management such as in school improvement planning and school policy formulation and implementation. Moreover, community influence over strategic decisions in areas of management where community engagement was observed had been limited because the nature of their participation was mostly attendance at workshops. Table 9.1 highlights in triangles the aspects where changes in participation were observed across the four research sites in the areas of school planning (changing from mere use to involvement through consultation/feedback), policy formulation (changing from mere use to involvement through consultation/feedback), and school policy implementation (changing from mere use to participation on implementation of delegated power) extracted from Tables 5.2 and 5.3:

Hence, we can conclude that, when analysing participation in strategic areas of school management (specifically in urban research sites), changes to participation had been modest, thus negating the theoretical proposition in this area of inquiry.

9.2.2 Forms and Modalities of Participation

In the area of forms and modalities of participation, the study explored the functionality and the effectiveness of the SGC as a mechanism of community participation in school based management. Other forms of participation in the school were also explored.
Respondents’ opinions and extant documents on SGC developed by the Department were utilised to ascertain the functionality and effectiveness of the SGC as a broad-based mechanism for community participation at the school level.

The area of inquiry responded to the following question and theoretical proposition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theoretical Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What were the various avenues (formal and informal) by which the community/stakeholders participated in school management?</td>
<td>The SGC was constituted for compliance and did not function as originally envisioned by the Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings and analysis, it appears that SGCs, in a majority of the sites, were constituted out of compliance (see Section 6.2) and did not function (refer to Chapter 6, section 6.3) as a mechanism for participation in these schools. The SGC was observed to be functional in one of the four schools however even its functionality was limited when assessed against the expected functions proposed by the Department (see Section 6.6.1).

Other forms of participation were identified such as the Alumni association, partnerships with funding agencies, pupil/student councils, partnerships with government and non-governmental organisations and the Parent Teacher Association. From among these mechanisms of participation, the PTA was better organised and was observed as a more functional participation mechanism for the parents (see Section 6.4).

Thus, the School Governing Council, which was intended as a broad-based mechanism for participation was, in most cases, only constituted out of compliance and findings suggest that no purposive effort was made to make this participation mechanism
functional in majority of the sites. Therefore, research findings confirm the theoretical proposition in this area.

Moreover, it is not possible to draw any meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the SGC as a vehicle for meaningful community participation in school based management, at this stage. However, the PTA, which was perceived by respondents as being similar to the SGC in function, was already organised and was a functioning mechanism in all of the schools.

9.2.3. Stakeholders' Understanding of Community and Community Participation in SBM

In the area of understanding of community and community participation in school based management, the research examined stakeholders’ concept of community and of community participation in school management. It also examined how these perceptions influenced the level of stakeholders’ involvement in school management. The area of inquiry responded to the following question and theoretical proposition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theoretical Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What were stakeholders’ concepts of community and views about the role of community participation in SBM?</td>
<td>Stakeholders’ understanding of the importance of community participation influenced their level of engagement in school based management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2 summarises the research findings in this area. With respect to stakeholders’ general concept of community, all respondents believed that it encompasses everyone – the school head, teachers, learners, parents, community and the barangay. However, perceptions were varied among respondents in terms of what they believed the concept of community is in the context of the decentralisation policy.
Respondents in one school site perceived the community as being exclusive only to the school.

Regarding the reasons for community participation in schools, both internal and external respondents believe it is because of shared responsibility. However, for internal respondents, this is premised on the inability of government (resource-deficient state to provide the necessary resources to deliver basic education), while for external respondents’ it emanates from an appreciation of the value of education and the school in the community (see Table 7.2).

Specific attention was given to internal stakeholders as they represent the school, being the primary engager and motivator of external stakeholders. To determine if internal stakeholders’ perceptions influenced their behaviour towards community participation in SBM, the study:

- determined the areas where external stakeholders were frequently and consistently engaged (see Table 7.3);
- reviewed participation processes and their application at the school level (see Section 7.6.2);
- analysed the nature of disagreements between internal and external stakeholders (see Section 7.6.3); and
- reviewed extant school documents (e.g. school improvement plans, etc.).

Taking into account internal stakeholders’ behaviours and actions (areas of recurring stakeholder participation, the nature of major disagreements between stakeholders, application of participation mechanisms and school documents), it seems that external stakeholders’ engagement in all of the schools, was anchored on and aligned with internal stakeholders’ perceptions and beliefs of the role and value of community
participation in school based management thus confirming the theoretical proposition under the research area of understanding that stakeholders’ understanding of the importance of community participation influenced their level of engagement in school based management.

9.3. Conclusion to the Main Research Question and Theoretical Proposition

The overall research question explored the impact of decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school based management in the Philippines. As communities participate at the school level via school-community partnership mechanisms, the research posited that within the context of education decentralisation, school-community partnerships are reciprocal relationships that are anchored on education stakeholders’ collective appreciation of the critical role of the school as a community institution and on the recognition of the value of education in the community. This section discusses the conclusion on the study’s overall research question and theoretical proposition as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Research Question</th>
<th>Overall Theoretical Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How has decentralisation affected the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines?</td>
<td>Productive school-community partnerships are reciprocal relationships built on a mutual recognition of the value of education and on the collective appreciation by education stakeholders of the critical role of the school as a community institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enactment of RA9155 – Governance of Basic Education Act provided the legal foundation for:
• decentralising decision making to the school level when it encouraged local initiatives for improving the quality of basic education by empowering the schools and learning centres to make decisions on what is best for the learners they serve;
• decentralising fiscal management and to formulate a system that enables equitable allocation of resources;
• rationalising the Department structure to make it responsive to a decentralised model of education governance; and
• opening avenues for the meaningful engagement of stakeholders at appropriate levels of education governance.

This legal framework enabled the Department to introduce several decentralisation-related initiatives that promoted greater engagement and participation of education stakeholders at all levels of education governance.

The study found that participation is an inherent aspect of community life in the Philippines embodied in the Filipino concept of ‘bayanihan’ (see Chapter 8). Within the purview of ‘bayanihan’, the study found that communities were involved in schools even before the enactment of RA9155 mainly in the areas of resource generation and mobilisation and attendance to school activities (see Chapter 5).

Education decentralisation, as a concept, is distant and removed from the experience of the community. The research found that, more than being anchored on the goals of decentralisation, community involvement and engagement in schools was anchored on the concept ‘bayanihan’ (working together for the common good) (Chapter 8), on the appreciation of the value of education as a means to a better future for their children (Chapter 5 and 7) and on an appreciation of the role of the school as a community institution to facilitate and deliver this service (Chapter 7).
research also found that Department initiatives to implement RA9155 had opened more avenues for external stakeholders to participate in various aspects of school based management such as in school improvement planning, formulation and implementation of school policies (Tables 5.2 and 5.3), the introduction of participation mechanisms such as the SGC and in the introduction of the SBM scale of practice, to name a few (Chapter 2). The study identified factors that influenced the broadening and deepening of external stakeholders’ participation in school based management. One of the key challenges was internal stakeholders’ perception and appreciation (conceptual) of the role and value of community participation in school based management (see Chapter 7) which influenced and guided their behaviour and attitudes towards community participation in school based management. Another factor identified in the research is the competence of internal stakeholders in managing increased expectations and levels of participation of external stakeholders (Chapter 5). Similarly, external stakeholders’ competence to participate in school management was also a significant factor in ensuring productive engagement in school partnership mechanisms. Moreover, even in instances where these participation mechanisms and processes were implemented, external stakeholders were mainly involved in consultation workshops and were not engaged in the significant and critical aspects of participation processes that would have accorded them the ability to participate in decision making to influence school direction and priorities (Chapter 5).

From the findings, analysis and conclusions in each of the individual areas of inquiry and across all the research sites, it appears that there was mutual recognition by education stakeholders of the value of education on the community and there was collective appreciation of the role of the school as an educational institution that delivers basic education in the community. However, while external stakeholders’ contribution in augmenting the schools’ resource gaps were found to have persisted and increased
after the enactment of RA9155, the ability of external stakeholders to contribute and influence strategic areas of management had been modest in strategic areas of school management (see Table 9.1)

Overall, decentralisation, as an externally-induced initiative, had provided the necessary legal framework and mechanisms to promote community participation within a decentralised education management context. Moreover, the research found that the schools have yet to fully maximise this potential to develop and harness school-community partnerships that are productive and mutually benefiting mechanisms to both the school and the community.

9.4. Contributions

This section discusses the research’s contribution to the evolving discourse on school-community partnerships and outlines the recommended conceptual framework emerging from the research findings.

9.4.1. Research Contributions to School-Community Partnership Discourse

The study was able to contribute to the evolving discourse of school-community partnerships. One significant conceptual contribution of the research was expanding Epstein’s (1995) framework of partnership - the Overlapping Spheres of Influence. Epstein’s framework identifies three critical stakeholders in education – the School, Family, and the Community - and posited that the interaction between these three groups creates opportunities and activities that enable students to succeed. She suggested that the extent of the overlaps between these spheres depend on the
Table 9.1. Changes in the Patterns of Community Participation in Strategic Areas of School Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADDITIONAL EDUCATION/ MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>REIMERS' LEVELS OF DEGREES OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEFORE THE ENACTMENT OF RA915S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make use of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Planning</td>
<td>U11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Policy Implementation</td>
<td>U11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing Policy</td>
<td>U11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
quality of interaction between these groups, and that an action team composed of representatives from each stakeholder groups be formed to take responsibility for ‘assessing present practices, organizing options for new partnerships, implementing selected activities, evaluating next steps, and continuing to improve and coordinate practices for all six types of involvement’ (p.708)

However, from this research, the school head has a pivotal role in widening, deepening or even limiting the interaction of these critical stakeholders in the Philippine context. The study found that the school heads exercise considerable influence and power over what happens in the school and therefore are able to dictate and orchestrate the manner and depth of interaction of stakeholders at the school level.

Another research contribution with respect to methodology was related to Reimers’ Matrix of Dimensions and Degrees of Community Participation in Education. In this research, additional education management functions were identified and included (see Table 5.3) thus allowing the matrix to be more reflective of the current education management functions performed by schools in the Philippines.

Overall, the research contributes to the ongoing and evolving discourse on school-community partnerships and support the continuous strengthening and deepening of participation in schools in the Philippines.

### 9.4.2. A Proposed Conceptual Framework

A research conceptual framework (see Section 4.1.1) was utilised to study and explore the impact of education decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school based management in the Philippines. It studied education stakeholders’
appreciation and understanding of community and role of community participation in school based management (conceptual), explored the changes in the patterns of community participation after the enactment of RA9155 in terms of depth and quality (substance), and examined the various forms or modalities of community participation in schools (structural). The framework also acknowledged the influence other levels of education governance have on the schools in undertaking school-based management initiatives, and the overlaps between these three major areas of study.

The research demonstrated and confirmed the relationship between the three areas of inquiry, finding that there was a strong correlation between stakeholders’ understanding and perception (conceptual) with the quality and substance of community participation in school based management (substance). Chapter 7 discussed internal stakeholders’ perceptions of the value and role of community participation in school management (which stems from a resource-deficient state perceptive) and found that it had influenced the manner and the areas in which external stakeholders were frequently and consistently engaged (see Table 7.3). The research found that anchored on internal stakeholders’ ‘resource-deficient state perspective’, external stakeholders were largely and consistently engaged in resource generation and mobilisation activities to augment scarce school resources. Although opportunities for greater community participation were centrally introduced, the research found that only in urban school sites were external stakeholders involved in other areas of school management such as in school policy formulation and school improvement planning (see Table 5.2 and 5.3). This was further substantiated in Chapter 8 where the role of the school head as critical to broadening or limiting of community participation in school management given that decentralised functions were centralised onto the school head, was highlighted. Another point raised in Chapter 8 was the renewed understanding of the dual role of the school which necessitates, not only a shift in paradigm but likewise the identification of new
competencies that need to be developed to enable education stakeholders to effectively participate in school-community partnership.

Moreover, the study also showed that internal stakeholder’s behaviour (quality and substance) had, in turn shaped and reinforced the way external stakeholders perceive (conceptual) their role and the significance of their participation in school management perceiving their role to be mainly in the areas of resource mobilisation, resource augmentation and attendance at school meetings as discussed in Chapter 5.

The study also indicated that internal stakeholders’ perception (conceptual) impacted on the functionality of participation mechanisms (structural) in schools. Chapters 6 and 7 discussed findings that internal stakeholders’ perception of the similarity of the SGC with the PTA had impacted on the functionality of the SGC mechanism in the majority of the schools. This perception (conceptual) by internal stakeholders of the similarity of the SGC and the PTA was identified as having hindered external stakeholders’ ability to exercise strategic influence over decision and school direction and priorities (substance).

Overall, the study found a strong relationship between the research’s areas of inquiry. It was able to correlate that understanding influenced internal stakeholders’ attitudes and behaviour which then impacted on the organisation and functionality of participation mechanisms that would have allowed external stakeholders to participate in school decision making processes and in influencing the school’s strategic direction and priorities. This, therefore, supports the effectiveness of the research conceptual framework in studying community participation practices in school based management in the Philippines.
While the research conceptual framework was able to facilitate the study, the same framework can be transformed into a conceptual framework to strengthen school-community partnerships within the context of decentralised education management. Figures 9.1 until 9.5 will progressively be developed to illustrate different elements of the revised conceptual framework in school-community within the context of decentralised education management in Figure 9.6.

One of the main areas of inquiry of the research was in *stakeholders’ understanding*, which focused on exploring prevailing concepts of community, and perceptions on the role of community in school based management. Based on this initial research focus, this study evolved a more nuanced understanding of the dual role of schools (see Figure 9.1). The school, apart from being a sectoral institution is a community/social institution with its historical links to the community and a role in developing the community. This concept is significant and critical in ensuring the effectiveness of decentralisation initiatives in the Philippines as it recognises the social context of education and the school’s multiple layers of accountabilities (to learners, parents, and the wider community): ‘*multiple accountability increases legitimacy and trust from the local community through processes of learning and feedback*’ Hooge, et. al 2012, p.12).

The *quality and substance of participation* research focus explored the changes in the pattern of community participation in school based management after the introduction of RA9155. Beyond just determining changes in community participation,
the study recognised the principles and conditions that impact on the deepening, broadening, and strengthening of community participation in school management.

The research underscored the critical role of the school head in broadening or limiting the participation of stakeholders in school based management. Within the context of decentralised education management, the school head plays a pivotal role in influencing the extent, depth and quality of interaction among education stakeholders. The research also highlighted the centrality of the leadership role of the school head in:

- championing the dual role of the school, in establishing productive school-community partnerships that work towards the mutual benefit of the school and the community;
- improving the quality of interaction and participation by developing and/or enhancing the capacity of the school and the community; and
- promoting a culture that upholds and supports the principles of transparency, accountability and shared governance (see Figure 9.2).
The research findings also highlighted the significance and impact of organisational capacity and culture of the schools in engaging education stakeholders in school based management. The study highlighted the need for competent and capable school (internal) stakeholders that are able to manage participation and empowerment of external stakeholders and ensure quality interaction and participation in school-community partnership mechanisms. It likewise demonstrated the impact of organisational culture in evaluating the appropriateness of and contextualising decentralisation strategies to engage the community better in school based management. Both organisational culture and school capacity affect the role of the school as a sectoral institution (see Figure 9.3).

Similarly, the research supported the significance and impact of community capacity and culture on school based management by highlighting the need for competent and capable community (external) stakeholders that are able to productively engage and contribute to school management in a decentralised education environment. Community culture may either facilitate or hinder engagement in school-community partnership mechanisms and both community culture and capacity affect the role of the school as a community institution (see Figure 9.4).
In the area of **forms and modalities of participation**, the organisation and functionality of the SGC was reviewed while concurrently identifying other forms of participation at the school. The research found that in most of the schools the SGC was non-functional largely because of the perceived functional similarity between the SGC and the PTA. In addition, most schools did not see the need to establish the SGC when they felt that another mechanism (such as the PTA) was able to satisfy their perceived expectations from community participation. Furthermore, other, more organic mechanisms of participation should be investigated to see if these local mechanisms are able to perform the role expected of the SGC (see Figure 9.5).

Finally, the research findings support the role and the direct influence of the various levels of education governance (e.g. Central, Regional and Division) in reinforcing and promoting a renewed concept of school community partnerships. It is also important to highlight the impact of the changing social, economic, and cultural conditions in the community that affect community culture and capacity which then impacts on the ability of the school to fulfil their social responsibilities. While these elements of the conceptual framework were derived from the findings across the schools, their introduction and application is a context specific process thus allowing for a process that is unique to each school and community (Cook 2007).

![Figure 9.5. Elements of Revised Framework](image-url)
sites, the revised Conceptual Framework (see Figure 9.6) provides both a conceptual framework for viewing school-community partnerships within the context of decentralised education management and a practical framework to further harness and strengthen school-community participation within the purview of education decentralisation.

![Revised Conceptual Framework](image)

**Figure 9.6. Revised Conceptual Framework Emerging from the Research**

### 9.5. Future Directions

This research can inform future research initiatives in mapping out and determining the impact of community participation in school based management in the Philippines. The Department could adapt the research framework as the research parameters are comparable and replicable to most conditions in the country. As the research did include schools from indigenous communities, other research could study how communities participate in school based management within a decentralised management context in schools largely servicing indigenous communities which may
potentially result in a more nuanced, culturally-sensitive and specific set of recommendations for schools working in these communities. Similarly, further research that recognises that the cultural diversity in the Philippines is much more textured than urban-rural communities and indigenous communities is needed.

This research results only investigated four schools so future research could investigate other policy development efforts around strengthening school-community partnerships and community participation within the context of decentralised education management. In particular, further research could also be undertaken to explore the impact of school-community partnerships in school based management on student learning outcomes pre and post introduction of decentralised management strategies.

Finally, the research results may broadly inform further studies on school-community partnerships within the context of school based management.
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APPENDIX 1
Sample Data Gathering Instrument

INSTRUCTIONS

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research and for making time for this interview.

I am Ronald Bucud, a Masters Research candidate at the RMIT University. RMIT University is an Australian tertiary institution based in Melbourne, Victoria.

The Interview Process

Before we begin the interview, I would like to remind you about your rights as participants and how we will protect and respect your privacy and maintain confidentiality in the research (hand a copy of the participant’s rights).

The interviewer mentions that the interview will be recorded and the process of how they will be de-identified in the final transcript.

Note: At this point collect the signed Participant Consent Form (if the interviewee has not handed the signed form)

The Interview Process: A Final Reminder

There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions and facts about the research topic as it pertains to your position and school. I would encourage you to be as candid and honest in your responses.

I. Personal Information

Name (optional):

Gender: □ Male □ Female

Position

No. of years in service: __________ Place of Residence:

No. of years as SH:

Highest Educational Attainment:

Have current children in the school? □ Yes How many? ____  □ No

II. Conceptual Understanding of Community and Community Participation

These series of questions explore your concept of community and community participation.

1. To be effective in your role as a school head, what critical relationships do you need to establish or have established and nurtured? Why?
2. You’ve mentioned that one of the critical relationships you need to establish is the community, what is your concept of community?

3. Do you believe that the community has a role to play in school management? Do you believe that the school has a role to play in the community?

4. When the IRR of RA9155 states “parents and the community shall be encouraged for active involvement in the education of the child”, who do you think was the IRR referring to as “community” in relation to the school?

5. How does this compare with your own concept of community?

6. What is your view about the strategy of engaging the community in school management – its nature and purpose?

III. Patterns and Forms of Participation in School Management

This section explores the changes on the patterns and depth of participation by the community in school management. It also explores the various mechanisms (formal/informal) by which the community participates in school management.

7. Prior to the implementation of RA9155, in what ways has the community participated in the school? Please cite examples.

8. The BESRA has supported the constitution of the School Governing Council (SGC) as the primary avenue of participation by the community in school management. What do you perceive is the role of the SGC in school management?

9. In your opinion, how important is the SGC in the effective functioning of the school?

10. Have you established an SGC? If No, proceed to Q27.

IF YES TO SGC

11. How was it constituted?

12. What were the criteria used in selecting members?

13. What is the composition of the SGC?

14. How often does the SGC meet?

15. Apart from the regular members, has anyone been invited to participate in the SGC? In what capacity have they been invited?

16. Did the school introduce any modifications to the SGC composition and functions? Why?

17. Can you describe your role in the SGC? What functions does your role perform in the SGC?

18. What issues and concerns do you discuss in the SGC? How are these issues/concerns raised?
19. What decisions have you made in the SGC? How do you reach decisions in the SGC?

20. Have there been occasions where disagreements arose? In what areas where the disagreements on? How were these resolved?

21. What factors have facilitated or hindered the functioning of the SGC?

22. In your opinion, what are the major accomplishments of the SGC?

23. In your opinion, how has the SGC represented the interest of the community in the school and vice versa?

24. Did the school receive support from the Division/Region in implementing the SGC? What type of support did the school receive? How did you find the support provided? Do you require other support apart from what was provided?

25. Apart from the SGC, are there other avenues (formal/informal) where the community participates in the school?

26. How were these mechanisms established? Who are involved in these mechanisms?

27. In what areas of school affairs/management have they been involved in?

28. In what way have they been involved in (e.g. planning, resource generation, technical resource, implementation, evaluation, etc)

29. In your opinion, what were the major accomplishments under these mechanisms?

30. In your opinion, what are the factors that facilitated or hindered the effective involvement of the community via these mechanisms? PROCEED TO Q38

X IF NO TO SGC

31. Why was the school unable to establish the SGC?

32. In the absence of the SGC, in what ways has the community participated in school affairs/management?

33. How were these mechanisms established? Who are involved in these mechanisms?

34. In what way have they been involved in (e.g. planning, resource generation, technical resource, implementation, evaluation, etc)

35. Have there been occasions where disagreements arose? In what areas where the disagreements on? How were these resolved?

36. In your opinion, what were the major accomplishments under these mechanisms?

37. In your opinion, what are the factors that facilitated or hindered the effective involvement of the community via these mechanisms?

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL PROJECTS (SBM Grants, NGO-funded, etc.)
38. Did you avail of the SBM grant? If No, proceed to Q10

39. What is the SBM grant all about? What issue was the grant addressing?

40. Was this identified as one of the priority improvement areas in the SIP?

41. How was the proposal prepared? Who were involved in the preparation of the proposal?

42. Did you experience any difficulties in accessing the funding facility? Please explain. How did you address these difficulties?

43. What steps did you take to implement the proposal?

44. Has the community/parents been involved in the implementation of the project?

45. What were the results?

46. What factors facilitated or hindered the attainment of project objectives?

47. Were/Are there other similar projects implemented in the school which were not funded by the Department? IF NO, PROCEED TO Q59

48. What were/are the projects? Who funded these projects?

49. How did this funding come about?

50. Were this identified as one of the priority improvement areas in the SIP?

51. How was the proposal prepared? Who were involved in the preparation of the proposal?

52. What steps did you take to implement the proposal?

53. Has the community/parents been involved in the implementation of the project?

54. What were the results?

55. What factors facilitated or hindered the attainment of project objectives?

56. Have there been changes in the way the community participated in the school after the implementation of RA9155? Can you cite examples?

57. In your view what are the factors that affected the participation of the community in this school?

58. Overall, what do you perceive are the effects (benefits/disadvantages) of involving the community in school affairs/management?

59. One major critique with regards to schools adopting this strategy is that the relationship tends to be one-sided or school-centric. Is there truth to this in your school? Why?

60. Which of these description best describe the practice of community participation in your school? (Show Schaeffer)

61. How have these changes affected your role as a school head?
• Responsibilities
• Expectations
• Accountabilities

62. What challenges have you faced in engaging the community in your school?
   How have you overcome these challenges

63. Did you feel empowered or felt that you had the power to introduce meaningful changes that affect school management?

64. What are you particularly proud of in your school in terms of its partnership with the community?

IV. Wrap up

• Discuss how the data will be processed and used.
• Recommend other people to interview?
APPENDIX 2
Possible Document Requirements

DETAILED RESEARCH AREAS

The research revolves around determining the effect of decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines. To determine this, the research examines three interrelated areas, namely:

Stakeholder’s Understanding (Conceptual)
This area explores various school stakeholder’s understanding and assumptions about decentralisation (as operationalised through school based management) and community participation in school management.

Depth and Substance of Participation (Quality)
This area explores the quality of community of participation in school management. In this area, the research explores the impact of decentralisation on the patterns of community participation over time in terms of:

- who participates;
- how stakeholders participate;
- the nature of decisions made;
- the breadth of management areas where communities have contributed (moving beyond traditional, resource-extraction roles);
- the quality of interaction between and among internal and external stakeholders;

The research also explores how the community’s socio-economic-cultural life impacts (facilitates or hinders) on the depth and quality of participation in school management.

Forms of Participation (Structural)
This area examines the current and emerging forms of participation by the community in school management. In this area, the research explores the:

- functionality of the SGC model—identifying facilitating and hindering factors;
- strengthening of current participation structures;
- emergence of other structures/networks that are better and proven avenues of participation in school management

POSSIBLE DOCUMENTS TO SUPPORT RESPONSES

Given the nature of the research, some possible documents that may be required are:

- School Improvement Plan (current and past plans)
- School SBM Assessment (current and past assessments)
- External Funds/Grants received (historical)
- Minutes of Meetings (historical)
- Project Proposals and Reports
- Socio Economic Profile of the Community
- Other documents may be requested depending on the flow of the interview and focus group discussions.
14 August 2014

Dr. Jose Roberto Guevara
Associate Professor and Research Supervisor
School of Global, Urban and Social Studies
RMIT University
Melbourne, Australia

Mr. Ronaldo Bucud
Masters Research Student
School of Global, Urban and Social Studies
RMIT University
Melbourne, Australia

Subject: Permission Granted to Conduct Research in the Philippines

Dear Associate Professor Guevara and Mr. Bucud,

This has reference to your letter dated 28 April 2014 requesting the Department of Education (DepEd) to grant permission to study the effect of education decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school-based management in the Philippines.

We are pleased to advise you that the Department has agreed to grant you permission to:

- Conduct the research in public schools in the Philippines;
- Interview key personnel at various levels of education governance about the research topic, subject to their availability during the research period;
- Use results of the School-Based Management (SBM) Assessment to determine the level of stakeholder participation in the school;
- Use the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) data and other extant Department documents and literature relevant to the study;
- Use the Master List of Public Schools; and
- Secure contact details of selected key personnel at various levels of governance for purposes of sending information and consent forms to potential study participants.

As per your request, we will likewise be assisting in identifying the pilot-test site and actual regional study site where the research will be conducted.
However, we expect the research team to:

- Comply with ethical norms and standards;
- Take precautionary steps in respecting the privacy and confidentiality of participating units and individuals;
- Provide updates on the conduct of the research;
- Share the results and findings of the research study with the Department; and
- Provide us a copy of research questions in advance prior to the conduct of the research.

We have nominated Mr. Roger B. Masapel from the Planning and Programming Division-Office of Planning Service to be your key contact while undertaking the research. You may contact him through Telephone Number 02-6337216 or his email address roger.masapel@deped.gov.ph.

We hope to maintain close collaboration with you.

Sincerely yours,

[Redacted]

Department of Education
DeplEd Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines
APPENDIX 4
Sample Letter of Invitation to Participate

[DATE]

Subject: INVITATION TO SIGNIFY INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY

Dear [NAME OF SCHOOL HEAD],

We are writing to invite [NAME OF SCHOOL] to signify its interest to participate in a research study conducted by Ronaldo Bucud, a Master of Social Science by Research student at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University, an Australian tertiary institution based in Melbourne, Australia. This study has passed the RMIT Ethics Committee and is conducted with the consent of the Department of Education.

The research investigates how decentralization affected the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines. The study hopes to contribute in:

- establishing an understanding of the practice of community participation in school-based management within a decentralized environment in the Philippines;
- gathering pertinent information that will inform efforts to review the existing legal framework, implementing rules and regulations and other attendant processes and procedures (e.g. SBM Accountability Model, SGC Manual) to implement RA9155; and
- providing pertinent information to educators on how to strengthen and maximise the inherent potential of engaging the community in school management.

In order to answer the research question, the study looks into three interrelated areas of inquiry, namely: [1] Stakeholders’ understanding of education decentralisation (as operationalized through SBM) and of community participation in school management; [2] the quality of community participation in SBM; [3] and emerging forms/modalities of community participation in school management. The research’s unit of analysis is the School Governing Council. The study utilises the case research method as its primary approach with semi-structured interview and focus group discussion as its data gathering techniques. There will be four schools selected for this study.
[NAME OF REGION] has been selected as one of the Regional sites for the study and your Division has provided consent to participate in this research. We are currently in the process of inviting and selecting potential school sites for the research and it is in this light that [NAME OF SCHOOL] is being invited to signify its interest to participate in the study.

To assist the school in deciding to participate in the research, we have included, for your perusal, a detailed description of the research project and other pertinent matters such as privacy and confidentiality, participant’s rights, research contacts, among other things. This, we hope, will enable the school to arrive at an informed decision whether or not to participate in the study. Should the school decide to participate, it will need to:

- Sign a **school consent form** indicating that the school willingly agrees to participate in the study. This needs to be signed by the School Governing Council or its representative/s. This is built into the pre-selection questionnaire; and
- Complete a **pre-selection questionnaire**. The questionnaire comes in two forms – a hard copy and in a Microsoft Excel file. Although you can use any of the two forms, we prefer that you use the Microsoft Excel file. If you have an email address and wish to respond to the questionnaire using the electronic version, please email Ronald Bucud in the below email account to provide you a copy of the electronic file.

Please return the completed pre-selection survey on or before [Date] via any of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>[Indicate email address]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post</strong></td>
<td>Attention: [NAME OF REGIONAL CONTACT]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Address Line 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Address Line 2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHILIPPINES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please find, together with this request letter, a copy of the Project Information Sheet, the Consent Form and the Pre-Selection Questionnaire.

We hope for your considerate and positive response to this request.

Please do not hesitate to contact Ronald Bucud if you need further clarification. Thank you very much.

Respectfully yours,
Dear ________,

The above research project is being conducted by RMIT University with the support and consent of the Department of Education. You has been identified as one of the potential participant to the research. It is in this context that you are being invited to participate in this undertaking.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the study, please ask one of the investigators.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

The research is undertaken by Ronaldo Bucud, a research student in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University. RMIT University is an Australian tertiary institution located in Melbourne, Australia. The School of Global, Urban and Social Studies is one of RMIT’s largest schools whose vision is to contribute to a just and sustainable world through the delivery of education training and research activity. Additional information about the School and RMIT University, please follow this link: http://www.rmit.edu.au/socialhumanities

The research is supervised by Dr. Jose Roberto Guevara, Associate Professor from the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies and Dr. Annette Gough, Professor from the School of Education. The study is undertaken as part of a Master of Social Science by Research degree. This study has been approved by the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee and is supported by the Department of Education – Philippines.
What is the research about? What are the questions being addressed?

The proposed study intends to examine the effects of education decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines. Education decentralisation in the Philippines began 12 years ago with the enactment of Republic Act 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001.

One of the major strategies the Philippines adopted to implement RA9155 was the introduction of School Based Management (SBM). This was evident in Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda as one of its key reform thrust. SBM implementation in the Philippines involves the engagement of the community in school management through the establishment of a School Governing Council. Although globally there have been extensive studies to determine the effects of decentralisation on community engagement, efforts to study its effects in the context of the Philippine basic education governance have been negligible. Recognising this gap, the study’s main research question is: How has decentralisation affected the practice of community participation in SBM in the Philippines?

To answer this, the study examines three interrelated areas, namely – stakeholder understanding, quality and depth of participation, and emerging forms of participation in school management.

A total of 125 people are expected to participate in the research.

Why have you been approached?

You have been approached because of the critical nature of your current position to the implementation of education decentralisation efforts in the Philippines.

The Department of Education – Philippines has given permission for the conduct this study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

Participation in the research would mean:

- Signing a school consent form signifying your willingness to participate in the study.
- Committing at least 1-1.5 hours of your time to actively discuss and share your perception of and experience in relation to the research topic.

  Interviews will be scheduled on a mutually agreed time. You may decide to be excused from the interview and FGD should the process prove to be uncomfortable or distressing; and
- Reviewing and validating the interview and discussion transcriptions.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no perceived risks or disadvantages associated with participation in the study as the study revolves around discussing regular activities related to education decentralisation. Also, the research takes purposive steps in ensuring that privacy and confidentiality is adhered to in the entire study. Anonymity is ascertained in the final interview and FGD transcripts.

However, as has been previously stated, participants may, decide to opt-out of the FGD should they feel uncomfortable. There are no
disadvantages, penalties, or adverse consequences if you choose not to participate in the research.

What are the benefits associated with participation?
There will be no direct benefit that may accrue to you as a result of participation in the study. However, the information you provide will contribute in:

- establishing an understanding of the practice of community participation in school-based management within a decentralized environment in the Philippines;
- gathering pertinent information that will inform efforts to review the existing legal framework, implementing rules and regulations and other attendant processes and procedures (e.g. SBM Accountability Model, SGC Manual) to implement RA9155 and provide BESRA information in its efforts to achieve its key reform thrusts; and
- providing pertinent information to educators on how to strengthen and maximise the inherent potential of engaging the community in school management.

What will happen to the information I provide?
The study will take all necessary steps to safeguard the data collected from the study and ensure confidentiality and anonymity in all steps of the research. Data will be aggregated and will employ the use of pseudonyms and other de-identifying techniques.

The data will be viewed and managed by the research team that will process, transcribe, analyse and interpret the data collected.

Results will be used to prepare the research report and will be disseminated through the RMIT Thesis Repository which is a publicly accessible online library of research papers of RMIT students. The data (i.e. raw information and/or images) will be kept securely at the University for 5 years after publication before being destroyed.

What are the your rights in participating?
The following are your rights as a participant:

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time;
- The right to request that any recording cease;
- The right to have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant;
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication; and
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact for any questions?
For any concerns regarding the research, the you may contact, via email or phone, the following:

If you have any complaints about your participation in this project please see the complaints procedure at [http://www.rmit.edu.au/research/human-research-ethics](http://www.rmit.edu.au/research/human-research-ethics)
APPENDIX 5
Project Information Pack (Filipino)

IMPORMASYON HINGGIL SA PROYEKTO

Pangalan ng Proyekto
Pakilkilahok ng Komunidad sa Pamamahala ng Paaralan
Isang Pag-aaral hinggil sa epekto ng desentralisasyon ng edukasyon sa pakilkilahok ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan sa Pilipinas

Mga Mananaliksik
Dr. Jose Roberto Guevara
Associate Professor
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+61 3 9925 3046

Dr. Anette Gough
Professor
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Ronaldo Bucud
Mag-aaral
S3365045@student.rmit.edu.au
+61 3 99259045

Ang pagsasaliksik na ito ay isinasagawa ng RMIT University na may pahintulot at suporta ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon. Ang inyong Rehiyon at Dibisyon ay napili bilang isa sa mga lugar na kung saan maaring isagawa ang pagsasaliksik. Dahil dito kayo ay inaanyayahang lumahok sa nasabing pagsasaliksik.

Mangyari lamang na masusing basahin at unawain ang nilalaman ng dokumentong ito bago magdesisyo nang magdesisyon tungkol sa pag-aaral, mangyari lamang na tanungin ang mga Mananaliksik.

Sino ang mga mananaliksik?
Ang proyekto ay isinasagawa ni Ronaldo Bucud, isang mag-aaral sa School of Global, Urban and Social Studies ng Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University. Ang RMIT University ay isang unibersidad sa Australia sa Melbourne, Australia. Ang School of Global, Urban and Social Studies ay isa sa mga pinakalamaking eskwelahan ng RMIT na ang pananaw ay tumulong sa pagbubuo ng isang makatarungan at ‘sustainable’ na mundo sa pamamagitan ng edukasyon, pagsasanay at pananaliksik. Para sa karagdagang impormasyon hinggil sa RMIT University at sa School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, mangyaring puntahan ang website na ito:

http://www.rmit.edu.au/socialhumanities

Bakit isinasagawa ang proyekto?
Ang proyekto ay isinasagawa ni Ronaldo Bucud, isang mag-aaral sa School of Global, Urban and Social Studies ng Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University. Ang RMIT University ay isang unibersidad sa Australia sa Melbourne, Australia. Ang School of Global, Urban and Social Studies ay isa sa mga pinakalamaking eskwelahan ng RMIT na ang pananaw ay tumulong sa pagbubuo ng isang makatarungan at ‘sustainable’ na mundo sa pamamagitan ng edukasyon, pagsasanay at pananaliksik. Para sa karagdagang impormasyon hinggil sa RMIT University at sa School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, mangyaring puntahan ang website na ito:

Isa sa mga pangunahing estratehiyang ginamit upang maisakatuparan ang RA9155 ay ang pagpapatupad ng School Based Management. Sa katunayan, isa ito sa mga pangunahing layunin ng Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda. Bahagi ng pagpapatupad SBM ay ang pakikibahagi ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan sa pamamagitan ng pagtatatag ng School Governing Council.

Bagama’t may malawak pagsasaliklik na sa buong mundo hinggil sa epekto ng desentralisasyon sa pakikibahagi ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan, wala ganitong pagsasaliksik sa batayang edukasyon sa Pilipinas. Ito ang puwbang na nais tugunan ng proyektong ito. Dahil dito ang pangunahing katanungan na nais tugunan ng pagaaral na ito ay: Paano naapektuhan ng desentralisasyon sa edukasyon ang pakikibahagi ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan sa Pilipinas?

Upang lubusang masagot ang katanungan ito, sisiyasatin ng proyekto ang tatlong magkakaugnay na aspeto -- ang paagakabasa ng mga tao hinggil sa desentralisasyon at pakikibahagi ng komunidad, ang kalidad at kalidad ng paglahok ng komunidad at ang umuusbong na porma ng pakikilahok sa pamamahala ng paaralan.

Sa kabuuan, 125 katao ang inaasahang lalakhang sa pagsasagawa ng proyektong ipinakita ito. Napapahintulutan ng Kagawaran ang pagsasagawa ng pagsasagawa ng pagsasagawa na ito sa paaralan. Ang listahan ng mga paaralan, mga tauhan ng eskwelahan ay ibinigay ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon sa pamamagitan ng inyong Rehiyon.


Pinahintulutan ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon ang pagsasagawa ng pagsasagawa ng pagsasagawa na ito sa mga Rehiyon at Diibisyon. Ang listahan ng mga paaralan, mga tauhan ng eskwelahan ay ibinigay ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon sa pamamagitan ng inyong Rehiyon.


Pinahintulutan ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon ang paglalakhang sa pagsasaalo ng pagsasaalo na ito sa inyong Rehiyon at Diibisyon. Ang listahan ng mga paaralan, mga tauhan ng eskwelahan ay ibinigay ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon sa pamamagitan ng inyong Rehiyon.

Ano ang layunin ng pananaliksik? Ano ang mga katanungang nais matugunan ng pagaaral?

Ang paaralan ay aanyahang magpakita sa paraan na ito ang inyong Rehiyon o sa ibang talakayan. Kung kayo ay kasang-ayon, kinaakalaang:

- Basahin, unawain at lagdaan ang dokumento na nanggagawa ng pagpapahayag ng pagsang-ayon ng paaralan sa paglalagay sa pagsasaalo na ito. Ito ay kailangang lagdaan ng School Governing Council o sinumang opisyal na inilagay na inaasahang ito.
- Pahintulutan ang mga guro at mga mag-aaral na magkakaroon ng 1.5 hanggang 2.5 na oras upang makipanayam o sumasa sa
talakayan upang magbahagi pananaw hinggil sa paksa ng proyekto
- Pahintulutan ang mga guro o mga mag-aaral na repasuhin at pagtibayin ang pagkakasipi ng panayam o talakayan.

Itatakdita ang mga panayam o talakayan sa araw at oras na napagkasunduan ninyo at ng mananaliksik. Maari mong itigil anumang oras ang panayam kung ikaw ay nababahala sa daloy ng inyong talakayan.

**Ano ang posibleng panganib o pinsala?**
Walang nakikita na panganib o pinsala ang paglahok sa pagsasaliksik dahil ang paksa ng pagsasaliksik ay iikot sa karaniwang mga gawain sa paaralan. Dawag na, gagawa ang proyekto ng mga hakbang upang panatilihing lihim ang inyong katauhan.

Gayunman, maaaring umurong ang kalahok kung ito ay nababahala sa daloy ng talakayan.

**Ano ang mangyayari sa impormasyong naibigay ng paaralan?**
Walang direktang benepisyong pagtataas na pagsasaliksik. Gayunpaman, ang impormasyong inyong ibabahagi ay makakatulong sa:
- Pagtatataba ng pangunahing kumuli sa paksa ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan sa Pilipinas
- Pagkatapal ng impormasyon na maaaring makatula ng RA9155 at iba pang mga proseso upang isakatuparan ito. Maari din makalagay ng impormasyon upang matulungan ang mga taunang matamo ng BESRA ang kanyang layunin; at
- Makapagbigay ng mahahalagang impormasyon sa mga tao at ng paaralan sa pagbubuo at pagpapalibad ng relasyon sa pagitan ng komunidad at ng paaralan sa pamamahala ng eskuwela.

**Ano ang mga karapatan ng paaralan sa paglahok?**
Sisiguraduhan ang pagsasaliksik ang pangangala ng mga nakalap na datos at tityakin din ng proyekto na panatilihing kumpidensyal ang pagkatao ng mga lumahok sa kabuuan ng pag-aaral.

Ang datos ay gagamitin at papamahalaan ng grupo ng mananaliksik na siyang mag po-proseso, magsasaliin, magusuri at magbibigay-kahulugan sa nalikom na datos.


Ang mga sumusunod ay ang karapatan ng paaralan sa paglahok sa pag-aaral:
- Bawiin ang inyong paglahok sa pag-aaral anumang oras;
- Hilingin ang pagtigil ng pag-record ng panayam
- Bawiin ang anumang datos na hindi napo-proseso sa kundisyon maaring maaring makatulunin.
ibinahagi at sa kundisyong hindi lalong malalagay sa mas matinding panganib ang kalahok

- Mapanatilihing lihim ang inyong pagkatao sa anumang larawan/litrato sa anumang dokumento bago ito malathala
- Masagot ang anumang katanungan hinggil sa pag-aaral anuman oras

**Kung ako ay may katangungan hinggil sa pag-aaral, sino ang maaring kong kausapin?**

Para sa karagdagang katanungan hinggil sa pagsasali, maaring ipagbigay alam ng paaralan sa mga sumusunod:

Thank you for taking time to respond to this pre-selection questionnaire.

APPENDIX 6

Pre-selection Questionnaire

RMIT University, an Australian tertiary institution based in Melbourne, is conducting a research which examines the effect of education decentralisation on community participation in school based management in the Philippines.

The research is conducted with the permission and consent of the Department of Education.

The Selection Process

Region IV-A CALABARZON has been selected as the research's study site. We are inviting you to participate as your Division agreed to participate in the study. The study will select four focal schools sites based on these two variables: (1) economic classification of the locale of the school and (2) the school’s level of SAM practice.

This process will assist in identifying the four schools. All schools within your division will be invited to complete the pre-screening questionnaire based on the shortlisted schools. RMIT University and the Region will make the final selection of the four focal school sites.

Please be advised that this is a region-wide selection process.

Responding to the Questionnaire

1. Please make the results of your latest assessment of school level of Practice handy as you will need to refer to this document when responding to some of the questions.

2. Responses to most of the questions should be evidence-based. If selected as one of the focal study sites, you will need to provide these documents when requested.

3. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions and facts about the research topic as it pertains to your position and the Department. I would encourage you to be candid and honest in your responses.
APPENDIX 6
Pre-selection Questionnaire

Please read the following instructions carefully:

1. The questionnaire is password-protected and you are only given permission to use specific cells. You will be prompted to put in a password to write on these cells. The password to access these cells is "1" without the quotation marks.

2. The questionnaire has four (4) sections, namely:
   - Part 1: Basic School Information
   - Part 2: ISM Level of Practice Assessment
   - Part 3: School Improvement Process
   - Part 4: Participation of Stakeholders

3. NEXT and BACK buttons are located at the end of each section to facilitate movement from one section to the other.

4. Some cells have drop-down choices signified by the "Please select" statement in the box. Click on the drop-down arrow beside the box to reveal the choices.

   What Division do you belong to? (Dibisyong)
   Please select

5. Some questions are open-ended. A descriptive text box is provided to type your responses. Just click on the box to begin typing.

6. It would be good practice to click save after completing every section of the questionnaire.

7. After completing and saving the questionnaire, email the completed questionnaire to:
   - r336516@student.rmit.edu.au
   - r60257@gmail.com

Masining basahin ang sumusunod na tagubilin sa paggamit ng talabangunan.

1. Upang magamit ang paldanggunungan to, kailangan gumamit ng isang "password. Kapag sila gumamit ng type may natala na kahon upang teto ang password. Ang password para magamit ang to ay "1" na wala ang puno.

2. May isip (4) na bahagi ang pagamit ng talabangunan:
   - Upang magharing iibigay ang talabangunan
   - Isipin ang paldanggunungan na hindi sa Palarangan
   - Itatanggap si Pancun sa Antas ng Pagpasensyon ng ISM sa Palarangan
   - Isipin ang talabangunan na makapal sa pagbabago ng paldanggunungan to.

3. Wukitla si Lola ng iba't ibang bahagi ug IDNT at BACK button na maaring pinaghiupan madiploma sa bawat bahagi ng paldanggunungan to.

4. Ang isip na magamit ng talabangunan na may kalagay "Please select" ay may tukang mga paraan. Naglalagay "Please select" ito sa kabuuan magpapalit ang tukang.

   What Division do you belong to? (Dibisyong)
   Please select

5. Ang isip na magamit ng talabangunan ay magpahalagaan ng iba't ibang bahagi. Naglalagay "Please select" ito sa kabuuan magpapalit.

6. Minumungkahi kase ang dokumento pagkatapos naglalagay ng iba't ibang bahagi.

7. Pagkatapos dumitenshin at ito ang talabangunan, pasilat na sa sumusunod na email:
   - r336516@student.rmit.edu.au
   - r60257@gmail.com
"Studying the effect of education decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school-based management in the Philippines."

Consent to Participate (Pahintulot sa Paglahok)

I, on behalf of the School, have read the project information sheet and willingly agree to participate in the research as discussed in the said document.

I understand that the information collected from this questionnaire may be used in the preparation of the thesis

(Pirma sa panasa o sa pagtuturo o sa kahulugan ng mga talaang nangyari sa proyekto.
Dahil dito, ako, bilang kahulugan ng proyekto, ay sumasang-ayon na gumuhit sa pagbiliran ng nau na ito.
(Nawawalan na ang impormasyon makakalat sa pak滔tumangang ito ay marating nanini
sa paghahanda ng thesis.)

YES

You may now proceed to do the pre-selection questionnaire. Please begin the questionnaire by clicking on P1-Info.

Moari na akin ang simulang talaan. Moari nyo ng simulang pak滔tumangang ito.
Pindutin ang P1-Info.

Consent provided by: (ibinigay ang pahintulot nito)

Name (Pangalan): __________________________________________
Position (Posilyon): ________________________________________
APPENDIX 6
Pre-selection Questionnaire

Name of School (Pangalan ng Paaralan)

What Division do you belong to? (Dibryon)
Please select

Address (Lokasyon ng Paaralan)

Year Established (Taon ng Pagkakataon)

Total Number of Enrollment (Bilang ng Enrollment)

Number of Teaching Staff (Bilang ng Guro)

Number of Non-Teaching Staff (exclude teacher designates) (Bilang ng mga maa maa Administrasyon)

Economic Classification of School Location (Pang-economisang klasifikasyon ng lugar kung saan nakakatayo ang paaralan)
Please select

When is a barangay considered Urban?
(1) If a barangay has a population size of 5,000 or more, then a barangay is considered urban, or
(2) If a barangay has at least one establishment with a minimum of 100 employees, a barangay is considered urban, or
(3) If a barangay has 5 or more establishments with a minimum of 10 employees, and 5 or more facilities within the two-kilometer radius from the barangay hall, then a barangay is considered urban.

A barangay that does not fit these criteria is considered Rural.
Appendix 6: Pre-selection Questionnaire

**PRE-SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

**LEVEL OF SBM PRACTICE**

To respond to the questions in this section you will need the copy of your most current Assessment of SBM Level of Practice available for easy reference.

Upara mapapagpatuloy ang mga katanungan sa bahaging ito, kailangan ninyo ang resulatang inyong pinakabagong pagkatasa ng SBM Level of Practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Last Assessment</th>
<th>Current level of SBM Practice</th>
<th>Frequency of Conduct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peta ng pinakabagong pagkatasa</td>
<td>Kasahikuyang antas ng SBM Practice</td>
<td>Dala ng pagpasayaw sa pagkatasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please select</td>
<td>Please select</td>
<td>Please select</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What were your raw scores for each Dimension?

Ako ang inyong raw score sa bawat dimensyon?

| Dimension 1: School Leadership | | |
| Dimension 2: Internal Stakeholders | | |
| Dimension 3: External Stakeholders | | |
| Dimension 4: School Improvement Process | | |
| Dimension 5: School-Based Resource | | |
| Dimension 6: School Performance Accountability | | |

**TOTAL RAW SCORE** 0

Raw scores of Specific Indicators per Dimension

Based on your most current assessment, please choose "yes" for the indicator you have determined as your level of SBM practice for each of the following indicators. Choose only **ONE** per indicator. Once you select one, the other indicators will disappear. To make the other indicators re-appear, click back "Please select."

Raw Scores sa lihang mga batayan sa bawat dimensyon

Batay sa inyong pinakabagong pagkatasa, maging lamang pilili ang "yes" sa batayang inyong napili bilang ibaang inyong SBM practice. Pumili lamang ng "yes" sa bawat batayan.

Kapag nakaapi ninyo ng isa, mawalang ang ibang batayan. Ang kinaaibit, pilili ninyo ang "Please select."
APPENDIX 6

Pre-selection Questionnaire
APPENDIX 6
Pre-selection Questionnaire

THANK YOU
for taking time to respond to this pre-selection questionnaire.

WHAT NEXT
1. Please save the completed questionnaire and email to both:

   s3365045@student.rmit.edu.au
   rbucud2@yahoo.com

2. The Region and RMIT University will use this information to select the focal sites for the research. We will inform you of the results of the selection on [DATE]

MARAMING SALAMAT
sa pagdayo ng panahon upang sagutin ang talananang ito.

ANO ANG SUSUNOD NA HAKBANGIN
1. I-save ang talananang at ipadala sa sumusunod:

   s3365045@student.rmit.edu.au
   rbucud2@yahoo.com

2. Gagamitan ng Rehiyon at ng RMIT ang impormasyon na nakalap mula dito upang piliin ang mga paaralan para sa pananatiliha.
   Ipapalaan ang resulta ng pagsili ng paaralan sa (PETSA)
APPENDIX 7
Sample Letter of Confirmation of Selection as Research Site

[Date]

[Name]
[Position]
[Address line 1]
[Address line 2]

Subject: SELECTION AS A RESEARCH STUDY SITE

Dear [Name],

This has reference to the letter dated [date] inviting your School to signify its interest to become one of the four school sites.

We are pleased to inform you that after thorough consideration, the selection panel has selected [Name of School] as one of the four study sites for the research that examines how decentralization affected the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines. The research is conducted in both Regions 1 and IV-A.

The research has two main variables, namely: the economic classification of the locality where the school is situated (Urban or Rural) and the level of stakeholder participation (High or Low). Given this, there are four primary sites for the research where in-depth study will be conducted. You have been selected to represent the Urban – High Stakeholder Participation category.

Through the conduct of the in-depth study, the research is expected to contribute in:

- establishing an understanding of the practice of community participation in school-based management within a decentralized environment in the Philippines;
- gathering pertinent information that will inform efforts to review the existing legal framework, implementing rules and regulations and other attendant processes and procedures (e.g. SBM Accountability Model, SGC Manual, SGC Manual, School-Community Partnership);
- providing pertinent information to educators on how to strengthen and maximise the inherent potential of engaging the community in school management; and
- providing pertinent information to the wider community on how to strengthen and maximise the school to enable it to act as a responsible and productive entity within the wider community.

The research is designed to delve into the motives and surface factors that facilitate or hinder stakeholder participation. It is an opportunity for various school stakeholders to identify potential gaps, learning points, and ways of how to strengthen and deepen community-school partnership in a decentralised education governance framework in the Philippines.
As one of the School study sites, you agreed to:

- Allow School personnel at least 1.5-2.3 hours of their time to actively discuss and share their perception of and experience as school stakeholders.
  
  Interviews and FGDs will be scheduled taking into consideration the school/participants’ availability and convenience. Participants may decide to be excused from the interview and FGD should the process prove to be uncomfortable or distressing;

- Allow the use of School facilities for purposes of the research provided availability of facilities at the time requested;

- Allow School personnel and stakeholders to review and validate the interview and discussion transcriptions; and

- Provide permission to access pertinent education information of the School (e.g. Plan, BEIS, list of education personnel, etc).

We have organised a research resource pack that contains pertinent information about the research, the school’s rights and responsibilities as a research site which we hope that you can share with the various stakeholders in the school.

Please do not hesitate to contact Ronald Bucud if you need further clarification.

Once again, thank you for agreeing to take part in this research undertaking.

Respectfully yours,
APPENDIX 8

RMIT College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN) Approval Letter

RMIT UNIVERSITY
Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN)
Sub-committee of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

Notice of Approval

Date: 12 June 2014

Project number: CHEAN A 0000018694.09/14

Project title: Community Participation in School Managements: Studying the effect of decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines

Risk classification: Low Risk

Investigator: Dr. Roberto Guevara and Ronaldo Bucud

Approved: From 12 June 2014 To 31 December 2015

I am pleased to advise that your application has been granted ethics approval by the Design and Social Context College Human Ethics Advisory Network as a sub-committee of the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

Terms of approval:

1. Responsibilities of investigator
   It is the responsibility of the above investigator/s to ensure that all other investigators and staff on a project are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure that the project is conducted as approved by the CHEAN. Approval is only valid whilst the investigator/s holds a position at RMIT University.

2. Amendments
   Approval must be sought from the CHEAN to amend any aspect of a project including approved documents. To apply for any amendment please use the ‘Request for Amendment Form’ that is available on the RMIT website.

3. Adverse events
   You should notify HREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.

4. Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF)
   The PICF and any other material used to recruit and inform participants of the project must include the RMIT university logo. The PICF must contain a complaints clause including the project number.

5. Annual reports
   Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an annual report. This form can be located online on the human research ethics web page on the RMIT website.

6. Final report
   A final report must be provided at the conclusion of the project. CHEAN must be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.

7. Monitoring
   Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by HREC at any time.

8. Retention and storage of data
   The investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

In any future correspondence please quote the project number and project title.

On behalf of the DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network I wish you well in your research.

Suzana Kovacevic
Research and Ethics Officer
College of Design and Social Context
RMIT University
Ph: 03 9925 2974
Email: suzana.kovacevic@rmit.edu.au
Website: www.rmit.edu.au/dsc
APPENDIX 9
Participant Consent Form (English)

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Community Participation in School Management

Studying the effect of decentralisation on the practice of community participation in school management in the Philippines

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree:
   • to be interviewed and/or complete a questionnaire
   • to attend a focus group discussion
   • that my voice will be audio recorded
   • that my image will be taken

4. I acknowledge that:
   (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
   (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
   (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to RMIT University. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant’s Consent

Participant: __________________________ Date: ______________

(Signature)

Witness:

Witness: __________________________ Date: ______________

(Signature)

Where participant is under 18 years of age:

I consent to the participation of __________________________ in the above project.

Signature: (1) __________________________ (2) __________________________ Date: ______________

(Signatures of parents or guardians)

Witness: __________________________ Date: ______________

(Witness to signature)
APPENDIX 9
Participant Consent Form (Filipino)

**IMPORMASYON HINGGIL SA PROYEKTO**

**Pangalan ng Proyekto**

Isang Pag-aaral hinggil sa epekto ng desentralisasyon ng edukasyon sa pakikilahok ng komunidad sa pamamahala ng paaralan sa Pilipinas

1. Naipaliwanag sa akin ang proyekto at nabasa at naunawaan ko ang dokumentong nagpapaliwanang hinggil sa proyekto

2. Sumasang-ayon ako na lumahok sa pagaaral na ito

3. Ako ay sumang-ayon na:
   - Dumalo sa isang panayam at/o kumpletuhan ang isang palatanunan
   - Dumalo sa isang talakayan
   - Makunan ang aking larawan
   - Ma-tape ang aking panayam

4. Pinatutunayan at tinatanggap ko na:
   (a) Ang aking paglahok ay kusang loob at naunawaan ko na maari akong umurong mula sa pagaaral kahit anumang oras at maari kong bawiin ang anumang impormasyong naibigay na hindi pa na-proseso
   (b) Ang pagsasalihin lihim ng proyekto ang aking personal na impormasyon at maari lamang itong ibunyag kung aking pinahintulutan na naayon sa batas.
   (c) Ang seguridad ng impormasyong nakalap sa pagsasalihin ay walang direktang benepisyo sa akin at ito ay para lamang sa pagsasalihin.
   (d) Ang seguridad ng impormasyong nakalap sa pagsasalihin ay pagkatapos. Maaring ilathala ang nakalap na impormasyon, at ang aking hinggil sa resulta ng pag-aaral ay ibibigay sa RMIT University. Anumang impormasyon na tahasang kilalanin ako ay hindi gagamitin ng pag-aaral.

Pagsang-ayon ng Kalahok:

Kalahok: __________________________ Petsa: __________________________

(Lagda)

Testigo:

Witness: __________________________ Petsa: __________________________

(Lagda)

Kung saan ang kalahok ay 18 taong gulang pababa

Pinapahintulutan ko ang paglahok ni __________________________ sa nasasaad na proyekto.

Lagda: (1) __________________________ (2) __________________________ Petsa: __________________________

(Lagda ng mga Magulang o Tagapangalaga)

Testigo: __________________________ Petsa: __________________________

(Lagda ng Testigo)