



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

Impact of School Management Practices on Educational Equity in Public Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools in the Division of Quezon. Grounded in the perspectives of García and Weiss (2020) and Kirthika (2022), it emphasized the vital role of effective leadership in ensuring equitable resource distribution, inclusive policies, and teacher support. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, the research involved 190 teachers in the quantitative phase and 20 in-depth interviews in the qualitative phase. Data collection tools included a self-devised questionnaire and an interview guide.

Findings revealed that while schools employ various strategies to promote equity, such as stakeholder engagement, teacher development, and inclusive teaching, challenges persist. Key issues include limited technological resources, outdated infrastructure, and budget constraints. Despite these barriers, school management is critical in fostering inclusive education through initiatives like teacher training programs, parental involvement, and strategic interventions.

To address these challenges, the study proposes the development of a Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity. This manual offers practical strategies for school heads to enhance leadership, resource allocation, and community engagement, aiming to build a more supportive and equitable learning environment.

The study recommends that school leaders use the manual to guide planning and decision-making, prioritize continuous professional development for teachers, and advocate for improved facilities and equitable resource access. Teachers are encouraged to adopt inclusive education strategies and maximize available resources to support all learners. Future research should examine factors influencing educational equity, such as policy implementation and student well-being, and conduct comparative studies across various school settings. Strengthening school management practices through strategic planning and informed policies is essential to fostering a more equitable and inclusive educational environment for every student.

Keywords: school management practices, educational equity, public elementary schools, inclusive education, resource allocation

I. Introduction

Education has long been regarded as a fundamental aspect of society, dating back to ancient times. This is due to the recognition that education holds the ability to transform society, influence norms, and ultimately impact the quality of life across various eras (Wakaraka, 2023). In today's world, the concept of educational equity is a crucial component of ensuring that all students have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. According to UNESCO (2019), equity in education is about providing all students with the tools and support they need to succeed rather than merely offering identical opportunities. Effective school management is key in addressing disparities, particularly in public schools, where diverse student populations often face unique challenges.

According to Macasero (2023), the Department of Education (DepEd) has reported a serious classroom shortage for the 2023–2024 school year, needing 159,000 more classrooms, a sharp increase from the previous year's shortage of 91,000. The Senate Committee on Basic Education has identified this shortage of facilities as one of the main challenges in the education sector.

Further illustrating the resource disparity, DepEd reports that approximately 5,000 schools across the Philippines lack access to electricity, while 10,000 schools have no access to potable water, putting both students and teachers at a considerable disadvantage. This lack of basic amenities affects the quality of education and is an issue in both rural and urban areas. Furthermore, García and Mendoza (2021) stated that the shortage of teachers in rural areas contributes to larger class sizes, reduced instructional quality, and limited attention for students, further widening the education gap.

The role of school management practices in shaping educational equity is critical. Effective leadership ensures resources are distributed equitably, teachers are well-supported, and policies are inclusive of all students' needs. According to García and Weiss (2020), professional development for teachers plays a significant role in promoting equity, as training equips educators with the skills to differentiate instruction and address diverse learning needs, thereby minimizing academic disparities. In addition, Espiritu and Santos (2021) argue that schools with strong and equitable management practices are better equipped to address the challenges posed by inequality, ensuring that marginalized students receive the necessary support to succeed.

Recognizing the importance of school management, Republic Act No. 9155, The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, establishes the framework for school-based management (SBM) in the country. This law highlights the need for a decentralized and participatory approach to education governance, empowering schools to make decisions that address the unique needs of their students. It mandates school leaders to implement policies that enhance access to quality education and reduce disparities. Similarly, DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2015, Guidelines on Strengthening School-Based Management (SBM) Practices provides a structured approach for schools to enhance governance, emphasizing participatory decision-making, effective resource management, and inclusive education policies. These legal and policy frameworks serve as vital instruments in promoting educational equity across public elementary schools.

School management runs the school according to the desired educational policies. It takes into account all aspects of the school, like policies, material and human resources, programs, activities and equipment, which are being integrated into the fruitful whole (Kirthika, 2022).

Furthermore, based on an interview conducted in February 2025, it was found that the majority of schools' lack internet access and do not have sufficient books in their libraries. This limited access to essential learning resources further exacerbates educational disparities. By conducting a thorough exploration of the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools, this study aims to provide insights about the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools. The findings will serve as a basis for a management practices manual designed to enhance educational equity in public elementary schools, providing school heads with a framework for implementing strategies to promote educational equity.

Statement of the Problem

The primary objective of the study is to determine the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools.

Particularly, this study has the following specific research questions:

1. What school management practices in public elementary schools are observed in promoting educational equity in terms of
 - 1.1 access to learning resources;
 - 1.2 inclusive environment;
 - 1.3. teacher training and development;
 - 1.4. parental and community involvement;
 - 1.5. facility and infrastructure accessibility; and
 - 1.6. intervention programs?
2. How are the school management practices impact the promotion of educational equity?
3. Based on the findings of this study, what management practices manual for educational equity enhancement for public elementary school heads can be developed by the researcher?

Conceptual Framework

The study explores the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools, recognizing the critical role that effective leadership plays in shaping an equitable educational environment. Educational equity is understood as the principle of fairness in education, where every student, irrespective of their socioeconomic background, race, gender, or ability, has access to the resources, opportunities, and support necessary to thrive academically and socially. This concept extends beyond mere equality, where all students receive the same resources, ensuring that educational opportunities are designed to meet the diverse needs of all students. Achieving educational equity requires an active commitment to dismantling systemic barriers that hinder access and success for underrepresented groups.

School management practices encompass a range of strategies and actions taken by school leaders to foster an equitable learning environment. These practices can be categorized into several key components that directly impact educational equity.

First, access to learning resources is a foundational element. This includes the equitable distribution of essential educational materials, technology and facilities. Research shows that when schools prioritize equal access to high-quality learning resources, students from all backgrounds are better equipped to engage with the curriculum and perform academically (Miller et al, 2020). Schools must ensure that resources are available not only in terms of quantity but also quality, adapting them to meet the varying needs of students.

Second, the creation of an inclusive environment is vital for promoting educational equity. An inclusive environment values diversity and actively works to eliminate barriers to participation. This involves fostering a school culture that respects and embraces differences, ensuring that all students feel welcome, supported and capable of achieving success. An inclusive environment positively influences students' sense of belonging and motivation, which are significant (Vavrus & Moser, 2020).

The third component, teacher training and development, focuses on equipping educators with the necessary skills to implement inclusive practices effectively. Ongoing professional development is crucial in preparing teachers to recognize and respond to the diverse learning needs within

their classrooms. Research indicates that effective teacher training significantly enhances student outcomes and promotes equity by enabling educators to differentiate instruction (Gordon et al, 2021).

Parental and community involvement constitutes another critical area of school management practice. Engaging parents and community members in the educational process fosters collaboration that benefits students. This involvement not only provides support network for students but also helps schools better understand the unique challenges their community faces. A strong partnership between schools and families has been linked to improved student engagement and achievement, reinforcing accountability for equitable practices (Gonzalez et al., 2020).

Furthermore, facility and infrastructure accessibility play a significant role in ensuring that all students can participate in school. Schools must prioritize the design of facilities that are physically accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. This accessibility is fundamental in promoting equity, as it removes physical barriers that could hinder any student's educational experience (Floyd & Faughnan, 2022). Ensuring that all areas of the school are accessible is not just a legal requirement; it is a moral imperative to create an equitable learning environment.

Lastly, the implementation of intervention program is essential for addressing the specific needs of the students who may be at risk of underachievement. Targeted intervention programs provide important aid to help close achievement gaps among students from different backgrounds. By identifying students who need extra assistance and providing appropriate interventions, schools can significantly enhance their academic performance (Ullucci et al, 2021).

The study aimed to analyze the impact of school management practices in relation to educational equity. By examining the interconnections between various components of school management, such as resource allocation, staff support, inclusive policies, and community engagement, the research identified effective strategies that school leaders can employ to promote inclusivity in education.

The findings of this study served as the foundation for the development of a Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity designed specifically for public elementary school heads. The manual will serve as a practical resource, providing actionable guidelines and strategies that school leaders can implement to foster an equitable environment, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed academically and reach their full potential.

The creation of the manual was guided by the principles of the Hanover Research Equity Framework (2017), which served as a foundational reference in structuring its contents. The framework provides a strategic lens for examining how school systems can advance equity by embedding inclusive values into leadership practices, school culture, and decision-making processes. It highlights the importance of recognizing and addressing disparities in student outcomes, fostering culturally responsive leadership, and ensuring that policies, resources, and supports are tailored to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

In particular, the Hanover framework outlines critical focus areas such as leadership commitment to equity, data-driven practices to monitor and address gaps, professional development on equity and inclusion, and collaborative engagement with families and communities. The focus areas were reflected in the manual's structure, offering concrete strategies that school heads can adapt to their local contexts.

This study explored the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools in the Division of Quezon. The crucial role of effective leadership in equitable resource distribution, inclusive policies, and teacher support. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, it surveyed 190 teachers and conducted interviews with 20 participants. Data were collected through a self-devised questionnaire and interview guide.

Findings revealed strengths in stakeholder engagement, teacher development, and inclusive teaching practices. However, challenges such as limited technological resources, outdated facilities, and budget constraints persist. These findings directly shaped the structure and content of the Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity. For example, reports of inadequate access to technology led to the inclusion of strategies for digital resource acquisition and integration. Feedback about the need for inclusive teaching practices informed a section on culturally responsive pedagogy and differentiated instruction. Likewise, responses highlighting the importance of community involvement contributed to the development of guidelines for building strong home-school partnerships.

By anchoring the manual in the Hanover Research Equity Framework, the study ensured that its output was not only informed by local findings but also aligned with globally recognized equity principles. These principles include equitable access to learning resources, culturally responsive teaching, inclusive practices, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement. By focusing on these core principles, the manual strengthens its relevance and usability, empowering public elementary school leaders to adopt management practices that are fair, responsive, and supportive of every learner's academic journey. The principles guided the development of strategies that address disparities in access, foster inclusive environments, and ensure that all students, regardless of their background, receive the support and resources they need to succeed. This approach helps school leaders implement practices that are not only locally relevant but also aligned with global standards for educational equity.

Conceptual Paradigm

Figure 1

Conceptual Paradigm of the Impact of School Management Practices on Educational Equity in Public Elementary School of San Francisco District, San Francisco, Quezon.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the study was anchored on the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model. The input included the school management practices in public elementary schools in promoting educational equity in terms of access to learning resources, inclusive environment, teacher training and development, parental and community involvement, facility and infrastructure accessibility, and intervention programs. At the same time, it also determined how school management practices impacted the promotion of educational equity in public elementary schools in one of the provinces in the Division of Quezon, which was the central focus of the study.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study aimed to assess the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools in one of the towns in the Division of Quezon. It explored the school management practices in public elementary schools in promoting educational equity and how school management practices impacted its promotion.

Through mixed research methods, utilizing survey questionnaires and interviews, the study gathered data to assess the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools in one of the towns in the Division of Quezon, which provided an opportunity to design management practices manual for educational equity enhancement for public elementary school heads. Specifically, the study was conducted in one of the towns in the Division of Quezon, which served as the research locale of the study. The respondents of the quantitative and participants in qualitative part were public elementary school teachers. A total of 190 teachers participated in the quantitative phase, and for the qualitative phase, 20 participants were selected.

The researcher identified the school management practices in public elementary schools in promoting educational equity in terms of access to learning resources, inclusive environment, teacher training and development, parental and community involvement, facility and infrastructure accessibility, and intervention programs by utilizing a survey questionnaire to gather data. Weighted Arithmetic Mean (WAM) was used to determine the level of school management practices in public elementary schools in promoting educational equity. Meanwhile, coding was the method of data analysis used, wherein the responses to the interview regarding the impact of school management practices on the promotion of educational equity were described.

The study was confined to the impact of school management practices on educational equity only in public elementary schools in one of the towns in the Division of Quezon. At the same time, it relied on surveys and interviews to gather the necessary data. As such, the findings might not fully represent other districts, regions, or levels of education.

The study was conducted from January to February 2025, allowing ample time for thorough preparation and organization.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined conceptually and operationally for the readers to have a better understanding of the study.

Educational Equity. Refers to the concept of fairness and justice in education, ensuring that all students have equal access to resources, opportunities, and support, regardless of their background or circumstances. It involves addressing and eliminating disparities in educational outcomes and providing a level playing field for all students (Educational Research Review, 2023). It involves providing equal access to quality learning resources, fostering an inclusive environment, supporting teacher development, engaging parents and the community, ensuring accessible facilities, and implementing intervention programs to address diverse student needs and reduce disparities in educational opportunities.

Impact. A marked effect or influence that an action, event, or phenomenon has on someone or something (DeBevoise, 2019). It refers to perceived influence of school management practices on promoting educational equity in public elementary schools.

Management. It is defined as a distinct process consisting of planning, organizing, actuating and controlling performed to determine and accomplish stated objectives by the use of human beings and other resources (Kaehler and Grundei, 2019)). The set of actions and decisions carried out by school leaders to plan, organize, lead, and control school resources and personnel in order to achieve educational goals.

Manual for Educational Equity Enhancement. A structured guide designed to assist educators and school leaders in implementing strategies that promote fairness and inclusion within educational settings. Such manuals provide actionable frameworks, best practices, and tools aimed at ensuring that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, have equitable access to quality education and opportunities for success (Murray and McLaughlin, 2023). It refers to a structured guide developed based on the findings of the research. This manual includes recommended strategies, practices, and guidelines for public elementary school heads to promote educational equity. It focuses on improving access to resources, fostering inclusivity, supporting teacher development, enhancing community involvement, ensuring infrastructure accessibility, and implementing targeted intervention programs to address disparities and support diverse student needs effectively.

Schools. Organized institution designed to facilitate learning, where educators provide structured education to students, helping them develop intellectually, socially, and emotionally. It is a setting that fosters academic achievement and personal growth, with a focus on knowledge transmission and the development of skills relevant to a student's broader life (Harris and Herrington, 2020). Specifically, the school referred to in this study are public elementary schools within the San Francisco District, San Francisco, Quezon.

School Management. School management is a process of leading the school towards development through not only the optimum use of the human resources, physical sources, principles and concepts that help in achieving all the objectives of the school but also the proper coordination and adjustment among all of them (Prusothmaha, 2022). Refers to the set of activities carried out by school leaders, such as principals, administrators, and other educational authorities, to plan, organize, direct, and control school resources (human, financial, and physical) to achieve educational goals.

School Management Practices. refer to the processes, strategies, and actions employed by school leaders to effectively oversee and enhance various aspects of school operations (Buitizon, 2024). Activities, methods and strategies that school leaders implement to effectively run and manage a school. These practices cover a wide range of responsibilities, including resource allocation, student and staff management, curriculum planning, policy implementation, facility maintenance, and community engagement.

II. Methodology

Research Design

The research used an explanatory sequential mixed research method to examine the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools in a province within the Division of Quezon. This approach was chosen because it combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The quantitative phase focused on identifying and measuring the school management practices that promote educational equity, while the qualitative phase sought to explore in-depth the ways these practices actually impact equity.

The study utilized a descriptive-survey research design for the quantitative component. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to systematically gather data on various school management practices related to equity, such as access to learning resources, teacher training, parental involvement, and the condition of school facilities. By quantifying these variables, the researcher could identify patterns and correlations in how these practices are implemented across schools.

In the qualitative phase, the study used a descriptive-analytic research design to gain deeper insights into the specific ways school management practices influence educational equity. This design was suited to describe and analyze how school heads and teachers perceive and experience the impact of these practices in their schools. By gathering rich, qualitative data through interviews or focus groups, the researcher was able to complement the statistical findings with personal perspectives and context-specific examples.

Together, the two designs, descriptive-survey for the quantitative part and descriptive-analytic for the qualitative part, work in harmony by first identifying the practices that affect educational equity and then exploring the underlying reasons and experiences behind their success or limitations. The integration of both approaches ensures a holistic understanding of the research problem, which is essential for creating an effective Management Practices Manual aimed at enhancing educational equity in public elementary schools.

Research Locale

The research locale of the study was the public elementary schools of one of the towns in the Division of Quezon to assess the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools. The town was split into two divisions: District 1, which included 12 elementary schools, and District 2, which consisted of 11 elementary schools.

The districts were chosen over other districts in the Division of Quezon because it provided a rich and diverse setting where various school conditions and challenges are present. All schools in this district are located in rural areas, which allowed the study to focus on the unique issues and practices found in geographically isolated communities. Its unique composition made it possible to capture a wide range of experiences and management strategies despite the shared rural setting. The division allowed the study to examine a variety of school environments, giving a clearer view of the practices and strategies that supported equal educational opportunities for students. By looking at both District 1 and District 2, the study observed how different schools managed resources, promoted inclusion, supported teacher development, engaged parents and the community, ensured accessible facilities, and implemented intervention programs.

Several key characteristics in schools affect educational equity. One important factor is the location of the schools. Those in far or rural areas often have limited access to learning materials, internet, and basic facilities. Another factor is the socioeconomic status of the community. Schools in low-income areas may have fewer resources and less support from parents. School leadership matters, too, as effective school heads can lead programs that support all learners fairly. Parental and community involvement also influences equity since strong support systems help students succeed. Lastly, the condition of school facilities, like classrooms, restrooms, and ramps, affects how inclusive and accessible the learning environment is for all students.

Research Population and Sample

The respondents of the study "Impact of School Management Practices on Educational Equity in Public Elementary Schools," were the selected public elementary school teachers in one of the towns in the Division of Quezon. The study aimed to gather information directly from the teachers to determine the impact of school management practices on educational equity.

The respondents of the study were selected public elementary school teachers in the San Francisco District. The researcher utilized the simple random sampling technique to identify the respondents for the quantitative aspect of the study. This method was deemed appropriate because it ensures that every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected, thereby minimizing selection bias and increasing the likelihood that the sample is representative of the broader population.

Simple random sampling is suitable for this study because the public elementary school teachers in the district have similar job roles and responsibilities, making the population relatively homogeneous, so any group selected at random is likely to represent the whole population well, and since the goal of the study is to understand school management practices and how they affect educational equity, using a random sample helps make sure that the results

are fair and accurate, reduces the chance of bias, and makes the findings more reliable and valid for generalizing to all teachers in the district by giving every teacher an equal chance of being selected, it minimizes selection bias, ensures diversity in the sample despite homogeneity, and strengthens the generalizability of the findings across the entire population.

Moreover, the simplicity and objectivity of this method made it easy to implement and ensured transparency in the selection process, contributing to the overall rigor of the study's methodology.

A total of 190 respondents participated in the quantitative part of the study, while 20 participants were involved in the qualitative aspect. The sample size of 190 quantitative respondents was computed using Cochran's Sample Size Formula, ensuring a statistically reliable representation of the target population with an acceptable margin of error and confidence level. This method is widely recognized for determining appropriate sample sizes in social science research, particularly in studies involving large populations.

For the qualitative aspect, 20 participants were selected from the pool of 190 respondents. However, selection was also guided by specific inclusion criteria, particularly focusing on teaching experience. Only teachers with at least three years of service were included in the sample to ensure that participants had adequate exposure to school management practices and were capable of offering meaningful, experience-based insights. This purposive element in the selection process helped capture a diverse range of perspectives on educational equity, as participants varied in teaching levels and years of service. The sample size of 20 was deemed sufficient based on qualitative research standards, as it was expected to reach data saturation, where no new significant themes emerged from the responses.

The researcher obtained informed consent from the respondents, ensuring that they were aware of the study's purpose, their rights as respondents, and the confidentiality of their responses. Respecting ethical guidelines and maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents' information were important considerations throughout the research process.

Research Instrument

The researcher utilized a self-devised survey questionnaire and interview to assess the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools of the San Francisco District, San Francisco, Quezon.

The researcher-crafted survey instrument was used to identify the school management practices observed in promoting educational equity in terms of access to learning resources, inclusive environment, teacher training and development, parental and community involvement, facility and infrastructure accessibility, and intervention programs, with five (5) statements in each variable. A 4-point Likert scale was used to measure the respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with each statement, ensuring a clear understanding of the extent to which each practice is observed in the schools.

Meanwhile, the interview guide was developed to gain deeper insights into the impact of school management practices on educational equity in public elementary schools. It consisted of semi-structured, open-ended questions categorized into specific sections: background information, perceived impact of school management practices, challenges encountered, and recommendations for improvement. This format allowed flexibility in exploring participants' responses while focusing on the core areas aligned with the survey.

The questionnaire and interview guide underwent a rigorous validity and reliability testing process to ensure the quality and reliability of the research instruments.

For content validity, the instruments were evaluated by a panel of three experts with strong educational and leadership backgrounds. The validators included: (1) a Master Teacher I in Senior High School who holds a Doctor of Education (EdD) degree; (2) a Principal I of a public elementary school currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree; and (3) an Education Program Supervisor in the Division of Quezon who holds a PhD degree. These experts carefully reviewed each item in the questionnaire and interview guide to assess its relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study's objectives. Constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement were provided, and minor revisions were made based on their recommendations to enhance the overall quality and coherence of the instruments.

To establish reliability, the quantitative portion of the instrument (the survey questionnaire) was pilot-tested with a small group of respondents who possessed similar characteristics to the target population but were not included in the actual study. A total of 27 respondents were included in the pilot test, and they were selected from different districts using random sampling. This ensured that the pilot test group closely mirrored the target population, allowing for an accurate assessment of the instrument's effectiveness. The data collected from the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items within each variable. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.80 or higher was considered acceptable, indicating a high level of reliability and consistency in the responses.

This comprehensive process ensured that the instruments used in the study were both valid and reliable for collecting meaningful and accurate data.

Data Gathering Procedures

The data gathering procedure followed a structured approach to ensure clarity and organization. Initially, the researcher secured a letter of request for endorsement addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Quezon, seeking permission to administer the questionnaire. The request was signed by the research adviser and the dean of the Graduate School of Sacred Heart College. Upon receiving permission, the researcher identified respondents through a simple random sampling method and reached out to those who were willing to participate in the study. Respondents

were also provided with an overview of the study's objectives, procedures, and rights. Prior to data collection, verbal informed consent was obtained from each respondent, ensuring that they fully understood the study's purpose and the confidentiality of their responses.

The researcher administered the self-devised survey questionnaire through forms to respondents in public elementary schools in San Francisco District, San Francisco, Quezon, to gather data on school management practices observed in promoting educational equity in public elementary schools. Specifically, the study focused on the following areas: access to learning resources, inclusive environment, teacher training and development, parental and community involvement, facility and infrastructure accessibility, and intervention programs. Once data collection was complete, the researcher securely organized the data and employed appropriate data management techniques. Finally, the researcher analyzed the collected quantitative data using suitable statistical methods, such as descriptive statistics and inferential techniques, to identify patterns and relationships. The findings were then interpreted based on the results of the analysis, providing a clear understanding of the school management practices and their impact on educational equity.

Meanwhile, for qualitative data collection, the researcher personally invited selected public elementary school teachers for face-to-face interviews based on the availability of the interviewees. The interview, aimed at eliciting the impact of school management practices in the promotion of educational equity, was recorded and noted with the permission of the interviewees. The researcher assured the participants that any information they shared would be kept strictly confidential. The qualitative data collected from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data to provide a deeper understanding of how school management practices contribute to educational equity.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in research involves a series of systematic steps to convert raw data into meaningful insights. The process began with data collection, where relevant information was gathered through surveys, interviews, or other methods (Creswell, 2018). The data collected from the interview guide was processed to provide answers regarding the impact of school management practices on promoting educational equity. The interviews were audio-recorded with permission from the interviewees, and the recordings were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and maintain the integrity of the responses. The researcher then employed artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist in the initial coding and organization of the data. These AI tools were instrumental in improving the efficiency and consistency of identifying emerging themes from the data. AI helped quickly analyze large volumes of qualitative data by detecting patterns and key themes. However, the researcher manually validated the final analysis and interpretation, ensuring that the nuances of the participants' responses were captured correctly and interpreted.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that identifies and interprets patterns or themes within the data. The researcher followed the steps of thematic analysis, including familiarizing themselves with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing those themes, and finally defining and naming them. While AI assisted in the early stages of data organization and coding, the researcher's expertise was central to refining these themes, interpreting their meanings, and ensuring the themes reflected the research objectives. Some notes were taken by the researcher to assist in accuracy and transcription. However, note-taking was kept minimal to allow the researcher to focus on the interviewees and their responses. Once the interviews were transcribed, the researcher analyzed and coded the responses, searching for significant themes related to school management practices and educational equity. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of how these practices foster educational equity. The researcher's interpretation and validation of the AI-generated data ensured that the final analysis was rigorous and human-centered, reflecting the authentic voices and perspectives of the interviewees.

Specialist Informants

The researcher enlisted the assistance of three experts, each specializing in a different field, to act as specialist informants for the study. Their varied perspectives were instrumental in validating the emerging themes and confirming the study's findings. The experts reviewed the thematic categories to ensure they accurately reflected the data and aligned with the research objectives. Their expertise was key in ensuring the analysis was accurate, reliable, and thorough.

IV. Results and Discussion

From the analyses and interpretation of the gathered data, the following findings were obtained:

1. School Management Practices in Public Elementary Schools are Observed in Promoting Educational Equity

1.1. Access to learning resources has an average WAM of 3.11 with a qualitative index of Agree. The indicator "The school engages with community partners such as LGUs, NGOs, and GOs to acquire additional learning materials and resources to benefit underserved students through the school partnership program" got the highest WAM of 3.55 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree, indicator "School management regularly evaluates and addresses disparities in resource distribution to promote fairness and inclusivity" contained the second highest WAM of 3.29 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree, and indicator "Teachers and students have equitable access to essential learning materials, including textbooks, worksheets, and supplementary resources" gained the third highest WAM of 3.06 with a qualitative index of Agree.

Meanwhile, the indicator "The school provides sufficient technological resources, such as computers, internet access, and multimedia tools, to support inclusive learning," obtained the lowest WAM of 2.91 with a qualitative index of "Agree."

1.2. Inclusive environment has an average WAM of 3.44 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree. Indicator "School heads actively engage in decision-making processes that emphasize inclusivity and equitable treatment for all learner" got the highest WAM of 3.52, indicator "Policies and practices in schools explicitly focus on fostering a learning environment that is free from discrimination and supportive of diversity" gained second highest WAM of 3.47, and indicator "Collaboration with parents and local organizations fosters an inclusive culture and addresses socio-economic barriers" received the third highest WAM of 3.46. The three indicators have the same qualitative index of Strongly Agree.

While "School facilities are designed and maintained to accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities, ensuring accessibility" obtained the lowest WAM of 3.29, yet still attained a qualitative index of "Strongly Agree."

1.3. Teacher training and development has an average WAM of 3.49 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree. The indicator "Teachers participate in regular training sessions such as INSET and LAC Sessions that focus on culturally responsive teaching methods to address diverse student needs" gained the highest WAM of 3.67, indicator "Training programs provided by higher officers to help teachers effectively implement inclusive education strategies in diverse classrooms" got the second highest WAM of 3.49, and indicator "Regular evaluation of teachers' performance and tailored training opportunities are implemented to improve their instructional practices and foster equity" gleaned the third highest WAM of 3.44. The qualitative index of Strongly Agree is consistent across all three indicators.

Concurrently, indicator "Teachers are trained in the use of digital tools and platforms to ensure equitable access to learning during online or hybrid learning scenarios" garnered the lowest WAM of 3.33 but still attained a qualitative index of Strongly Agree.

1.4. Parental and community involvement 3.49 with qualitative index of Strongly Agree. The indicator "Parents and community members are engaged in shared decision-making processes during PTA meetings to support school initiatives and address learner needs" obtained the highest WAM of 3.53 with a qualitative index of 'Strongly Agree, indicator "Schools collaborate with local organizations and community stakeholders to provide additional resources for learning equity through the implementation of Brigada Eskwela" got the second highest WAM of 3.52, and indicator "Regular communication channels, including meetings and newsletters, keep parents informed and involved in promoting educational equity" gained the third highest WAM of 3.49. All three indicators share the same qualitative index of Strongly Agree.

The indicators "Structured programs encourage active parental involvement in their children's academic and extracurricular activities" and "Schools initiate community-based projects, such as feeding programs or resource drives, to support disadvantaged learners" both got the lowest WAM of 3.45 but still received a qualitative index of "Strongly Agree."

1.5. Facility and infrastructure accessibility have an average WAM of 3.02 with qualitative index of "Agree." Indicator "Classrooms and other learning spaces are sufficient in number and appropriately equipped to accommodate the learner population" garnered the highest weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.15, with a qualitative index of Agree, "Local stakeholders and community members are involved in projects aimed at improving school infrastructure and facility" gained the second highest weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.10, with a qualitative index of Agree, and "Schools ensure the availability of essential amenities such as clean water, restrooms, and safe learning environments to support educational equity" got the third highest weighted arithmetic mean of 3.01, with a qualitative index of Agree.

The indicator "Schools regularly implement infrastructure improvement programs to address disparities in facility quality" received the lowest weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 2.84, with a qualitative index of Agree.

1.6. Intervention program has an average WAM of 3.24 with qualitative index of Agree. The indicator "Remedial classes or enrichment sessions are offered to bridge learning gaps and improve educational outcomes" obtained the highest weighted arithmetic mean of 3.52, with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree, indicator "Schools regularly assess the effectiveness of intervention programs to ensure alignment with students' needs" got a second highest weighted arithmetic mean of 3.46, with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree, and indicator "Schools implement targeted intervention programs such as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Reading Buddies, and Read-a-Thon to support students at risk of falling behind academically" gained the third highest weighted arithmetic mean of 3.33, with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree.

The indicator "Nutrition-related interventions, such as school feeding programs, are implemented to address student health and enhance learning outcomes" gathered the lowest WAM of 2.82 with a qualitative index of Agree.

The overall average WAM of school management practices in public elementary schools are observed in promoting educational equity of 3.29 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree. The school management practices in public elementary schools are observed in promoting educational equity in terms of facility and infrastructure accessibility got the lowest WAM of 3.02 with a qualitative index of Agree. Meanwhile, school management practices in public elementary schools are observed in promoting educational equity in terms teacher training and development and parental and community involvement, both garnered the highest WAM of 3.49 with a qualitative index of Strongly Agree.

2. School management practices impact the promotion of educational equity.

Inequitable Access to Learning Resources and Budget Constraints Undermining Educational Equity, challenges include budget shortages, unequal distribution of textbooks, inadequate classrooms and facilities, and a lack of learning materials, all of which hinder educational equity.

Promotion of respect and diversity: School management fosters inclusive education by implementing programs that support diverse learners, ensure accessible classrooms, and provide continuous teacher training. These efforts create a fair and welcoming learning environment where all students feel included and have equal opportunities to succeed.

Promotion equity in instructional delivery, school management supports teachers through regular training, equipping them with skills for diverse learners. Prioritizing professional development ensures inclusive and equitable education.

Strengthened social support networks, school encourages parental and community participation through flexible schedules, and clear communication fosters inclusivity. Engaging stakeholders strengthens collaboration, enhancing educational equity.

Facility and Infrastructure Gaps as Barriers to Educational Equity, challenges include inadequate and outdated school buildings, lack of financial support, limited space, and insufficient facilities for learners, particularly those with disabilities. These issues make the learning environment less conducive and hinder equitable access to education.

Addressing learning gaps, supported by school management a Well-designed intervention programs implemented address students' specific needs. Early identification and proactive support enhance effectiveness, benefiting both individual learners and the entire class.

3. Output of the Study

The Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity serves as a structured guide for public elementary school heads to promote fairness and inclusivity in education. It emphasizes that educational equity is not simply about equal distribution of resources but about providing every learner with the support they need to succeed. Grounded in Hanover Research's Equity Framework (2017), the manual outlines practical and actionable strategies to address barriers that hinder equitable learning experiences. One of the key areas is Access to Learning Resources, which focuses on addressing shortages in textbooks, digital tools, and other educational materials. This is achieved through a thorough needs assessment, the development of equitable resource allocation plans, integration of technology in teaching and learning, and regular monitoring to ensure resources are properly utilized. Another important dimension is the creation of an Inclusive Environment, which involves making school facilities accessible for students with disabilities, training teachers in differentiated instruction to meet diverse learning needs, enforcing anti-bullying policies, and establishing peer support systems to foster a safe and supportive school culture for all learners.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were formulated based on the findings of the study:

1. The study revealed that public elementary schools implement various school management practices to promote educational equity, with stakeholders generally agreeing on their effectiveness. Access to learning resources, inclusive environments, teacher training, parental and community involvement, facility accessibility, and intervention programs were all observed, with most indicators receiving high ratings. However, challenges remain in areas such as technological resource availability, infrastructure improvement, and targeted interventions, highlighting the need for continuous enhancement and support to ensure equitable education for all learners.
2. School management practices play a crucial role in promoting educational equity by addressing key areas such as access to resources, inclusivity, teacher development, parental involvement, and infrastructure. However, challenges persist, including budget constraints, outdated facilities, and limited resources that hinder equitable learning opportunities. Despite these obstacles, school management fosters an inclusive environment through teacher training, intervention programs, and stakeholder engagement. Strengthening these efforts through strategic planning and resource allocation can further enhance educational equity and create a more supportive learning environment for all students.
3. The findings serve as the basis for developing a Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity, providing public elementary school heads with effective strategies to address challenges in resource allocation, inclusivity, teacher development, community engagement, infrastructure, and intervention programs. While schools implement various management practices to promote educational equity, gaps remain in technological resources, facility improvements, and targeted interventions. The manual aims to enhance school leadership practices, strengthen strategic planning, and ensure continuous support, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions made, the following recommendations are at this moment offered:

For the School Heads

- o Utilize the Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity to improve leadership, resource allocation, and school management.
- o Provide continuous professional development and training for teachers to enhance inclusive education strategies.
- o Strengthen parental and community involvement by fostering collaboration in school programs and initiatives.
- o Advocate for facility improvements and ensure equitable access to learning resources for all students.
- o Regularly evaluate and enhance intervention programs to address diverse student needs effectively.

For Public Elementary School Teachers:

- ☐ Apply strategies from the Management Practices Manual for Educational Equity to promote inclusive and equitable learning.
- ☐ Engage in continuous professional development to enhance teaching effectiveness.
- ☐ Utilize available resources efficiently to support diverse learners.

For Future Researchers:

- ☐ Use this study as a foundation for further research on school management practices and educational equity.
- ☐ Explore additional factors affecting equity in education, such as policy implementation and student well-being.
- ☐ Conduct comparative studies across different school settings to identify best practices.

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