



EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF STAKEHOLDERS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BRIGADA ESKWELA

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder participation in school-related activities remains a global concern, with studies across countries consistently reporting low levels of engagement among parents and other key stakeholders in school programs and initiatives. The study aimed to describe the experiences of public-school principals, teachers, and parents in implementing the program. A qualitative case study design was employed using in-depth and focus group discussions with ten (10) participants chosen through purposive sampling. Findings revealed that Brigada Eskwela, viewed through Freeman's Stakeholder Theory, manifested in three main themes: obligations and expectations to participate in Brigada Eskwela, information channels of the stakeholders, and the creation of social norms in participating in Brigada Eskwela. The program fostered strong collaboration and engagement among stakeholders, enhancing school readiness and educational quality. It is recommended that schools continuously strengthen community partnerships to sustain meaningful participation in future Brigada Eskwela activities.

KEYWORDS: Brigada Eskwela, obligation, information channels, social norms, Freeman's Stakeholder Theory

INTRODUCTION

Low stakeholder participation in public education remains a persistent operational challenge that directly undermines the systemic readiness of primary institutions and fractures the morale of educational communities (Bano & Khan, 2024; Harris & David, 2025). Within the scope of contemporary institutional management, low participation is defined as the minimal, uneven, or inconsistent involvement of parents, civic leaders, and external community actors in vital school-initiated programs (Santos & Alvares, 2026). This issue extends far beyond mere attendance metrics; it reflects deeper systemic deficiencies in institutional coordination, leadership alignment, and the shared ownership of foundational educational goals (Ocampo, 2023). When community engagement is fractured, the structural and financial burdens of school maintenance and holistic student development fall disproportionately on school personnel, creating a critical operational vulnerability within public education systems (Tan & Villa, 2025).

Globally, this disconnect between institutional expectations, and actual community mobilization is heavily documented in recent comparative literature. Educational researchers across various international landscapes, such as Ezech et al. (2024), Munje and Mncube (2018), and Al-Thani (2024), highlight that schools consistently struggle to sustain authentic stakeholder engagement despite executing deliberate partnership frameworks. Recent global studies reinforce that macro-level educational policies often fail to translate into micro-level community action due to competing socio-economic demands, institutional insularity, and a lack of structured communication channels between non-academic stakeholders and school

managers (Kujala et al., 2022; Chacha & Tangi, 2023). This international trend reveals that school-community alignment requires more than policy mandates; it demands localized social capital and clear institutional trust (Olaoye & Potter, 2024).

In the Philippine context, this structural gap is sharply evident in school-community programs designed to promote shared civic responsibility, most notably the *Brigada Eskwela* initiative. While designed to embody the traditional spirit of bayanihan (communal unity) and co-creation, recent national literature indicates a troubling disparity between policy intent and ground reality (Adlit & Martinez, 2023; Lingcob, 2023). Prior investigations by Tus (2021) and Peregrino et al. (2022) are mirrored by recent assessments showing that many community stakeholders remain highly ambiguous about their defined operational roles, or are completely constrained from active participation due to shifting employment demands and weak school-to-home digital infrastructures (Nieva & Lim, 2023; Oyando & Leaño, 2023). Consequently, despite continuous national campaigns and localized institutional pushes by the Department of Education, authentic stakeholder engagement frequently remains superficial, highly episodic, and transactional (Arguelles & Sarsale, 2025).

At the local level, particularly within the Division of Davao City, empirical field observations reveal a definitive, localized decline in stakeholder participation and volunteer turnouts over recent implementation cycles (Capistrano, 2015; Manila & Decano, 2022). While quantitative data occasionally capture superficial policy compliance, a severe empirical gap exists in qualitative literature regarding how local school leaders, teachers, and parents navigate the lived realities, structural



friction, and motivational barriers inherent in the ground-level implementation of *Brigada Eskwela*. Exploring these localized, context-specific narratives is necessary to move beyond transactional metrics and formulate authentic, data-driven partnership strategies. Therefore, this qualitative inquiry is vital for addressing this empirical gap by deeply examining the lived experiences of public-school principals, teachers, and parents in Davao City during the School Year 2023–2024, and providing a conceptual blueprint to revitalize community collaboration in public education.

Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this qualitative descriptive inquiry was to investigate and document the dynamics of school-community partnerships within public education institutions. Mainly, this study aimed to explore and describe the practical experiences and operational challenges encountered by institutional stakeholders in the ground-level execution of school programs. Specifically, the study sought to fulfill the following research objective:

1. To describe the practical experiences and operational challenges encountered by public school principals, teachers, and parents in the implementation of the *Brigada Eskwela* program within the Division of Davao City.

Theoretical Lens

The theoretical lens of this study comes from Edward Freeman's Stakeholder Theory (1984). Stakeholder theory posits that businesses must recognize their responsibility to all parties affected by their operations. At its core, the theory defines stakeholders as groups and individuals who can affect or be affected by a company's actions, establishing the essential relationships that underpin business operations. This organizational responsibility extends specifically to customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and financiers, the key stakeholders to whom businesses are accountable. The theory emphasizes that these stakeholder interests are fundamentally interconnected, and genuine value creation requires businesses to deliberately consider how their actions create value for each stakeholder group. This integrated approach to business management combines ethical responsibility with strategic effectiveness (Freeman, et al., 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive design to explore and document the dynamics of school-community partnerships. As emphasized by Sandelowski (2000, 2010), a qualitative descriptive design is highly appropriate when a straightforward, unadorned description of a phenomenon is desired. It allows the researcher to stay closer to the actual data and surface-level meanings of the participants' accounts rather than moving into highly abstract conceptual frameworks. This design aligns with the assertions of Creswell and Creswell (2018), who noted that qualitative research is focused on understanding

how individuals construct meaning from their real-world experiences. The utilization of this design is further supported by recent regional qualitative research, such as the descriptive work of Undaloc and Galache (2026), which establishes that an unadorned qualitative descriptive approach is uniquely suited for capturing the authentic voices, everyday stressors, and localized frictions of individuals navigating complex social and institutional landscapes.

By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the researcher sought to understand the ground-level implementation of the *Brigada Eskwela* program from the perspectives of the stakeholders. Instead of applying deep psychological or highly philosophical interpretations typical of phenomenology, this design focused on gathering comprehensive, detailed, and practically grounded narratives of the participants' operational challenges and lived realities.

Participants and Sampling

The researcher selected ten (10) participants composed of public-school principals, teachers, and parents who could provide rich, practical, and meaningful insights into the implementation of *Brigada Eskwela*. Individuals were selected through purposive sampling. As noted by Palinkas et al. (2015), purposive sampling is an effective technique in qualitative inquiry that involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. This sampling approach allowed the researcher to deliberately focus on information-rich cases that directly addressed the study's objectives, consistent with the foundational qualitative sampling methodologies described by Creswell (2018).

Participants were selected to meet the following inclusion criteria: School Principals / Teachers: Must be currently serving in a public school within the Division of Davao City with at least five (5) years of active education service. Parents: Must have a child currently enrolled in the selected public school and have active personal participation in *Brigada Eskwela* activities.

Data Collection Technique

Data were gathered in a systematic and ethical collection process. Institutional approval was first sought and obtained from the Dean of the Graduate School and the Ethics Committee. Formal letters were then transmitted to the Schools Division Superintendent of Davao City and to the respective administrators of the selected school sites to request permission to conduct the study. Prior to commencing the data collection, the researcher personally distributed and explained informed consent forms to the purposively sampled participants. This step ensured that all participants fully understood the purpose of the study, their voluntary roles, and their right to withdraw at any point without penalty.

The primary data collection techniques used were In-depth Interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). According to Gill and Baillie (2018), qualitative interviews facilitate direct interaction between the researcher and participants to explore individualized experiences, perceptions,



and deep insights. Concurrently, a focus group discussion operates as a structured group interview that leverages group dynamics to generate collective views and shared community meanings regarding a specific topic (Creswell, 2018).

While COVID-19 was no longer a critical public health threat during the data collection period, the researcher prioritized the participants' convenience, safety, and comfort. Consequently, sessions were conducted either face-to-face or via secure online video conferencing platforms depending on participant preference. This flexible deployment of remote qualitative instruments reflects recent developments in regional educational data collection, where researchers use secure video conferencing layouts to preserve high-quality participant interaction while minimizing structural barriers and temporal constraints (Sobradil et al., 2023). With explicit written permission from the participants, an audio recorder was utilized to preserve verbatim transcriptions.

Data Analysis Technique

The qualitative data collected from the transcriptions were analyzed using Thematic Analysis, strictly adhering to the classic six-phase reflexive framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019). Thematic analysis within a qualitative descriptive study provides an accessible, flexible, and systematically rigorous approach to identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. The data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's six distinct phases:

Phase 1: Familiarization with the Data: The researcher immersed themselves in the data by transcribing the audio recordings verbatim, reading through the transcripts multiple times, and noting initial reflections regarding stakeholders' operational challenges.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes: The researcher conducted systematic coding across the entire dataset. Codes were assigned to meaningful segments of text that captured practical experiences and ground-level challenges in the execution of *Brigada Eskwela*.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes: The codes generated in the previous phase were organized, clustered, and combined into broader, overarching candidate themes that reflected shared meanings across participant narratives.

Phase 4: Reviewing Potential Themes: The candidate themes were vetted against the compiled extracts and the entire dataset to ensure they accurately represented participants' statements. This phase verified that the thematic map aligned well with the empirical data.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes: The researcher conceptualized and refined the structural essence of each theme, giving them clear definitions and working titles that directly addressed the study's research questions.

Phase 6: Producing the Report: The final analysis was compiled, integrating vivid data extracts with analytical narratives to present a coherent, persuasive story that answers the research objectives.

By applying Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework, the analysis maintained a systematic yet reflective

posture, ensuring that the generated themes remained deeply grounded in the authentic voices and lived institutional realities of the stakeholders.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the scientific value, rigor, and moral integrity of this qualitative descriptive inquiry, the researcher adhered to the trustworthiness framework established by Lincoln and Guba (1985), evaluating credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability while seamlessly weaving in strict ethical protections. Credibility was established through data triangulation, using both individual interviews and focus group discussions to capture multiple perspectives of the *Brigada Eskwela* program. To ensure that the participants' meanings were accurately represented and free from researcher bias, member-checking was offered, allowing them to review and validate their transcribed narratives. Crucially, the entire study was subjected to rigorous institutional oversight and received formal ethical clearance from the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE), the official ethics review board of the Holy Cross of Davao College (HCDC) Graduate School. This review guaranteed that the rights, welfare, and dignity of the human participants were protected at every stage of the research process.

Dependability and *confirmability* were maintained through a systematic audit trail and a disciplined approach to data management. The researcher carefully documented every methodological decision, from the initial purposive sampling criteria to the final steps of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. To enforce strict confidentiality protocols and uphold the ethical promise of absolute identity protection, contextual aliases or pseudonyms were assigned to all individuals across data reporting, and specific school sites were anonymized. All digital artifacts, including audio recordings, verbatim transcripts, and reflexive codebooks, were stored in a password-protected cloud storage with localized backups, accessible only to the researcher. By anchoring the analytic process strictly in the empirical data, the researcher safeguarded confirmability, ensuring that the final themes emerged directly from stakeholders' authentic voices rather than from personal preconceptions.

Transferability was addressed by providing thick, rich descriptions of the research context within the Division of Davao City, detailing the operational environments and background demographics of the participating principals, teachers, and parents. While qualitative descriptive studies do not aim for statistical generalization, providing this extensive contextual depth allows future researchers, educators, and policymakers to determine the applicability of these insights to similar public education ecosystems. Ethically, the researcher also prioritized participant autonomy and beneficence; informed consent was obtained through transparent, face-to-face or digital orientations in which participants were explicitly reminded of their freedom to withdraw from the study at any point without negative repercussions. This holistic approach structurally balanced academic rigor with the highest ethical standards of the HCDC Graduate School.

RESULTS

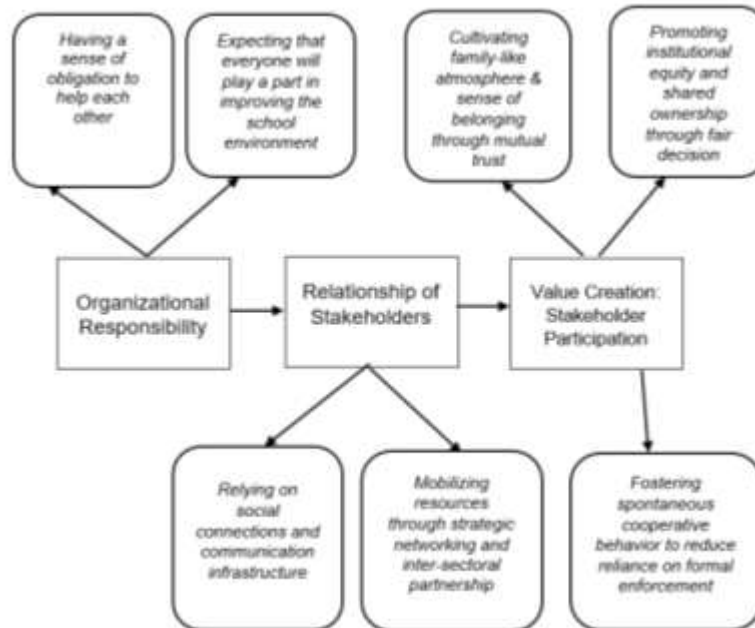


Figure 1. Emergent Themes on Community and Stakeholder Engagement in Brigada Eskwela.

Theme 1: Organizational Responsibility

The analysis revealed that a strong sense of obligation and expectation to participate in *Brigada Eskwela* significantly influences the school ecosystem. Key findings show that individuals feel a deep sense of duty to one another and operate under the collective belief that everyone should contribute to improving the institution. This shared accountability fosters a supportive and highly collaborative atmosphere.

Sub-theme 1.1: Having a Sense of Obligation to Help Each Other

A prevalent sub-theme within the findings is the compelling sense of obligation among individuals to assist one another within the school community. This sense of duty fosters a supportive environment where members feel personally responsible for the well-being and success of their peers. In this context, the commitment to assist one another strengthens interpersonal bonds and contributes to a positive, collaborative school culture.

The responses from the participants explicitly underscore this deep-seated sense of obligation:

Mao man gyud na among ginahatag nato, among sakripisyo ba, among paningkamot. (That's what we really give, our sacrifices, our efforts) **IDI-P1-P88-L9**

The findings underline the necessity of appreciating the efforts and contributions of all participants, particularly teachers and parents. Acknowledging diverse individuals working in unison directly optimizes the execution of the

program. Involving community members actively and establishing effective feedback systems contributes to accessing a broader range of resources, which supports the initiative's goal of promoting sustainability and enhancing the school community.

Ang amo ato maam no kay nindot kaayo kay nag gather jud ang tanang parents ato sa gym then makita jud nimo ang camaraderies sa community nga nag kahiusa jud during the brigada. (For us, Ma'am, it was very good because all the parents gathered in the gym, and you could really see the camaraderie in the community, as everyone united during the 'Brigada.)

IDI-P3-P88-L88

The physical assembly of parents in the school gymnasium clearly illustrates how such drives ensure that parents' bond, develop friendly interpersonal relationships, and attribute their collective progress to structural teamwork. This palpable sense of community is woven into programs like *Brigada Eskwela* because people work together to rehabilitate school infrastructure. When participants witness these relational dynamics firsthand, they engage more actively, thereby enhancing the overall influence of the initiative.

Successful kaayo to na event kay actually daghan to nag ano nag donate ato na time. (That event was very successful because, actually, many donated during that time.) **IDI-P5-P88-L18**

This response conveys how substantial donation levels validate the depth of community participation during fundraising and mobilization events. Such occasions bring



together parents, local businesses, and civic actors to support school mandates. This collective action not only adds value to the resources that can benefit the school but also develops deep-seated public interest and concern towards the institution, ensuring that the structural interventions remain active over time.

These individual responses illuminate a community deeply committed to mutual support. Participant 1 emphasizes personal sacrifice and effort, reflecting a profound sense of duty. Participant 3 describes a community event where visceral camaraderie and unity characterized their collective work. Participant 5 points to measurable event success, attributing it to widespread donations.

This baseline of mutual obligation is further expanded in the focus group dynamics, where participants contextualized this behavior culturally through the concept of the bayanihan spirit:

Ang bayanihan spirit makita jud nimo nga bisag wala man silay maambag financially or kung naa man gamay lang. Ang ilahang motivation nga maandam ang skwelahan since ang ilang mga anak nagskwela man diha, kanang kuan sila movoluntary jud sila panilhig, panglimpyo, pamintura. (You can really see the spirit of community cooperation even if they can't contribute financially, or if they do, it's just a small amount. Their motivation to prepare the school, since their children are studying there, makes them volunteer to sweep, clean, and paint.) **FGD-P1-P88-L21**

This statement captures the essence of bayanihan, showcasing how community cooperation thrives despite financial constraints. The readiness of parents to pledge their time and manual labor demonstrates a high degree of responsibility and dedication to their children's education, creating a vital support system for the school environment.

The Operational Tension: Authentic Volunteerism vs. Systemic Compulsion

While the data highlights a strong communal drive, the focus group responses candidly reveal a critical operational friction on the ground: the balance between genuine, self-motivated volunteerism and external systemic pressures or competition that sometimes force participation:

So ang challenge karon is kanang authentic jud kanang manganha ang mga ginikanan para movolunteer nga bisan walay compulsion or wala natong forces force nga maingon natog force tungod sa competition. (So the challenge now is for parents to come and volunteer authentically, without any compulsion or forces that could be perceived as competition.) **FGD-P1-P88-L30**

This finding highlights a distinct challenge: ensuring that community engagement remains a sincere act of volunteerism rather than an obligation driven by artificial pressure or school-level competitions. Parents who engage out of autonomous, self-warranted interest develop a

significantly more resilient bond with the institution, which ultimately enhances the program's authentic footprint.

To help resolve this tension and guide community goodwill effectively, participants emphasized that the school must communicate its actual infrastructure needs transparently through accessible data:

Actually Ma'am, I have some additional Ma'am. Kanang it is very important kana ganing naa tay mga data sa school para makit-an didto kung unsa juy ang mga need sa school kay basig diay naa tay makit an nga kanang mga kuan ba benevolent people. (Actually, Ma'am, I have something to add. It is very important that we have data in the school to identify the real needs because we might discover benevolent people who can help.) **FGD-P3-P88-L37**

Utilizing data fosters a more efficient and collaborative effort to enhance school resources. By collecting and displaying accurate data regarding infrastructural deficits, school administrators can pinpoint exact areas requiring external assistance, enabling them to targetedly attract potential sponsors or benevolent community groups who wish to see empirical evidence of their impact.

Sub-theme 1.2: Expecting that Everyone Will Play a Part in Improving the School Environment

The second sub-theme emerging from the coding process is the normative expectation that every member of the school ecosystem must contribute to enhancing the physical and social environment. These expectations reflect a collective understanding of shared responsibility and commitment toward school improvement initiatives, where mutual obligations generate collective efficacy.

The individual interview excerpts demonstrate how these expectations manifest across various roles:

So tanan pud mi diha gina oblige gud pud mi sa mga bata nga mag pasalamat jud sila sa mga nag donate... kay kung dili sila ingnon maam ayaw ninyo'g pakauwaw sa among mga donors. (So, all of us there are obligated to make sure that the kids express their gratitude to the donors... because if they don't, we tell them, 'Don't embarrass us in front of our donors.) **IDI-P3-P89-L7**

Expressing outward gratitude to sponsors enriches long-term cooperation and builds social capital. Cultivating an institutional culture of thankfulness teaches students the value of community investment while simultaneously validating the contributions of external donors, securing their future involvement.

Kay kanang tanan mi diha bisan gamay nga butang naa mi'y kabayanihan gud pud bisan usa ka swiping swiping kay kabayanihan gihapon na. (Because all of us there, even with small contributions, still show our spirit of heroism, even with just a bit of sweeping, it's still an act of heroism.) **IDI-P5-P89-L7**



This highlights that within *Brigada Eskwela*, even minor actions like sweeping are framed as acts of micro-heroism (kabayanihan). This mindset democratizes participation, ensuring that every participant feels motivated, self-driven, and structurally appreciated, reinforcing the descriptive standard that every individual contribution counts.

Maski mga staffs nagadonate og ilang oras ba kung unsa'y ilang mahatag. Bisag pila ra ka oras, at least naa kay contribution. Mao na'y importante didto sa Brigada Eskwela, ang contribution gyud sa tanan. (Even the staff donate their time, whatever they can give. Even if it's just a few hours, at least you have a contribution. That's what's important in *Brigada Eskwela*—the contribution from everyone.) **IDI-P4-P89-L18**

This perspective broadens the scope of responsibility to include internal non-teaching staff, cementing the notion that temporal contributions are just as valuable as financial capital. This collective investment forms the bedrock of the program's overall operational success.

The focus group discussions further corroborated these shared norms of reciprocity while candidly addressing the ongoing challenges of universal engagement:

So ang bayanihan spirit makita jud nimo nga bisag wala man silay maambag financially or kung naa man gamay lang. Ang ilahang motivation nga maandam ang skwelahan since ang ilang mga anak nagskwela man diha, kanang kuan sila movoluntary jud sila panilhig, panglimpyo, pamintura. (You can really see the spirit of 'bayanihan' (community cooperation) even if they can't contribute financially, or if they do, it's just a small amount. Their motivation to prepare the school, since their children are studying there, makes them volunteer to sweep, clean, and paint.) **FGD-P1-P89-L35**

Kanang challenge karon na ang uban ginikanan kuan rapud di napud tanan muingon rag ay di bitaw girequire akong anak murag ana no pero naa man gihapon inuon movolunteer kana lang sa lately na brigada implementation. (The challenge now is that some parents think, 'Oh, my child isn't required, so I won't participate,' but there are still those who volunteer, especially in the recent Brigada implementation.) **FGD-P2-P90-L1**

This friction highlights the operational challenge of balancing voluntary drive against bystander apathy. When participation is strictly decoupled from formal academic requirements or disciplinary compulsions, administrators must work harder to clearly communicate how collective contributions directly improve the

Theme 2: Relationship of Stakeholders (Information Channels)

The empirical data revealed that open, structured information channels serve as the operational backbone for resource utilization and community deployment. By consolidating the overlapping communicative channels identified during the coding process, the findings show two clear pathways: local communication infrastructures and external partner networks.

Sub-theme 2.1: Relying on Social Connections and Communication Infrastructure

The first pathway centers on how internal stakeholders use local social connections and communication channels such as social media group chats and regular monthly meetings to share knowledge, coordinate tasks, and keep the community updated on school needs. The following excerpts demonstrate how these information platforms function on the ground:

We have a group chat sa mga parents, mga teachers. Ana mi ngadto sa ilaha, 'Unsaon man ni? Asa ta kuhaan?' (We have a group chat with the parents and teachers. We ask them, 'What should we do? Where can we get it?') **IDI-P2-P90-L19**

Naa may mga connections ko, mo ask ko sa ilaha unsay best na buhaton. (I have some connections, so I ask them what the best course of action would be.) **IDI-P4-P90-L23**

Kita naa mi'y monthly meeting, didto gahatag na mi'g listahan unsa ang amuang gi pangita, unsa ang mga kulang. Di man sad mi mangutana ana sa principal, sa ubang teachers. (We have a monthly meeting where we provide a list of what we need, what is lacking. We don't ask the principal or the other teachers about it.) **IDI-P1-P91-L9**

This proactive communication demonstrates operational independence and strong horizontal accountability. By using structured face-to-face spaces like monthly meetings to self-generate, organize, and distribute clear logs of what is missing, community members can actively drive localized school support without constantly relying on or waiting for direct instructions from the principal or teachers.

Daghan ming activities, we have a school board, tapos Brigada Eskwela. Tapos during Christmas, mag-celebrate gyud mi didto. (We have many activities; we have a school board, then *Brigada Eskwela*. And during Christmas, we really celebrate there.) **IDI-P3-P91-L14**

By participating in both official administrative spaces (the school board) and informal communal events (Christmas celebrations), community members build deep, multifaceted relationships. These organic interactions ensure that information flows naturally, laying a strong foundation of community trust before official programs even begin.



Sub-theme 2.2: Mobilizing on Strategic Networking and Inter-Sectoral Resource Mobilization

The second pathway highlights how school leaders expand their reach beyond immediate parent-teacher groups. By actively building networks with local government units, corporate partners, and civic organizations, they successfully mobilize labor, financial donations, and material resources. The data reveals a diverse, multi-sector network supporting the school:

Nagtagad ko og ilang contact para makatabang pud sila sa mga construction materials sa eskwelahan. (I reached out to their contacts to see if they could help with construction materials for the school.) **IDI-P4-P90-L15**

Maski dili ka member sa PTA, you can still donate. Kung mag-Brigada Eskwela, maglabang-labang gyud mi. Dili lang PTA members ang mag-contribute, pati ang mga wala sa PTA, musulod sila og magtukod. (Even if you're not a member of the PTA, you can still donate. During Brigada Eskwela, we all help out. It's not just the PTA members who contribute; even those who aren't in the PTA come in and help with the construction.) **IDI-P2-P91-L18**

This underscores that institutional ownership extends well beyond formal Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) boundaries. The open-door policy of *Brigada Eskwela* allows non-affiliated citizens to freely offer construction skills and labor, transforming school improvement into a shared community project. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with local government units and private entities expand the program's resource base:

So, nag adto me sa baranggay, makig-cooperate me sa baranggay crossing na mag donate sila lugaw so ma-ingganyo sila na muapil jud daghan. Then naa pud panghatag snacks ang Jollibee so maencourage jud ang uban na mo joined because of that platform. (So, we went to the barangay to cooperate with them, asking them to donate rice porridge, which encouraged more people to participate. Jollibee also provided snacks, which further encouraged others to join because of that initiative.) **IDI-P5-P91-L-24**

Naga rely mi sa mga connections namo, mga kaila. Mao naa miy mga sponsors, mga nag-donate og mga gamit sa eskwelahan. (We rely on our connections and acquaintances. That's why we have sponsors and people who donate supplies to the school.) **IDI-P5-P91-L32**

By securing localized civic food donations (such as lugaw from the local barangay) and corporate sponsorships (such as snacks from Jollibee), organizers make the volunteer experience welcoming and accessible. These simple gestures help lower the barrier to entry, encouraging broader community participation. This multi-sectoral mobilization model is further illustrated in the focus group accounts of

school heads engaging institutional entities:

In addition to that ma'am, we the school heads are also begging to some organizations like sa police, moduol mig Police Station, fire station, and other nongovernment organizations. Asking their force, no provided however, halimbawa we need painting, so mag request me sa task force Davao to do the job pero amoa ang pintura then kato nga dungag sa giingon ni ma'am Tes that their effort in terms of manpower is converted into certain amount based on the skills they have given to the school. (In addition to that, ma'am, we, the school heads, also seek assistance from organizations like the police, the police station, the fire station, and other non-governmental organizations. We request their support; for example, if we need painting, we ask Task Force Davao to do the job, but we provide the paint. As Ma'am Tes mentioned, the effort they contribute in terms of manpower is converted into a certain amount based on the skills they have provided to the school.) **FGD-P2-P92-L1**

Ang pamaagi namo ana mao to magpaluoy-luoy nalang jud kung asa maka kuan maka pangayog tabang kanang moboluntaryo or muhatag pud dili lang labor pati materyales pud dalhon nila. (Our approach is to humbly ask for help wherever we can, from those who are willing to volunteer or give. They don't just offer labor; they also bring materials.) **FGD-P1-P92-L15**

By systematically coordinating with institutional actors like the Bureau of Fire Protection, the Philippine National Police, and Task Force Davao, school heads efficiently optimize resource allocation. The school provides raw assets (such as paint), while external institutional partners contribute skilled manpower. This collaborative arrangement demonstrates that successful school governance relies on strong relationships across a diverse network of community partners.

Theme 3: Value Creation Through Shared Social Norms

The final major theme focuses on the tangible value created within the school community through shared social norms. Rather than simply noting that trust and cooperation exist, the narrative data demonstrates that these shared norms directly generate meaningful outcomes, including a supportive, family-like atmosphere, classroom readiness, a culture of mutual appreciation, and genuine community ownership.

Sub-theme 3.1: Cultivating a Family-Like Atmosphere and Sense of Belonging Through Mutual Trust

The primary value created through peer-to-peer trust is a strong sense of psychological safety and belonging. Trust goes far beyond financial safety; it ensures that every person's time, effort, and care are valued, transforming the school into a welcoming, family-like environment. The



transcripts highlight this relational value creation:

Maka ingon ko nga gina trust ka sa imong kaparehas. Dili man gani ka mag dalhon ug kwarta, magdala gani ka og programa sa eskwela, dili man gani ka kahibaw unsay imong ehatag sa school, makasalig ka nga ang imong ikagawas naa man gihapon. (I can say that you are trusted by your peers. Even if you don't bring money, when you bring a program to the school, even if you don't know what you'll contribute, you can trust that whatever you provide will still be appreciated.)

IDI-P1-P92-L21

Kung unsay imong ma hatag, sure ka nga naa pud silay ihatag sa imo. So ma feel ka pud nimo nga naa pud sila sa imo or naa silay imong tabang kay na feel man pud nimo nga inyo diay mong tanan. (Whatever you give, you're sure that they will also give something back to you. So, you can feel that they are there for you, or that they value your help because you realize that you're all in this together.)

IDI-P4-P92-L29

Mao jud na ang purpose ani nga maka gather ta og tanan and then makatabang jud ta og dugang. Ma feel nimo nga duna kay family diri sa skwelahan. (That's really the purpose of this, to gather everyone so we can contribute more. You feel like you have a family here at the school.)

IDI-P5

This form of trust establishes a supportive environment where non-monetary ideas and programs are warmly welcomed. Knowing that personal contributions will be genuinely appreciated creates a strong sense of mutual care and reciprocity. This shared commitment helps build a close, family-like atmosphere within the institution, transforming the school into a shared home for all who contribute.

However, we could only encourage participation kay kung imong pugson dili naman to volunteerism however kay si teacher man is the recipient of the preparation so siya mismo maningkamot siya nga maandam niya iyang school that is why ang role ni teacher is dako jud iyang role ana sa pag encourage sa parents. (However, we can only encourage participation because if you force it, it's no longer volunteerism. Since the teacher is the recipient of the preparation, they themselves work hard to prepare their school. That's why the teacher's role in encouraging the parents is significant.)

FGD-P3-P93-L12

So ang challenge karon is kanang authentic jud kanang manganha ang mga ginikanan para movolunteer nga biasn walay compulsion or wala natong forces force nga maingon natog force tungod sa competition. (So the challenge now is for parents to come and volunteer authentically, without any compulsion or any force that might be seen as competition.)

FGD-P1-P93-L22

Because teachers are the direct recipients of a well-prepared classroom, they play an essential role in inviting parents to participate. Trust is maintained by keeping this invitation open and genuine, ensuring that community involvement stems from care for the students rather than external pressure or comparison.

Sub-theme 3.2: Fostering Spontaneous Cooperative Behavior to Reduce Reliance on Formal Enforcement

The second form of value created is operational efficiency. When community cooperation becomes a natural social expectation, it minimizes the need for formal rules, administrative penalties, or mandatory compliance, encouraging community members to step up spontaneously.

The transcripts highlight this balance between guidance and spontaneous community support:

Naa man pud mga kalihukan na libre nga inyong ma enjoy, dili nimo mabuhat nga way enforcement sa mga bata. Sa way inform, inform nila nga mag enjoy sila. (There are also free activities that you can enjoy, which you can't do without guiding the children. You just need to inform them so they can enjoy.)

IDI-P2-P93

So like asa diay nga dili nimo ma kaya, naa may mo offer, naa may mo tabang. Mao na ang isa ka maayo sa amoang community kay gihatag man na sa atoang Ginoo nga ngaayon ato, tungod kay anad na pud tang mo tabang-taabangay. (So, when you're in a situation where you can't handle something, someone will offer help. That's one of the good things about our community, it's a blessing from God that we help each other, because we're used to giving assistance.)

IDI-P3-P94-L29

The natural habit of looking out for one another (tabang-taabangay) acts as a soft, self-regulating social norm. Because the community is naturally accustomed to offering support, individuals facing challenges are quickly met with volunteer help, long before any formal administrative request is made. To sustain this collaborative spirit, focus group participants highlighted the importance of moving away from top-down management toward a shared leadership model:

Ang nature baya, human nature is to be recognize no kay mahiubos baya ng ubang tao nga grabe silag effort di na nato sila marecognize. Along with the planning with all the committee, we will not forget na ang success ana is naa jud tay partners no. The sense of shared leadership no kanang sa public-school man gud, we always share the responsibility and leadership mao ng we involve people. (Human nature seeks recognition, right? Some people feel hurt if their efforts aren't recognized. So, in our planning with all the committees, we don't forget that the success involves our partners. It's about the sense of shared leadership. In public schools, we always share responsibility and leadership, which is why we involve people.)

FGD-P3-P93-L1



Ako maam, I am into katong dili na siya in terms of competition ang gaves ang measurement whether or you're not implementing ah you are the best implementer provided however na as long as the volunteerism is there is present is evident. (For me, ma'am, it's not about competition or being measured by whether you're the best implementer. What's important is that volunteerism is present and evident.)

FGD-P3-P94-L8

Acknowledging every participant's contribution is vital; failing to recognize their hard work can discourage future involvement. By actively sharing leadership responsibilities, school heads ensure that community members feel like true partners rather than just additional labor. This shared approach shifts the focus away from institutional rivalries and places it squarely on the real presence of volunteer teamwork.

Sub-theme 3.3: Promoting Institutional Equity and Shared Ownership Through Fair Decision-Making

The final value created is genuine community ownership of the school's growth. When school decisions, resource allocations, and curriculum opportunities are guided by fairness and transparency, it builds a lasting sense of mutual respect between the school and the community. The following statements highlight this commitment to equity:

Dapat fair tanan. Dili ra unfair karon ky gipatabangan gyud ang tanan. Like sa among curriculum, dili ra man angay suwayon ang mga estudyante. Dapat tanan naay chance na mahatagan og opportunity. (Everything should be fair. It's not unfair now because everyone was consulted. Like in our curriculum, it's not just the students who should be tested. Everyone should have the chance to be given an opportunity.) IDI-P1-P94-L21

Ang akong pagtoo man gud, ang ginahatag nga opportunity, dapat pareho. Kay kun di man pareho, di gyud na masabtan sa uban. Dapat bisag unsaon na ang kalamboan, mao jud na dapit sa katarungan. (I believe that the opportunities given should be equal. Because if they're not, others won't understand. No matter how you look at progress, it should always be rooted in fairness.) IDI-P4-P94-L27

These insights demonstrate that prioritizing fairness creates an environment where everyone can thrive. When development is clearly grounded in justice (*katarungan*), it prevents misunderstandings and deepens the community's trust in the school's leadership.

This shared dedication to fairness ultimately builds a meaningful sense of collective ownership across the entire institution:

Ang sense of involvement and ownership kay ang teacher cannot make it alone it's because of the support of the students. So diha ang nindot pud, so mag strategies pud intawn si principal kung unsaon pagpapadaghan sa participation kay ingnon na daan na establish na daan na mao ni akong criteria sa Brigada Eskwela, ingon ani akong gusto makita sainyong classroom. (The sense of involvement and ownership is important because a teacher cannot do it alone; it requires the support of the students. That's what's good about it. So, the principal also has to strategize on how to increase participation by setting criteria for Brigada Eskwela and specifying what they want to see in the classrooms.) FGD-P3-P94-L33

As the data illustrates, the success of *Brigada Eskwela* relies on a thoughtful mix of clear management strategies and genuine community care. To maximize participation, school heads must set clear, transparent expectations while keeping an open ear to feedback. Creating space for everyone to contribute to decision-making transforms the physical preparation of the school into a shared expression of community pride.

DISCUSSIONS

Organizational Responsibility

The empirical findings demonstrate that *Brigada Eskwela* operates less as a formal administrative mandate and more as an extension of a deeply institutionalized cultural expectation. The descriptive data reveals that community stakeholders, particularly parents and teachers, view school maintenance through a lens of collective duty. This sentiment is anchored heavily in the traditional Filipino ethos of bayanihan a cultural paradigm of communal unity and cooperation to achieve a common goal without expecting direct material compensation. Participants explicitly framed their personal sacrifices, temporal investments, and manual labor as non-negotiable contributions toward the welfare of the learners.

In exploring how this localized commitment takes shape, Torres (2021) emphasized that stakeholder support during school maintenance cycles relies on a vibrant collective effort, where teachers spend extended time coordinating ground activities while local businesses and parents supply basic material resources. Building on this dynamic of shared institutional investment, Agnas (2020) documented that when parent-teacher associations experience a visible surge in school-level camaraderie, it builds an environmental readiness that correlates with overall better student reception at the start of classes. These collective community efforts validate the notion that local stakeholders expect a shared social responsibility, operating under the baseline assumption that an individual parent or an isolated school administration cannot adequately handle structural needs alone.

To understand how these daily tasks form localized norms of behavior, Lacanilao (2020) tracked public school events and discovered that parents show an extraordinarily high degree of involvement when acting as active observers and collaborators



rather than passive clients. This micro-level commitment was examined further by Perocillo and Virador (2024) in an institutional evaluation of the Department of Education's regional Adopt-A-School efforts. Their narrative reports revealed that simple actions—such as weeding, hauling debris, and sweeping classroom spaces are embraced by parents as personal contributions toward generating a safe learning environment. Taken together, these studies clarify that grassroots accountability is primarily driven by immediate, human connections between the neighborhood and the classroom.

However, a critical finding within this domain is the presence of an operational friction between genuine, self-motivated volunteerism and systemic, institutionalized pressures. Participants candidly noted that the introduction of heavy school-level competitions and implicit administrative pressures can inadvertently distort the authentic spirit of bayanihan. When community members sense an underlying compulsion whether driven by bureaucratic metrics or competitive rankings the relational bond between the school and the community risks becoming transactional.

In examining the negative effects of top-down structural frameworks, Cabual (2021) investigated the psychological balance of parent cohorts, demonstrating that when public initiatives lean too heavily on strict extrinsic standardizations, the long-term intrinsic motivation of the community begins to deteriorate. This exact operational challenge was highlighted by Bantias and Cabual (2022), who argued that competitive performance metrics often turn an organic bayanihan movement into a compliance-focused event, leaving some parents feeling disconnected from the school's actual administrative goals. For those who feel pressured by these institutional scorecards, Galang (2021) discovered that highly standardized rules often cause bystander apathy, as parents are far more likely to disengage completely when they feel their voluntary labor is being measured as a bureaucratic metric.

To help resolve this operational tension on the ground, the empirical data points to data-driven transparency as a practical solution. In an assessment of how regional schools can rebuild community partnerships, Aliasas and De Dios (2021) confirmed that presenting parents with open, verifiable lists of an institution's infrastructure deficits helps manage human resources more effectively and reduces stakeholder doubt. This structural transparency was supported by Alcantara et al. (2024), who noted that data-driven operations provide parents with a clear, reliable rationale for involvement. By replacing abstract administrative metrics with open information about school needs, school heads can transform a vague request for help into a targeted, meaningful opportunity for community action, shifting the paradigm from forced compliance back to authentic engagement.

Relationship of Stakeholders (Information Channels)

The empirical data revealed that open, structured information channels serve as the operational backbone for resource utilization and community deployment. The qualitative descriptions reveal that stakeholder communication does not depend on rigid, formal bureaucratic hierarchies. Instead, it relies

on horizontal, organic communication networks, heavily utilizing social media architectures (such as Facebook Messenger group chats) alongside face-to-face structures (such as regular monthly meetings). These channels allow for immediate problem-solving, real-time coordination, and independent stakeholder action.

In analyzing these informal platforms, Durban and Celajes (2020) observed that internal school networks that adapt instant messaging architectures successfully bypass rigid administrative channels, allowing parents and teachers to co-manage operational challenges with minimal delay. Looking closely at how cohorts talk within these online spaces, Gonzales and Santos (2021) established that instant messaging serves as an effective tool for micro-level governance, empowering parents to coordinate daily maintenance tasks entirely on their own. This localized management is further validated by Ramos (2023), who proved that horizontal communication setups such as parent-led face-to-face meetings foster a culture of shared accountability that stands as a strong alternative to traditional, top-down instruction.

Beyond immediate parent-teacher groups, the operational success of *Brigada Eskwela* relies on a broader network of external alliances. The findings show that school heads actively build relationships with diverse sectors, including local government entities (the barangay), private corporate sponsors (e.g., Jollibee), and national civic agencies (e.g., the Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, and Task Force Davao). This pathway highlights how school leaders expand their reach to successfully mobilize labor, financial donations, and material resources.

To map out these external networks, Ramos (2021) studied the leadership styles of regional school heads, framing them as essential community brokers who must actively link their schools with municipal and barangay offices to fill resource deficits. Looking at how these partnerships play out in practice, Bautista and Dumandan (2024) demonstrated that cross-sector mobilization works best when a school pairs skilled institutional labor (such as specialized fire department or task force manpower) with raw materials supplied directly by the school. Finally, Tolentino (2023) highlighted the unique value of cultural hospitality within these networks, showing that simple gestures—like providing local snacks or lugaw—lower the barrier to entry, welcoming non-PTA members and turning a school maintenance drive into a shared civic project.

Value Creation Through Shared Social Norms

The final major theme focuses on the tangible value created within the school community through shared social norms. Rather than simply noting that trust and cooperation exist, the narrative data demonstrates that these shared norms directly generate meaningful outcomes, including a supportive, family-like atmosphere, classroom readiness, a culture of mutual appreciation, and genuine community ownership. The primary value created through peer-to-peer trust is a strong sense of psychological safety and belonging. Trust goes far beyond financial safety; it ensures that every person's time, effort, and care are valued, transforming the school into a welcoming, family-like environment.



In a study on community engagement, Llego and Capalaran (2021) discovered that public organizations that intentionally build an atmosphere of psychological safety experience significantly higher volunteer loyalty across multiple years. Explaining this connection through local relationships, Fernandez (2022) noted that implementing a family paradigm within public school environments changes a parent's commitment from short-term participation to long-term ownership. To keep this trusting environment active, Salazar and Reyes (2020) emphasized that teachers must develop strong bridging capabilities, acting as the primary connectors who ensure that invitations to volunteer are open, fair, and completely free from external competitive pressures.

A second notable form of value created is operational efficiency. When cooperative behavior becomes a natural community expectation (*tabang-taangay*), it minimizes the need for formal rules, structural penalties, or mandatory compliance guidelines. The internal drive of the community creates a self-regulating ecosystem where individuals spontaneously step forward to help when structural challenges arise. This self-regulating behavior relies heavily on a shared leadership model.

In an analysis of operational management, Abugho and Quirap (2023) discovered that delegative leadership practices among school heads are closely tied to higher success during school maintenance preparations, as sharing responsibility encourages stakeholders to step forward spontaneously. This view is supported by Ansano and Melchor (2024), who verified that a school head's ability to share authority directly improves a community's willingness to complete tasks. By moving away from top-down administrative instructions, Ocampo (2021) proved that public schools practicing shared leadership create a highly collaborative environment that shifts the community's focus away from winning trophies toward fostering deep, everyday cooperation.

Finally, the descriptive findings indicate that institutional equity and fairness (*katarungan*) are essential for building lasting community trust and genuine ownership of the school's growth. Stakeholders invest their energy, time, and resources much more readily when they see that decisions, resource allocations, and opportunities are distributed fairly to benefit every student, regardless of background or starting point. When development is clearly grounded in justice, it prevents local misunderstandings and aligns the community behind the school's leadership.

In analyzing the impact of fairness on community trust, Santos and Villafuerte (2024) confirmed that when school development is clearly grounded in justice, it prevents local misunderstandings and aligns the community behind the school's leadership. Evaluating this dynamic through physical improvements, Navarro and David (2022) proved that parents show the highest motivation when they see resources used fairly to achieve infrastructure parity across all learning spaces. Ultimately, as Tecson (2024) concluded, when school leaders listen to feedback and invite authentic community participation in decision-making, they build deep community pride, transforming school

maintenance into a shared expression of care and a collective investment in the future of all learners.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Implications for Practice

Educational leaders must recognize that effective community engagement in programs like *Brigada Eskwela* requires moving away from rigid, compliance-heavy transactional volunteerism to cultivate a deeper sense of shared responsibility rooted in traditional cultural values like *bayanihan*. The empirical data underscores a sharp ground-level friction when school-level competitions or bureaucratic metrics overshadow authentic community participation. To manage this tension, school heads should intentionally foster an environment where stakeholders view their participation not as an optional charity or a forced administrative metric, but as an essential civic duty grounded in mutual respect and reciprocity. Practically, this requires school leaders to display clear, data-driven transparency regarding actual school infrastructure deficits, transforming vague requests into targeted, meaningful opportunities for action so that parents can see exactly how their time and labor directly improve learning environments.

Moreover, schools must strategically harness informal, horizontal communication pathways and strategic community networks rather than relying strictly on top-down, rigid bureaucratic channels to build shared leadership and institutional trust. The study highlights that the operational success of resource mobilization depends heavily on organic platforms such as Facebook Messenger group chats and informal parent-led face-to-face meetings which allow for real-time problem-solving and immediate, independent task coordination among stakeholders. Educational leaders should map these localized social relationships and formally integrate them into their administrative strategies, actively building cross-sector alliances with local government units (the *barangay*), civic organizations, and private entities. When school heads act as relational brokers and distribute resources fairly across all learning spaces to achieve equity (*katarungan*), it reduces reliance on formal compliance enforcement and creates a profound sense of institutional ownership and psychological safety.

Implications for Theory

This study provides critical insights that expand the application of Edward Freeman's Stakeholder Theory (1984) beyond its traditional corporate origins into the governance of public basic education. At its core, Freeman's theory posits that organizations must recognize their responsibility to all parties affected by their operations and that authentic value creation requires a deliberate consideration of how institutional actions create value for each stakeholder group. While traditional corporate settings measure value through financial dividends, market share, or transactional efficiency, this study demonstrates that value creation within public education is driven by social capital, relational outcomes, and shared cultural norms. The qualitative realities of *Brigada Eskwela* show that the corporate assumption of transactional alignment is insufficient for



managing public educational communities, requiring a theoretical pivot toward relational accountability.

Consequently, this study modifies Stakeholder Theory by demonstrating that value for educational stakeholders is experienced through emotional and cultural dimensions rather than material returns. Institutional value is generated when school heads transition from corporate managers to relational brokers who leverage cultural frameworks like bayanihan to establish mutual accountability among parent-teacher cohorts. Furthermore, this study establishes that organizational value in public basic education is defined as psychological safety, a family-like atmosphere of belonging, and institutional equity (*katarungan*). Therefore, theoretical frameworks applied to educational governance must integrate these cultural and emotional dimensions, proving that strategic institutional effectiveness cannot be separated from ethical, transparent, and shared grassroots leadership.

Future Directions

Based on the study's practical and theoretical implications, the directions foreseen for future research are established across key educational domains. For Department of Education (DepEd) officials, future research should focus on a large-scale mixed-methods policy-practice gap assessment across 100 schools in various regions to specifically measure stakeholder compliance rates with mandated consultation requirements, resource allocation discrepancies between centralized policy intent and ground reality, and overall stakeholder satisfaction scores with current engagement mechanisms. Additionally, DepEd officials are encouraged to implement a quasi-experimental study comparing community engagement outcomes between public schools operating under strict centralized mandates versus those utilizing decentralized, autonomous decision-making models, tracking specific variables like volunteer participation rates, project completion timelines, resource mobilization efficiency, and long-term stakeholder retention across three consecutive *Brigada Eskwela* cycles.

For public school heads, principals, teachers, and community leaders, the research directions point toward quantitative and structural mapping to enhance localized engagement outcomes. School administrators can execute a quantitative descriptive study utilizing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to pinpoint which specific leadership behaviors—transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire—correlate most strongly with measurable community metrics such as total volunteer hours contributed, external financial donations secured, and localized project completion rates. Concurrently, community and barangay leaders can expand this understanding by conducting a structural social network analysis among 30 distinct local leaders across urban and rural settings to explicitly measure network density, resource mobilization capacity, and the exact pathways of influence that affect grassroots volunteer recruitment. This localized data can then be coordinated with academic institutions to develop and pilot a Community Engagement Sustainability Index to predict, evaluate, and

enhance long-term stakeholder commitment over multi-year implementation cycles.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to expand the scientific scope of this inquiry by deploying longitudinal methods and testing the boundaries of established organizational frameworks over time. Researchers should design a 3-year panel study tracking 100 distinct stakeholders across 50 public schools to collect annual data on participation frequency, contribution types, subjective satisfaction scores, and perceived institutional value, using advanced growth curve analysis to identify distinct long-term engagement patterns and their predictors. Furthermore, future researchers want to re-test the boundaries of Freeman's Stakeholder Theory across other major public education programs, such as the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) initiatives, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Integration programs, which will measure the validity of the theory across varying educational contexts and identify the specific conceptual modifications required for public school governance.

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/514

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