

# **The Implementation of the Enhanced School Improvement Plan (E-SIP) of the Secondary Schools in the Division of Bayugan City, Philippines: Basis for Improvement of the Next Planning Cycle**

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Gunning Fog Index: 16.52 • Originality: 99% • Grammar Check 99%  
Flesch Reading Ease: 34.44 • Plagiarism: 1%



## **ABSTRACT**

The research focused on implementing the Enhanced School Improvement Plan of the secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City for the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 cycles. The mixed-method research design, or the Concurrent Triangulation method, was used to determine the level of compliance by the respondent planning teams with the prescribed planning process of the Enhanced Improvement Plan and the quality of the 2019-2021 Enhanced School Improvement Plan. Based on the findings of the study, the School Planning Team (SPT) generally knows the planning process and the different steps required how to achieve the desired goal of the school in crafting the E-SIP as manifested by its highly complied rating. As to the level of compliance of the prescribed processes, the SPT has adapted and conformed to the preparatory activities and plan phase but only complied in the Assess and Act Phase, which could

be attributed to the various actions implemented by the department, which could mean that the SPT was not able to follow what had been indicated in E-SIP fully. The schools can likewise conduct vision sharing on the school's strategic goals; conduct vision sharing to internalize DepEd's vision, mission, and core values; validate school data by listening to the voice of the learners and stakeholders and other pertinent activities as indicated in the E-SIP which are deemed necessary for the improvement of E-SIP. To the Division Office, School Administrators, and School Planning Team, they must ensure the allocation of funds for programs and projects articulated in the next E-SIPs, and to ensure that funds already allocated to such projects are utilized in their actual implementation.

### **KEYWORDS**

Implementation, enhanced school improvement plan, planning cycle, secondary schools Bayugan city, mixed method, Philippines

### **INTRODUCTION**

The School Improvement Plan is a roadmap that lays down specific interventions that a school, with the help of the community and other stakeholders, will undertake within a period of three consecutive school years. It seeks to provide those involved in school planning with an evidence-based, systematic approach with the learner's point of view as the starting point. It is envisioned to help schools reach the goal of providing learners access to quality education.

RA 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, guides Philippine schools in implementing the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The act sets the general framework for principal empowerment by defining principal and leadership goals and local school-based management with transparency and accountability as core values. The SIP operationalizes these mandates.

RA 9155 mandates the decentralization of the school management system. It recognizes the role of the Local Government Units and other stakeholders as partners in delivering basic education services. In pursuit of this principle, the Department of Education introduced the Schools First Initiative (SFI) in 2005 to endow the school and its community stakeholders with full authority to address education access and quality.

Subsequently, in 2006, Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) was launched. BESRA was a more comprehensive package of policy reforms aimed at sustaining and expanding the gains of SFI through School-Based Management (SBM). It enabled the formulation of several enabling policies on SBM, including School Improvement Planning (SIP).

Through SBM, the number of schools with SIP increased. However, there were systemic issues in the operationalization of the policies and guidelines at the field level. Most SBM implementers saw it as just another requirement that the Central Office needed to comply with, including the SIP.

A finding presented in the Department of Education Caraga Region's SBM Manual of Implementation that most schools visited included unrealistic targets and inappropriate strategies in the SIPs. Too much focus is given on complying with the suggested templates rather than on responding to the uniqueness of the school's current situation, the type, and socio-economic situations of the pupils/students whom the schools are tasked with providing a conducive learning environment. The SIP template was construed by many as a one-size-fits-all form. The blunder was experienced despite the development and issuance of the SIP Manual in 2009; the series of capacity building programs on SIP formulation that were conducted supposedly to equip School Heads with knowledge and skills in the preparation of a data-driven SIP; and the subsequent training on Appraisal and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) to strengthen the capacity of the Division Quality Management Team (DQMT) who were tasked to appraise the quality and viability of SIPs.

These led to the conclusion that most schools generally crafted the SIP only for compliance rather than using it as a roadmap for school improvement. These schools did not reflect in the SIPs and Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) their plans and activities for in-service training, health and nutrition program, and SBM grant projects.

Having considered these findings, DepEd issued DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2015 entitled "Guidelines on the Enhanced School Improvement Planning (SIP) Process and the School Report Card (SRC)." The order requires the school community to share its vision for school improvement. A three-year plan called the Enhanced School Improvement Plan (E-SIP) encapsulates this shared vision. It is supposedly an improved version of the previous SIP and should effectively address issues, unlike the previous SIP, which was just submitted for mere compliance.

In the E-SIP, targets are made specific. It addresses the three key result areas of access, quality, and governance by focusing on the identified priority improvement areas within the school's control and capacity and its community stakeholders to address. To ensure the appropriateness of the interventions, the E-SIP provides a planning framework and processes that enable the School-Community Planning Team (SPT) to prepare the E-SIP to come up with an evidence-based, results-based, and child or learner-centered improvement plan. (SIP Guidebook)

The E-SIP should be a powerful means of promoting school effectiveness. It should enable the school community to collectively develop a clear vision of what their school wants to be about and where it wants to go, a shared purpose and set of goals, and consensus on the means of achieving such vision. Therefore, the E-SIP should be a product of a successful planning process and able to deliver an effective governance framework for the school, for a school that is governed well contributes to the attainment

of the mandates of DepEd as a government institution tasked with providing every school-aged children access to complete education (access); preparing every graduate for further education and the world of work (quality); and ensuring effective, transparent, and collaborative governance of education (governance).

Moreover, aside from allowing collaboration by empowering school teams and personnel, the E-SIP should also encourage expanding the community's participation and involvement. With these in place, the delivery of education services to the learners is more responsive, efficient, and effective, therefore compliant with Section 2, paragraph 4 of RA 9155, which stipulates that the state shall encourage local initiatives to improve the quality of education.

The provision cited empowers the schools and learning centers to make decisions on what is best for the learners they serve through the E-SIP. It encourages the active involvement of the parents and the community in the child's education. The provision also maximizes the participation and coordination among the school, local school board, the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), and School Governing Council (SGC). Lastly, volunteerism among all sectors is sought, emphasized, and encouraged to ensure sustainable education growth.

Meyers et al. (2018) suggest that a high-quality school improvement plan that reflects the school's needs and objectives is central to the community's success in turning around low-performing schools. DepEd, mindful of the less than stellar experience from the previous round of SIP implementation, provided a guidebook containing a detailed procedure for preparing, evaluating the quality and implementing the SIP. DepEd also urges relevant departments, LGUs, and partners to follow the guidelines as they implement projects and activities to pursue school improvement.

Since the issuance of DepEd Order No. 44 s. 2015 prescribing the implementation of the Enhanced School Improvement Plan (E-SIP), one full cycle of E-SIP had already been implemented in the calendar year 2016-2018. Currently, E-SIP for the CY 2019-2021 cycle is in the midterm of its implementation. Presently, there has been no study conducted at least at the Division level to determine if the systemic issues experienced in the previous version of the SIP have not been experienced in implementing the current enhanced SIP. The Division of Bayugan City has not yet studied if the 2016-2018 E-SIP significantly improved the schools' compliance to DepEd's mandates of access, quality, and governance.

Being the monitoring and evaluation coordinator on the implementation of the E-SIPs in the Division of Bayugan City, the researcher proposes the research on the E-SIP policy in the Division, specifically on the level of the school planning team's compliance with the prescribed process stipulated in DepEd Order 44 s. 2015. The research will also collect data on the quality of the crafted E-SIPs and their performance based on the ratings of the respondent planning teams to come up with recommendations to improve the implementation of the E-SIP policy.

## FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on the theory of collaboration as cited by Jamal (1995) as applied to the planning and development of the school-based on local community initiatives. The theoretical construct of collaboration was used to underpin the challenges and considerations in the planning and development of schools from a community-involvement perspective about the crafting and implementing the E-SIP.

Gaida (2004) stated that increasingly, the collaboration between business, non-profit, health, and educational agencies is a powerful strategy to achieve a vision otherwise not possible when independent entities work alone. Bryson et al. (2006) also stated that collaboration exists when a group of people jointly tackles tough social problems and achieve beneficial community outcomes where multiple sectors of a democratic society—business, nonprofits and philanthropies, the media, the community, and government—collaborate to deal effectively and humanely with the challenges. In this study, cross-sector collaboration exists through the participatory nature of the crafting and implementation of the E-SIP where representatives from the school community come together to plan and execute the plan (E-SIP) for the development of the school.

This study also considered the concept of School-Based Management as defined in RA9155 or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001. SBM, as a practice of decentralization, promotes shared governance and emphasizes the necessity of the involvement of both the school's internal and external stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan to achieve the desired student learning outcomes.

This study also looked into the crafting and implementation of the Enhanced Improvement Plan as defined in DepEd Order No. 44 s. 2015. Specifically, the level of compliance by the school planning team with the prescribed process in the three phases of the cycle, namely: Assess, Plan, and Act, including the preparatory activities, were rated by the respondents. They also rated the E-SIP quality as crafted and its contribution to the attainment of the three performance mandates of access, quality, and efficiency in governance.

Further, this study took into account the experiences of the School Planning Team in their actual involvement in the crafting and implementation of the School Improvement Plan. It identified the themes and behaviors behind their participation. The study sought to find the actual contributions of the School Planning Team to the E-SIP planning and implementation, how they rate the level of their compliance with the prescribed planning process, and their rating of the quality of the SIP they crafted. The study also examined the extent of the school-community partnership at play in the schools and how exactly their role in the development of the school through SBM practices in general and their participation in the E-SIP process, in particular, has benefitted the schools in terms of achieving the targets in the mandates of the provision of equitable access, ensuring the quality of education, and ensuring efficiency

in governance.

The findings of this study are used as the basis for recommendations for the development of a new planning framework for the improvement of the E-SIP policy implementation to achieve better quality education in the Division of Bayugan City.

The researcher used the concurrent strategy of triangulation mixed-method research design, according to Creswell W.J. 2003. The data were generated from the (7) members of the School Planning teams in the ten (10) secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City who were involved in crafting and implementing the Enhanced School Improvement Plans in the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 cycles.

Following the research flow, the researcher first gathered qualitative data from the participants through focused-group discussion. During the FGD, the participants were probed on their assessment, based on their experiences as a respondent planning team, of the level of compliance with the prescribed planning process in crafting the Enhanced School Improvement Plan, the performance of the 2015 – 2018 E-SIP, which explains the success and limitations in the planning and implementation of the E-SIP, and on what improvements are necessary for implementation in the next planning cycle. Quantitative data were gathered through a survey questionnaire to validate the responses of the participants. It was administered after the focused-group discussion. The survey questionnaire was designed to determine, by using descriptive statistics, the level of compliance of the respondents with the prescribed steps in the crafting and implementation of the E-SIP. The quality of the E-SIP was also determined based on the ratings of the respondents, which was gathered through another survey questionnaire.

The qualitative data were then analyzed thematically, compared, and integrated into quantitative data to come up with answers to the problems of the study. The findings became the basis of the recommendation for an enhanced planning framework for the E-SIP.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

This study examined the processes involved in School Improvement Planning and the quality of the School Improvement Plans of the secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The study used the Concurrent Triangulation Mixed Method design, according to Creswell W.J. (2003). The concurrent method of triangulation research design was employed since the research dealt with both qualitative and quantitative data, which were gathered at the same time. As defined by Creswell W.J. (2003), the purpose of this type of investigation is to validate the findings generated by each *method* through evidence

produced by the other. Data on the respondents' rating on their level of compliance to the prescribed planning process and their rating on the quality of the E-SIP and their lived experiences as members of the School Planning Team were gathered using the focused-group discussion and survey questionnaire.

### **Research Locale**

The research was conducted at the Division of Bayugan City. It is located in the City of Bayugan **in the Province of Agusan del Sur, Philippines.** The city has a population of 106,379 based on the Community-Based Management System 2010 records. It is located in the northern part of Agusan Del Sur and is bordered by the Municipality of Sibagat **and the province of Surigao del Sur to the north; the Municipality of Prosperidad to the east; the Municipality of Esperanza to the south; and the Municipality of Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte, to the west.** The city is comprised of Forty-three (43) barangays.

The Division of Bayugan City was established through a memorandum dated July 3, 2012, issued by the Honorable DepEd Secretary Bro. Armin Luistro. Currently, it is comprised of sixty-nine schools, ten secondary, 58 elementary, and one stand-alone Senior High School.

Specifically, the research was conducted in the ten secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City, namely: Bayugan National Comprehensive High School located at Narra Avenue, Poblacion, Bayugan City; Noli National High School located at Barangay Noli; Salvacion National High School located at Brgy Salvacion; Marcelina National High School located at Brgy Marcelina; Magkiangkang National High School located at Brgy Magkiangkang; Mt. Olive National High School located at Brgy. Mt. Olive; Mt. Carmel National High School located at Brgy. Mt. Carmel; Calaitan National High School located at Brgy. Calaitan; Berseba National High School located at Brgy Berseba; and San Juan National High School located at Brgy. San Juan, Bayugan City.

For the conduct of the focused group discussion, the participants were chosen from three schools that represent a similar typology with the other remaining schools in the division. The selection was done to comply with the ideal number of FGD participants but still ensuring that the experiences of the respondents from the rest of the schools with similar contexts could also be represented in the discussion.

For the large school typology, the Bayugan National Comprehensive High School was chosen. It is the largest secondary school in the Division of Bayugan City. It is home to more the 7200 students from grade 7 to grade 12 and has 242 teachers and non-teaching personnel. It is led by a Principal and an Assistant Principal. It is an operating unit, meaning it manages its funds, which it receives directly from the Department of Budget and Management. It is situated in the center of the City. It caters to many learners who hail either from the city proper, the neighboring barangays, and even from Sibagat, Esperanza, and Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur.

For the medium school classification, Marcelina National High School was chosen to be the participating school. It is a medium secondary school with slightly less than 700 learners from grade 7 to grade 12. It has 29 teachers, excluding the Principal. It is a rural school in Barangay Marcelina, which is an agricultural barangay located more than 10 kilometers southwest of the city proper. The school caters primarily to learners who are children of farmers residing in the barangay as well those who live in the neighboring barangays of New Demar and New Katipunan, Bayugan City.

Lastly, the study chose Berseba National High School for the small secondary school classification. It has an enrolment of only 240 students. It only has 12 teachers and is located 21 kilometers north of the city proper. The school is located in Barangay Berseba, which is populated by a mixture of Manobos, the indigenous people of the part, and Cebuanos who have relocated to the area from different parts of Bayugan, other municipalities of the Province of Agusan del Sur, and even as far as Surigao, Leyte, and Cebu.

The three schools were chosen to represent the rest of the secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City, which have similar typology, therefore, offer a fair representation in terms of the experiences of the respondents.

### **The Respondents/Participants**

The respondents/participants of this study were the school-community planning team (SPT) of the ten secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City for the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 cycle as required in DepEd Order 44 s. 2015. These members are the following: School Head; Student representative; teacher representative; parent representative; barangay LGU representative; member of the Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; and a member of the School Child Protection Council. They were oriented on how to conduct the E-SIP cycle before they started the planning of the SIP.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by School and by Stakeholder Group Representation

School	Respondents							Total
	School Head	Teacher Rep	Student Rep	Parent Rep	BLGU Rep	BDRRMC Rep	Child Protection Committee Rep	
BNCHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Salvacion NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Marcelina NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Magkian-gakang NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mt. Olive NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Mt. Carmel NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Noli NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Calaitan NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Berseba NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
San Juan NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>70</b>

Table 2. Distribution of Participants by School and by Stakeholder Group Representation

School	RESPONDENTS							Total
	School Head	Teacher Rep	Student Rep	Parent Rep	BLGU Rep	BDRRMC Rep	Child Protection Committee Rep	
BNCHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Marcelina NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Berseba NHS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>

Table 2 shows that there were a total of twenty-one participants in the focused-group discussion. The participants were selected based on the school's size as determined using the classification of schools in the Brigada Eskwela Program. Schools are classified as either small, medium, large, or mega school based on the number on the number of teachers assigned at the school.

The SPT members of one large school, one medium school, and one small school were selected as conversational partners or research participants. They were selected as participants as their varied experiences as stakeholders of schools with different backgrounds in terms of size, availability of resources, and location of school and community may provide insights as to the level of their compliance to the prescribed

process and the quality of their crafted E-SIPs. For the large school, the Bayugan National Comprehensive High School was selected. Marcelina National High School was chosen for the medium school, while Berseba National High School was preferred for the small school category.

All schools selected have designated School Planning teams as identified in DepEd Order No. 44 s. 2015.

The purposive, non-probability sampling, considered by Welman and Kruger (as cited in Groenewald, 2004) as the most logical method to identify research participants, was used in this study.

### **Research Instrument**

The researcher used a survey questionnaire to gather quantitative data. There were three sets of questionnaires administered in this study. The questionnaire was adapted from the School Improvement Plan Guidebook and Unnumbered memorandum on the E-SIP content and style guide. It assessed the extent of compliance of the prescribed planning process, the quality of the E-SIP, the performance of the 2016-2018 E-SIP, and the extent of the application of the learnings from the 2016-2018 E-SIP in the planning and implementation of the 2019-2021 E-SIP. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested by piloting it at 10 of the elementary schools in the Division, which are more or less similar in size, and location and was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. It has a reliability index (alpha) of 0.86.

The 1<sup>st</sup> part of the questionnaire is the Profile of the Respondents. It sought to gather information about the respondents, specifically about their name, gender, age, highest educational attainment, stakeholder group represented, and the E-SIP cycle they had participated. The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the questionnaire contains questions designed to gather the respondents' ratings on their compliance with the prescribed planning process, specifically in the Preparatory activities, Assess, plan, and Act phase. The 3<sup>rd</sup> phase gathered the respondents' ratings on the availability of the Means of Verification (MOV) that each process under each stage was conducted. The 4<sup>th</sup> part is an evaluation checklist containing a rubric for rating the quality of the E-SIP parts. The 5<sup>th</sup> part of the questionnaire sought to gather the respondent's rating on the performance of the 2016-2018 E-SIP in terms of provision of equitable access, delivery of quality education, and ensuring efficiency in governance of basic education. Finally, the 6<sup>th</sup> part of the questionnaire contains questions designed to gather information on the extent of application of the learnings in the 2016-2018 E-SIP in the planning of the 2018-2019 E-SIP.

For the qualitative data, since the researcher was looking for detailed information, not for yes or no, agree or disagree responses (Rubin and Rubin, 2012), he conducted a focused-group discussion using open-ended guide questions that led to the stakeholders' self-discovery of the extent of their compliance with the planning process and an objective rating of the quality of their School Improvement Plan. The focused-group discussion

allowed a free-flowing conversation with conversational partners while following Rubin and Rubin's (as cited in Abunales, 2016) reminder to exercise extreme caution by using broad and probing questions to avoid imposing the researcher's views and opinions.

On the experience on the School Planning Team in terms of the level of compliance with the prescribed process in crafting the E-SIP, the following questions were raised to ferret out from the participants the processes/activities they had undertaken in the different phases of the E-SIP cycle. For the preparatory phase, the following sub-questions were raised. *Based on your experience as a respondent planning team, what is the level of compliance with the prescribed planning process? How did the school inform you and prepare you in your role as a member of the school planning team? What preparations did you undertake before the start of the E-SIP planning? As a representative of the different stakeholder groups of the school, were you able to communicate the vision of your group for the school? If yes, how? If no, why?*

To determine the level of compliance in the Assess phase of the E-SIP planning cycle based on the experiences of the respondent planning teams, the research raised the following follow-up questions: *How did you start with the actual planning of the E-SIP? Did you discuss the school's current situation? Were you able to identify improvement areas? How? Did you have an initial list? Did you prioritize solving identified improvement areas? What process did you use in prioritizing an improvement area?*

In the case of the Plan phase of the E-SIP cycle, the following sub-questions were raised to gather qualitative information based on the experiences of the respondent planning teams: *What were your specific plans for the PIAs? Did you assign people to lead in addressing the PIAs? Did you talk to the affected learners, parents, teachers about the problem? How? Did you conduct a root cause analysis of these PIAs? How?*

Lastly, to gather qualitative information on the experience of the respondent planning teams in the Act phase of the E-SIP cycle, these questions were raised. *Did you test the solutions first before using them all permanently throughout the year? Are you following the progress of your E-SIP?*

The qualitative information was compared and integrated into the respondent planning team's quantitative ratings to complete the information regarding the level of compliance with the prescribed planning process.

For research problem no. 4 on the performance of the 2015-2018 E-SIP, the following questions were raised: *Based on your assessment, where all the projects in the E-SIP 2016-2018 implemented? Was this strictly according to project design? Did the projects address the root causes of the PIAs? Were all the PIAs addressed? How? Why or Why not?* The thematic results of the discussion on this problem were then compared and integrated to the quantitative results from part 5 of the survey questionnaire to find a definitive finding on this problem.

For problem no. 5 on what explains the success and limitations in the planning and implementation of the E-SIP, the following guide questions were used to gather qualitative responses: *Based on your experience as SPT, what are the reasons why the*

*E-SIP is successful in addressing the PIAs? Why was it successful? What do you think are the limitations or weaknesses of your crafted 2016-2018 E-SIP? Were the projects implemented effective? Were they implemented? Why do you think that the success happened?*

Lastly, for problem no. 6 on what improvements were necessary for the implementation in the next planning cycle, this guide question was raised, *Based on your experience as a school planning team, what are the lessons learned from the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 E-SIP cycle that can be used to improve the 2022-2024 E-SIP cycle?* These questions were raised to gather qualitative information on how to improve the next E-SIP planning cycle based on the experiences of the respondent planning teams.

### **Ethical Considerations**

In conducting this research, these ethical considerations were observed.

The participants were informed of the purpose and extent of the interview through a Division Memorandum discussed with them before the interview/focused-group discussion. They were also guaranteed anonymity and sanctity of their responses in compliance with the data privacy act. They were given the freedom to manifest their observations and opinions. Utmost respect and courtesy to the respondents in the course of the interview were ensured. More importantly, confidentiality was maintained in the analysis and interpretation of data.

According to Kalof et al. (as cited in Abunales 2016), compliance with the ethical requirements “maximizes benefits in both the scientist and research participants, respect participants’ rights and minimizes the risks to participants.” With this, the conversational partners were assured that the researcher is ethically-bound to keep the information they shared confidential.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher asked permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Bayugan City Division to conduct the study and gain access to the research participants. After securing her approval expressed through a Division Memorandum, the researcher informed the school principals of the potential participants, of the study’s conduct and sought their assistance. The school principals were asked to invite the respondents to be at the school on the designated date and time for the purpose. The researcher arranged, together with the School Principal, the day and time of the encounter with the conversational partners personally at the school. During the focused-group discussion, the researcher read to the participants the purpose and extent of the study. The researcher also asked permission to audio and video-record the conversation for documentation and reference purposes. The focused-group discussions were conducted to gather the relevant qualitative data. Right after the FGDs, quantitative data were then collected through the survey questionnaire.

For the qualitative data collection, the researcher followed Groenewald’s (2004) suggestion in conducting an unstructured interview/focused-group discussion using

questions directed to the “participants’ experiences, feelings, beliefs and convictions about the theme in question.” Also, the participants were asked about their contributions to the actual steps they took in planning the school improvement, their assessment of the quality of the E-SIP they crafted, the challenges they met, and their ideas of how to improve the school improvement process. This procedure was done to answer the specific problems sought in the study.

As part of the validation process, the study results will be presented to the stakeholders during the Management Committee (MAN-COM) conference.

### **Treatment of Data of Data**

This study utilized the following:

**Mean.** It is used to determine the extent of compliance of the respondents with the prescribed steps in the school improvement process, the quality of the crafted E-SIP, and the performance of the 2016-2018 E-SIP, which are research questions no. 1 and 2, respectively.

**Thematic Analysis.** Used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns of meaning (or “themes”) within qualitative data. Analyzing the qualitative data included preparing transcriptions and summaries, looking for concepts, themes, and events, coding, and analyzing or explicating coded data. The researcher made data explication through text reading, identifying, coding, aggregating, and finalizing common themes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research focused on implementing the Enhanced School Improvement Plan of the secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City for the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 cycles. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the question on the level of compliance of the School Planning Team with the prescribed E-SIP process in the Preparatory activities, Assess phase, Plan phase, and Act phase, the performance of the 2016-2018 E-SIP as well as the quality of the 2019-2021 E-SIP.

The research locale is the ten secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City. The respondents were the School Planning Team of the ten secondary schools in the Division composed of the School Head, Teacher Representative, Student Representative, Parent Representative, BLGU Representative, BDRRMC Representative, and the Child Protection Committee Representative. The participants in the focus group discussion were the SPT of the Bayugan National Comprehensive High School, Marcelina National High School, and Berseba National School, which are classified as large, medium, and small schools, respectively.

The mixed-method research design, or the Concurrent Triangulation method, was used to determine the level of compliance by the respondent planning teams with the prescribed planning process of the Enhanced Improvement Plan and the quality of the

2019-2021 Enhanced School Improvement Plan. The findings were generated through quantitative data analysis and supplemented by qualitative data. The quantitative data were gathered through the survey questionnaires and were analyzed using the mean. The qualitative data were collected through a focus-group discussion and were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The following findings are drawn from the analyses of the data collected:

1. As experienced by the respondent planning teams, the prescribed planning processes crafting the Enhanced School Improvement Plan were generally **highly complied**. However, in terms of the compliance of the processes in the different phases of the E-SIP cycle, the prescribed procedure in the Preparatory activities and the Plan phase were **highly complied with** while the processes in the Assess and Act Phase were **complied with** only.

2. Based on the experience of the respondent school planning teams, the performance of the 2016-2018 E-SIP was **good only**. Generally, up to 90% of the projects designed to address priority improvement areas were implemented as planned, which solved an estimated 90% of the problems identified at the root cause level. The respondents were contented with the results of the 2016-2018 E-SIP in the three mandates of the Department of Education, namely: the provision of equitable access, ensuring quality, and efficiency in governance.

3. Based on the respondents' ratings, the quality of the 2019-2021 Enhanced School Improvement Plan **meets expectations**. The 2019-2021 E-SIP currently in use in the secondary schools in the Division of Bayugan City has sufficiently met the quality standards set by the Department of Education. The different parts and contents of the E-SIP are adequately discussed and crafted in a manner that meets the minimum expectation of the school planning team. The general objectives of the E-SIP are responsive to priority needs. There is confidence from the respondent planning teams that problems of the school that is considered priorities could be solved in this E-SIP. However, the respondent planning teams also rated the clarity and completeness of the root cause analysis process as not of the highest quality.

4. The success of the 2016-2018 E-SIP was underpinned by the strengthened collaboration among the school personnel and the stakeholders in its planning and implementation. The strengthened linkages provided the school with other sources of much-needed resources to implement projects; such resources were otherwise not available to the school other than the school MOOE. Conversely, the limitation in implementing the 2016-2018 E-SIP is whether there are actual availability and utilization of the budget allocated for the projects identified therein.

5. The most significant area for improvement necessary for implementation in the next planning cycle is strengthening cooperation among stakeholders. While the collaboration among stakeholders is already fine in the previous E-SIPs, due to its paramount importance in the success of the succeeding E-SIPs, it needs to be

continuously nurtured to attain maximum participation of the stakeholders.

6. The learnings generated from the 2016-2018 E-SIP planning cycle were implemented to a **very great extent**. The respondent planning teams were able to apply to the best degree the learnings generated from the preparatory phase, which enriched the conduct of the Preparatory activities of the 2019-2021 E-SIP. However, the learnings generated in the Act phase of the 2016-2018 E-SIP were only applied to a **great extent in the 2019-2021 E-SIP**.

7. The gains from the successful implementation of the E-SIPs in the two cycles can be summarized into four general categories, namely: *the establishment of a well-defined mechanism for the articulation of a shared vision and strategic direction for the school and the community by the school and its stakeholders thru the compliance of the E-SIP process; strengthening of the collaboration between the school and its public; improvement of the level of transparency in school governance and operations particularly concerning resource generation and utilization; and establishment of a well-defined and acknowledged delineation of authority, responsibility, and accountability for the stakeholders and the school personnel concerning the performance of the school specifically on the learning outcomes.*

8. From the experience of the E-SIP in the two cycles, the existing planning framework can be evolved into a new planning framework to ensure sustainability through the strengthened and institutionalized involvement of the stakeholders; establishment of a well-defined system for guaranteeing accountability; and bolstering the plan implementation monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that projects are implemented as planned. In the two cycles, there were activities under the Assess and Act phase where the involvement was not utilized to the fullest extent. Strict observance of shared accountability among all stakeholders over the E-SIP quality and its outcomes was also not observed at the fullest extent. Strict implementation of the plan must also be entrenched in the new planning framework.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. The School Planning Team (SPT) generally knows the planning process and the different steps required how to achieve the desired goal of the school in crafting the E-SIP as manifested by its highly complied rating. As to the level of compliance of the prescribed processes, the SPT has adapted and conformed to the preparatory activities and plan phase but only complied in the Assess and Act Phase, which could be attributed to the various actions implemented by the department, which could mean that the SPT was not able to follow what had been indicated in E-SIP fully.

2. The respondents followed the 2016-2018 Enhanced School Improvement Plan. The E-SIP was able to satisfactorily deliver the designed programs and projects to make the schools compliant with its mandate of providing equitable access, ensuring quality and efficiency in governance of education. The schools, through 2016-2018 E-SIP, was

able to provide the necessary activities. However, the specific performance of ensuring the availability of learning materials and school facilities was rated the lowest, which could be attributed to insufficient funds available to the schools to provide these needs.

3. The School Planning Team (SPT) are generally knowledgeable of the prescribed planning process and the different steps required in crafting the E-SIP as manifested by the rating of the quality of 2018-2021 as meets expectations. The SPT was able to conform to the prescribed processes in crafting the E-SIP; however, they only complied with the conduct of the root cause analysis process, which affected the clarity and completeness of identifying the root-causes, which also affected the general quality of the E-SIP.

4. The SPT and the rest of the school personnel know how to collaborate and build strong relationships with the community and school stakeholders. They can create a strong collaboration with stakeholders, which underpins the E-SIP's success as it affords the school with a more varied source of resources and multiplies the number of people who make representations for and in half of the school to generate resources to fund the projects in the E-SIP.

5. The respondent planning teams recognize that collaboration is a vital element in ensuring a higher level of success in implementing the E-SIP. Hence, it is a significant area for improvement necessary in the next planning cycle even as a collaboration among stakeholders is already good during the execution of the previous E-SIPs. Still, due to its paramount importance in the success in the planning and implementation of the succeeding improvement plans, it needs to be continuously nurtured to attain maximum participation of the stakeholders.

6. The SPT is receptive to new knowledge to improve the way they plan for school improvement as they implemented the learnings generated from the 2016-2018 E-SIP planning cycle to a very great extent. They are readily amenable to applying the learnings generated from previous E-SIP to enrich the conduct of the prescribed activities, albeit, they were only able to use the learnings generated in the Act phase of the 2016-2018 E-SIP to a **great extent** in the 2019-2021 E-SIP.

7. The gains from the successful implementation of the E-SIPs in the two cycles enable the schools to establish a well-defined mechanism for the conduct of vision sharing and formulation of strategic direction; strengthening of the collaboration between the school and its community; improvement of the level of transparency in school governance and operations particularly concerning to resource generation and utilization; and establishment of a well-defined and acknowledged delineation of authority, responsibility, and accountability for the stakeholders and the school personnel concerning the performance of the school specifically on the learning outcomes.

8. The existing planning framework needs to be evolved into a new planning framework to ensure sustainability through the strengthened and institutionalized involvement of the stakeholders, establishing of a well-defined system for guaranteeing

accountability, and enhancing the plan implementation monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that projects are implemented as planned.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered.

1. To the members of the School Planning Team, the School Heads, they can take the lead in monitoring the E-SIP such that the prescribed processes and the different phases be highly complied with. In this way, the implementation of the E-SIP in the next planning cycle can be improved. The schools can likewise conduct vision sharing on the school's strategic goals; conduct vision sharing to internalize DepEd's vision, mission, and core values; validate school data by listening to the voice of the learners and stakeholders and other pertinent activities as indicated in the E-SIP which are deemed necessary for the improvement of E-SIP.

To the Division Office personnel, especially the Schools Governance and Operations Division, they must hold an enhancement training workshop to improve the capability of the School Planning Team to implement the activities to ensure that all prescribed processes and phases of the E-SIP cycle will be highly complied.

2. To the Division Office, School Administrators, and School Planning Team, they must ensure the allocation of funds for programs and projects articulated in the next E-SIPs, and to ensure that funds already allocated to such projects are utilized in their actual implementation. In this way, the performance of the succeeding E-SIPs will become *impressive*. This is to guarantee that the schools can ensure the provision of equitable access to quality education.

3. To the School Planning Team, after their capability to conduct the prescribed E-SIP planning process has been enhanced thru the enhancement workshop to be implemented by the Division Office, they should guarantee the clarity and completeness of the root cause analysis process to improve the quality of the succeeding E-SIPs.

4. To the School Planning Team and school personnel, they must sustain their efforts in building collaboration with the school community. They must be empowered to seek and engage well-meaning and generous individuals and entities, in both the private and public sector, to enter into partnership agreements with the school for donations of cash, goods, and services needed to implement projects and activities that address problems identified in the E-SIP.

5. To the SPT and school personnel, they should sustain and nourish harmonious relationships with the community and school stakeholders to achieve the educational goals of the school. They can do it through the regular information dissemination of the financial status of the schools and other vital information to include the performance of the learners through the regular updating of the transparency board, maintenance of an updated website or social media platforms, issuance of updated School Report

Card (SRC), conduct of regular PTA meeting, rendering of the State of the School Address (SOSA), and other means of fostering transparency which is the foundation of a harmonious relationship.

6. To the Division Office and the School Heads, they should catalog the best practices in E-SIP application to take advantage of the SPT's openness in applying the learnings generated from previous E-SIP implementation. The catalog could be published both in a digital and printed newsletter so that more schools in the Division or the region could adopt/adapt.

7. To the Regional Office, they can include the awarding of the most outstanding E-SIP implementer in the Bulawanong Sulo Awards to recognize the best E-SIP implementing school in order motivate the rest of the schools in the region to improve their E-SIP implementation by applying the gains from the successful implementation of the E-SIP in the two cycles.

8. To the Division Office, they can issue a local policy to better strengthen the level of involvement and accountability of the stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and outcomes of the E-SIP by adopting the evolved E-SIP Framework presented in question number 8 of this research. The localized policy shall also institutionalize the rewards and awards system for parents and stakeholders to boost morale and encourage more participation in the activities.

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