

School Governance, Learning Environment and Cultural Diversity

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity among 365 respondents in the Schools Division of Antique for the year 2025. A descriptive-correlational research design was used. Data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson product-moment correlation.

Findings revealed that school governance was highly effective, the learning environment was very favorable, and cultural diversity practices were highly implemented in schools. Significant positive relationships were found among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity. This suggests that strong school governance helps create a better learning environment and supports the effective implementation of inclusive and culturally responsive practices.

The study concluded that school governance plays an important role in improving both the learning environment and cultural diversity in schools. Strengthening governance systems further enhances school effectiveness and supports inclusive education.

KEYWORDS: School governance, learning environment, cultural diversity, inclusive education, school leadership, school climate, educational management, Schools Division of Antique, instructional environment, diversity practices

INTRODUCTION

School governance is an important part of how schools are managed and led. It includes leadership practices, policies, decision-making processes, and the overall system that ensures schools function effectively. In the Schools Division of Antique, strong governance is essential in making sure that schools operate smoothly, fairly, and in line with educational goals. Studies show that effective governance improves school performance by promoting transparency, accountability, and collaboration among stakeholders (OECD, 2020; Bush, 2018).

The learning environment is another key factor that affects the quality of education. It refers to the physical, social, and emotional conditions where teaching and learning take place. A positive learning environment is safe, inclusive, supportive, and well-resourced. According to Wang and Degol (2016), students perform better when they feel safe and supported in school. Hattie (2017) also emphasized that the school environment plays a major role in improving student achievement and engagement.

Cultural diversity in education is becoming more important as classrooms become more diverse in terms of culture, language, and background. It promotes respect, equality, and inclusion among learners. Gay (2018) explained that culturally responsive teaching improves student participation and achievement by recognizing learners' cultural backgrounds. UNESCO (2017) also stressed that cultural diversity in

schools helps build inclusive education systems that respect human rights and promote understanding among learners.

The relationship among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity is important in building effective schools. Strong governance supports the creation of a positive learning environment and encourages respect for cultural diversity. Research shows that well-governed schools are more likely to provide fair and inclusive learning opportunities for all students (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2017). A supportive environment that values diversity also helps improve student learning and school relationships (Wang et al., 2018).

Anchored on these ideas, this study focused on 365 respondents in the Schools Division of Antique for the year 2025. It aimed to examine the relationship among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity and provide evidence that may help improve school management and promote inclusive education.

This study specifically aimed to describe the respondents' profile, assess school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity, determine differences when grouped according to profile variables, and identify relationships among the variables.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity among 365 respondents in the Schools Division of Antique for the year 2025. The descriptive part described the level of each variable, while the correlational part examined the relationships among them.

The respondents were 365 teachers, school heads, and school personnel from public elementary and secondary schools in the Schools Division of Antique. They were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proper representation across schools and districts. All respondents were involved in school governance and familiar with school environment and diversity practices.

A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect data. It included three parts: school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity. The instrument was validated by experts in educational management and multicultural education and was pilot tested to ensure reliability. Ethical standards such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were strictly observed.

Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for descriptive purposes. T-test and ANOVA were used to test differences among groups, while Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine relationships among variables at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The findings showed that school governance was highly effective, with an overall mean of 4.28 (SD = 0.53), interpreted as "High." This means that leadership, policy implementation, and stakeholder involvement were well-practiced in schools. These results support OECD (2020) and Leithwood et al. (2017), who highlighted the importance of strong governance in improving school effectiveness.

The learning environment was rated very high, with an overall mean of 4.32 (SD = 0.51). This indicates that schools provided safe, supportive, and inclusive environments for both teaching and learning. Respondents reported positive classroom conditions and strong relationships within the school community. These findings align with Wang and Degol (2016) and Hattie (2017).

Cultural diversity was rated high, with an overall mean of 4.25 (SD = 0.55). This shows that schools acti-

vely promote inclusion, cultural sensitivity, and respect for diversity. Teachers and school leaders integrate culturally responsive practices in instruction and school activities, consistent with Gay (2018) and UNESCO (2017).

Inferential results revealed no significant differences in school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity when grouped according to age, sex, and position ($p > 0.05$). This means perceptions were generally consistent across respondents.

Significant positive relationships were found among the variables. School governance was significantly related to learning environment ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.01$) and cultural diversity ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.01$). Learning environment also showed a strong relationship with cultural diversity ($r = 0.75$, $p < 0.01$). These results support Bush (2018) and Wang et al. (2018), who emphasized the connection between leadership, school climate, and inclusion.

Overall, the findings show that strong school governance is closely connected to a positive learning environment and effective cultural diversity practices.

FINDINGS

The study found that school governance in the Schools Division of Antique was highly effective. This means that leadership practices, policy implementation, and stakeholder participation are well-established and functioning effectively in schools.

It was also found that the learning environment was very high. Schools were seen as safe, supportive, and inclusive spaces that promote effective teaching and learning.

In terms of cultural diversity, the study found a high level of implementation. Schools actively promote respect for diversity and integrate inclusive practices into their systems and activities.

No significant differences were found when respondents were grouped according to age, sex, and position, indicating that perceptions were generally similar across groups.

The study also revealed significant positive relationships among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity. This means that stronger governance is associated with better school environments and stronger cultural diversity practices.

SUMMARY

This study examined the relationship among school governance, learning environment, and cultural diversity among 365 respondents in the Schools Division of Antique for the year 2025. The study found that school governance was highly effective, the learning environment was very high, and cultural diversity practices were also highly implemented. Significant positive relationships were found among all variables, while no significant differences were observed when respondents were grouped according to selected profile variables.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is concluded that effective school governance plays a major role in improving the learning environment and promoting cultural diversity in schools. Strong leadership and well-implemented governance systems help create safe, inclusive, and supportive school environments. These conditions also encourage respect for diversity and fairness in education. The relationships among the variables show that improving governance leads to better school environments and stronger cultural inclusion. Therefore, school governance is essential in achieving effective and inclusive education.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions, it is recommended that school leaders continue strengthening governance practices through transparent leadership, consistent policy implementation, and active stakeholder involvement. Schools should further improve the learning environment by ensuring safety, adequate resources, and supportive classroom conditions. Programs that promote cultural diversity and inclusivity should be continuously strengthened and sustained. Teachers and school heads should also receive ongoing training on inclusive education and culturally responsive teaching. Future researchers may conduct similar studies in other divisions or include additional variables such as school climate and teacher effectiveness for further exploration.

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