

# Teacher Empowerment Practices in Public Elementary Schools

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**Abstract**— *Teacher empowerment has been recognized as a vital factor in improving the quality of education and enhancing teacher performance. This descriptive phenomenological study was conducted to explore the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers regarding empowerment practices and the challenges they encounter within the Bayugan South District of the Bayugan City Division during the 2024–2025 school year. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with six purposively selected teachers from large, medium, and small schools, and were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method of qualitative data analysis. The study revealed that empowerment was manifested in four major areas: carrying out teacher responsibilities, designing and delivering instruction, engaging in collaboration and collegial partnerships, and pursuing professional growth and development. On the other hand, six themes emerged as challenges hindering teacher empowerment: limited autonomy in decision-making, excessive workload and time pressure, restrictive policies and regulations, lack of resources and support, lack of parental involvement, and difficulties in sustaining initiatives. In light of these findings, the study proposed policy directions to strengthen teacher empowerment, such as expanding autonomy in decision-making, rationalizing workloads, clarifying policies, improving resource allocation, enhancing parental engagement, and supporting teacher-led innovations. The researcher believes that the results of this study will serve as a basis for school administrators and policymakers in fostering participative governance, supportive leadership, and sustainable empowerment practices to improve the quality of education in public elementary schools.*

**Keywords**— *Teacher empowerment, phenomenological study, instructional autonomy, professional development, public elementary schools.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Empowering teachers is a fundamental pillar of a strong and effective education system. Research consistently highlights that when educators are given the authority to make instructional decisions and are provided with continuous professional development, their performance and job satisfaction improve. Blase and Blase (2001) found that teachers who experience autonomy and professional collaboration demonstrate greater instructional effectiveness and commitment. Similarly, Spreitzer (1995) emphasized that workplace empowerment positively correlates with job satisfaction and engagement—two critical elements in fostering high-quality education. However, despite the recognition of teacher empowerment as a key driver of educational success, challenges remain in ensuring that all teachers have access to the necessary support, resources, and leadership conducive to professional growth.

In the Philippines, teacher empowerment is reinforced through Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, which decentralizes decision-making power to schools, enabling teachers to play a more active role in shaping their instructional practices. This legal framework is further strengthened by DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, which institutionalizes the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), advocating for continuous teacher development, collaboration, and professional growth. Despite these policies, significant gaps persist, particularly in resource-limited schools. Unequal access to professional development opportunities, varying leadership styles among school heads, and a lack of institutional support hinder the full realization of teacher empowerment.

Observations in public elementary schools within the Bayugan City division reveal these challenges firsthand. Teachers, especially in smaller schools, often report feeling isolated due to limited opportunities for collaboration and tailored professional development. Leadership styles among school heads also vary widely, directly influencing teacher motivation, engagement, and autonomy. While some principals adopt transformational leadership approaches—encouraging shared decision-making and professional collaboration—others employ authoritarian methods that restrict teacher agency and creativity. Sun and Leithwood (2017) suggested that transformational leadership fosters a sense of empowerment, leading to better instructional quality and student performance. The inconsistency in leadership approaches contributes to disparities in teacher empowerment, ultimately affecting educational outcomes.

Given these realities, this study seeks to examine the effects of leadership styles and institutional support on teacher empowerment and its impact on instructional effectiveness. Understanding these relationships is crucial for addressing barriers to teacher autonomy and professional growth in the Bayugan City division. By identifying actionable strategies to enhance teacher empowerment, this research aims to contribute valuable insights for school leaders, policymakers, and educators alike.

Ultimately, the goal of this study is to provide evidence-based recommendations that foster an environment where teachers feel empowered, motivated, and supported—allowing them to deliver high-quality instruction that positively influences student learning outcomes.

## II. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study on teacher empowerment practices in public elementary schools is grounded in theoretical and legal foundations, including Republic Act 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001), Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): Quality Education, Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), and transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991).

Republic Act 9155 serves as the primary legal basis for this study, emphasizing shared governance, accountability, and leadership as key elements in fostering teacher innovation and professional growth (Department of Education [DepEd], 2001). The law highlights the role of school heads as both instructional managers and administrative leaders, responsible for creating supportive environments that enhance teacher empowerment and promote quality education (DepEd, 2001). Within the public elementary school context, evidence confirms that instructional leadership and teacher empowerment significantly predict teacher efficacy—strongly influencing both teacher performance and student learning outcomes (Gudmalin & Apostol, 2024).

Aligned with this is SDG 4, which advocates for inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education, while promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015). Research suggests that teacher empowerment significantly contributes to the achievement of SDG 4 by enhancing instructional effectiveness and bridging professional development gaps (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2020). Empowered teachers are better equipped to adapt to diverse student needs, making SDG 4 an essential foundation for this study (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) provides the theoretical foundation for understanding how social interactions and institutional environments shape teacher empowerment. This theory posits that teachers learn through observation, modeling, and collaboration, highlighting the importance of school leadership and peer interactions in fostering professional growth (Orrod, 2014). Within public elementary schools, leadership styles and institutional support significantly impact teachers' self-efficacy and motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018), emphasizing that empowered teachers tend to be more innovative and resilient in their teaching practices (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Complementing this is transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), which focuses on critical reflection and collaborative learning as essential components of teacher empowerment (Mezirow, 1991). This theory suggests that teachers become more empowered when they engage in professional development opportunities that challenge their existing beliefs and encourage innovative pedagogical strategies (Illeris, 2018). In the public elementary school setting, reflective practices and mentorship programs have been found to enhance teacher autonomy and leadership skills, contributing to improved classroom instruction (Brookfield, 2017).

As illustrated in Figure 1, this study aimed to analyze teacher empowerment practices in public elementary schools, identify challenges that hinder empowerment, and propose

strategies for enhancing teacher performance and student learning outcomes. By examining how leadership styles, professional development opportunities, and institutional support contribute to teacher empowerment, this study seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations for school leaders and policymakers. Ultimately, the framework highlights the critical role of teacher empowerment in achieving high-quality education (Ingersoll et al., 2018).

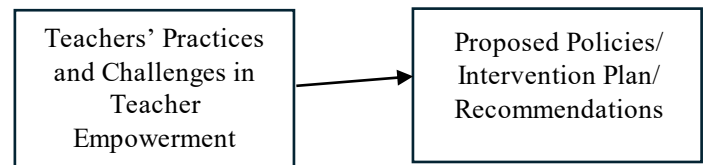


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

### III. OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to explore teacher empowerment practices in public elementary schools within the Bayugan City Division during the school year 2024–2025. This was conducted among selected teachers from large, medium, and small schools in the Bayugan South District. Specifically, the following objectives were set for the study:

1. What are the teacher empowerment practices implemented in public elementary schools?
2. What challenges do teachers face regarding empowerment in public elementary schools?
3. What policies can be developed or improved to strengthen teacher empowerment in public elementary schools?

### IV. METHODOLOGY

Generally, the study made use of a hermeneutic phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers on empowerment practices and the challenges they encountered. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with six purposively selected teachers from large, medium, and small schools in the Bayugan South District of the Division of Bayugan City. Colaizzi's method of data analysis was employed after the data were gathered.

The researcher followed the proper protocol in gathering the data. An informed consent was sent to the participants prior to the conduct of the interview. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and their identity was not revealed in any part of the study. Interviews were conducted face-to-face or online depending on the availability of the participants. Member checking was also done to validate the accuracy of the results.

The study was conducted in Bayugan South District, Division of Bayugan City, particularly in Salvacion Elementary School, Lapana Elementary School, and San Isidro Elementary School. The participants were public elementary school teachers who were able to share their reflections and experiences regarding empowerment practices.

Based on the results of the data gathered, policy directions were proposed to strengthen teacher empowerment in public

elementary schools, focusing on decision-making autonomy, workload management, parental engagement, and provision of resources.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After gathering the data, the presentation of results was organized according to the order of the specific problems of the study. Data collection was done through individual interviews with teachers, guided by prepared questions. Through these interviews, the participants were able to share their experiences and challenges related to empowerment practices in public elementary schools.

### *Teacher Empowerment Practices in Public Elementary Schools*

Analysis of the transcribed interviews revealed four themes:

1. Carrying out teacher responsibilities
2. Designing and delivering instruction
3. Engaging in collaboration and collegial partnerships
4. Pursuing professional growth and development

These themes represent the various ways teacher empowerment is practiced and supported in the school setting.

#### Theme 1: Carrying Out Teacher Responsibilities

This theme emerged as central, highlighting the wide range of daily duties and roles assigned to public elementary school teachers. Participants emphasized that empowerment is deeply rooted in these diverse tasks—from classroom instruction to school program coordination and administrative support. This aligns with Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001), which promotes decentralization and empowers teachers with decision-making authority and shared accountability, and with Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), which underscores the need for teacher competence in curriculum implementation.

##### Sub-theme 1.1: Instructional Design and Classroom Duties

Teachers identified classroom instruction and lesson preparation as their foremost responsibilities. Participants described planning, delivering lessons, managing the classroom, and supporting students' academic and personal growth as the foundation of their professional practice.

- *“I’m a Grade 1 teacher in DepEd. My first responsibility is to teach my pupils how to read and write.”* (P6)
- *“My responsibility is to plan my classes, deliver my lessons, assist my students in their progress, and maintain classroom discipline.”* (P1)
- *“My primary responsibility is to create a positive and engaging environment... I also collaborate with my co-teachers and parents.”* (P2)
- *“As a Grade 6 teacher, I am actively involved in planning and delivering lessons, guiding pupils in their learning, and supporting their overall growth.”* (P5)

These findings are consistent with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), Ingersoll et al. (2018), and OECD (2019), who emphasized that instructional planning and classroom management form the core of teachers' professional efficacy.

##### Sub-theme 1.2: School Program Coordination

Beyond classroom teaching, participants reported active engagement in school coordination roles such as program management, event organization, and subject coordination.

These expanded functions reflect empowerment through leadership and decision-making opportunities.

- *“I am a Grade 5 teacher handling four school coordination programs. I also help organize school events and maintain communication with parents.”* (P2)
- *“I am a kindergarten teacher and also a coordinator for the feeding program and ELLN... I also submit the necessary reports related to my responsibilities.”* (P4)
- *“Of course, we are coordinators of many subjects... Through activity designs, we can express our creativity and turn them into reality.”* (P1)

Such practices align with DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 (Rationalization of Teachers' Workload), which recognizes teacher leadership in school programs. Research further suggests that participative decision-making fosters teacher ownership and motivation (Ingersoll et al., 2018; Paris, 2025). Sub-theme 1.3: Administrative Support

Teachers also provide vital administrative support to school heads, contributing to institutional efficiency.

- *“As a master teacher, I help the school principal administer activities and support them in ensuring smooth workflow.”* (P1)
- *“I assist the school principal in accomplishing reports and serve as her partner in overseeing the quality of instruction.”* (P5)

This role, while less emphasized in DepEd Orders No. 002 and 005, s. 2024 (which seek to reduce administrative burdens on teachers), still reflects empowerment by recognizing teachers as active contributors to school operations (Liu et al., 2022).

#### Theme 2: Designing and Delivering Instruction

This theme highlights teachers' autonomy in planning, adapting, and delivering lessons tailored to learners' needs. Empowerment is expressed through their freedom to choose teaching methods, develop learning materials, and design assessments.

##### Sub-theme 2.1: Instructional Planning and Responsiveness

Teachers described tailoring lessons and activities to meet students' diverse learning needs.

- *“We exercise the freedom to choose methods and delivery approaches suited for our children. We need to design tailored activities... and create engaging assessments.”* (P1)
- *“I ensure that I have the freedom to make decisions, especially in choosing teaching methods, because it allows me to respond effectively to the different needs of my students.”* (P2)
- *“In planning my lessons, I design them using differentiated instruction... I also provide remedial support to those who need it.”* (P4)

These practices align with RA 10533 and DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017 (PPST), which require learner-centered and differentiated instruction.

##### Sub-theme 2.2: Teacher Autonomy and Empowerment

Participants described empowerment as strongest when they had full control over their classrooms and witnessed student learning outcomes.

- “My most empowering moments are when I’m in my classroom, because I plan everything—from lesson planning to creating a conducive learning environment.” (P1)
- “I feel most empowered in lesson planning and in leading school activities... knowing that my ideas contribute to the progress of our school.” (P2)
- “I feel satisfied, especially when I know that 100% of them have understood the lesson.” (P6)

This reflects the empowerment principles of RA 9155 and supports research showing that teacher autonomy enhances motivation, efficacy, and job satisfaction (Herman et al., 2020). Theme 3: Engaging in Collaboration and Collegial Partnerships

Collaboration and collegiality emerged as crucial to teacher empowerment, with teachers highlighting the role of peer networks, mentoring, and shared decision-making.

Sub-theme 3.1: Professional Collaboration and Mentorship Teachers described receiving guidance from master teachers and engaging in joint lesson planning and school improvement efforts.

- “I also support my mentees in their lesson planning and delivery. Additionally, I collaborate with my colleagues on planned activities.” (P1)
- “Through collaboration, we receive mentoring from our master teacher, especially in lesson planning.” (P4)

These findings align with DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016 (institutionalization of LACs), OECD (2019), and Herman et al. (2020), which emphasize collaboration as a driver of teacher empowerment.

Sub-theme 3.2: Peer Support and Empowerment

Teachers also emphasized the motivational power of peer support.

- “Collaboration with fellow teachers creates a strong support system where we share ideas, solve problems together, and celebrate successes.” (P2)
- “Collaboration... contributes to my sense of empowerment by allowing me to share ideas, learn from others, and work together toward common goals.” (P5)

Such collegiality fosters confidence, reduces isolation, and reinforces empowerment (Gudmalin & Apostol, 2024; OECD, 2019).

Theme 4: Pursuing Professional Growth and Development

Teachers consistently linked empowerment with access to professional learning opportunities, training, and seminars.

- “As a Grade 1 teacher for 20 years, I have training in pedagogies for teaching beginning reading... I upgraded my teaching style and used digital tools for more effective learning.” (P1)
- “I have attended many significant seminars on early literacy, technology integration, and managing children’s behavior.” (P6)
- “I also have training on reading instruction, child-friendly schools, and child protection laws.” (P2)
- “With training related to science, I’ve learned to love the subject... Now I can’t imagine letting go of it.” (P3)
- “I attended training on cross-specialization in science... It provided me with new strategies and deeper knowledge.” (P5)

These accounts echo Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), Ecarma (2024), and Leithwood & Jantzi (2006), who found that sustained professional development and distributed leadership enhance teacher empowerment and instructional effectiveness. *Challenges Faced Regarding Teacher Empowerment*

The following are the analysis of the transcribed interviews revealed six themes on the challenges faced regarding teacher empowerment.

Theme 1: Experiencing Limited Autonomy in Decision-Making

Teachers described how centralized structures and national mandates restricted their participation in school-level decision-making. While some school heads were supportive, the broader system limited their ability to exercise professional judgment.

- “One of the challenges is the lack of administrative support and limitations in decision-making. When your ability to make decisions is restricted, that’s when problems and challenges arise.” (P2)
- “I can’t really say much about that because, here in our school, our school head is very supportive. However, we are somewhat limited in our decision-making.” (P3)
- “Overly centralized decision-making can make us feel hesitant or unsure to take initiative, especially if approval is needed for a small adjustment.” (P3)
- “Centralized decision-making processes—such as when the national level conducts training—can be challenging because we already have activities planned at the school level. Sometimes, decisions from above hinder our school activities.” (P4)

These narratives show how excessive centralization hindered innovation and ownership, echoing findings from the OECD (2019) and DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, which both emphasize the importance of teacher participation in decisions affecting their work.

Theme 2: Facing Excessive Workload and Time Pressure

Another recurring challenge was the heavy workload and limited time to focus on instructional quality. Teachers pointed to overlapping schedules, administrative demands, and insufficient planning time as sources of stress.

- “Perhaps, Ma’am, it’s the unpleasant, successive tasks that keep piling up, along with overlapping schedules, which can limit our flexibility in adapting lessons to meet our students’ needs.” (P3)
- “In DepEd, our activities often overlap. So, if you have a planned activity that’s overridden by a regional or divisional event, it ends up being postponed repeatedly until it eventually gets canceled.” (P2)
- “The problem is the overlapping activities that we can’t attend to because there are so many lined up.” (P4)

Despite protections under Republic Act No. 4670 (Magna Carta for Public School Teachers), the data revealed that administrative overload undermined teacher agency and empowerment, consistent with Sawyer (1991), Herman et al. (2020), and OECD (2019).

Theme 3: Encountering Limiting Policies and Regulations

Policies intended to ensure standards were described as sometimes rigid, unclear, or disconnected from classroom realities, leaving teachers with limited flexibility.

**Subtheme 3.1: Rigid and Unclear Policies**

- “Some existing rules, such as strict curriculum guidelines and requirements, limit my flexibility in choosing teaching methods and activities.” (P5)
- “When policies are too rigid or unclear, they limit my flexibility and make it harder to respond effectively to my students’ needs.” (P5)
- “Our school policies can either support or hinder our confidence. When policies support our activities and remain consistent, they provide us with security in decision-making. However, unclear policies are very difficult to deal with because they can disrupt our work.” (P2)

**Subtheme 3.2: Policy Constraints in Discipline**

- “My disciplinary actions are limited by laws, which prevent me from doing everything I believe is necessary for the children’s development.” (P4)
- “There’s also a need to develop policies that protect teachers in situations where, for example, they discipline children and parents complain, even if the teacher hasn’t done anything wrong.” (P2)

These responses highlight how policy ambiguity and rigidity weakened empowerment, a concern echoed in Short and Rinehart (1992) and McConnell & Swanson (2022).

**Theme 4: Lacking Parental Support**

Teachers consistently emphasized the importance of home-school collaboration and shared their frustration when parents were uncooperative.

- “I also have a child whom I wanted to keep for remedial support, but the parent won’t cooperate, so we can’t do anything about it.” (P4)
- “That reaction from the parent who won’t allow her child to stay. So, we really can’t do anything about that... We want to help. That’s it. We can’t, oh, the parent doesn’t want help.” (P4)
- “If the parents and child don’t support the teacher, then nothing can be done, and the problem keeps recurring. So, it’s not fair to always blame the teacher.” (P6)

This theme underscores that empowerment is collective and requires parent-teacher partnership, as also noted by Memoracion (2024) and Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2017).

**Theme 5: Lacking Resources and Support for Initiatives**

Teachers pointed to insufficient resources and discontinued programs as barriers to innovation and effective teaching.

**Subtheme 5.1: Resource Shortages**

- “As a kindergarten teacher, I lack resources and textbooks. I need materials and food for the children to use every day. That’s my difficult experience—how can I feel empowered when I want to do something but don’t have the necessary tools?” (P4)

**Subtheme 5.2: Limited Support Programs**

- “Oh, the pull-out remediation program is no longer allowed, even though it was supposed to be beneficial. Since it’s no longer permitted, it didn’t continue.” (P4)
- “There are cases where struggling readers are promoted without receiving sufficient support, which can be

*discouraging and hinder the effectiveness of our teaching efforts.” (P5)*

These accounts align with Ahmadi & Arief (2022) and Memoracion (2024), who noted that access to resources and sustained program support are central to empowerment. Theme 6: Managing Challenges in Implementing and Sustaining Initiatives

While many teachers were motivated to launch projects, sustaining them proved difficult due to fatigue, resistance, and lack of institutional support.

- “So far, the reading projects I’ve conducted have been fine. However, in the long run, their impact fades because, first, they’re tiring to implement, and second, the recipients also become exhausted and lose continuity in their enthusiasm.” (P2)
- “I had a home reading project before, but it got twisted. Others changed it even though I was supposed to implement it, and it was originally my project.” (P1)
- “While a few teachers supported the idea, others resisted—feeling it added to their workload or questioning its effectiveness.” (P5)

These responses highlight the need for stronger institutional backing to ensure that teacher-led initiatives are recognized, supported, and sustained (Short & Rinehart, 1992; Dizon et al., 2021).

*Proposed Policies to Strengthen Teacher Empowerment in Public Elementary Schools*

**Rationale**

Teachers in public elementary schools encounter various challenges in fully experiencing empowerment. These include issues related to autonomy, workload, policy clarity, parental engagement, resources, and sustainability of initiatives. Addressing these challenges requires clear, supportive, and context-sensitive policies that align with existing laws and Department of Education (DepEd) directives. Strengthened policies will not only improve teacher well-being but also enhance instructional quality and learner outcomes. As highlighted in Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001) and DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, teacher empowerment is essential for effective governance and professional growth.

The proposed policies are outlined below and are suggested to be institutionalized at both the school and division levels: Theme 1: Expanding Teacher Autonomy in Decision-Making Policies must institutionalize shared governance mechanisms such as school-based management councils to give teachers a stronger voice in shaping instructional and administrative decisions. This aligns with Republic Act No. 9155 and DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017, which emphasize professional agency. Continuous training for school heads in distributed leadership is also necessary to create environments where teacher input is valued and acted upon.

**Theme 2: Rationalizing Teacher Workload and Time Management**

Workload policies must strictly enforce Republic Act No. 4670 (Magna Carta for Public School Teachers), particularly the six-hour classroom teaching limit. DepEd Memorandum No. 291, s. 2008 must also be reinforced to protect time for

lesson planning, assessment, and professional development. Schools should conduct annual workload audits to ensure fair distribution of tasks and reduce excessive non-teaching assignments.

Theme 3: Clarifying and Updating Policies and Regulations  
Subtheme 3.1: Reviewing Rigid and Unclear Policies

Policies must be systematically reviewed and rewritten to be context-sensitive and learner-centered, as mandated by Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013). Ambiguity and rigidity in policies often cause hesitation among teachers, limiting their confidence and autonomy.

Subtheme 3.2: Strengthening Policy Guidelines on Discipline Policies must strike a balance between child protection (DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2010) and teachers' authority. Clear guidelines should define acceptable disciplinary measures while protecting teachers from undue complaints, ensuring safe and respectful learning environments.

Theme 4: Enhancing Policies on Parental Engagement

Policies on School-Based Management (DepEd Order No. 54, s. 2009) must be reviewed and expanded to emphasize shared accountability between schools and parents. Parent education sessions should be institutionalized, and Homeroom PTA guidelines updated to clarify parental roles in supporting attendance, remedial interventions, and school programs.

Theme 5: Improving Resource Allocation and Program Support  
Subtheme 5.1: Addressing Resource Shortages

Policies should ensure equitable allocation of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), consistent with DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2016. Divisions must also provide innovation grants to support teacher-led projects and initiatives.

Subtheme 5.2: Reviving and Sustaining Support Programs

Policies must safeguard programs like pull-out remediation and early reading interventions by providing clear implementation guidelines, adequate funding, and regular monitoring. These are essential for addressing diverse learner needs and strengthening inclusive teaching practices.

Theme 6: Sustaining Teacher-Led Initiatives and Innovations

Policies should strengthen Learning Action Cells (LACs) under DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016 and link teacher innovations with incentives under the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS). Recognition, mentoring, and technical assistance should be institutionalized to help teachers sustain and scale up their initiatives.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Teacher empowerment in public elementary schools is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by diverse professional responsibilities, instructional autonomy, opportunities for professional growth, and systemic challenges.
2. Teachers experience empowerment through instructional design, classroom management, program coordination, and collaborative professional practices.
3. Despite these empowering practices, significant barriers persist, such as limited autonomy in decision-making, excessive workloads, unclear policies, lack of resources,

insufficient parental support, and challenges in sustaining initiatives.

4. These barriers contribute to difficulties in sustaining teacher empowerment programs and, in some cases, to reduced professional motivation and fulfillment among teachers.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. For School Leaders and Administrators
  - Expand teacher autonomy in decision-making.
  - Rationalize teacher workload and time management.
  - Strengthen collaboration and collegial partnerships.
  - Support teacher-led initiatives and innovations.
2. For Policy-Makers and DepEd Officials
  - Clarify and update policies and regulations to ensure they are practical, contextualized, and teacher-friendly.
  - Improve resource allocation and program support.
  - Enhance parental engagement policies.
  - Sustain and institutionalize teacher empowerment programs.
3. For Teachers
  - Maximize professional growth opportunities provided by DepEd and other platforms (e.g., seminars, workshops, online courses, and further studies).
  - Advocate participation in decision-making through involvement in school committees, SBM councils, and other leadership bodies.
  - Innovate and share best practices to strengthen knowledge-sharing and institutional memory in schools and the division.
4. For Parents and the Community
  - Strengthen school-community partnerships.
  - Engage in capacity-building initiatives that promote shared responsibility in improving the quality of education.

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