

Effective Participatory School Administration, Leadership, and Management: Does It Affect The Trust Levels of Stakeholders?

Page by: David GamageDiosdado San Antonio

Summary



This module has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of the Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a scholarly contribution to the knowledge base in educational administration.

Introduction

The perennial challenge facing school systems worldwide is how to improve student-learning outcomes. In the pursuit of improvements, educators introduce various innovations. Today, most of these innovations are being introduced in the field of educational management to encourage decentralization and implementation of collaborative school governance (Anderson, 1998; Chan and Chui, 1997; Walker and Dimmock, 2000). The usual manifestation of this worldwide trend for decentralization

and devolution of authority to the school level can be referred to as the school-based management (SBM) phenomenon. SBM involves the formal change in the structures of school governance that leads to a more democratic administrative approach in which planning and decision making are devolved to the individual school (Doran, 1999). This governance structure features school councils composed of representatives from various stakeholder groups. The presence of these governing councils provides abundant opportunities for the practice of participatory school administration, leadership and management (PSALM). PSALM, as used in this paper, refers to the involvement of various stakeholders in the management of schools through their membership in an Advisory School Council (ASC). This paper first briefly discusses how PSALM and the building of trust contribute to better school outcomes. Next, the Philippine public school context is described before the research scope, purpose and methodology are clarified. Moreover, the respondents' perceptions on the effectiveness of PSALM are considered. The trust levels of stakeholders who implemented PSALM are then looked into. Finally, these perceptions on the effectiveness of PSALM are related to the levels of trust among the stakeholders before the conclusions are presented.

Adopting PSALM for Better Outcomes

Practicing participatory management has been long acknowledged as an essential ingredient in the quest for better schools. In characterizing successful schools, researchers commonly list five school-level factors, which include collaborative planning/collegial work and parental/community participation (Creemers, 1994; Edmonds, 1979; Joyce, 1991; Marzano, 2003; Purkey & Smith, 1983). Golarz and Golarz (1995) assert that "high levels of parental involvement and support, collaborative collegial instructional planning, individual school autonomy and the resulting flexibility" (p. 3) are effective school characteristics that justify the implementation of participatory governance. In fact, Cheng and Cheung (2003) have observed that efforts to enhance organizational effectiveness since 1990s have featured participative management. As Caldwell and Spinks (1992) point out, securing a "synergy of communities" (p. 131) is the key to attainment of educational benefits. It should be noted, however, that attempts to involve stakeholders should be geared beyond mere participation but towards meaningful involvement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Research findings show that allowing teachers and stakeholders to take part in decision-making yields salutary results. Employee satisfaction, motivation, morale and self-esteem are affected positively by involvement in decision-making and implementation (Chapman & Boyd, 1986; Doyle & Wells, 1996; Driscoll, 1978; English, 1979; Gamage & Pang, 2003; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Hunton, Hall, & Price,

1998; Jenkins Jr. & Lawler III, 1981; Lawler III, Mohrman, & Ledford Jr., 1992; Lindelow & Bentley, 1989; Locke & Schweiger, 1979; Vroom, 1960; Watkins, 1985). Similarly, employee commitment and loyalty are fostered by collaborative school management practices (Beyerlein, Freedman, McGee, & Moran, 2003; Chapman & Boyd, 1986; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Wong, 2003). Moreover, researchers claim that better decisions and greater efficiency are reached since issues are discussed extensively via open communication among people having varying viewpoints involved in participative set-ups (Connors, 1978; Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Fidler & Bowles, 1989; Gamage, 1996b; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Hoy & Tarter, 1993; Likert, 1967; Lindelow & Bentley, 1989; Lindelow, Coursen, Mazzarella, Heynderickx, & Smith, 1989; Locke & Schweiger, 1979; Owens, 1998; Powers & Powers, 1983; Rosener, 1990).

Another noteworthy impact of participatory management is that participants tend to have a sense of ownership of change initiatives and eventually extend stronger support to realize the goals of such efforts (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980; Gamage, 1996c; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Kefford, 1985; Lindelow & Bentley, 1989; Melcher, 1976). Implementing participative management practices is also known to yield the following benefits: heads cannot easily manipulate people (Watkins, 1985); teachers are given a sense of control over their own working lives (Weiss, Cambone, & Wyeth, 1992); power inequities are balanced (Harchar & Hyle, 1996); and additional resources become available to the organization (Gamage, Sipple, & Partridge, 1996; King & Swanson, 1990; Lienhart & Willert, 2002).

Enhancing Trust in Schools for Better Results

Aside from participatory approaches, enhancing the levels of trust within the school community attains educational benefits (Blase & Blase, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Trust as used in this paper means that someone feels confident and assured in allowing something to be in the care or control of another (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Bryk and Schneider (2002) argue that allowing relational trust to grow in a school community triggers the effective interplay of the various factors towards academic productivity. In fostering trust, certain aspects of participatory practices have been found to be essential. These practices are open communication (Blase & Blase, 2001; Butler Jr., 1991; Hoffman, Sabo, Bliss, & Hoy, 1994; Saunders & Thornhill, 2003); and supportive and collegial behavior of the leader (Hoy, Sabo, & Barnes, 1996; Tarter & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).

A variety of benefits can be derived by organizations who can foster an atmosphere of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). To stress the value of trust in schools, Blasé and Blasé (2001) wrote: “the reward of a trusting environment is immeasurable, yet the price of lack of trust is dear” (p. 23). They add that when there is trust, people are able to work together in identifying and solving problems. Siegall and Worth (2001) report that greater trust in the administration yields more positive work outcomes among faculty members. In high-trust groups the socially generated uncertainty is minimal and problem solving is more effective (Zand, 1972). Hargreaves (2001) argues that high levels of trust hasten the establishment of strong networks and collaborative relations among the members and stakeholders in a school rich in social capital. As Coleman

(1988) notes, “a group within which there is extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without trustworthiness and trust” (p. S101).

Successful implementation of SBM or any form of school renewal is hinged on trust (Daniels, 1996; Lindelow & Heynderickx, 1989; Spilman, 1995/1996). Gamage (1996a; 1998) states that trust and confidence between the teachers and students or the teachers and parents in schools with open climates promote unity in the school community towards the attainment of goals for greater school effectiveness. When trust and collaborative spirit pervade at faculty meetings, collegiality is fostered (Edwards, Green, & Lyons, 2002). Additionally, Driscoll (1978) argues that people who have stronger trust in the organization’s decision makers tend to be more satisfied with their level of participation.

Similarly, a study of trust-effectiveness patterns in 79 American Midwestern schools concluded that high trust among parents and teachers in a high socio-economic status school leads to positive teacher efficacy beliefs, enabling school structures and high academic performance (Forsyth, Barnes, & Adams, 2006). Forsyth and colleagues (2006) also found that parents’ trust influences academic performance more than the teachers’ trust. Indeed, it can be said that trust brings about salient benefits to the organization in the form of better performance outcomes.

The Philippine Public School System in Context

During the school year 2004-2005, the Department of Education (DepED) in the Philippines served the needs of more than 17 million students in the public elementary and secondary schools. DepED has sixteen regional offices headed by directors, serving 185 provincial and city school divisions managed by schools division superintendents. There are 41,769 public schools - 37,000 elementary and 4,769 secondary.

The Department of Education (DepED) was previously known as the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS). At present, DepED takes care only of basic education – education at the elementary and secondary levels. The Commission on Higher education administers tertiary and postgraduate education while the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority manages technical and vocational education.

The decentralization of the administration of public schools has been an on-going initiative from the top management officials of both the DepED and Congress. DECS Order No. 17 of 1997 vested the school principals with instructional, administrative and fiscal autonomy. Five years ago, the school superintendents were authorized to perform tasks previously carried out by the regional directors in pursuant to DECS Order No. 4 of 2001. The appointment of head teachers, principals, and supervisors by superintendents are examples of these delegated tasks. Republic Act 9155 of 2001 mandates the implementation of shared governance in the administration of public schools. The said educational legislation grants authority, responsibility, and accountability to school heads along twelve areas including: the development of the school improvement programs; management of school resources; and fostering of active school-family-community linkages. However, it should be noted that there is no mandate to create school councils in the Philippine public schools. Its existing version of SBM is anchored on an empowered school principal. The different educational stakeholders have their respective associations like the Faculty Club, Student Council, Parents-Teachers Association, and Alumni Organization. However, no school council, that synergizes the efforts of these sectors in the performance of school management functions, exists in most public elementary and secondary schools.

An encouraging development in the Philippines is the try-out of SBM in schools covered under the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) funded by the World Bank (WB) and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). Twenty-three school divisions in the country's poorest provinces were included in the TEEP, which was introduced in 1997. Another recent positive step being taken by system-level administrators towards large-scale SBM is the Schools First Initiative launched by former Secretary Abad (2004). In addition, the Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM), a project funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) stresses school-community partnership in improving the quality of and access to basic education. Recently, the newly appointed education secretary Jesli Lapus has announced that one of the major approaches he intends to adopt in improving the public schools is school-based management (Martinez-Clemente, 2006).

Scope and Purpose of the Study

This paper primarily aims to look into how the indicators of PSALM effectiveness relate to the levels of trust among the stakeholders. Specifically, the paper attempts to: determine the perceptions of the stakeholders on the effectiveness of PSALM; assess the trust levels of stakeholders who have implemented PSALM; and find out whether the indicators of PSALM effectiveness are related to the stakeholders' levels of trust.

Methodology and Research Design

This study employed the correlational research design. In correlational studies, the basic aim is to measure and describe a relationship between two variables by determining the magnitude and direction of such a relationship, if any exists (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2004; Pagano, 1998). Relationships do not necessarily suggest causation.

Participants

Respondents in this study came from one of the 185 school divisions in the Philippines. Two hundred eighty two out of 368 stakeholders who implemented participatory school management returned completed questionnaires. This represents a 76.63 percent response rate.

Instruments

An existing instrument for measuring trust was used with appropriate adaptations to suit the needs of this research. A six-point Likert response format (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – slightly disagree, 4 – slightly agree, 5 – agree, and 6 – strongly agree) was used. As pointed out by Anderson and Bourke (2000), even number of response categories tend to produce better scale reliability when compared with odd number ones. Other researchers contend, however, that odd number of response categories offer wider choices to respondents. In this case, it is acknowledged that this is one of the limitations of this study.

The scale for trust validated by Hoy and Kupersmith (1985) was utilized. Originally, it was a six-point Likert type scale of 21 items grouped into three measures. The seven-item measure for trust in the principal was used in this study. Items were modified to refer not only to the principal but the teachers as well. This measure had all items loading higher than .6 in the factor analysis with an alpha coefficient of .93. After using principal component analysis and varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization, two factors were extracted from the results of the first survey. It was then decided to use only the four items that comprised the first factor in the final data analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was .788 with Bartlett's test of sphericity $p < .001$, indicating sampling adequacy and good factorability. In the survey, items 2, 4, 6 and 7 in the original trust scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha reliability of .794 while the factor loadings in the principal component analysis and varimax rotation ranged from .700 to .843.

Another questionnaire, originally developed by Gamage (1996c), was used to determine the perceptions of the participants on the operational effectiveness of the ASCs, the scheme introduced as a mode of implementing PSALM. The 23-item questionnaire included items on the respondents' personal information, the council decision-making processes, use of sub-committees and the operation of the ASCs. The questions were mostly of the multiple-choice Likert-type with open-ended questions in relevant areas.

Considering that the items used were taken from questionnaires previously validated in earlier research, no attempt was made to undertake a pilot run of the questionnaire used in this research. It was assumed that the questionnaire items used constitute a valid tool for measuring the variables. However, as discussed earlier, only items that comprised a single factor for each variable was used. The reliability coefficients of the items used meet the standards set by statisticians. Scores with modest reliability (coefficients ranging from .50 to .60) are acceptable in measurement of results used for research purposes (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002). The Cronbach alpha for the instruments used are acceptable even at the level of at least 0.70, the level recommended by Nunnally (1978) and Martin and Bateson (1986).

Results and Discussion

The first research question focused on the perceptions of the research participants on the operational effectiveness of PSALM. Indicators of PSALM effectiveness included: composition of the ASC; usefulness of the committee structure; power and authority of the ASC; information for ASC decisions; time for ASC business; ASC influence on teaching and learning; and overall ASC functioning.

Table 1
The composition of the Advisory School Councils (ASCs)

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	19	6.7	6.7
Unsatisfactory	1	2	0.7	7.4
Poor	2	0	0	7.4
Good	3	123	43.6	51.0
Very Good	4	106	37.6	88.6
Excellent	5	32	11.4	100.00
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 3.6132

Table 1 shows how the research participants viewed the composition of the ASCs. The results show that almost all (92.6 per cent) of the participants endorsed the distribution of membership amongst the different categories of stakeholders involved in the experiment. Most ASCs had 11 members – the school head and two representatives from each of the groups of teachers, students, parents, community leaders and alumni. It is interesting to note that only 0.7 per cent, of the participants found the composition of the council to be unsatisfactory. The mean score is 3.6132, where 5 = excellent and 1 = unsatisfactory. These findings offer an empirical basis for organizing school councils in the Philippines when this scheme is finally implemented in the whole school system via the SFI.

Table 2
The usefulness of the committee structure

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	22	7.8	7.8
Unsatisfactory	1	4	1.4	9.2
Poor	2	0	0	9.2
Good	3	124	44.0	53.2
Very Good	4	96	34.0	87.2
Excellent	5	36	12.8	100.00
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 3.6154

The table 2 presents the perceptions on the usefulness of the committee structure. Here again 90.8 per cent, were highly satisfied with the usefulness of the committee structure (rating it as good, very good or excellent) whereas only 1.4 per cent, found it to be unsatisfactory. This result is similar to the findings by Gamage and colleagues (Gamage et al., 1996) in the Victorian effective schools, which is a virtual endorsement of the committee structure as a very useful feature of PSALM. It facilitates the exploration of alternative solutions, saves ASC's time and enables the wider participation of stakeholder groups.

Table 3 shows that adequate power was available to the ASCs as claimed by 86.5 per cent of respondents, with a mean of 2.0077 in a scale of 1-3 with 3 indicating too much power. Too much power was found to be vested in the ASCs by 3.2 per cent, while only 2.5 per cent claimed that the power was not adequate.

Table 3
Power and authority vested in the ASCs

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	22	7.8	7.8
Not Adequate	1	7	2.5	10.3
Adequate	2	244	86.5	96.8
Too Much	3	9	3.2	100.0
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 2.0077

This finding is similar to the results of Sooksomchitra's (2004) study, in which stakeholders indicated adequate authority was vested in the school councils. This suggests that the school heads were willing to empower others in the pursuit of better learning outcomes. Considering the backdrop of school heads possessing high levels of power and authority under existing laws and guidelines, this finding implies that the school heads on their own free will shared the power and authority. However, this trend contradicts Parish and Aquila (1996) who point out that empowering the formerly powerless is difficult because everyone wished to be in control.

Table 4
Availability of adequate information for decision-making

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	23	8.2	8.2
Unsatisfactory	1	1	.4	8.6
Poor	2	1	.4	9.0
Good	3	130	46.1	55.1
Very Good	4	95	33.7	88.8
Excellent	5	32	11.2	100.00
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 3.6023

Table 4 shows that 91.0 per cent of the respondents were highly satisfied with the amount and quality of information provided for decision-making by rating their responses as excellent, very good, and good as indicated above. This result is similar to the findings in Thailand (Gamage & Sooksomchitra, 2004) as well as the findings of Gamage et al (1996) in their research in Victoria. This suggests that information was made available to the members of the ASC before they deliberated on courses of action to be taken in improving the school. Indeed, keeping communication channels open is an important factor for the success of school councils (Gamage & Pang, 2003). Considering that school heads are the usual gatekeepers of information flow, it can be said that school heads involved in the study were willing to share vital information with others, particularly with the members of the ASC. This transparency is a positive contributor in encouraging stakeholders' involvement in school level policy-making, which the study was investigating.

Table 5
Availability of time for Advisory School Council business

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	21	7.4	7.4
Inadequate	1	17	6.0	13.4
Barely adequate	2	22	7.8	21.2
Adequate	3	210	74.5	95.7
More than adequate	4	12	4.3	100
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 2.8314

As shown in Table 5, 74.5 per cent of respondents reported that there was adequate time for council business; 4.3 per cent indicated that time was more than adequate; 7.8 per cent, barely adequate; and 6.0 per cent, inadequate with a mean score of 2.8314. In Thailand, school board members likewise indicated adequacy of time for council business (Sooksomchitra, 2004). This finding reveals that, generally, the ASCs were able to devote sufficient time for discussing problems and issues that were submitted for their consideration.

Table 6
Perceptions on the influence of the ASC on teaching/learning

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	20	7.1	7.1
It has deteriorated	1	0	0	7.1
It has made no difference	2	4	1.4	8.5
It is insignificant	3	19	6.7	15.2
It has improved a little	4	98	34.8	50.0
It has improved significantly	5	141	50.0	100
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 4.4351

Table 6 reveals the influence of the ASC on the teaching/learning situation in the school as was perceived by the council members. The results suggest that 50 per cent acknowledged that it has improved significantly; 34.8 per cent claimed that it has improved little; 6.7 per cent said that it was insignificant whereas only 1.4 per cent felt that the ASC has not made any difference. The mean score of 4.4351 suggests that the ASCs influence varied from significant to little. Indeed, the majority recognized that their efforts contributed to the improvements in teaching and learning. Yet, we need to be cautious since it is possible that the respondents might have over-estimated their own contributions. However, it is important to note that the ASCs have contributed to the issues concerning teaching/learning.

Table 7 shows how the participants perceived the overall functioning of the ASCs. It is interesting to note that 90.3 per cent of the participants were satisfied with the overall functioning of the ASCs on the basis of their evaluation of the performances as good, very good and excellent whereas less than two percent considered the overall functioning as either poor or unsatisfactory.

Table 7
Perceptions of participants on the overall functioning of the ASCs

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	0	23	8.2	8.2
Unsatisfactory	1	1	.4	8.6
Poor	2	3	1.1	9.7
Good	3	135	47.8	57.5
Very Good	4	89	31.5	89.0
Excellent	5	31	11.0	100.00
Total		282	100.0	

Mean = 3.5637

The mean score of 3.5637 shows this high degree of satisfaction. Just like in Thailand, an overwhelming majority of the participants indicated high levels of satisfaction with their experience in taking part in school management (Sooksomchitra, 2004). Similarly, Victorian school council members in effective schools perceived high level of effectiveness for the overall functioning of the school councils (Gamage et al., 1996). In this context, the experimental study affirms that the stakeholder participation is a very useful tool in leading and managing schools.

The Trust Levels of the Stakeholders

The second research question sought to determine the levels of trust among the stakeholders implementing PSALM. The trust levels of the 282 respondents yielded a mean score equivalent to 5.39 (SD = .575). In the scale ranging from 1 – 6 with 6 indicating the highest level, it can be said that the stakeholders who implemented a form of participatory management had a high level of trust on the school officials (school head and teachers). This result suggests that the stakeholders were inclined to put themselves in the care of the school professionals. In other words, the stakeholders were confident that the school officials were innately desirous to pursue the general welfare of everyone in the school.

In terms of the trust levels of the specific stakeholders, the mean and standard deviations for school heads were: 5.42 (SD = .518); teachers: 5.45 (SD = .553); students: 5.41 (SD = .601); alumni: 5.38 (SD = .631); parents: 5.34 (SD = .624); and community leaders: 5.35 (SD = .507). The stakeholders' trust levels were not significantly different on the basis of their constituency. The F value for level of trust and

constituency was .244, $p = .943$. This result indicates that the building of trust among the stakeholders in the school was not related to the constituency each stakeholder represented. In other words, regardless of the stakeholder type involved in participatory management, trust may either be increased or decreased on the basis of their individual performance.

PSALM Effectiveness and Levels of Trust

The third research question centered on the relationships between the indicators of PSALM effectiveness and the trust levels of stakeholders. Table 8 shows that the respondents' levels of trust were significantly correlated to their perceptions on the composition of the ASC, the usefulness of the committee structure, the adequacy of information for ASC decision making, the time available for ASC business, the ASC influence on teaching and learning, and the overall functioning of the ASC. Only their perception on the power and authority granted to the ASC did not yield a significant correlation to the levels of trust.

Implementers of PSALM who indicated higher levels of trust were moderately satisfied with the composition of the ASC and perceived the overall ASC functioning to be effective. On a lesser degree, trust levels were also found to be associated with the stakeholders' perceptions on the usefulness of the committee structure and adequacy of information and time for doing ASC business. There was also a weak correlation between the level of trust and the stakeholders' perceptions on the ASC influence on teaching and learning.

Table 8
The correlation between the trust levels of the respondents and their perceptions on the effectiveness of implementing PSALM

Indicators of PSALM effectiveness	Trust Levels		
	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Composition of the ASC	263	.315**	.000
Usefulness of committee structure	260	.268**	.000
Power and authority of ASC	260	-.117	.059
Information for ASC decisions	259	.276**	.000
Time for ASC business	261	.248**	.000
ASC influence on teaching and learning	262	.191**	.002
Overall ASC functioning	259	.325**	.000

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

This shows that participants who reported favorable perceptions on the composition of

the ASC, usefulness of the committee structure, adequacy of information for ASC decision making, availability of time for ASC business, ASC influence on teaching and learning, and overall ASC functioning were more likely to report higher levels of trust while implementing PSALM.

Previous studies appear to show results congruent with the findings of this study. These previous results confirm that trust is enhanced when leadership behavior is characterized by being supportive (Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989; Tarter & Hoy, 1998); and collegial (Blase & Blase, 2001; Hoy et al., 1996; Tarter & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Likewise, researchers have declared that open communication fosters trust (Blase & Blase, 2001; Butler Jr., 1991; Hoffman et al., 1994; Saunders & Thornhill, 2003). Sharing of information, using committees, providing adequate time for doing ASC business, enabling ASCs to be composed of members from diverse stakeholders are examples of supportive and collegial leadership behaviors.

That the perceived power and authority given to the ASC did not significantly relate to the stakeholders' levels of trust is something future implementers of PSALM should consider. Perhaps, among the factors considered in this research, enabling stakeholders to feel that they possess the power and authority to influence school decisions is the most difficult to accomplish. Another implication could be that the stakeholders were still aware that in the PSALM model implemented, principals had the final authority to make decisions. A non-advisory type of school council may yield better results in terms of the stakeholders' perception of their power and authority.

Conclusion

The results indicate that the stakeholders found the implementation of PSALM through advisory school councils to be effective. The effectiveness of implementing ASC as perceived by the respondents reinforces the finding that their levels of trust were also high. Indeed, many factors affect the fostering of trust in the school. However, this study has shown that, to some degree, the adequacy of time for ASC business, the satisfaction with the composition of the ASC, the appreciation for the usefulness of committees, the sharing of information, the perceived influence on teaching and learning, and the overall satisfaction with the operation of the ASC significantly related to the trust levels among the stakeholders.

It is therefore suggested that school leaders wishing to enhance the levels of trust among the stakeholders in their schools should endeavor to achieve a balanced representation in the school council, utilize committees appropriately, share more information with other stakeholders, provide adequate time for doing ASC business, and focus on teaching and learning to make the overall functioning of ASC highly effective. (4624 words except references)

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