Teachers and School Administrators' Assessment of their Classroom Management and Leadership Practices

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This study described school administrators' leadership practices and teachers' classroom management among purposively selected central schools in Cagayan de Oro City. Qualitative and quantitative research was employed utilizing a self-assessment survey questionnaire and focus group discussion method in gathering and collecting data. A simple random sampling technique was used to identify the number of classroom teachers, while purposive sampling was applied to determine the number of school principals as respondents. The data collected from the completed questionnaires were statistically analyzed and interpreted. At the same time, the results of the FGD were transcribed, and patterns of similarities and differences in leadership practices were identified and described.

The results of the self-assessment of the school principals on how they evaluate their administrative and supervisory practices revealed that most of them have excellent practices and management. The results of the principals' assessment jived with the teacher's classroom management assessment. The result of the focus group discussion revealed that on some items, the FGD respondents supported the assessment results of the principals; however, there were also notable and interesting responses made by the teachers that tended to invalidate the claims or responses of the school heads. Such incongruity is a clear manifestation of a problem, such as insufficient involvement of teachers in planning instructional programs, decision-making process, delegation of tasks and others, and inadequate staff and pupil development programs.

In light of the findings and limitations of the study, it is recommended that (1) a similar study that is wider and more comprehensive should be conducted to validate these findings, (2) create policies that will seriously involve teachers, especially in areas that concern them like but not limited to planning instructional programs, identifying and setting goals, involving teacher fully in all decisions related to their work, curriculum development, student development and staff development, and (3) school administrators should also use the Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEaD) Action Plan as reference to enhance leadership practices and classroom management.

KEYWORDS:
Leadership, Classroom Management, Relationship, Assessment, Focus Group, Administrative, Supervisory, Limitations, Policies, Curriculum, Instructional Programs

INTRODUCTION

The importance of effective administration and supervision in any educational setting is unquestionable. Current academic norms and standards advocate for proper and productive supervision and administration. The administration is the process of integrating the efforts of the

school personnel, i.e., the members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, the pupils and their parents, and of utilizing appropriate resources, i.e., the school plant, school property, equipment, and facilities, learning resources to nurture and develop the human qualities effectively. Conversely, supervision is the act of guiding and stimulating the activities of others toward their improvement. In the academic sense, supervision is usually thought of in terms of the teaching-learning processes and other related activities.

School administration and supervision are intertwined. They work hand in hand and influence each other because they share common goals. The administrative body

of schools corresponds to the whole educational system, while supervision represents a portion of it in improving the total teaching-learning condition in the school. Hence, school heads, as administrators and supervisors, play vital roles in setting the direction for successful schools. One of the most important of these roles is to uphold the quality of education and support the continuing professional development of the teachers to enable them to become effective and competent educators.

The management style of a school principal influences the school's performance as an educational organization. As delineated in his position description, the school's success relies on how he effectively and efficiently carries out his administrative and supervisory functions. Assuming full responsibility for providing exemplary leadership in implementing different school initiatives and programs, assisting teachers in improving their professional competencies, and collaborating with the various stakeholders who play vital roles in developing the school are some of the functions of a school administrator.

Accordingly, Wetzler (2000) listed the qualities of a successful school administrator based on his subordinates' point of view: 1) an effective school administrator should be innovative; 2) he must have inspiring management practices; 3) he must pursue continuing activities to address and meet the professional needs of his subordinates; and 4) he must continue leadership development and manage subordinates' professional growth and development.

Also, McKay (2008) asserted that employees are most likely to underperform in their jobs if they are unhappy and dissatisfied with their superiors. Thus, employees' satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) can majorly impact the Organization's overall performance.

However, Dean and Mollally (2000) opined that the central task of the school principal is the supervision and the improvement of instruction. They pointed out that the principal should know the learning program's objectives, scope, Organization, and sequence. They should assess and determine the strengths and weaknesses of the various academic programs and activities and find effective ways to improve.

In addition, Gregorio (2002) emphasized that traditional administration and supervision practices are inspectoral in character, and the methods used are dictatorial and coercive. But later on, emphasis is placed on improving instruction through the training and guidance of teachers. The teachers are given preference to attend seminars and workshops to enhance their teaching competencies.

Moreover, Villamar (2003) pointed out that a school manager should possess intelligence, analytical ability, leadership skills, and decision-making capability. He also stressed that administrators have seven specific functions: organizing, planning, staffing, directing, reporting, guiding, and budgeting.

The country's educational process rests heavily upon our understanding of how to develop and apply management skills when people participate in any helpful activity. This goal of the school system is achieved by physical work, which must be planned, organized, directed, and controlled. This way, the task may be done efficiently and successfully (Talindan, 2002).

The school principal performs dual roles in carrying out his managerial tasks. He provides the necessary leadership in the teaching-learning process, determining effective ways of enabling teachers to impart knowledge and skills to their pupils successfully, conducting studies on existing problems, and evaluating the results of the transfer of learning among pupils. These are all connected with his supervisory functions. The administrative duties include planning school activities, formulating policies, directing the implementation of the plans, and providing a conducive atmosphere whereby the activities can be coordinated appropriately to ensure the attainment of targeted goals (Chan, 2013).

Hence, it is undeniable that school principals are the prime movers and leaders of the educational system. Both common sense and research have shown that they are the most important person to a school's success, whether elementary or secondary. A successful school must have a strong leader, and the principal is the one who must provide this leadership. Thus, this study intended to bring to the fore how the relationship between principals and their teachers is crucial to the success of the Organization in terms of the overall performance and productivity of the school. Examining how these leaders' management and supervisory practices impact their teachers' classroom management and instructional competence is necessary.

In the same way, the study was conducted in three (3) city central schools in Cagayan de Oro City. The findings of this endeavor would greatly help students, considering that if teachers are innately motivated to work as influenced by the effective and efficient administrative and supervisory practices of their school principals, there is no doubt that their academic performance will improve, thus developing them personally as well. Public schools were also selected explicitly in this study because they cater to a significant number of students every year; therefore, more pupils/students will benefit from the result of this study. The

researcher may not be connected to the public school, nor is he a school administrator. Should this study come to fruition, it will benefit not only the researcher himself but most especially the study's respondents and their subordinates. Such a noble goal to help improve the quality of teaching and learning in public schools cannot be set aside and ignored.

METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative and quantitative in design. It specifically employs a self-assessment survey questionnaire and focus group discussion method in gathering and collecting data. The instrument used was appropriate to the nature of this study, which is to assess the relationship between the elementary school principals' administrative and supervisory practices and the teachers' classroom management. In addition, this study is exploratory and aims to identify issues and concerns relevant to classroom teaching and learning.

The study involved three (3) city central schools in Cagayan de Oro City. Though they are at the same basic education level, the different educational settings of the schools included in the study influence the internal and external activities of these learning institutions. The study's respondents were elementary school principals and teachers from city central schools in Cagayan de Oro City. They were treated as separate groups in the course of the investigation: the administrators' group and the teachers' group. Conversely, the research instruments used in the inquiry are the Descriptive Survey Questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion Method. The data collected from the accomplished questionnaires of the two groups of respondents, i.e., the school administrators and the classroom teachers, were the consolidated and coded responses, based on their perceptions and observations, of each group to the items included in the survey questionnaire intended for them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 illustrates the summary of the mean responses of the School Administrators regarding their administrative and supervisory practices. The table below incorporates all the areas, from planning to community linkages. It can be noticed that most of the school administrator respondents in almost all areas rated themselves excellently except for only one under student development. Therefore, one can safely infer that school administrators exhibit or manifest excellent leadership practices.

Table 1. Summary Mean of Administrative and Supervisory Practices of School Administrators

Item	Mean	Interpretation
Administrative Practices		
1. Planning	4.5000	Excellent
2. Organizing	4.7187	Excellent
3. Communicating	4.7250	Excellent
4. Decision Making	4.6250	Excellent
Supervisory Practices		
1. Staff Development	4.5134	Excellent
2. Student Development	4.3750	Excellent
3. Curriculum Development	4.6000	Excellent
4. Physical Development	4.7250	Excellent
5. Community Linkages	4.5833	Excellent
Grand Mean	4.5962	Excellent

Table 2, in contrast, depicts the summary of teachers' mean responses regarding classroom management and practices. The table below illustrates how varied the teachers' responses are compared to school administrators, who rated themselves excellently in most areas. Although the difference is relatively minor, the researcher believes the incremental variance depicts deeper meanings. Classroom Teacher's assessment of their classroom management practices revealed an overall mean of 4.22, which is "excellent" if interpreted.

The score of 4.22 was derived from the average weighted mean per area of the teacher's self-assessment result. Like the school administrators' findings, classroom teachers also evaluated themselves excellently, except for some regions like organizing, controlling, and linkaging, where the ratings were below 4.21 or if interpreted, only "very good." Overall impression suggests that teachers viewed their classroom management as very good or indicated a level demonstrating or manifesting excellent practices and management.

Table 2. Summary of Mean Responses of Teachers in terms of Classroom Management

Item	Mean	Interpretation
A. Planning	4.2424	Excellent
B. Organizing	4.2068	Very Good
C. Directing	4.2349	Excellent
D. Controlling	4.1244	Very Good
E. Evaluating	4.3073	Excellent
F. Linkaging	4.1890	Very Good
Grand Mean	4.2174	Excellent

Consequently, the findings presented in Table 3 compared the focus group discussion results of classroom teachers in terms of classroom management and school administrators' perceived administrative and supervisory practices. Focus-group interviews are becoming increasingly popular in various areas of concern for exploring what individuals believe or feel and why they behave the way they do. They offer a valuable vehicle for involving people in management and strategy development, needs assessment, participatory planning, and evaluation of programs and services (Basch, 1987). The aim is to understand and explain the meanings, beliefs, and practices influencing individuals' feelings, attitudes, and behaviors. It is ideally suited to exploring the complexity surrounding perception, attitudes and behaviors within the context oflived experience, and in ways encourage the participants toengage positively with the research process.

Table 3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Summary of Responses

Statement/Indicator	Categories
1. Up to what extent is your involvement (as teachers) in terms of: a. Planning instructional programs	➢ Indirectly involves teachers in planning instructional programs ➢ Provides teachers sufficient time to plan for classroom programs and other related activities
b. School Activities	➢ Provides teachers the leeway in planning for school programs and other related activities ➢ Become members of committees to plan and execute academic, co, and extracurricular activities. ➢ Involved and satisfied
c. Policy Formulation	➢ Teachers are not involved in policy formulation. ➢ Policies are made by the Central Office and cascaded to public schools for implementation.
2. Up to what extent is the involvement/ participation/ contribution of school principals in terms of: a. Identifying, setting, and defining school goals and objectives	➢ School principals set clear goals and objectives to be attained every school year ➢ School principals work closely with teachers to attain goals and objectives. ➢ Presence of general and specific objectives
b. Establishing group work or participation	➢ Establishes goals through group work participation ➢ Grouped according to field of specialization
c. Organization of staff for delegation of authority	➢ Organizes staff for delegation of authority ➢ Inequitable distribution or delegation of tasks
3. How open is your school principal in terms of: a. Discussion of DepEd orders, circulars, and others	➢ Very open and flexible ➢ The presence of a website with a dedicated group page for teachers ➢ Structured process of information dissemination
b. Accepts suggestions willingly	➢ Accepts suggestions but occasionally rejects suggestions and recommendations from peers
c. Sharing information with subordinates willingly	➢ Willingly shares communication with subordinates ➢ Shared accountability between school head and teachers

d. Allowing the teacher to give opinions/ideas as regards program/project implementation	➤ Open but not absolute ➤ Solicits ideas during organizational meetings
4. What can you say about the decision-making process of this community in terms of: a. Involving and encouraging teacher's participation b. Proper consultation c. Objectivity and fairness in decision	➤ Involves teacher during meetings ➤ Selective consultation ➤ Lacks decision skills ➤ Bases decisions on emotions ➤ Answered the question with "yes" and "okay lang," then laughed (meaningfully) right after
5. What kind of support/ aid/ assistance do school principal provide in terms of: a. Staff Development b. Student Development c. Curriculum Development d. Physical Development e. Community Development	➤ Conducts lectures, meetings, and conferences with teachers and staff ➤ Re-echoes attended seminars, discussions, and trainings ➤ Checks regularly teaching performance ➤ Absence of adequate scholarship grants or financial assistance for the teacher who desires to pursue graduate studies ➤ Absence of scholarship programs or financial assistance to poor but deserving students ➤ Provides minimal opportunities for developing the talents and creative abilities of students ➤ Assists students with problems ➤ Develops appropriate instructional materials ➤ Suggests kind of teaching procedures for faculty to employ ➤ Presence of peer coaching ➤ Presence of performance observations (per month) ➤ Maintains all the facilities in safe, sanitary, and good working conditions ➤ Lacks equipment and supplies ➤ Alternative source of funds ➤ Involves parents/community in sharing accountability for learners' achievement ➤ Presence of parents-teachers association

The findings of the self-assessment of the school principals on how they evaluate their administrative and supervisory practices (presented in Table 1) revealed that most of them have excellent practices and management. The result of the focus group discussion, on the other hand, showed that on some items, the FGD respondents supported the assessment results of the principals; however, there were also notable and interesting responses made by the teachers that tended to invalidate the claims or reactions of the school heads. Such dichotomy in how school administrators perceive their leadership practices compared to how their teachers perceive and assess their leadership is a clear manifestation of a problem. Furthermore, suppose we will closely observe the trend of how school administrators answered the survey. In that case, one can instantly notice that they rated some items or indicators a few decimals lower than their counterparts. The variance in their decimals may be comparatively low; however, the researcher believes this difference is something that even the respondents believe can still be improved. After all, self-assessments are, in most cases, self-serving.

On top of that, the teachers' responses during the focus group discussion are another area that must be given due attention and consideration. There were notable and interesting responses made by teachers that tended to nullify the claims or responses of the school heads. Therefore, one can safely surmise that inconsistencies between and among groups are enough reasons to conclude that a problem in school administrators' administrative and supervisory practices exists. Therefore, school administrators should consider using the proposed Leadership Enhancement and Development (LEaD) Action Plan to enhance administrative, supervisory, and classroom management.

With the growing demand and pressure for academic institutions to address a myriad of issues and problems not limited to more responsive curriculum, mandates for equity, low survival rate, school and classroom facilities and equipment, collective bargaining, and others, educational

leaders are now required to respond to these heavy pressures through a carefully studied management approach that is both efficient and effective. Precise goals in short- and long-term-range planning, close teacher supervision, and tougher performance evaluation characterize life in many schools. This mystique of "management" continues, even though many do not understand the concept well, and school administrators have rarely been trained to plan, organize, direct, and control.

This LEaD program below is an action plan school administrator may consider in further improving their administrative and supervisory practices. This program is a researcher-made action plan highlighting three major key result areas: 1) Training in Leader Behavior, 2) Training in Management Skills, and 3) Training in Instructional Leadership.

Area of Concern	Quality Objectives	Strategies/ Activities	Persons Responsible
Key Areas: **(1) Training in Management Skills**	• To improve skills in forecasting, establishing short- and long-term goals and objectives, and implementing appropriate budgeting and policy-making	Carry out or execute the following activities or programs: 1. Training on instructional planning – How to create SMARTER objectives 2. Budgeting strategies; Alternative Funding 3. Methodologies for effective policy formulation	Principal Classroom Teachers Staff Resource Speaker
	• To operate, coordinate, "troubleshoot," and generally motivate teachers and staff to accomplish the goals and objectives	Carry out or implement the following activities or programs: 1. Communication techniques 2. Seminars or workshops on how to encourage teachers 3. Job enrichment approaches	Principal Classroom Teachers Staff Resource Speaker
	• To establish standards, measure performance against these standards, and reallocate resources to correct deviations from standards or plans.	Carry out or implement the following activities or programs: 1. Work on teacher performance evaluations 2. Developing systems for obtaining periodic data on achievement 3. Getting feedback on teacher morale or the leader's style	Principal Classroom Teachers Staff Resource Speaker
Key Areas: **(2) Training in Leader Behavior**	• To train and develop leaders to lead, to provide a sense of direction, to motivate others toward the attainment of goals and objectives, and to build consensus	Carry out or implement the following activities or programs: 1. Conduct training programs that take the participants to take people through the conceptualization of leader and relationship (people aspects) behavior 2. Start or create productivity or quality circles 4. Seminars or workshops on how to motivate teachers	Principal Classroom Teachers Staff Resource Speaker
Key Areas:	• To help increase the productivity of school	Carry out or implement the following activities or programs:	Principal Classroom Teachers Staff

(3) **Training in Instructional Leadership**	administrators in school improvement in terms of curriculum development, staff development, teacher evaluation	**Curriculum Development** – Training experiences are available in all of these areas and must be provided to raise the confidence level of school administrators if they are to feel comfortable in doing curriculum work **Staff Development** – Training in helping the school administrators realize the potential of activities, alternative resources for providing staff development, knowing principles of adult learning and the necessity for experiential approaches, and allowing teachers to observe other teachers. **Teacher Evaluation** – Training on factors related to effective teaching or on issues teachers perceive as weaknesses or an area they wish to improve. Improving skills in the well-developed sequence includes pre- and post-observation, data collection, and pre-and post-conference with analysis.	Resource Speaker

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Both common sense and research have shown that school principals are the most important person to a school's success. The management style of a school principal influences the school's performance as an educational organization. As delineated in his position description, the school's success relies on how he effectively and efficiently carries out his administrative and supervisory functions. A successful school must have a strong leader, and the principal is the one who must provide this leadership. The relationship between principals and their subordinates is crucial to the Organization's success in terms of the school's overall performance and productivity.

The study also showed a discrepancy between the principal and teacher's assessment and focus group discussion results. Both the respondents' assessments are very high, which is almost excellent in every area. However, after analyzing and transcribing the result of the focus group discussion, it revealed a different result – some comments do not support or conform to the self-assessment. Teachers were not satisfied with some of the practices observed by their school principals. But since they have no choice because, according to them, it's the Department of Education (DepEd) structure, and that's how things are supposed to be, they became passive observers and followers – which is not good

in management. Such contradiction can be explained through theoretical perspectives like Self-enhancement theory and Self-consistency theory.

Nonetheless, we recognize that a problem exists. School administrators must, therefore, emphasize providing solutions to pressing matters and issues their teachers are having. If ignored or neglected, these might escalate into a more serious situation that may affect or influence the school's teaching and learning environment.

As such, the weak areas are then adjudged as room for improvement and must be kept up-to-date, correcting the deficiencies in the program delivery.

In light of the results, findings, and limitations of the study, the following are hereby recommended:

To the School Administrators. (1) Policy Implication – Create policies that will seriously involve teachers, especially in areas that concern them, like but not limited to planning instructional programs, identifying and setting goals, involving teachers fully in all decisions related to their work, curriculum development, student development, and staff development. The researcher may not recommend complete autonomy to teachers; however, he would only like

to suggest genuine inclusivity. After all, school administrators must realize and rethink the teacher's primary responsibility not just as directors of student learning, but also taking on other roles in schools and their profession. They are working with colleagues, family members, politicians, academics, community members, employers, and others to set transparent and obtainable standards for the knowledge, skills, and values we expect Filipino children to acquire. They participate in day-to-day decision-making in schools, work side-by-side to set priorities and deal with organizational problems that affect their students' learning. Their participation and involvement is a must. (3) Action Plan – It is recommended that school administrators consider the action plan presented by the researcher. The said action plan will contribute to enhancing and attaining the desired knowledge and skills for both the principal and teachers. They may modify or improve some areas of the plan. Still, implementing the same or developing a plan further to enrich administrative, supervisory, and classroom management is necessary.

To the other/ future Researchers. (1) Area for Future Research – To conduct a more comprehensive case study on the influence of school administrators' leadership practices on teacher's classroom management to validate the results and findings of this study employing both qualitative and quantitative methods and to determine as well the similarities and differences of administrative, supervisory and classroom management practices in public schools. (2) To undertake a more wide-ranging study focusing primarily on private schools run by private individuals and articulate the difference between the groups concerning practices observed and influence.

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