

## SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: AN INVESTIGATION OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

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### ABSTRACT

*The success of the school depends upon the ability of the principal, who is responsible for academic as well as administrative functioning of the school. This descriptive research aimed to determine the leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of school heads in Norzagaray district, Division of Bulacan, conducted from February to March 2019. A total of 31 school heads were drawn for the study. Later, the study revealed that the average weighted mean of leadership capacity (WM=3.39; Great Deal) of school head- respondents is higher than the effectiveness of instructional supports (WM=3.11; Some Influence). In addition, there is no significant relationship between leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional support of the respondents. Lastly, there is no significant difference on the leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional support of the respondents as to (a) gender, (b) age, (c) civil status, (d) highest educational attainment, and (e) school level.*

**Keywords:** instructional leaders; leadership capacity; instructional supports

### INTRODUCTION

*“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things”. (Reagan, 2018)*

The success of the school depends upon the ability of the principal, who is responsible for academic as well as administrative functioning of the school (Preetika, 2013). The principal of a school is like the center of a wheel. He keeps everything in line and in good working order and take charge of keeping the school working so

that teachers, students, and support staff can function and complete their respective jobs. He also serves as an intermediate between the county board of education and the school system in which they are employed (Arizona State University, 2019).

According to Republic Act No. 9155, Governance of Basic Act Section 6.1, Rule VI of the Implementing Rules and Regulations a school head or principal (2001) a principal or school head is a person responsible for the administrative and instructional supervision of the school or cluster of schools. As such, a school head is expected to possess the following dimension; (1) educational leadership, it is the ability to craft and pursue a shared school vision and mission, as well as develop and implement curriculum policies, programs and projects, (2) people leadership, it is the ability to work and develop effective relationships with stakeholders and exert a positive influence upon people and (3) strategic leadership, it is the ability to explore complex issues from a global perspective, manage an educational enterprise and maximize the use of resources. There shall be a school head for all public elementary and secondary schools or a cluster thereof, pursuant to Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Act, 2001). Section 6.1.

According to Duggan (2018) there are four good characteristics of instructional leaders; (1) know how to plan effectively, (2) excellent communicator, (3) can display competency and (4) show lead by example.

A good instructional leader knows how to plan effectively; he knows his organization's strengths and weaknesses. She makes effective use of available resources to plan and hire to staff initiatives. This includes using human resources, technology and other tools to create compelling instructional programs with clear objectives, descriptive content and comprehensive evaluation programs. Instructional leaders follow industry-standard practices regarding project management to create these programs. However, effective leaders maintain a healthy balance between required administrative procedures and flexibility. This characteristic allows the leader to foster creativity and innovation while running an efficient organization (Zinrath, 2017).

Communication needs to be clear, concise, concrete and correct. It also helps to be coherent, complete and courteous. Following these guidelines, an instructional leader communicates her instructional strategies to both her subordinates and her training program's participants. He uses a variety of communication mechanisms, such as email, presentations, lectures, brochures, case studies and posters to convey ideas and concepts. By delivering a consistent message throughout his organization, an effective instructional leader ensures everyone stays informed about her strategic direction for his programs (The Room 241, 2013).

Good instructional leader displays competency. He keeps abreast of issues, techniques and strategies that impact an educational program. This may involve learning about new technology, such as social media technology, that can be used to improve instructional programs for the business. It may also involve developing competence in quality management strategies, such as Lean Six Sigma, and applying these methods to the development of instructional programs.

Instructional leader leads by example, the best leaders in the educational system make it a point to lead by example, and not simply by words. It's easy to spell out rules and dictate them from an ivory tower, but this type of leadership will not have a large impact in your school. As an educator, he has so much influence on students. If instructional leader wants the students to speak kindly to one another in the hallways, he must always speak kindly, too. If instructional leaders want his students to show respect, show them what that means. This method is effective and powerful, and helps everyone to teach students skills they will need for the rest of their lives.

It is the desire of the researcher to study about school principal as instructional leaders, investigation of school leadership capacity. The aim of this study is to address the need for improving principal's capacity to assume new roles and responsibilities in a decentralized system. The study focused on principals in Norzagaray District, Division of Bulacan and their capacity for providing instructional support to teachers. Principals are facing the challenges of working within a recently decentralized education system while learning to become instructional leaders through formal training.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used descriptive research. As defined by Simon (2012) it involves description of similarities with other phenomena. The purpose of descriptive research is to study primarily "what is." The methods involve the questionnaire, interview or observation and documentation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Leadership capacity and instructional supports perceived by school head-respondents

**Table 1**  
**Leadership Capacity of School Head-Respondents**

Leadership Capacity	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. Make textbooks available in time for start of school year.	3.58	Great Deal
2. Provide teacher guides to teachers.	3.51	Great Deal
3. Make classroom resources available. (chalkboard, pencils, notebooks, etc.)	3.41	Great Deal
4. Make learning aids available. (globes, maps, posters, science lab equipment, etc.)	3.47	Great Deal
5. Use research to understand teaching methods to improve classroom instruction.	3.10	Some Influence
6. Mentor teachers in making decisions about the best teaching method.	3.49	Great Deal
7. Mentor teachers to make decisions about strategies for assessing student learning.	3.57	Great Deal
8. Analyze classroom practices.	3.26	Great Deal
9. Conduct teacher performance assessment.	3.17	Some influence
10. Provide teachers constructive feedback on teaching performance.	3.37	Great Deal
11. Mentor teachers to use learning aids to enhance student learning.	3.09	Some influence
12. Mentor teachers to make effective use of instructional time.	3.29	Great Deal
13. Mentor teachers to address their professional development needs.	3.32	Great Deal
14. Engage teachers in curriculum development.	3.72	Great Deal
15. Provide teachers opportunity to learn about teaching strategies for active learning.	3.38	Great Deal
16. Provide teachers opportunity to understand student-centered learning.	3.41	Great Deal
17. Provide teachers opportunity to develop skills and knowledge to teach different subjects.	3.44	Great Deal
18. Provide teachers opportunity to learn classroom management strategies.	3.44	Great Deal

19. Foster professional learning community among teachers.	3.47	Great Deal
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>Great Deal</b>
<b>Legend:</b> 3.25 – 4.00 – Great Deal; 2.50 – 3.24 – Some Influence; 1.75 – 2.49 – Little; 1.00 – 1.74 – None		

Table 1 presents the obtained weighted means and the verbal descriptions of item-statements relative to the leadership capacity of school heads in Norzagaray district, Division of Bulacan.

Item 9 “Mentor teachers to use learning aids to enhance student learning” was the item with the least weighted mean of 3.09, verbally described as “some influence”. While, item 14 “Engage teachers in curriculum development” was the item with the highest weighted mean of 3.72, verbally described as “great deal”.

The average weighted mean on leadership capacity of the school head- respondents is 3.39 with verbal interpretation of “great deal”.

The school head- respondents remarked that they make textbooks available in time for start of school year; they provide teacher guides to teachers; they make classroom resources available; they make learning aids available; they mentor teachers in making decisions about the best teaching method; they mentor teachers to make decisions about strategies for assessing student learning; they analyze classroom practices; they conduct teacher performance assessment; they provide teachers constructive feedback on teaching performance; they mentor teachers to make effective use of instructional time; they mentor teachers to address their professional development needs; they engage teachers in curriculum development; they provide teachers opportunity to learn about teaching strategies for active learning; they provide teachers opportunity to understand student-centered learning; they provide teachers opportunity to develop skills and knowledge to teach different subjects; they provide teachers opportunity to learn classroom management strategies; and they foster professional learning community among teachers.

There are also some influences that they use research to understand teaching methods to improve classroom instruction, and they mentor teachers to use learning aids to enhance student learning.

The role of teachers in the curriculum process is to help students develop an engaged relationship with the content. Active learning will increase the focus and retention of the curriculum, resulting in an exciting learning environment. According to Voogt, et.al. (2016), collaboration in curriculum design positively affects both

professional development and the implementation of curriculum change, because teachers develop competencies and practice and develop ownership of the change.

Based on Aslan and Ocal (2012), mentorship is defined as a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person. It is an ongoing process in which individuals in an organization, mostly school heads, provide support and guidance to others who can become effective contributors to the goals of the organization. Mentoring process is important for teaching profession where experience is important. In teaching profession, low motivation, burn-out or leaving the profession problems may occur if the novice teachers could not get any support from their school principals.

As one of the respondents stated that:

“I always involved my teachers when it comes with planning, most especially in the preparation of lessons aligned with the existing curriculum. They seemed to be more motivated and enthusiastic in the conduct of their teachings as they may feel that they are part of the whole preparation phase”.

**Table 2**  
**Instructional Supports of School Head-Respondents**

<b>Instructional Supports</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1. Classroom Resources (textbooks, notebooks, chalkboard, etc.)	3.25	Great Deal
2. Learning Aids (Globes, maps, posters, science lab equipment, etc.)	3.20	Some Influence
3. New Teaching Methods	2.30	Some Influence
4. Your Feedback from Classroom Observations	3.50	Great Deal
5. Mentoring Teachers	3.40	Great Deal
6. Training / Professional Development	3.00	Some Influence
7. Giving Teachers Role in Curriculum Development	3.20	Some Influence
8. Professional Learning Community for Teachers	3.00	Some Influence
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>Some Influence</b>
<b>Legend:</b> 3.25 – 4.00 – Great Deal; 2.50 – 3.24 – Some Influence; 1.75 – 2.49 – Little; 1.00 – 1.74 – None		

Table 2 presents the obtained weighted means and the verbal descriptions of item-statements relative to the instructional supports of school heads in Norzagaray district, Division of Bulacan.

Item 8 “Professional Learning Community for Teachers” was the item with the least weighted mean of 3.00, verbally described as “some influence”. While, item 4 “Your Feedback from Classroom Observations” was the item with the highest weighted mean of 3.50, verbally described as “great deal”.

The average weighted mean on effectiveness of instructional supports of the school head- respondents is 3.11 with verbal interpretation of “some influence”.

The school head- respondents’ answers to the following item-statements projecting their instructional supports that came up with the verbal description of great deal are the following: classroom resources; their feedback from classroom observations; and mentoring teachers.

Situational cases that came with the verbal description of some influence included: learning aids; new teaching methods; training/ professional development; giving teachers role in curriculum development; and professional learning community for teachers.

Feedback from the school principals provides an opportunity for the teacher to see if he or she is maintaining the proper flow of information during the classroom study. If only teachers use it wisely, it can encourage opportunities for them to get students more information. Further, Kelly (2014) stated that teachers often preferred responding to principal feedback after classroom observations by changing behaviors, considering changes to behaviors, through written communication, by providing explanations for the situations that generated principal feedback, and by reflecting on their teaching. He also demonstrated that teachers preferred to respond to principal feedback of classroom observations with a focus on promoting the safety and security of their students and themselves.

Besides, DuFour (2004) stated that the development of professional learning communities can avoid the cycle of enthusiasm to confusion about the fundamental concepts, followed by inevitable implementation problems, then the reform will fail causing its abandonment, and the launch of a new search for the next promising initiative.

As participants stated that:

“I can feel that my feedbacks to my teachers during their classroom observations do matter. As they become more motivated to teach, regardless if there will be an observation or not. They seemed to prepare more this time to be able to justify the ratings that I gave”.

“Teachers changed their behaviors in teaching their students. As they are known to be giving instructional materials to their students to copy it in their notebooks. My negative feedback changed them a lot as I observed it. They don’t treat it as failure but rather as a challenge to be able to improve their works in our department”.

“They accept my feedback during my classroom observations. They treat it as just and fair”.

**Table 3**  
**Significant Relationship Between Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Support of the School Head- Respondents**

	<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>
<b>Leadership Capacity</b>	<b>3.39</b>
<b>Instructional Supports</b>	<b>3.11</b>
<b>Pearson r = -.03</b>	
<b>R Square = .0009</b>	

The data shown in Table 3 was used to correlate leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of the school head- respondents to coefficient correlation obtained using Pearson r is -.03 (no correlation). The  $r^2$  (0.0009) or 0.09 known as coefficient determination reveals only 0.09% of variations in leadership capacity can be attributed the effectiveness of instructional supports. Thus, there is no significant relationship between the leadership capacity and the effectiveness of instructional supports of school head- respondents.

**Table 4**  
**Difference on Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Supports of the Respondents as to Gender**

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	8.166667	1	8.166667	0.150888	0.717477	7.708647
Within Groups	216.4955	4	54.12387			
Total	224.6621	5				

Table 4 illustrates the result of analysis of variance to determine the difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to gender. There is a mathematical difference among the mean- perceptions of the respondents regarding their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. This difference when subjected to ANOVA, the computed value of 0.15 which is lower than the critical value of 7.71 set at 0.05 level of significance. Male and female school principals are equally aware of their duties and responsibilities, in terms of leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional support. Regardless of gender, the



school principals are equally equipped of skills and competencies in providing necessary teaching materials, mentoring of teachers, providing specific opportunities, engagement, providing assessments and feedbacks, and fostering a community. There is enough evidence found to accept the hypothesis of the study. Therefore, there is no significant difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to gender.

As one male principal commented:

“As a male principal, I can manage the school well and I guess that the said management do not really differ from that of a female-managed school. We all have the motivation to lead and to serve our stakeholders; and the same innovative mind in this district”.

**Table 5**

**Difference on Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Supports of the Respondents as to Age**

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	21.1002	3	7.0334	0.586526	0.640639	4.066181
Within Groups	95.93307	8	11.99163			
Total	117.0333	11				

Table 5 illustrates the result of analysis of variance to determine the difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to age. There is a mathematical difference among the mean-perceptions of the respondents regarding their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. This difference when subjected to ANOVA, the computed value of 0.59 which is lower than the critical value of 4.07 set at 0.05 level of significance. Despite diversity in age, the school principals exude similar skills and competencies associated with their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. Regardless of age, the school principals similarly convey and project mentoring of teachers, provision of necessary materials in the conduct of teachers' works, like textbooks, teacher guides, classroom resources, etc., assessment of practices and performance, mentorship, provision of teachers' opportunity and fostering a professional learning community among teachers. There is enough evidence found to accept the hypothesis of the study. Therefore, there is no significant difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to age. As two young respondents stated that:

“I believe that I can manage my people even though they are older than me. As a young school head, I learn to listen from their techniques on handling some situations in school, and that transfer of information also yielded harmonious relationship within us”.

“Being a school head in a young age plays a big challenge. I always need to be firm, strict with the policies, and considerate with my teachers at the same time. Despite my age, I need to adjust in order to understand things beyond their perspectives. I know that these made and continuously makes a difference among my teachers”.

**Table 6**  
**Difference on Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Supports of the Respondents as to Civil Status**

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	87.63082	1	87.63082	0.929482	0.389593	7.708647
Within Groups	377.1167	4	94.27917			
Total	464.7475	5				

Table 6 illustrates the result of analysis of variance to determine the difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to civil status. There is a mathematical difference among the mean- perceptions of the respondents regarding their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. This difference when subjected to ANOVA, the computed value of 0.93 which is lower than the critical value of 7.71 set at 0.05 level of significance. Regardless of civil status, the school principals equally exert efforts in the provision of opportunity for teachers, mentoring different aspects in teaching, fostering favorable community; analyze performance and practice, utilization of research, and endowment of materials and aids. There is enough evidence found to accept the hypothesis of the study. Therefore, there is no significant difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to civil status. In the researcher’s study, a participant stated that:

“In this type of job, school heads should have a motherly- or fatherly-touch and appreciation, regardless of the civil status. We must always need to listen and understand in behalf of the welfare of our teachers. Listen with all our hearts, give advice if necessary. Our job doesn’t end by just signing papers in a four cornered, air-conditioned room within 8-5 routine”.

Table 7

**Difference on Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Supports of the Respondents as to Highest Educational Attainment**

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	8.350667	3	2.783556	0.315606	0.813947	4.066181
Within Groups	70.55773	8	8.819717			
Total	78.9084	11				

Table 7 illustrates the result of analysis of variance to determine the difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to highest educational attainment. There is a mathematical difference among the mean- perceptions of the respondents regarding their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. This difference when subjected to ANOVA, the computed value of 0.32 which is lower than the critical value of 4.07 set at 0.05 level of significance. The school principals, across educational attainment, do not differ in their analytic skills, mentoring skills, provisional skills and fostering of favorable environment for teachers. There is enough evidence found to accept the hypothesis of the study. Therefore, there is no significant difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to highest educational attainment. In this study, this was determined as one participant stated that:

“I am masters degree holder and I have a co-head, who completed her doctoral degree, and I see no difference in the way we lead our schools. We are both mandated by the existing memoranda and orders in our department. In addition, we are continuously being trained and updated by the division office on managerial skills and tackling different problematic scenarios in schools. Our co-heads, who are doctoral degree holders, motivate us to continue our graduate studies and lend some information they gathered from those degrees”.

**Table 8**  
**Difference on Leadership Capacity and Effectiveness of Instructional Supports of the Respondents as to School Level**

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	48.3936	1	48.3936	0.653375	0.464239	7.708647
Within Groups	296.2685	4	74.06713			
Total	344.6621	5				

Table 8 illustrates the result of analysis of variance to determine the difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to school level. There is a mathematical difference among the mean- perceptions of the respondents regarding their leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports. This difference when subjected to ANOVA, the computed value of 0.65 which is lower than the critical value of 7.71 set at 0.05 level of significance. The elementary and secondary school principals do not differ in their mentorship of teachers, provision of opportunity for teachers, conducting of analysis, research and performance evaluation, and provision of essential materials for teachers. There is enough evidence found to accept the hypothesis of the study. Therefore, there is no significant difference on leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports of respondents as to school level. An elementary school principal stated:

“Managing an elementary school is quite challenging yet fulfilling. When you see the way you manage people changes them a lot. It’s like giving a great impact on your leadership status. You are working for their welfare, thus, they work for the welfare of their learners. I see that style as a true essence of leadership”.

A secondary school principal experienced this as she stated:

“School heads should always have the perseverance and passion to work. He/she always thinks that in every decision they’ll make will affect their learners. We must always agree for the betterment of the lives of our students”.

### **Proposed Seminar on Instructional Leadership**

An output which is a proposed seminar on instructional leadership was born resulting from the perceptions of the respondents in the study. It reflects the appreciation of school heads regarding leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional supports.

**Proposed Seminars on Instructional Leadership**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
a) Using data to make instructional decisions. b) Exploring the pros and cons of teaching methods. c) Designing researches to study teaching methods.	Training Seminar on Research and Updates on Teaching Methods	School Heads	May 2019 (five days)	Utilized researches in finding suitable teaching methods for learners.
a) Determining the applicability of assessment techniques. b) Developing a rubric of assessment tool. c) Performing return demonstration on the conduct of teacher performance assessment. d) Determining appropriate feedbacks after classroom observations. e) Analyzing classroom practices through regular	Training Seminar on Assessment of Teacher Performance	School Heads	June 2019 (five days)	Improved conduct of assessment for teachers' performance.

monitoring and review.				
<p>a) Discovering the mentorship styles.</p> <p>b) Enumerating different learning aids and its uses.</p> <p>c) Developing contextual learning aids.</p>	Training the Mentors on Learning Aids	School Heads	July 2019 (five days)	Teachers used learning aids during their instructions.
<p>a) Updating on the existing knowledge on professional development.</p> <p>b) Determining the appropriate persons needed for delegation.</p>	Orientation on Professional Development	School Heads	August 2019 (two days)	Updated knowledge on professional development of teachers and school heads.
<p>a) Giving of roles to teachers in curriculum development.</p> <p>b) Motivating teachers/ sharing leadership.</p> <p>c) Understanding the contribution of the stakeholders of the school.</p>	Training Seminar on Curriculum Development	School Heads	September 2019 (five days)	Involved teachers in the curriculum development.
a) Leading a professional community.	Training Seminar on the Establishment	School Heads	October 2019 (five days)	Established a professional learning

b) Determining the key aspects of the professional community. c) Establishing and maintaining a professional community.	of Professional Learning Community for Teachers			community for teachers.
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### CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The average weighted mean on leadership capacity of the school head- respondents is 3.39 with verbal interpretation of “great deal”. Further, the average weighted mean on effectiveness of instructional supports of the school head- respondents is 3.11 with verbal interpretation of “some influence”. The average weighted mean of leadership capacity of school head- respondents is higher than the effectiveness of instructional supports.
2. There is no significant relationship between leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional support of the respondents.
3. There is no significant difference on the leadership capacity and effectiveness of instructional support of the respondents as to (a) gender, (b) age, (c) civil status, (d) highest educational attainment, and (e) school level.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are given to:

1. The school heads ought to strengthen the effectiveness of instructional supports for the school like instructional materials, school facilities and performance of the teachers and students.
2. The proposed seminar workshop developed suggests that it is a suitable plan for enhancing instructional leadership in the education sector.
3. A replicate study is hereby recommended with other school heads from different districts/ divisions as participants.

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