

New Normal Leadership Competencies of School Heads and its Influence on their Decision-Making Style and Organizational Trust

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Abstract: *The principal aim of the researcher was to test the influence of new normal leadership competencies of school heads and their influence on their decision-making style and organizational trust. A descriptive correlational design was utilized to test the assumed hypotheses of the study within a .05 level of significance. Various statistical measures such as frequency counts, mean, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data and answer the study's hypotheses. The researcher utilized reliable and validated instruments. To gather necessary information for this study, the researcher adopted the New Normal Leadership Competency Scale developed and standardized by Nuqui and Francisco (2020). Meanwhile, to determine the school heads' decision-making styles, the researcher used the instrument Decision-Making Style Questionnaire utilized by Bruce & Scott (2015) and the Organizational Trust Inventory by Bromiley and Cummings (1995). To ensure reliability, the researcher requested teachers to answer all three standardized questionnaires via google form with the utmost confidentiality—a total of 256 teachers from selected public elementary schools in the two districts of Marilao. The collected data were analyzed and treated statistically using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis of variance revealed a lesser value than the significance level set at 0.05. The researcher rejects both null hypotheses, which states that school heads' new normal leadership competencies do significantly influence their decision-making styles and school heads' new normal leadership competencies do significantly influence their organizational trust. The study recommended that training programs for future school heads and those already in administrative positions may be intensified to prepare them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.*

Keywords—New Normal Leadership, Decision-making Styles, Organizational Trust

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an elusive ideological capability that must be imbibed by humanity. This gives great responsibility to provide high standard quality of life, determining social function, making firm and efficient decisions. Leadership is the manager's capacity to inspire subordinates to work with confidence and zeal [1]. It is defined as the capacity to influence a group toward the accomplishment of a goal. Leaders have the responsibility of developing future visions and motivating organizational members to work toward achieving those visions. It means that there is a cycling process of leading among societal stakeholders that are significantly needed as part of the community. One must have the capability to look beyond daily happenings and visualize a brighter future to be an effective leader.

2. RELATED WORKS

Moreover, successful leaders work closely with those they lead, and through this collaboration, they can influence others to pursue common goals and achievements to have quality institutional objectives. Influential leaders are successful at convincing others to follow and pursue a shared mission and vision by establishing trustworthy relationships [2]. In line with this, according to DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2007 entitled, "The Revised Guideline on Selection, Promotion, and Designation of School Heads" stipulated that a school head is the one who is responsible for the administrative and instructional supervision of the school or cluster of schools. Indeed, school heads are considered key leaders responsible

for organizing objectives and planning projects in line with the needs and stability of their institutions. Thus, the success of schools depends on the leadership style to be used by the school heads. On the other hand, the duties and responsibilities of the school heads became complicated and challenging due to a pandemic scenario happening in the Philippines. This gives a wide range of impacts in the educational framework. Many guidelines and protocols need to be considered for the safety of the learners, school personnel, and other stakeholders.

According to D.O No. 032 s. 2020 also referred to as "Guidelines on the Engagement of Services of Learning Support Aides to Reinforce the Implementation of Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) during COVID-19 Pandemic," which aims to commit and ensure a quality education for the learners despite health emergency happening in the Philippines. In accordance with DepEd Order No. 012 s. of 2020, it must be included in the learning continuity plan of the administrators the multiple learning delivery modalities (LDMs) to be used by their respective institutions. These guidelines are composed of new normal emerging trends in education set up as abided by the COVID – 19 Pandemic protocols.

In lieu of this, school heads become bombarded and strange to the current educational scenarios. They are challenged to face the educational phenomenon because they know this will influence their organizational trust and strategic style as leaders. Organizational Trust is about the positive expectations of individuals about the intended behaviors of

multiple organizational members based on the organizational roles and interdependencies (Winter, 2015). Due to new normal educational trends, school heads must assign people within the organization who will be trusted to do specific tasks excellently. Moreover, in this time of the pandemic, the dimensional concept of organizational trust must be considered. This helps the school heads to collaborate with their workforce with great satisfaction and perception during the new normal. As stated by an author, "The leadership characteristics of the school heads should be the source of inspiration for the teachers and should guide them" [3].

Moreover, the strategic organizational style will become explorative on the part of the school heads since a new normal educational setup is a phenomenological experience for them. They are doing experimentation on the leadership style actions that they will be using amidst new normal curriculum challenges and will fit the continuity learning plan of their institutions.

School heads' decision-making process also affects organizational objectives and institutional development, and stability. This will be judged according to the purpose and function of the decisions. One wrong decision will probably ruin the projects and plans of the entire organization. Decision-making determines by several alternatives to achieve the desired result [4]. Indeed, having the right decisions will help the school heads find alternatives in sustaining academic stability and adapting to the different learning environment changes. Administrative decision-making is assumed to be rational. By these school administrators make decisions under certainty: They know their alternatives; they know their outcomes; they know their decision criteria, and they can make the optimum choice and then implement it [5].

Therefore, new normal leaders should embrace equality and diversity, have a strong commitment to attaining their visions and mission through talent, technology, and maintain a dynamic interplay between all employees, shareholders, and others. School heads must not rely solely on their traditional views and practices of leading people but should also adapt to the trends in education to develop appropriate decisions and relevant actions that will invite good achievement in any organization [6].

However, despite the above-mentioned characteristics and responsibilities of school heads and despite the set of best practices researchers honed over the years that leaders must follow in new normal times, some leaders are failing their endeavors to save organizations and jobs [7]. It is worth mentioning that while crisis-related organization and leadership focus on man-made threat, little is known about leadership challenges and organizational outcomes emerging from other types of threats including COVID-19 [8] that will greatly affect how organization will rise against unprecedented challenges through the capabilities of the leaders to manage the situation.

The desire to identify conflicting gaps and the lack of local studies into the influence between the school heads' new normal leadership competencies to their decision-making style and organizational trust triggered the interests of the researcher to conduct the study. It was of great importance for the researcher to analyze the school heads' new normal leadership competencies and their influence on their decision-making styles and organizational trust. The researcher assumed that the school heads' new normal leadership competencies are essential predictor of their decision-making styles and organizational trust [8].

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main purpose of this study is to determine the New Normal Leadership Competencies of School Heads and their Influence on their Decision-Making Style and Organizational Trust.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following:

1. How may the new normal leadership competency of the school head be described in terms of :
 - 1.1 adaptability,
 - 1.2 decision-making style, and
 - 1.3 planning and implementation?
2. How may the decision-making style of the school heads be described in terms of :
 - 2.1 rational,
 - 2.2 intuitive,
 - 2.3 dependent,
 - 2.4 avoidant, and
 - 2.5 spontaneous?
3. What is the level of organizational trust of the school heads in the following dimensions:
 - 3.1 affective state,
 - 3.2 cognition, and
 - 3.3 behavioral intention?
4. Does the new normal leadership competency of the school heads significantly influence decision-making style?
5. Does the new normal leadership competency of the school heads significantly influence organizational trust?

4. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the descriptive-correlational method. This method aimed to gather information about an existing condition that enables the researcher to describe the situation entirely.

In a research study, a descriptive correlational method refers to a type of study in which information is collected without making any changes to the variables. It is a type of research design where a researcher seeks to understand what relationships variables have with one another.

A descriptive study is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, evident effects, or developing trends. It is primarily concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences related to current conditions [9]. The research method, as mentioned earlier, is

believed to be the best design for this particular study since its main thrust is to describe the school head's level of decision-making as well as their level of organizational trust. Moreover, this design allowed the researcher to discover the influence of new normal leadership competencies on school heads' decision-making style and organizational trust.

The respondents of this study were the public elementary teachers of the two (2) Districts of Marilao in the Schools Division of Bulacan employed in the school year 2020-2021. The researcher utilized the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator, a software that primarily calculates or generates the sample size of a research or survey and considers the margin of error (5%), the confidence level (95%), and response distribution. It also offers to show viz-a-viz what the margin of error would be like with various sample sizes.

From eighteen (18) public elementary schools with a total population of 759, the researcher got 256 samples as respondents of the study. Then, he applied the systematic random sampling technique to derive the sample size of the respondents per school. Through the help of the school heads per school, the names of all possible respondents were listed alphabetically in a name picker application called the hat. The list of the names that were randomly selected using the said application was returned to the school heads to inform the teachers that through the permission of their heads, they served as the respondents of the study.

This study utilized reliable and validated instruments. To gather the necessary information for this study, the researcher adopted the New Normal Leadership Competency Scale developed and standardized by Nuqui and Francisco (2020). It consists of 15 items subdivided into three parts: New Normal Leadership in terms of Adaptability, New Normal Leadership in terms of Decision-Making, and New Normal Leadership in terms of Planning and Implementation. It is a 5-point Likert scale, from poor to outstanding, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

Meanwhile, to determine the school heads' decision-making styles, the researcher used the instrument Decision-Making Style Questionnaire utilized by Bruce & Scott (2015). It encompasses 25 items in 5 subscales: Rational Decision-Making Styles, Intuitive Decision-Making Styles, Dependent Decision-Making Styles, Avoidant Decision-Making Styles, and Spontaneous Decision-Making Styles with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.815.

Lastly, the Organizational Trust Inventory by Bromiley and Cummings (1995) that measures the (3) dimensions of trust in organizations: (1) affective state, (2) cognitive, and (3) behavioral intentions were utilized. This questionnaire is composed of 20 items and considered highly reliable, as evidenced by 0.71 Cronbach's alpha.

The researcher also sought a letter of permission to use the above-mentioned standardized questionnaires to the proponents of the said instruments.

The school heads' new normal leadership competency, decision-making styles, and organizational trust were quantified and analyzed using the weighted mean procedures. To determine the influence of the said independent variable on the dependent variables, the data were subjected to multiple correlation and regression analysis.

5. RESULTS

New Normal Leadership

Based on the results of the survey, the new normal leadership competencies of the school heads in terms of adaptability (4.55), and decision-making (4.51), were described as outstanding. While planning and implementation gained a weighted mean of (4.46) with a verbal interpretation of very satisfactory.

Decision-making Styles

The result presented how the respondents described the decision-making styles of their school heads. Rational decision-making style gained a general weighted mean of 4.54 (frequently, if not always), both intuitive and dependent decision-making styles received a verbal interpretation of fairly often as shown in their general weighted means (3.84) and (3.97), respectively. Moreover, avoidant and spontaneous decision-making styles obtained a general weighted means of (2.83) and (2.95), respectively both having a verbal interpretation of sometimes.

Organizational Trust

The findings exhibited the level of organizational trust of the school heads in the following dimensions: affective state and behavioral intention both interpreted as to some extent with general weighted means of (2.37) and (2.29), respectively. While cognition gained a general weighted mean of (3.38) interpreted as to a great extent.

Influence of New Normal Leadership on Decision-making Styles

The computed value of R is .784, which is interpreted as a strong relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The overall model explains 61.4% variation of new normal leadership competency of school heads. It is significantly useful in explaining their decision-making styles, $F(1,3838) = 6112.625$, $p < .05$. The data indicates that the computed p-value is less than the alpha value, which means the researcher rejects the null hypothesis, which states that the new normal leadership competency of school heads does significantly influence the decision-making styles of the school heads.

Influence of New Normal Leadership on Organizational Trust

The computed value of R is .590, which is interpreted as a moderate correlation between the independent and dependent variables, and the overall model explains 34.8% variation of

new normal leadership competency of school heads. It is significantly useful in explaining the organizational trust, $F(1,3838) = 2045.519$, $p < .05$. The data indicates that the computed p-value is less than the alpha value, which means the researcher rejects the null hypothesis, stating that school heads' new normal leadership competency significantly influences organizational trust.

6. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following implications were drawn: (1) School heads may adapt to the new normal leadership competencies to further improve their decision-making styles and strengthens organizational trust; (2) Mentoring program for school heads must be sustained to guide them in their decision-making styles and level of organizational trust. Sharing of their best practices may be conducted to assist other school heads, especially the novice ones; and (3) Training programs for future school heads and those already in the administrative positions may be intensified to prepare them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. The management implications mentioned above may be shared and communicated to the district and division offices by providing them a copy of the research paper after completing the study, which may serve as a basis for future programs geared towards the school leaders' improvement [10][11][12] [13].

7. CONCLUSIONS

In light of the findings generated from the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The school heads' new normal leadership competencies in terms of adaptability and decision-making style were described as outstanding, while planning and implementation were described as satisfactory. The new normal of leadership is embodied by school heads who can embrace new challenges as a means of organizational growth and advancement, who prioritize what is best for teachers and students over their own interests, and who can credit and recognize those responsible for successful plans and excellent implementations in the face of challenging educational phenomena.

2. On the other hand, school heads' decision-making style in terms of rationality is described as frequently, if not always. Intuitive and dependent decision-making styles of school heads are described fairly often. While school heads' decision-making styles in terms of avoidant and spontaneous gained a verbal interpretation of sometimes.

3. In addition, school heads' level of organizational trust in affective state and behavioral intention is described as to some extent. In terms of cognition, the level of organizational trust of school heads is conveyed to a great extent.

4. The null hypothesis that new normal leadership competencies of school heads do not significantly influence decision-making style was not sustained. School heads' new

normal leadership competencies significantly influence their decision-making styles.

5. The null hypothesis that new normal leadership competencies of school heads do not significantly influence organizational trust was not accepted. School heads' new normal leadership competencies significantly influence their organizational trust.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions derived from the data gathered, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

1. There is an excellent necessity for school heads to adapt new normal leadership competencies by making proper discernment in decision-making and implementing actions providing significant contributions to the development of the organizational trust of the teachers in these trying times called New Normal.

2. Although school heads display an outstanding level of new normal leadership competencies, they still need to commit themselves towards improving decision-making styles, which are fairly observed. Organizational trust is observed by their teachers by equipping themselves with enough knowledge on policies and guidelines and considering teachers' welfare, morale, and satisfaction in making relevant decisions.

3. School heads may reflect on their leadership practices and assess how they can influence their decision-making styles and organizational trust. This can assist them in developing their leadership skills and encourage teachers' and other stakeholders' active participation in school programs and projects to foster more harmonious parent-teacher-school head relationships.

4. School heads mentoring may be intensified to expose them to best leadership practices through benchmarking and participating in existing leadership program like School Heads Development Program-Foundational Course and Training Program on School Leadership and Management (TPSLM) conducted by the National Educators' Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) that they can apply in their respective schools. School heads will be guided about leading the organization and directing people towards a common goal.

5. Training programs may be designed to further improve school heads' capabilities in handling administrative responsibilities. Additionally, a series of leadership development training may be provided to those already working as administrators to develop themselves and their leadership abilities continuously. These programs must be designed to equip school leaders with comprehensive knowledge and a deeper understanding of leading and managing effective schools under the new normal system. As a result, all school leaders and heads of schools should be required to attend various webinars and online workshops on leadership and management prior to taking on the role of school principal.

6. Future researchers may conduct a similar study focusing on the influence of school heads' new normal leadership competencies on their decision-making styles and organizational trust. Should future researchers wish to carry out the same study, they may consider using other instruments and indicators to measure new normal leadership competencies, decision-making styles, and organizational trust. .

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