The Extent of Principals' Empowerment and Their Functions towards Management of Public Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the extent of empowerment of public elementary school principals and their functions towards school management in the District of Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. 18 public elementary principals/school heads were involved. Anchored on Zimmerman's (2000) empowerment theory, both process and outcomes-based empowerment had been carefully assessed. This lens provided principles and framework in looking at processes such as individual action and engagement activities within a particular social context. Survey questionnaire was used involving statements measured through Likert scale. With a six-month period of data gathering, Pearson r was utilized in the analysis. Results revealed that instructional ($r=.408$, $p < 0.01$) and administrative empowerments ($r=.776$, $p < 0.01$) established highly significant relationships with school safety and orderliness, opportunities to learn, time on task and instructional leadership respectively. Recommendations on sustainability of quality instruction in relation to school-based management are further taken into account as these might likewise impact the teaching and learning process to enhancing the identity of instructional leadership.

Keywords

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Introduction

Empowerment of school heads to enhance school management is one of the major concerns of Department of Education (DepEd) considering its gigantic bureaucratic structure for effective and efficient delivery of educational service. This can only be achieved if proper attention is given to the people who manage the different schools in the country, whether they are in the elementary or secondary level. Principal empowerment is technically defined as the authority given to the school administrators in discharging management function. It denotes that the principal may be empowered to instructional, administrative and financial aspects. The logic of principal empowerment is to give the development and implementation of appropriate reform initiative at their own level and context (Hatcher, 2015). The principals' extent of empowerment as stipulated in DECS Order no. 17 s. 1997, adopting a policy of empowering school principals stating that all school principals shall henceforth be vested with instructional, administrative and fiscal autonomy for more effective and efficient delivery of quality basic education. School heads shall have the authority, responsibility and accountability in managing all affairs of the school. It simply means that the lives of the school principals are packed with challenges (Symonds, 2003).

In the Philippines, the elementary school principals shared the administrative and supervisory responsibilities of the division superintendent and district supervisors. Decentralization of power, duties and responsibilities paved the way to the empowerment of school principals. This proves to be reasonable with the basis that principals, being the brain of the school, know more in as much as needs, problems and developments of their respective schools are concern. In recent years, more attention has been given to the need to enhance school management system and strengthen the authority given to the school heads. Much research has demonstrated that the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed (Taylor et al, 2004), more than on the abundance of available resources (Wilson, 2005), and that the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the quality of power provided by the school heads (Sun et al., 2007). At the same time, policy makers in various educational organizations used these research results to move towards more school-based management and autonomy.

It is imperative to look at how school heads exercise instructional leadership since this would be contributory to the great extent of school operations. As such, empowerment plays pivotal role to school safety, orderliness, parents' involvement, and proper implementation of curriculum and instruction. In the locale of the study, it was believed that school heads' empowerment seemed either be applied very broadly or politically. Majority of them encountered problems about to what extent should one acts and makes such decisions. Given this rationale, this research study attempted to examine how the empowered principals are obliged to infuse systematic change in managing the school and the people in them, including the non-human resources. This would address and provide basis on the perceptions of Department of Education authorities in the Philippines who believe that with such empowerment, principals will take a more active role in the

development and implementation of appropriate reform initiatives at their own level and context.

Literature Review

The study was based primarily on Empowerment Theory by Zimmerman (2000). Empowerment theory is to explore relationships between individuals within specific social, organizational, educational, and political environments. It mainly focuses on participation and collaboration of individuals within an organizing structure to focus their efforts on an identified outcome or common goal. Empowerment is the "process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and control over their own lives. In exercising educational leadership capacity, they increase their competence to accomplish their highest individual and communal desires and targets (Alfadli & Al-Mehaisen, 2019; Hussein, 2011; Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016). Empowerment is likewise process and outcomes-based (Wiley, 2010). Processes, such as an individual's actions and activities of engagement within a particular social context, can result in an outcome of either empowerment or disempowerment. When an individual feels empowered, he/she has a greater sense of intrinsic motivation and self-confidence; alternatively a feeling of disempowerment can result in decreased levels of motivation and self-confidence.

By looking through this lens, issues related to school control and management had been given prime emphasis. Power structure as to who controls specific school situation and how such leadership imbalance in control that might impact individual performance at school had been critically evaluated. Similar to Bandura's (1986) notion of developing self-efficacy, empowerment theory is achieved through an experience in which the outcome results in an increase to the individual's self-efficacy and motivation. Viewing empowerment as an enabling process has shown important results as it targets self-determination, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and engagement (Babelan et al., 2019) and may help transform struggling principals into striving principals in the school management. The study was based also in the implementation of Republic Act 9155; putting emphasis on empowerment of principals encourages local initiatives for improving the quality of basic education. In here, governance of the said basic education begins at the national level. Through this, the re-shaping, re-directing and re-orienting of the department in general and of the local school in particular shall lead to a learning revolution and a new environment nurtured which eventually results to citizens provide with the skills, knowledge and values they need to become caring, self-reliant, productive and patriotic citizens.

Researchers suggest that principals' function towards school management and the performance of principals in terms of their instructional, administrative and financial task are correlated (Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016; Shuck &Mogan, 2012; Xu & Cooper, 2011). To Xu and Cooper (2011), principal empowerment is a variable that affects the school management. And the principal empowerment should be one of the products of successful school management. Challenged by the notion that principal empowerment tends to overshadow fairness through political pressures, this study hoped to define how schools had

been managed critically adherent to certain standards. Anchored on Empowerment theory of Zimmerman (2000) and implementation of Republic Act 9155, this study conceptualized the relationship of socio-demographic profile of principals in terms of age, gender, civil status, monthly family income, educational attainment, designated position, length of service, school category and seminars attended and in the extent of empowerment of school principals in terms of instructional, administrative and fiscal empowerment. Likewise, the relationship of empowerment of school principals and principals' functions towards school management had all been assessed to fill the gap in the literature of principal empowerment. These include instructional leadership, school safety and orderliness, clarification of mission and vision, high expectations for success, parents' involvement and community partnership, opportunity to learn and time on task.

Methodology

Research design, participants, and locale of the study

Two groups of respondents were used namely 18 principals or school heads. Purposive sampling was used to the former and random sampling to the latter. Using purposive sampling, the main sources of data were principals in the Division of Nueva Ecija, District of Aliaga, Philippines. A purposive sampling is a type of non-scientific sampling design on selecting the individuals as samples according to the purposes of the researcher as his control (Calmorin, 2016). Principal-respondents were chosen as part of a sample due to good evidence that they represent the total population. Only those with Principal I-IV designations were considered since Philippine Republic Act (RA 9155) stated that these public schools heads have been more empowered because of their qualification standards. Descriptive research design was used to examine the relationship between extent of empowerment of public elementary school principals and their functions towards school management. Calmorin (2016) noted that this design is used describe an existing relationship between variables and the degree to which two or more quantitative variables are related. In this study, it was used to illustrate principals' socio-demographic profile, their extent of empowerment as observed by school heads and teachers, and principals' functions towards school management.

Data collection and analysis

Survey questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers to the respondents after seeking approval from the Division Superintendent of Nueva Ecija, Philippines. Principal respondents were likewise provided with orientation and explanation about the purpose of the study. Survey questionnaires for teacher respondents were entrusted to their respective principals. Questionnaires were retrieved within 2-month administration with 98.08 percent retrieval rate. Data were tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency count and percentage was employed in determining the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the principals and principals' functions towards school management, and the relationship between the extent of empowerment and principals' functions towards school management.

Ethical considerations

To cope with the ethics of investigation, mainly, we camouflaged the names of the participants and research site. Also, participation in this study was totally voluntary and participants were allowed to resign anytime they wanted. All participants were given an informed consent form.

Findings and Discussion

Principals' socio-demographic profile

Principals' socio-demographic profile comprises ofage, sex, civil status, monthly family income, educational attainment, designated position, length of service, school category and seminars attended. Respondents' age had been grouped into four distinct categories. It is shown in Table 1, that principals' age had a mean of 53.17 and standard deviation of 6.17. Their ages ranged from 48 years old to 59 years old. As shown in the table, the youngest among the principals was within the age range of 47-49 years old with 33.30 percent. It was followed by 5 principals with age bracket of 57-59 years old or 27.70 percent. Four principals whose age ranged from 54-56 years old or 22.20 percent were included in the last bracket. These findings implied that the elementary school principals in the Aliaga District, Division of Nueva Ecija were generally 'middle aged'. According to Gonong (2012), 47-50 age-bracket was generally characterized by some degree of emotional and intellectual maturity as collected in that work and dealings with people. Moreover, Lopez (2010) reinforced that at this age; the individuals must have acquired the sense of achievement and have reached their peak of productivity. In this context, principals started as classroom teachers and it took some years for them to become school heads. Within such period, these principals must have developed themselves emotionally and intellectually brought about by their dealings with their colleagues, pupils, community people, and with their supervisors.

Table 1. *The socio-demographic profile of principal respondents*

Socio-Demographic Profile	Frequency (N=18)	Percentage
Age		
47- 49 years old	6	33.33
50 - 53 years old	3	16.67
54 - 56 years old	4	22.20
57 - 59 years old	5	27.70
	Mean: 53.17 SD: 6.17	
Sex		
Male	10	55.60
Female	8	44.40
Civil status		
Single	1	5.60
Married	16	88.90
Widowed	1	5.60
Estimated monthly income		
₱49,999-below	6	33.30
₱50,000-₱59,999	6	33.30
₱60,000-above	6	33.30
Highest educational Attainment		
MA/MS Degree	11	61.10
With Doctoral units	4	22.20
Doctoral Degree	3	16.70
Designated Position		
Principal I	12	66.70
Principal II	5	27.80
Principal III	1	5.60
Length of Service		
2 years	1	5.60
3 years	3	16.70
4 years	4	22.20
6 years	2	11.10
7 years	1	5.60
8 years	1	5.60
9 years	5	27.80
12 years	1	5.60

Table 1. *Continued…*

School Category		
Small school	7	38.90
Medium school	7	38.90
Large school	4	22.20
Seminars/ Trainings Attended		
Regional level	4	22.20
National level	14	77.80

Sex determined respondents' physical biological structure as to male or female. Majority of the principals were male (10) with 55.60 percent while female principals comprised of8 or 44.40 percent. It had been assumed that male principals dominate handling school management at Aliaga District, Nueva Ecija. This result conformed with Seed (2006),that majority of the principals at all three levels of public schooling (elementary, secondary and tertiary) are males. This finding challenged the study of Alejo (2018) that full pledged elementary school heads were dominated by females. However, with the introduction of gender issues related to school management, this belief paved its way to provide equal opportunities to both sexes.

Civil Status were classified into single, married and widowed. There were 16 or 88.90 percent (16) of principals were under married status. It was interesting to note that sole principal was beneath both single and widowed equally comprising 5.60 percent. Results on civil status coincided with the findings of Faraclas (2018) noting that majority of school head respondents were also married. He also stated that married principals possessed higher degree of sense of responsibility and accountability. Estimated monthly income mainly into three distinct brackets. Three categories of estimated monthly income defined their earnings. Principals were equally divided into these categories in Philippine peso (49,999-below, 50,000-59,999 and 60,000-above) of estimated monthly income with six respondents or 33.30 percent for each category. It has been noted in Salary Standardization Law (SSL) and in the study of Kintanar (2017) that principal's position is considered as the basis in salary adjustments wherein Principal I, II, and III receive basic monthly salaries of P40,637.00 under Salary Grade 18, P45,269.00 under Salary Grade 19 and P51,155.00 under Salary Grade 20 respectively. School Principal IV is compensated with Salary Garde 22 amounting to P65, 319.00.00 per month. Educational attainment among respondents illustrated that majority of the principals graduated with master's degree (11 or 61.10 %) followed by those who obtained doctoral degree units (4 or 22.20%).There were only three principals (16.70%) who finished doctoral degree. Abrami (2001) confirmed this finding, that graduate studies were seen as very important in the academe. School heads will not be promoted to principal unless they passed the national principal's test conducted by NEAP and an earned graduate degree would offer higher points in employment ranking which

would mean priority to be promoted regardless of age and years of teaching experience. These findings implied that the principals were educationally qualified, that is, they had at least completed a master's degree. As revealed in the unstructured interviews with the principals, those that had undergone and completed their master's degrees find it easy to manage their schools. According to Marks (2004), principals tend to constantly apply the school management principles and skills learned from their graduate studies. Designated position represented the three major highest ranks as school heads**.** Majority of the principals (12 or 66.70 %) were designated as Principal I followed by Principal II, having five school heads with 27.80 percent.   Only one school head was assigned with rank beneath Principal III with 5.60 percent. This result was also aligned with Castillo (2003) that school heads designated as Principal I, were said to be young in the position. Castillo also stated that they are still in the process of mastering the 'ins' and 'outs' functions in school management. This scenario had been emphasized that majority of the school principals who have less than a decade of school management functions, were familiar to such management situations.

Length of service comprised two to twelve years of school head experience**.** Data revealed that 5 school heads or 27.80 percent served the longest time as principal for nine years. It was then followed by 4 school heads with 4 years school management experience or 22.20 percent.   Three of them with 3 years in service or 16.70 percent while two respondents already served for 6 years or 11.10 percent. It was remarkable to note that only one respondent for each category belonged to 2, 7, 8 and 12 years in service as school head respectively. School category comprised three distinct types namely small, medium and large in population**.** Among the type of school being managed by the principals**,** seven schools were both under the small school and medium school categories with 38.90 percent respectively. Data likewise disclosed that only four among the school head respondents managed large schools with 22.20 percent.   This implies that the public elementary schools in the District of Aliaga, Division of Nueva Ecija were not thickly populated. This was accounted to the fact that every village or *barangay* has an elementary school.

Seminars or trainings attended by respondents revolved into regional and national levels. Most respondents attended seminars and trainings in national level comprising of 14 individuals or 77.80 percent. Four respondents revealed of constantly attending regional level conferences with 22.20 percent. These data indicated that many school principals had already gained trainings from attendance to conferences since most of them have already rendered long years of school head experiences which offered them many opportunities to run an educational institution. The findings supported Faraclas (2018) who noted that principals who were able to attend national and regional trainings depend largely on the school administrators or their educational supervisors assigned to their respective school jurisdiction.

Relationship between principals' socio-demographic profile and their functions towards school management

Table 2 presents the relationship between principals' socio-demographic profile (age, sex, civil status, monthly income, educational attainment, length of service, school category, seminars attended, positions) and their functions towards school management (instructional leadership, school safety and orderliness, clarification of vision and mission, expectations of success, parent involvement community partnership, opportunities to learn and time on tasks).

Age and opportunities to learn and time on task, To determine whether the principals' socio-demographic profile is related to their functions towards school management, correlation using Pearson r was computed. Table 2 shows that age established a moderate positive relationship with Opportunities to Learn and Time on Task (r=.541, p<0.05). This means that senior or older school heads or principals tend to take the opportunities to learn as their functions in school compared to younger principals or school heads. This finding confirmed Babelan et al. (2019) that in order to improve the quality of students and teachers, older school heads capacities must be sufficient and knowledgeable to meet their demands, so as principals also provide his/her development opportunities.

Table 2. *Relationship between principals' socio-demographic profile and their functions towards school management*

VARIABLES	INSTRUCTIO-NAL LEADERSHIP	SCHOOL SAFETY AND ORDERLI-NESS	CLARIFICATION OF VISION AND MISSION	EXPECTA-TIONS OF SUCCESS	PARENTS INVOLVEMENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP	OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND TIME ON TASK
Age	.002	.054	.151	.351	-.114	.541*
Sex	-.313	-.097	-.147	.197	.040	-.394
Civil Status	.067	.565*	-.316	.499*	.318	.124
Monthly Income	-.044	.005	.194	-.234	.433	.311
Educ. Attainment	.008	.538*	-.013	-.314	.055	-.138
Length of Service	.257	-.339	.174	-.209	.516*	.092
School Category	.335	-.362	-.082	-.537*	.077	-.008
Seminars	.258	.069	-.058	.315	-.104	-.083
Position	.092	-.345	.281	-.255	.695**	.027

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Furthermore, this result of correlation was in conformity with the findings of Shuck and Mogan (2012) that older principals with lesser opportunities to learn tended to perceived significantly lower than those younger principals. This can be a logical reason that from day to day, younger principals are pursuing higher degrees and educational degree improves their functions as a school principal.

Civil status and school safety and orderliness, Correspondingly, further analysis of the data revealed that civil status of the principal established a moderate positive relationship with School Safety and Orderliness (r=.565, p<0.05) and Expectations of Success (r=.499, p<0.05). The findings revealed that civil status likewise greatly contributed to school safety as well as its success. Results were in consonance with the findings of Welch (2011) that married school heads tend to have higher concerns with school safety and success than single principals. Being men and women, these principals carry over their roles in their respective families the same responsibilities as they take care of school to a safe and orderly environment. This however, does not discredit the concern and love shown by the unmarried principals to their subordinates.

Highest educational attainment and school safety and orderliness, similarly, highest educational attainment had a moderate positive correlation with school Safety and Orderliness (r=.538, p<0.05). This finding disclosed that educational qualification is imperative to implementing school security. Results further suggest that principals with earned higher degree most likely manifest greater concerns and accountability about school safety and orderliness. A principal must be equipped with knowledge about on methods of teaching, organizations and educational psychology. The principal should have up-to-date knowledge of the theories and principles of education presented by modern educators. This result was in accordance with Wiley (2010) who stated that those principals who received higher degree and had a continuous professional development system established and institutionalized in the education system, are well equipped with knowledge and skills in executing an orderly, purposeful, businesslike environment, which is free from the threat of physical harm.

Length of service and parents' involvement and community partnership, Likewise, Length of service established moderate positive correlation with Parents Involvement and Community Partnership (r=.516, p<0.05). The results revealed that the length of service of a school principal is significant on how they influenced the parents and the community. The study of Xu et al. (2011) confirmed these findings that parents recognize understand and support the principal's basic mission of the school because of the years in service. Principal are treated as respected partners who bring important perspectives and open the untapped potential to grow in their capacity to support their children's education.

Principals' position and parents' involvement/community partnership, Meanwhile, principals position established a highly positive relationship with Parents Involvement/Community Partnership (r=.695, p<0.01). This finding showed that being principal has been treated as the highest authority in every school that has the power to influence others. Thus, the result most likely advocates that the higher the principal's rank, the greater it its influence to parents to participate at schools as well as the school's linkage to community partnership. Findings coincided with Gordon (2013) that higher positions tend to have the power to perceive authority to make and enforce policies designed to promote good behavior and discipline. Principals plan and do whatever they have to in order to get the parents involved and strengthen the parent-child-school relationship.

School category and expectations of success, on the other hand, school category established moderate negative correlation with Expectations of Success (r=-.537, p<0.05). The result

revealed that schools with small population could easily be handled by the principals as compared to schools with large population. This might propose that principals tend to manifest higher expectations of success in leading small group of teachers and students rather than the opposite. Results conformed Mehdinezhad and Sardarzahi (2016)who pointed out that students and teachers based on "outcomes", e.g., student achievement, school completion rates, less tasks, and student attendance generally recommend smaller size. Studies based on "inputs" e. g., teacher salaries, instructional materials, specialized staffing etc., favour for larger schools.

On the other hand, the findings contradicted Haberman (2003), who concluded that size alone, is not the issue, but how it interacts with other school factors, school climate, curricular, offerings, student participation in activities, teacher-student relationships, home-school relationships and student opportunities etc. All of these have important roles to play in determining the success in handling the school. Among the nine variables being run for correlations, there were six variables that established significant relationships namely age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, school category and designated position. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between principals' socio-demographic profile and their functions towards school management was hereby rejected.

Relationship between Principals' Extent of Empowerment and their Functions towards School Management

Table 3 presents the relationship between principals' extent of empowerment and their functions towards school management.

Table 3. *Relationship between principals' extent of empowerment and their functions towards school management*

VARIABLES	INSTRUCTIO-NAL LEADERSHIP	SCHOOL SAFETY AND ORDERLIN ESS	CLARIFICA-TION OF MISSION/ VISION	EXPECTA-TION FOR SUCCESS	PARENTS INVOLVE MENT / COMMUN ITY PARTNER SHIP	OPPORTUNI-TIES TO LEARN AND TIME ON TASK
Instructional Empowerment	.295*	.408**	-.095	.159	.079	.554*
Administrative Empowerment	.404*	.037	.066	.054	.776**	-.041
Fiscal Empowerment	.058	.240*	-.025	.134	.059	.058

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Instructional empowerment and school safety and orderliness, To determine whether the principals' extent of empowerment is related to their functions towards school management,

correlation using Pearson r was computed. As depicted on the table, results showed that instructional empowerment established high correlation with School Safety and Orderliness (r=.408, p<0.01), followed by moderate positive correlation with Opportunities to Learn and Time on Task (r=.554, p<0.05) and weak positive correlation with Instructional leadership (r=.295, p<0.05).This finding disclosed that instructional empowerment is imperative implement of school security. As stated by Lezotte et al. (2002) and Lezotte (2010), principals who are more committed in instructional empowerment had the tendency to enhance their success to become a healthy, safe, orderly and disciplined school environment.

Instructional empowerment and opportunities to learn and time on task, Further, instructional empowerment established a moderate positive correlation with Opportunities to Learn and Time on Task(r=.295, p<0.05). The result revealed that principals who carried instructional empowerment in their schools easily handle the time management. Principals smoothly solved the unbalance issues of increasing curricular demands with limited instructional time. Similarly, the results revealed that principals provide and ensure adequate learning materials and time for effective instruction. This result of correlation was in conformity with the findings of Hoy (2009) for schools to improve student outcomes principals need to dedicate higher level of authority in instructional tasks to establish preconditions and interventions directed at improving teaching and learning, and reduce time devoted to administrative, managerial and financial roles. They actually need to be leaders in learning, rather than just leaders of learning. Conversely, Lezotte (2010) argued that principal's consideration should always be given to instruction materials and the limited time for effective learning. School heads as instructional leaders ensure that the mission of the school is being fulfilled. Principal monitors the quality instruction and performs supervisory powers. In the same manner, Horng and Loeb (2007) described that the schools require good leaders to organize the process of teaching and learning to ensure that the mission of the school is achieved. Additionally, the findings implied that the principals who showed high empowerment in terms of instruction had the greater tendency to become a successful instructional leader. The result was in lined with the findings of Taylor et al. (2004) stating that when school principals play a role in shaping the instruction (instructional empowerment) delivered in their schools, they are said to play instructional leadership role. Such principals have been found to affect the type of instruction that teachers use in their classroom as stated in Devoset et al. (2014), they bear the responsibility for developing instructional strategies to ensure the success of all children along with their staff.

Administrative empowerment and parent involvement/ community partnership, Similarly, Administrative empowerment established high positive correlation with Parent Involvement/ Community Partnership (r=.776, p<0.01). This means that principals who execute high empowerment in administrative tasks most likely to have a greater chance to influence parents to participate at schools as well as the school's linkage to community partnership. This context likewise coincided with Alfadli and Al-Mehaisen(2019) who considered administrative task behaviors of school principals as essential in ensuring effective relationships with the community councils, community development associations,

parent-teacher associations (PTA), parent groups and other local organizations that have interest in the schools.

Administrative empowerment and instructional leadership, Administrative empowerment established weak positive correlation with Instructional leadership (r=.404, p<0.05). The result implied that principals who carried high level of administrative empowerment tended to possess a clear direction to establish a set of common core values among the instructional staff. However, this result had been argued by Henderson (2004) that instructional leadership is distinguished as key for successful school principals, it refers to all tasks of school principals that they carry out leaving impact on curriculum and instructions. In the same way, the results affirmed that fiscal empowerment established weak significant correlation with School Safety and Orderliness (r=.240, p<0.05). The study revealed that principals who showed high empowerment in financial matters had the greater tendency to implement school security as well as the orderliness of the school. These findings were in conformity with Hussein (2012) who stated that since school principals are the chief of finance to execute the budget, they must be committed to financial tasks in order to have a safe and secure facility environment. Among the six variables being run for correlations, there were four variables that established significant relationships namely instructional leadership, school safety and orderliness, parents involvement or community partnership and opportunity to learn and time on task. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between the extent of empowerment and the principals' functions towards school management was hereby rejected. On the other hand, other variables that did not established significant relationships most likely due to a small sample size versus many outcome measures used for the number of respondents involved.

Conclusion and Recommendations/Implications

Based on the results of this study, the following conclusions were drawn. With the current trend in Philippine educational system, more males than female emerged as school heads or principals. This implies that males dominated the school administration responsibilities/tasks and they are more attracted to handle school management. To aptly put, middle to old aged principals tend to be more effective in school management, communication and competence. It is imperative to consider years of experience since school heads having long productive years of handling school management most likely to be more productive that would emphasize their educational leadership expertise. Principals' Extent of Empowerment played significant role in terms of instructional empowerment which centered on assigning the most qualified teachers to handling courses and planning school activities that would address the needs of poor pupils. This research offers that the best way to lift student achievement is to ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom. Principals are primarily concerned in administrative empowerment to keep, maintain and beautify their school sites, more than any other administrative tasks. Principals are

responsible for working condition that facilitates the success of students, realizing that teachers make the most difference in student achievement.

Furthermore, fiscal empowerment focuses on school budgetary planning ensuring that school achieves its goals establishes a control system and motivates employees to work hard. With the capacity to manage their respective schools, principals had greater extent of empowerment on instructional and administrative but less in fiscal matters. Hence, they were found better instructional and administrative leaders than financial managers. Instructional leadership defined principals' core functions like updating teachers' lesson plan, attendance, forms and student records. Principals who showed high empowerment in terms of instructional had the greater tendency to become a successful instructional leader. Similarly, educational qualification is imperative to implementing school security. Principals with higher degree are most likely to manifest greater concerns and accountability about school safety and orderliness. In the same manner with earned credentials, the length of service as school principal most likely to affect how they influenced parents for school community involvement. Lastly, principals who carried high level of administrative and fiscal empowerment had the tendency to providing schools direction to establish a set of common core values among the instructional staff. School heads being more committed to instructional empowerment most likely to enhance and probably increase their school's success to become a healthy, safe, orderly and disciplined school environment. Thus, instructional empowerment is imperative to implementing school security.

Disclosure statement

Acknowledgments

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