Leadership Practices of School Heads in Public Schools

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Abstract— This study determined the extent of leadership practices of both elementary and secondary school heads in Bulan District, Division of Sorsogon Province for school year 2021-2022. A descriptive method of research using survey questionnaire and unstructured interview were utilized to gather data from the 74 respondents. Data on school heads' profile and the extent of practice of the five domains of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) were gathered. Statistical tools such as frequency count, percentage and weighted mean were employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data. The study found out that 58% of the respondents are 46 years old and above, 38% are 36-45 years old and 4% are 35 years and below. In terms of position, 34% are full-fledged Principals, 41% are Head Teachers while 25% are Teachers-In-Charge. On educational attainment, 15% either had units in doctorate studies, 78% earned units and/or Master's degree holder and 7% were baccalaureate degree holders only. In terms of length of service, 41% were already 11 years and above, 39% were 6-10 years, while 20% were 0-5 years. On the extent of leadership practices, domains such as building connections (4.57) and managing school operations and resources (4.54) were described as most intensively practiced while developing self and others (4.47), focusing on teaching and learning (4.46), and leading strategically (4.45) were interpreted as intensively practiced. Generally, all domains were most intensively practiced with an average mean of 4.50. When grouped according to profile, school heads in general perceived all domains to be most intensively practiced. Age at 46 years old and above (4.51), head teacher position (4.51), doctorate degree or with units (4.55) and 11 years and above in service (4.54) led each grouping.

It was concluded that most of the school heads belong to the middle to old-adult age; most are occupying Head Teacher position; were able to study for master's degree and are considered experienced school heads with more than six years as administrators. The five domains of the PPSSH were perceived to be most intensively practiced. This could be associated with the impressive profile of the respondents most especially in terms of their age, educational attainment and length of service. It was recommended that teachers before being promoted or designated to school head position should have gained enough experience needed to run a school; school heads need to pursue graduate studies and must exert all means to pass the Principal's Test. Further, the proposed leadership enhancement program based on weak points of the data gathered may be implemented by the school heads to advance to higher career stages.

Keywords— Education, Leadership Practices, Public Schools, Profile, School Heads.

I. INTRODUCTION

School heads are catalyst of change. Thus, the quest to achieve quality education, regardless how complex and elusive it may seem, rises and falls on the kind of leadership school heads demonstrate. Leadership competency of school heads predicates the success of the school. In fact, such immensely indispensable role has been the subject in one of the studies conducted by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), confirmed the importance of skilled school principals in providing guidance and responsibility for improving the learning of all students.

School heads in highly effective schools achieve this by promoting collaboration, providing support to teachers, engaging parents as partners for improving student learning, and building trust and respect in schools and communities (UNICEF, 2021). Hence, school heads are expected to dispense wide array of competencies in the performance of duties in order to realize the long-coveted global aim for quality and life-long learners.

Likewise, in the Philippines, it has become the vision of the Department of Education to produce Filipinos who passionately love their country and whose values and competencies enable them to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to building the nation" (2013).

It lays the cornerstone of Republic Act 9155, otherwise known as the Governance of Basic Education of 2001 declaring schools as the heart of the formal education system. Categorically, RA 9155 empowers school heads to realize said vision.

As an empowered authority in schools, school heads perform dual roles, as administrative manager and as instructional leader. Hence, school heads enjoy decisive latitude to dispense not only quantity but also quality education whose by-products are learners imbued with competitive lifelong skills and desirable values to enable them become active community participants in the future. Anything excess or want in the execution of such functions ultimately creates adverse impact on formal education system in schools. Such occurrence is, obviously, the accountability of school heads.

The challenge to keep every school head in route to quality formal education is dependent on several yet interdependent factors. Even with clear vision in mind and achievable goals at heart victory over quality hangs mid-air unless a technical road map is put in place. Therefore, school heads necessarily must adhere to specific professional standards and competencies that will help them manage schools and lead people to realize a common vision and goals. In response to this, the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) came into birth as DepEd recognizes the importance of professional standards in the continuing professional development as well as the advancement of school heads based on the principle of career-long learning. The PPSSH was made into a policy through DepEd Order No. 24, 2020, otherwise known as the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) which is made to institutionalize it as a public statement of professional accountability for school heads to reflect on and assess their own practice as they aspire for and pursue professional development.

At present, this system is used mandatorily in all DepEd schools and serve as the rating system of school head's performance through the validation of means of verification of their Office Performance and Commitment Review Form (OPCRF) every end of the school year beginning school year 2021-2022 which serve as the barometer in determining the extent of the leadership practices of school heads. At present this validation was upgraded by employing the PPSSH domains in light of determining the leadership competencies of school heads. This posed challenges and apprehensions among school heads whether or not the new system will give them better results. In conformity or not, school heads are obliged to follow marching orders from higher authorities, thus started to embrace this change.

It is in this light that the researcher, being a school head at the same time, was motivated to conduct an in-depth study and evaluation that determined the extent of leadership practices of school heads along the implementation of the PPSSH in elementary and secondary schools in Bulan under the Division of Sorsogon Province. This study also identified which among the five domains of the PPSSH are religiously being implemented in schools and which among need intervention for improvement purposes. The study likewise proposed a leadership enhancement program that may improve or sustain the school heads' leadership practices as they strive to deliver quality, accessible, relevant, and liberating basic education for all.

II. METHOD

In line with the commitment of the Department of Education (DepEd) to support school heads so they can better perform their roles in schools, including the improvement of teacher quality, and learner achievement, issued Deped Order No. 24, s.2020 otherwise known as the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). This issuance served as the backbone of this study. PPSSH defines professional standards that constitute a quality school head. It shall serve as public statement of professional accountability of school heads. It sets out what are expected of school heads to know, be able to do, and value as they progress in their profession (DO 24, s.2020). It depicts the synergy between maximizing school effectiveness and ensuring people effectiveness through a broad sphere of instructional and administrative practices stipulated in the five domains which are: (1) Leading strategically;(2) Managing school operations and resources; (3) Focusing on teaching and learning; (4) Developing self and other, and; (5) Building connections. These domains represent the variables of the present study.

Given these legit herculean tasks of school heads it is but imperative to assess whether the PPSSH are religiously adopted and sustained in the field. Besides, there are also several literatures to support the diverse roles of school heads in ensuring an enabling and supportive environment for effective teaching and learning to happen. Foremost is RA 9155 (2000) under section 6.2 which states that the school head shall have the Authority, Responsibility, and Accountability (AuRA) in managing all school affairs. Thus, the success and failure of the school depends upon the kind of leadership the principal practices. Republic Act

10533 or the Basic Education Act of 2013 mandates that school leaders such as Superintendents, Principals, subject area coordinators and other instructional school leaders shall undergo workshops and training to enhance their skills on their role as academic, administrative and community leaders. Henceforth, such professional development mentioned above shall be initiated and conducted regularly throughout the school year to ensure constant upgrading of skills. This is simply explained by Muring (2014), who emphasizes that school principals are key leaders in the educational system. They are responsible for carrying out the school vision and mission. They are involved in all aspects of the school's operation. They are leaders responsible in providing leadership in the development and implementation of all educational programs and projects in the school. Hallinger and Heck (1999), added that effective leadership is the key to developing schools that are successful in the efforts to educate all students. When personnel in leadership positions build and maintain a climate that sets high expectations for everyone within the organization, the organization will grow in its effectiveness. A more precise idea is cited by Hammond (2013) who categorically directs Principal as the one who leads the school, thus; he is empowered and has an authority to make decisions that would result in the achievement of instructional goals. It means that school heads are accountable for all actions one would take at the school level. One can always point to the principal's leadership as the key to success of a school that is vibrant and has a reputation of excellence in teaching. Furthermore, it has been observed by Toralde (2013), that the head of the school is the key factor on how effective the school is. The critical factor on continuous improvement depends upon its capacity – that is the collective competency of the school as an entity to bring about effective change. To understand school capacity is to understand the work of a successful school head. As a result, Clemente (1996) emphasizes the need to identify and develop education managers fit to pilot schools into the 21st century. In this light, he gives the characteristics that school managers should possess. The first character is the capacity to contribute to the academic performance, second the capacity to promote culture in a given academic year, the capacity to promote sports, fourth, the capacity to manage limited resources and capacity for innovation in academics, culture, sports, and resource management. To sum up, these literatures cited above discuss characteristics of effective leaders and how it impacts on the learning environment they work with. These ideas, sieved from

various authors, help the present study determine the leadership practices of school heads in managing schools vis-à-vis their implementation skills along the PPSSH domains as they commit to strategic courses of action consistent with institutional goals towards maximizing organizational performance.

At this juncture, it is noteworthy to include the work of Alcantara (2014), on perspective on principal empowerment states that in carrying out and accomplishing the goals of the school, the school head needs to entrust and to delegate some of his work effectively and effective delegation requires wise use of principles. This idea supports the present study as PPSSH underscores the shared management practices of school heads along systems, processes and resources of the school. According to Brolund (2016), additional traction over such empowerment can be achieved once the principal communicates a clear vision on instructional excellence and continuous professional development consistent with the goal of the improvement of teaching and learning. Similarly, Yukl (2006), opined that leaders need continual training to develop the skills and competencies necessary to adapt to the changing environments within the school in order to build appropriate culture that encourages teachers and others staff members to move and to grow in the direction needed to effectively deal with the changes and reform currently taking place.

Likewise, said idea of continued professional growth and sustainability to cope with changing work environment appeals much to the present study. As a matter of fact, PPSSH embodies the idea that school leaders should reflect on their personal and professional development to enhance their competencies in leading and developing people over the latter's professional development and welfare. Thus, as school heads inch their way up the professional ladder so do the individuals under their care. Meanwhile, Gaziel (2007), states that the Principal is increasingly expected to create a climate that is conducive to teaching and learning, works towards improving student performance and be accountable for results, support and supervise teachers' work in instruction and classroom management, supervise the use of the curriculum and its localization to ensure its relevance to the school, and ensure effective staff development programs that are operational in the school and that the teachers improve their professional competence. These functions define Principal's new role as instructional leader. They must be knowledgeable of

the school curriculum development, clinical supervision, staff development, and teacher evaluation. Houchens & Keedy (2009) states that effective school managers are expected to be academically goal-oriented and supervise instructional and co-curricular practices accordingly. The job of a school head if not more demanding and difficult than an ordinary teacher, is expected to be equal, hence the quality of school heads as school managers is a factor in improving the quality of education (EDCOM 1992). These well-chosen ideas from various authors clearly show parallelism towards one variable in the present study which is the promotion of participative leadership where everyone shares one's stake to promote quality education. These ideas flow alongside with the indicators found in the PPSSH which shall equip school heads with the knowledge, skills and attitudes in providing technical assistance on instruction that relates to curriculum, practice, and performance. Thus, upgrade their leadership capability.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study is geared towards determining the extent of leadership practices of school heads in public schools along the domains of the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads, namely: Leading Strategically; Managing School Operations and Resources; Focusing on Teaching and Learning; Developing Self and Others; and Building Connections. It also included profile of school heads in terms of age, position, educational attainment and length of service. The study used the descriptive method of research using survey and unstructured interview. The respondents of this study were the sixty-two (62) elementary school heads and twelve (12) secondary school heads occupying different teacher positions.

Table 1: The Respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher-In-Charge (TIC)	25	34%
Head Teacher (HT)	30	41%
Principal	19	25%
Total	74	100%

The Instrument

To gather the needed data in this study, the researcher made survey questionnaires on school heads' profile. A questionnaire checklist based on the indicators of the five domains of the PPSSH under career stage 2 was adopted. This stage is considered as the average stage and will fit the experience of school heads considering that most of them are newly promoted principals and Head Teachers while some are merely designated Teachers-in-Charge with only a couple of years in the said position.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the administration of the survey, the researcher sought approval through a letter from the Schools Division Superintendent. The same were sought from the four Public Schools District Supervisors (PSDS) of Bulan district to conduct the study and to distribute the research instrument during district meetings.

School heads who were not present during the meeting were met by the researcher to personally hand over the questionnaires, thus, reached a 100% retrieval rate. A handful of respondents underwent unstructured interview in order to help substantiate the results of the study. These selected respondents were chosen based on their wide experience from a number of schools they had been reassigned at time and again.

Thus, the more schools the school heads manage, the better leadership practices they might have had for themselves. The access to interview was two-pronged, one was in-person and the other one was Digital technology. The in-person interview was light and casual to ensure an honest and objective response. While, the use of internet platform, via on-line chatting, made the interview easier and faster.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered were subjected to different statistical measures and tool such as frequency count, percentage, and weighted mean. To determine the extent of leadership practices, the scale below was used.

Scale Adjectival Description
- 4.50 – 5.00   - Most Intensively Practiced
- 3.50 – 4.49   - Intensively Practiced
- 2.50 – 3.49   - Moderately Practiced

Table 2: Profile of School Heads

Profile	Freq	%
I. Age		
35 and below	3	4
36 – 45	28	38
45 and above	43	58
Total	74	100
1. Position		
Teacher-In-Charge	19	25
Head Teacher	30	41
Principal	25	34
Total	74	100
2. Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's degree	5	7
Master's degree or with units	58	78
Doctorate degree or with units	11	15
Total	74	100
3. Length of Service		
0 – 5	15	20
6 – 10	29	39
11 and above	30	41
Total	74	100

- 1.50 – 2.49   - Poorly Practiced
- 1.00 – 1.49   - Very Poorly Practiced

The responses relative to the extent of leadership practices along the PPSSH domains were tabulated and treated using Mean, and Weighted Mean. Weighted mean was utilized using the ratio of the sum of all means by the total number of responses in order to describe the entire extent of leadership practices per domain. The same statistical treatment was used for all domains. The results of the study, fortified with technical interpretation of data and authentic information generated from interview, enabled the researcher to propose a leadership enhancement program for school heads containing doable activities intended to enhance the leadership practices of school heads relative to the weak strands in the PPSSH domains. Besides, the ultimate target of such leadership enhancement program was to boost school head's leadership practices and sustain progressively the same into higher career stages of the PPSSH.

It can be gleaned from the table that the highest number of responses, which comprised 58% of the respondents, is 46 years old and above. While 38% are within the range of 36 to 45 years old, it is noted that only 4% were under 35 years of age and below. This can be supported by the study of Janer and Deri (2020), on the demographic perspective of public elementary schools (PES) in the province of Sorsogon revealed that school heads in the public elementary schools were beyond their middle age. The data depicted a generation of school heads who were either in their middle age or are approaching the optional to mandatory retirement age which implies an aging school management workforce in the PES in Sorsogon. Findings of Renovalles, Janer and Deri (2020) suggest that older persons are better accepted as leader than the younger ones because the followers often consider the age of the leader. The wisdom of the old is more powerful and persuading than that of the young ones because it is anchored on the belief of maturity and emotional stability.

Table 2 also refers to the profile of school heads in terms of their position. It reveals that in Bulan district, most school heads occupy Head Teacher positions at 41% while only 34% are full-fledged Principals. The same table reveals that 25% of the respondents are Teachers-In-Charge were all of them came from elementary schools categorized as small schools whose total number of teachers do not require supervision of either head teacher or principal position. Based on the table, a generalization can be deduced that the influx of head teacher positions is primarily due to reclassification of items and through ERF or Equivalent Record Form. But,

promotion to principal position requires passing the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH) otherwise known as the Principal's Test; thus, overshadowed number of years in service. "Maretire na ako anuhon ko pa man an exam for principals?" (Soon I will retire so what's the use of taking the examination for principals?), was the response of one head teacher-respondent when asked why he had not taken the NQESH yet. As a result, Head Teachers wallow in their positions alongside their lengthy years of service as school heads. Though, a consolation, in the guise of reassignment to more accessible bigger schools, saves the day. It appeared from the table that 58% or more than half of the respondents had units in M.A. or a degree holder. While 15% of the school heads earned units in doctorate degree or had completed academic requirements, none of them ever became holder of the highest degree. Meanwhile, 7% had yet to pursue higher education. It is crystal clear that majority of the respondents are in the process of completing their graduate studies. Also, as shown in the table, the respondents' longest years in service as school head is 11 years and above comprising 41% of the entire population. These findings can be supported by the study of Peñaflor (2013) on the level of instructional

leadership and administrative management competence of school heads. Most of them have served 16 to 20 years in Bacon District while very few have served for 1-5 years. In like manner, the study of Janer & Deri (2020) indicates that less than 50% of PES were being managed by mature leaders with mature leadership style. It can be deduced from the results that most of school heads in Bulan District performed managerial and administrative functions for many years already ranging from 6 years and above. Within this time interval, it could be an understatement if they had only acquired the minimum necessary administrative and technical skills notwithstanding their years of experience way back as they were merely classroom teachers. On the other hand, the length of service is only one criterion for promotion to principal position which, unfortunately, can only be considered once a particular applicant successfully passes the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH) or the Principal's Test. Though, managing a school, regardless of ones' rank, is truly generic in nature. Yet, it is only rightful that an employee, regardless of rank, desires promotion and continues to ascend the ladder of success provided he/she meets the minimum requirements of the unfilled position.

Extent of Leadership Practices of School Heads in PPSSH Domains

Table 3A: *Leading Strategically*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
1. SH communicates the DepEd vision, mission, and core values to the wider school community to ensure shared understanding and alignment of school policies, programs projects and activities.	4.59	Most Intensively Practiced
2. SH develops and implement with the planning team school plans aligned with institutional goals and policies.	4.45	Intensively Practiced
3. SH undertakes policy implementation and review in the school to ensure that operations are consistent with national and local laws, regulations and issuances.	4.43	Intensively Practiced
4. SH utilizes relevant research findings from reliable sources in facilitating data-driven and evidence-based innovations to improve school performance.	4.09	Intensively Practiced
5. SH implements programs in the school that support the development of learners.	4.66	Most Intensively Practiced
6. SH utilizes learner voice, such as feelings, views and/or opinions to inform policy development and decision-making towards school improvement.	4.45	Intensively Practiced
7. SH utilizes available monitoring and evaluation processes and tools to promote learner achievement.	4.50	Most Intensively Practiced
Average Weighted Mean	4.45	Intensively Practiced

It is noteworthy that among the seven indicators, school heads put great efforts in implementing programs in the school that support the development of the learners with a weighted mean of 4.66 and described as most intensively practiced. These programs according to some school heads are the celebration of Academic weeks like Science and Math weeks, Intramurals, Jamborettes, Foundation Day and other student-initiated activities that hone facilitation and academic skills of students. On the other hand, it was revealed that the indicator on utilizing relevant research findings from reliable sources in facilitating data-driven and evidence-based innovations to improve school performance is least practiced with a weighted mean of 4.09. Although described as intensively practiced, it substantiates the fact that school heads often times do not base their decisions and actions from research findings and worst not even indulge to reading or crafting educational researches. "Mayroon namang mga pag aaral at research na ginagawa sa school kaso ang dahilan para ipagpatuloy ang mga gawain ukol dito ay namamatay kalaunan." (There are also studies and researches being conducted in school but the motivation to continue relevant activities dies along the way.), said one respondent from big secondary school.

Table 3B: Managing School Operations and Resources

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
1. SH utilizes school data and information using technology, including ICT, to ensure efficient and effective school operations.	4.58	Most Intensively Practiced
2. SH manages finances adhering to policies, guidelines, and issuances in allocation, procurement, disbursement, and liquidation aligned with the school plan.	4.65	Most Intensively Practiced
3. SH oversees school facilities and equipment in adherence to policies, guidelines and issuances on acquisition, recording, utilization, repair and maintenance, storage and disposal.	4.47	Intensively Practiced
4. SH supervises staffing such as teaching load distribution and grade level and subject area assignment in adherence to laws, policies, guidelines and issuances based on the needs of the school.	4.64	Most Intensively Practiced
5. SH ensures school safety for disaster preparedness, mitigation and resiliency to ensure continuous delivery of instruction.	4.43	Intensively Practiced
6. SH manages emerging opportunities and challenges to encourage equality and equity in addressing the needs of learners, school personnel and other stakeholders.	4.46	Intensively Practiced
Average Weighted Mean	4.54	Most Intensively Practiced

Table 3B on Managing School Operations and Resources disclosed an average weighted mean of 4.54 and described as Most Intensively Practiced. It only suggest that school heads of Bulan understand and implement laws, policies, guidelines, and issuances that relate to the management of human, financial, and material resources (PPSSH, page 9). The strand on financial management more particularly defined as SH manages finances adhering to policies, guidelines, and issuances in allocation, procurement, disbursement, and liquidation aligned with the school plan topped the list with a weighted mean of 4.65. It only proves that the respondents are well-versed in the implementation of RA 9184, otherwise known as the Procurement Law. In contrary, the strand for school safety for disaster preparedness, mitigation and resiliency recorded the least weighted mean of 4.43 and is interpreted as intensively practiced. It only meant that school heads need more training and exposure to activities that will help them work with the wider school community in managing school safety for disaster preparedness, mitigation and resiliency to ensure continuous delivery of instruction.

Table 3C: Focusing on Teaching and Learning

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
1. SH assists teachers in the review, contextualization & implementation of learning standards to make the curriculum relevant for learners.	4.45	Intensively Practiced
2. SH provides technical assistance to teachers on teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas to improve their teaching practice.	4.53	Most Intensively Practiced
3. SH uses validated feedback obtained from learners, parents and other stakeholders to help teachers improve their performance.	4.45	Intensively Practiced
4. SH utilizes learning outcomes in developing data-based interventions to maintain learner achievement and attain other performance indicators.	4.36	Intensively Practiced
5. SH provides technical assistance to teachers in using learner assessment tools, strategies and results consistent with curriculum requirements to ensure accountability in achieving higher learning outcomes.	4.51	Most Intensively Practiced
6. SH manages a learner-friendly, inclusive and healthy learning environment.	4.68	Most Intensively Practiced
7. SH ensures integration of career awareness and opportunities in the provision of learning experiences aligned with the curriculum.	4.28	Intensively Practiced
8. SH implements learner discipline policies that are developed collaboratively with stakeholders including parents, school personnel and the community.	4.43	Intensively Practiced
Average Weighted Mean	4.46	Intensively Practiced

Table 3C revealed that this domain recorded the least average weighted mean of 4.46 and interpreted as intensively practiced. As quoted, "Mao ini an pinakamasakit na role san school head kay kapagal maghatag technical assistance sa teachers kun diri ka man subject matter expert". (This is the most difficult role of school heads giving technical assistance to teachers on subjects which you are not an expert), a respondent complains. In particular, the least mean recorded was on career awareness and opportunities (4.28).

It can be deduced that, in general, school heads find it hard to integrate career awareness and opportunities in the provision of learning experiences aligned with the curriculum. On one hand, school heads regularly practiced their role in ensuring a learner-friendly, inclusive and healthy learning environment as evidenced by its high weighted mean of 4.68. Bembo (2016) deduced that school heads constantly advocate for 21st century learning environment which accommodates the learning needs of every learner and support positive human interrelationships needed for effective learning to happen. The Basic Education Research Agenda (BESRA) stated that DepEd seeks to ensure that conducive teaching and learning environment is achieved by creating school environments focused on the needs of the learners and setting high social and academic expectations.

Table 3D: Developing Self and Others

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
1. SH sets personal and professional development goals based on self-assessment aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads.	4.55	Most Intensively Practiced
2. SH applies professional reflection and learning to improve one's practice.	4.53	Most Intensively Practiced

	Weighted Mean	Description
3. SH participates in professional networks to upgrade knowledge and skills and to enhance practice.	4.39	Intensively Practiced
4. SH implements the performance management system with a team to support the career advancement of school personnel, and to improve office performance.	4.39	Intensively Practiced
5. SH implements professional development initiatives to enhance strengths and address performance gaps among school personnel.	4.43	Intensively Practiced
6. SH provides opportunities to individuals and teams in performing leadership roles and responsibilities.	4.47	Intensively Practiced
7. SH implements laws, policies, guidelines and issuances on the rights, privileges and benefits of school personnel to ensure their general welfare.	4.62	Most Intensively Practiced
8. SH implements a school reward system to recognize and motivate learners, school personnel and other stakeholders for exemplary performance and/or continued support.	4.35	Intensively Practiced
Average Weighted Mean	4.47	Intensively Practiced

Table 3D on Developing Self and Others is generally interpreted as intensively practiced (4.47). In this domain school heads are expected to reflect on their personal and professional development to enhance their practice in leading and developing people as they support their personnel professional development and welfare (PPSSH, page 15). From the results, it can be gleaned that school heads intensively commit in ensuring people and team effectiveness. More particularly, the survey weighed high score of 4.62 on school heads' effort for general welfare of human resources thus, described as most intensively practiced. School heads always looked into providing the rights, privileges and benefits of school personnel while ensuring their general welfare. Meanwhile, a weighted mean of 4.35 was recorded over rewards and recognition mechanism in school. "Aminado man talaga ako na nahahatagan ko pabor an kaawatan sa serbisyo sa pag hatag reward sa teachers" (I accept I gave preference to longer years in service when giving reward to teachers.) confessed by one respondent. It points out that, per comparison with other indicators, school heads in general, rarely implement a school reward system to recognize and motivate teachers, students and stakeholders for their exemplary performance despite the DepEd's call to strengthen the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) as mandated in DepEd Order 78, s. 2007.

Table 3E: *Building Connections*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
1. SH builds constructive relationships with authorities, colleagues, parents and other stakeholders to foster an enabling and supportive environment for learners.	4.64	Most Intensively Practiced
2. SH manages school organizations, such as learner organizations, faculty clubs and parent-teacher associations, by applying relevant policies and guidelines to support the attainment of institutional goals.	4.57	Most Intensively Practiced
3. SH exhibits inclusive practices, such as gender sensitivity, physical and mental health awareness and culture responsiveness, to foster awareness, acceptance and respect.	4.55	Most Intensively Practiced
4. SH communicates effectively in speaking and writing to teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders, through positive use of communication platforms, to facilitate information sharing, collaboration and support.	4.61	Most

		Intensively Practiced
5. SH initiates partnerships with the community, such as parents, alumni. authorities, industries and other stakeholders, to strengthen support for learner development, as well as school and community improvement.	4.49	Intensively Practiced
Average Weighted Mean	4.57	Most Intensively Practiced

Table 3E is the domain on Building Connections. It can be gleaned from the table that 80% or 4 over 5 indicators recorded very high weighted means from 4.55-4.64 and described as most intensively practiced. Although the last indicator was interpreted to be intensively practiced, still however, its mean of 4.49 pose a hair line gap to most intensively practiced scale. This indicator refers to community engagement where school heads in general, intensively initiate partnerships with the stakeholders to strengthen support for school improvement. This support largely came from local government units and some from private individuals and organizations depending on the school assignment. Generally, schools in urban areas are favored more compared to schools located in rural areas due to political advantage a donor may receive over helping schools. It is indeed difficult for school heads to control external forces which Mendel (2012) suggested that school heads may harness the skills of the teachers and other stakeholders to step into shared-governance of the school. This domain recorded an average weighted mean of 4.57 and considered to have the highest mean against other domains.

Extent of Leadership Practices when Grouped according to Profile

Table 4A: *Extent of Leadership Practices According to Age*

Domain	46 and above	D	36 to 45	D	35 and below	D
A. Leading Strategically	4.46	IP	4.47	IP	4.29	IP
B. Managing School Operations& Resources	4.57	MIP	4.49	IP	4.56	MIP
C. Focusing on Teaching & Learning	4.48	IP	4.43	IP	4.46	IP
D. Developing Self and Others	4.45	IP	4.47	IP	4.71	MIP
E. Building Connections	4.59	MIP	4.54	MIP	4.53	MIP
Average	4.51	MIP	4.48	IP	4.51	MIP

D-Description, IP-Intensively practiced, MIP-Most Intensively practiced.

Table 4A presents the extent of leadership practices of school heads according to age. It can be disclosed from the data that school heads age 46 years and above and 35 years and below generally perceive all domains as most intensively practiced with an equal mean of 4.51 while school heads ages 36-45 years old averagely perceived these five domains as intensively practiced (4.48).

According to Janer & Deri (2020) as time passes, these school heads are likely to develop more abilities, which are tried and enriched because of the steady exercise of their functions, hence constantly challenging their management skills. This breed of leaders is capable of becoming mentors for the young school heads.

The aforementioned studies are substantiated by the findings of Boerrigter (2015) that the leader's age is directly related to leader effectiveness, hence, older leaders are more capable of molding effective schools. In like manner, school heads ages 35 years and below fall short to an average weighted mean of 4.29 under the domain of leading strategically.

This data lags behind from the weighted mean of two other groups which can be associated with the lacking experiences on school management due to young ages. These school heads are considered to be "learning from experience" stage or in the" experimental management" process (Janer& Deri, 2020).

Table 4B: *Extent of Leadership Practices when Grouped According to Position*

Domain	Principal	D	Head Teacher	D	TIC	D	
A. Leading Strategically	4.44	IP	4.47	IP	4.45	IP	
B. Managing School Operations & Resources	4.54	MIP	4.57	MIP	4.48	IP	
C. Focusing on Teaching & Learning	4.46	IP	4.48	IP	4.44	IP	
D. Developing Self and Others	4.43	IP	4.48	IP	4.51	MIP	
E. Building Connections	4.58	MIP	4.55	MIP	4.59	MIP	
Average	4.49	IP	4.51	MIP	4.49	IP	

D-Description, IP-Intensively practiced, MIP-Most Intensively practiced.

Table 4B above, revealed that school heads occupying Head Teacher positions, ranked highest with the over-all average weighted mean of 4.51 and interpreted as most intensively practiced compared to the two other groups who perceive the five domains as intensively practiced with an equal mean of 4.49. Moreover, three of the five domains were led by the Head Teacher group, namely: leading strategically, managing school operations and resources, and focusing on teaching and learning but ranked least along building connections. This corroborates with the study of Atienza (2018) where she found out that in quest for promotion, Head Teachers are more goal-oriented than full-fledged Principals.

Table 4C: *Extent of Leadership Practices when Grouped According to Educational Attainment*

Domain	Doctorate degree or w/units	D	Master's degree or w/units	D	Bachelor's degree	D
A. Leading Strategically	4.51	MIP	4.44	IP	4.46	IP
B. Managing School Operations&Resources	4.56	MIP	4.55	MIP	4.40	IP
C. Focusing on Teaching & Learning	4.50	MIP	4.46	IP	4.40	IP
D. Developing Self and Others	4.60	MIP	4.46	IP	4.23	IP
E. Building Connections	4.56	MIP	4.58	MIP	4.44	IP
Average	4.55	MIP	4.50	MIP	4.38	IP

Table 4C presents the extent of leadership practices of school heads according to their educational attainment generally showing positive relation between variables. It reveals that school heads with units in the doctorate education perceived the five domains as most intensively practiced with the highest over-all average weighted mean of 4.55. This is followed by the group of school heads with head teacher position having the same interpretation at 4.50 mean. Findings revealed that the higher the educational attainment the school heads attained, the higher the extent of their leadership practices. This is in contrast with the study of Deniega (2016), where she found out that the highest educational attainment was not significantly related to the school heads' level of instructional leadership. Perhaps, the reason between this contrast is the level of motivation of school heads. Hence, it can be inferred that there must be balance between cognitive and affective sides of school heads.

Table 4D: *Extent of Leadership Practices when Grouped According to Length of Service*

Domain	11 and above	D	6-10	D	0-5	D
A. Leading Strategically	4.50	MIP	4.40	IP	4.45	IP
B. Managing School Operations&Resources	4.58	MIP	4.49	IP	4.54	MIP
C. Focusing on Teaching & Learning	4.53	MIP	4.38	IP	4.48	IP
D. Developing Self and Others	4.49	IP	4.38	IP	4.59	MIP
E. Building Connections	4.63	MIP	4.44	IP	4.71	MIP
Average	4.54	MIP	4.42	IP	4.55	MIP

It can be drawn from the table that school heads with 5 years in service or below generally outweighs the two other groups with an overall-average weighted mean of 4.55 and described as most intensively practiced. However, three out of five domains topped the rating for group of school heads with the longest years in service. These domains are leading strategically, managing school operations and resources and focusing on teaching and learning which are the most critical domains in the PPSSH. This implies that as the school head prolongs his/her services, he/she acquires a lot of experience, knowledge and skills and he/she is exposed to varied strategies as well as techniques of school administration.

Results showed that from the principle of growth, developing skills comes with age and maturity (Zepeda, 2013). This means that as individuals grow older, they become better and get more skills necessary to perform a job better while young school heads need more time to harness their skills and gain experiences that may elevate their performance as school administrators.

IV. CONCLUSION

Findings

The following findings were revealed:

1. In terms of position, 34% are full-fledged Principals, 41% are Head Teachers while 25% are Teachers-In-Charge. On educational attainment, 15% either had units in doctorate studies, 78% earned units and/or Master's degree holder and 7% were baccalaureate degree holders only. In terms of length of service, 41% were already 11 years and above, 39% were 6-10 years, while 20% were 0-5 years.

2. On the extent of leadership practices, domains such as building connections (4.57) and managing school operations and resources (4.54) were described as most intensively practiced while developing self and others (4.47), focusing on teaching and learning (4.46), and leading strategically (4.45) were interpreted as intensively practiced. Generally, all domains were most intensively practiced with an average mean of 4.50.

3. When grouped according to profile, school heads in general perceived all domains to be most intensively practiced. Age at 46 years old and above (4.51), head teacher position (4.51), doctorate degree or with units (4.55) and 11 years and above in service (4.54) led each grouping.

4. A Leadership Enhancement Program for school heads can be formulated that will provide doable opportunities to advance to higher career stages in the implementation of the PPSSH, thereby sustaining or enhancing school heads' leadership practices.

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Most school heads belong to middle and late adulthood. This is the age interval where teachers are assumed to gain wide and significant experience for them to be designated or promoted to managerial position. Most school heads hold Head Teacher rather than Principal and/or Teachers-In-Charge positions because of fewer Principal plantilla positions whose primary requirement is passing the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads. Most school heads have units or holder of Master's degree which they use for promotion to upgrade their present Head Teacher plantilla position through reclassification and/or Equivalent Record Form (ERF) application. Moreover, school heads of Bulan are mostly experienced school heads with six or more years in the service, thus; are perceived to be well-capacitated to handle administrative and instructional functions.

2. The five domains of the PPSSH were generally perceived to be most intensively practiced. Among these domains, school heads of Bulan can easily and effectively engage stakeholders in initiatives towards the improvement of school communities and most intensively committed in advocating that education is everyone's responsibility. Generally, school heads exhibited quality leadership practices among all indicators under career stage 2 of the PPSSH.

3. When grouped according to their profile, school heads' perceptions exhibited differences along leadership practices in PPSSH domains but concentrated mainly to adjectival ratings such as intensively practiced and most intensively practiced. Groupings on age, position, and length of service revealed almost the same results while groupings on educational attainment disclosed that higher leadership practices are positively related to higher educational attainment.

4. Based on the impressive findings, a leadership enhancement program that can improve and/or

sustain the leadership practices of school heads may be proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the conclusions, the following were recommended:

1. Promotion and/or designation to school head position should require enough experience needed to run a school. Time element is crucial.
2. School heads need to pursue graduate studies.
3. School heads must pass the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads to qualify for a Principal position.
4. The proposed leadership enhancement program may be implemented by the school heads to advance to career stage 3 or 4.
5. Further study on the Philippine Professional Standards for Supervisors may be conducted which is completely allied to the present study.

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