

Leading with Purpose: Exploring School Administrators' Leadership Styles, Attributes and Functions as Basis for Training Plan



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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the leadership styles, attributes, and functions of school administrators in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, during the 2023-2024 school year, aiming to develop a training plan to enhance their leadership skills. The research explores various leadership styles—transactional, transformational, authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—and evaluates the administrators' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, alongside their roles in instructional leadership and school governance. A total of 111 respondents, including school administrators and teachers with at least one year of service, participated in the study. Data collection was carried out using a modified questionnaire, and statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, t-tests, and Pearson's correlation were employed to analyze the data.

The findings revealed that transformational and democratic leadership styles were most prevalent among the administrators, who exhibited strong knowledge, skills, and attitudes, particularly in instructional leadership and administrative functions. The study found no significant differences in leadership styles based on demographic factors, but a moderate positive correlation was observed between leadership styles and administrative functions.

Based on these findings, the study recommends the implementation of professional development programs aimed at enhancing transformational and democratic leadership skills, with a focus on instructional leadership. It also suggests tailored training to improve administrative functions and foster collaboration among school leaders, ultimately aiming to improve school performance.

KEYWORDS: leadership styles, school administrators, professional development, instructional leadership, administrative functions

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are navigating constant change in the contemporary landscape, requiring adept leadership to manage challenges and uncertainties. Effective leadership is particularly crucial in educational settings, where the dynamic changes in recent years have transformed the scope and diversity of education. Basic education, as a cornerstone of societal development, relies heavily on the leadership styles of school administrators, impacting teachers, students' education, knowledge dissemination, and overall outcomes. The role of school administrators becomes pivotal in fostering good governance, incorporating essential attributes through effective leadership to achieve positive results.

Educational leaders, particularly principals, influence school achievement significantly by creating a conducive environment for improvements among students, teachers, and the institution (Crum & Sherman, 2018). Previous studies have explored teachers' leadership styles, emphasizing the necessity for administrators to focus on instructional leadership and organizational management to enhance overall school performance. The study recognizes five distinct leadership styles—Transactional, Transformational, Authoritarian, and Instructional, and emphasizes the need for effective organizational management to drive instructional improvement.

Despite the critical role of school administrators, limited research has been conducted on the relationship between their leadership styles, personal traits, and administrative functions (Albugami, 2020; Chen, 2017). Notably, the challenges faced by school administrators extend beyond the classroom. The strain on resources, the need for innovative solutions, and the importance of fostering a supportive educational community require adept leadership. Amidst the uncertainties, school administrators are responsible for implementing policies and strategies that support the continuity of education. The research explores how different leadership styles contribute to or alleviate resistance to change within educational institutions. For

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instance, when administrators implement new technologies or teaching methods, understanding the factors influencing resistance to these changes is crucial for successful implementation. The study also delved into the relationship between leadership styles and resistance to change, acknowledging the influence of cultural, personal, psychological, and educational attributes on leadership styles. Given the transformative nature of educational administration, the study explores how administrators' leadership styles may contribute to or mitigate resistance to change. School administrators need to possess not only the requisite knowledge and experience but also a diverse set of talents and an expanded understanding of effective leadership.

In conducting this study, the researcher has observed the challenges school administrators and teachers face in adapting to the changing educational environment. The need for effective leadership and its impact on the well-being of educational institutions has prompted the investigation. The study aims to provide insights into the leadership styles exhibited by school administrators, their traits, and the administrative functions they adhere to in their efforts to be effective leaders in the context of new normal education. By examining real-world situations and collecting data from the field, this research aims to provide actionable insights into the leadership dynamics in the local educational landscape. The urgency of this research is underscored by the need to address the observed gaps in understanding the relationship between leadership styles, personal traits, and administrative functions of school administrators. By examining data from Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into how effective leadership can positively influence teacher growth, student outcomes, and the overall success of the educational system in the new normal.

The research focused on elementary school heads in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, within the Schools Division of Ilocos Sur, recognizing the unique challenges administrators and teachers face in the ever-evolving education landscape. The study aims to uncover the various leadership styles, attributes, and functions of school administrators, shedding light on how they work towards achieving the goals, mission, and vision of the Department of Education in this new normal of education.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed random-purposive sampling, ensuring equal opportunity for all members to participate. A total of 111 respondents from Narvacan North and South Districts were included: 9 principals, 17 head teachers, 5 officers-in-charge, and 80 teachers. Data was gathered through researcher-made questionnaires focusing on leadership styles, attributes, and administrative functions of school administrators. The questionnaire had three parts: (1) respondent profiles, (2) leadership styles and attributes, and (3) administrative functions. Responses were measured using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from "Not Manifested" to "Always Manifested" for leadership styles, "Not Possessed" to "Always Possessed" for attributes, and "Not Complied" to "Always Complied" for functions.

Ethical principles were strictly followed, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Participants were provided with clear information before involvement and had the right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity was ensured through coded identifiers. Measures were taken to protect respondents from psychological stress, and there were no conflicts of interest. For data analysis, Frequency and Percentage were used to analyze respondent profiles, Weighted Mean to assess leadership styles, attributes, and functions, T-test to determine significant differences in leadership styles based on demographic profiles, and Pearson R to examine the relationship between leadership styles and attributes of school administrators.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I. Demographic Profile of the School Heads in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur

Table 1 - Demographic Profile

Category	Frequency	Percentage
A. Age		
21-30 years old	20	18.09%
31-40 years old	28	25.29%
41-50 years old	27	24.39%

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51-60 years old	17	15.39%
61 years old and above	15	13.59%
Total	111	100%
B. Sex		
Male	50	45.09%
Female	61	55.09%
Total	111	100%
C. Highest Educational Attainment		
College Graduate	46	41.49%
Masteral Units	28	25.29%
Masteral Degree	16	14.49%
Doctorate Units	11	9.9%
Doctorate Degree	10	9%
Total	111	100%
D. Position		
Teacher I	30	27%
Teacher II	22	19.8%
Teacher III	28	25.2%
Head Teacher I-III	17	15.3%
Principal I-IV	14	12.6%
Total	111	100%
E. Length of Service		
5 years and below	22	19.8%
6-10 years	31	27.9%

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11-15 years	25	22.5%
16-20 years	19	17.1%
21 years and above	14	12.6%
Total	111	100%

The demographic data show that the majority of school heads fall within the 31-50 age group (49.68%), with slightly more female administrators (55.09%) than males. In terms of educational attainment, 41.49% are college graduates, while others have pursued master's or doctorate degrees. The most common position is Teacher I (27%), and most administrators have 6-10 years of experience (27.9%). These findings indicate a mix of both experienced and developing leaders in the school system.

II. Leadership Styles of School Administrators

Table 2 - Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	Overall Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Transactional Leadership	2.6	Sometimes Manifested
Transformational Leadership	3.2	Sometimes Manifested
Authoritarian Leadership	3.2	Sometimes Manifested
Democratic Leadership	3.2	Sometimes Manifested
Laissez-Faire Leadership	3.0	Sometimes Manifested

School heads in Narvacan exhibit various leadership styles, with transformational, authoritarian, and democratic leadership styles being the most commonly manifested (Mean: 3.2, "Sometimes Manifested"). Transactional leadership is less prominent (Mean: 2.6), while laissez-faire leadership is moderately observed (Mean: 3.0). This suggests that administrators adopt flexible leadership approaches depending on the situation.

III. Attributes Possessed by School Administrators

Table 3 - Attributes of School Administrators

Attribute	Overall Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Knowledge	3.4	Always Possessed
Skill	3.4	Always Possessed
Attitude	3.4	Always Possessed

School administrators consistently exhibit high levels of knowledge, skills, and attitude (Mean: 3.4, "Always Possessed"), highlighting their competence in leading their institutions effectively. These attributes are crucial in implementing school policies and fostering a conducive learning environment.

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IV. Functions of School Administrators

Table 4 - Functions

Function	Overall Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Instructional Leadership	3.4	Always Complied
Administrative Functions	3.2	Sometimes Complied

School heads show strong compliance with instructional leadership (Mean: 3.4, "Always Complied"), emphasizing their focus on academic supervision. However, their administrative functions are only sometimes complied with (Mean: 3.2), indicating possible challenges in paperwork, resource management, or operational leadership.

V. Significant Difference Between Leadership Styles When Grouped by Profile

Table 5 - Statistical Results

Demographic Category	Leadership Style	F-Statistic	p-Value	Significance
Age	All Leadership Styles	0.86 - 1.35	0.37 - 0.56	Not Significant
Sex	All Leadership Styles	0.89 - 1.21	0.37 - 0.45	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	All Leadership Styles	1.02 - 1.30	0.36 - 0.47	Not Significant
Position	All Leadership Styles	0.90 - 1.30	0.36 - 0.46	Not Significant
Length of Service	All Leadership Styles	0.92 - 1.28	0.35 - 0.48	Not Significant

Analysis shows no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in leadership styles across age, sex, educational attainment, position, and length of service. This suggests that leadership styles are not determined by demographic factors, meaning leadership training should focus on enhancing competencies rather than being tailored to specific demographics.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the school administrators in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, exhibit a combination of leadership styles, with transformational leadership being the most impactful. Administrators demonstrated strong knowledge and skills, as well as positive attitudes, which contributed to effective school governance and instructional leadership. However, certain leadership styles such as transactional and laissez-faire were less impactful and were manifested less frequently. The findings indicate that leadership styles influence the development of the administrators' attributes and their ability to execute key functions effectively. Additionally, demographic factors like age, sex, and educational attainment did not significantly affect the leadership styles of the administrators.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was delimited to school administrators' leadership styles, attributes, and administrative functions, as well as the issues and concerns encountered by the elementary administrators about their performance. The study is delimited to the public elementary school administrators in Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, Schools Division of Ilocos Sur. The school administrators are used in the study because they play a crucial role in the instructional supervision of their schools. They interact with teachers almost daily in and out of classrooms and indirectly influence students' academic performance. School administrators and teachers are the internal supervisors who offer support, motivation, encouragement, and professional support.

Likewise, this study only focused on all selected school administrators and selected teachers who have been in service for at least one year, as well as those who were available to answer the questionnaires at the time of the study. A total of 111 respondents

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shall be in the research. The present study does not include non-teaching personnel, elementary administrators in other districts, secondary school administrators, and private schools. The study was conducted from January 2024 to October 2024. The main source of data that were used for this study was a modified research survey questionnaire that describes the profile, styles of leadership, attributes, and functions of school administrators. The data was solely be based on respondents' responses as a primary source of data where the study is held during the mentioned school year and does not deal with the performance of the schools in terms of key metrics. Therefore, the findings of the study may be limited.

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