

LEADERSHIP SKILLS OF SCHOOL DEPARTMENT HEADS IN RELATION TO THE TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.16193779

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Abstract:

This study aimed to determine the level of leadership skills of School Department Heads in relation to teachers' performance in one of the Mega Schools in a medium-sized division of a highly urbanized city in Central Negros for School Year 2022–2023. Using a researcher-made, validated, and reliable questionnaire, quantitative data were collected from 130 teacher respondents. The study examined the leadership skills of department heads in three areas: relationship building, agility and adaptability, and innovation and creativity. Teachers' performance was assessed using their Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF). The independent variables considered were age, grade level assignment, and length of service. Findings revealed that most teachers were younger, assigned to higher grade levels, and had shorter teaching experience. Teachers showed outstanding performance across the three variables. Department heads demonstrated very high leadership skills in all three assessed areas. No significant difference was found in leadership skills in relationship building and agility/adaptability across teacher groupings. However, significant differences in innovation and creativity emerged when grouped by age and length of service. Teachers' performance significantly differed only in terms of length of service. A significant relationship was found between department heads' leadership skills and teachers' performance. The findings highlight the need to further enhance school leaders' management competencies through focused coaching and training programs. Strengthening their leadership capabilities will better equip them in supporting and improving teacher performance within their departments.

Keywords: Leadership Skills, Teachers' Performance, School Department Heads, Educational Management, Instructional Supervision

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

Leadership is seen as a process in which employees seek to participate in activities to achieve certain organizational goals. A Leader delegates and assigns tasks to meet certain goals (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014). There shall be a school head for all public elementary and secondary schools or a cluster thereof under Section 6.1, Rule VI of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9155 (D.O. no. 1, s. 2003). A school head is responsible for the administrative and instructional supervision of the school or cluster of schools. Educational leadership, people leadership, and strategic leadership are the leadership dimensions a school head should possess (D.O. no. 42, s. 2007).

School Department Heads are considered the leader of a school next to the principal. As the secondary head of an organization, a Department Head is expected to provide support to the Grade Level Advisers and Teachers under them, must be highly visible, have a clear vision, and have the power to inspire and lead others. The Department Head/Head of Department (HOD) plays an important role in terms of influencing the teachers in a specific subject area (their area of responsibility) to act and aim high for the school's improvement. HOD is the middle manager of the school. It is their task to elevate the standards reached by students within that subject area. HOD is enhancing the quality of teaching delivered by the teachers to raise the overall standards of education and ensures that teachers are equipped with the materials and technology they need to deliver the curriculum effectively (Alviz, 2019). A teacher's performance and the quality it delivers as a professional is also an important factor considering its significant role in student achievement. The role and contribution of a teacher cannot be separated from the educational context, student characteristics, and school factors (Kanya et al., 2021). An inspired and motivated teacher could produce a confident outlook and can create a conducive environment for its students.

The researchers observed that school department heads utilized various leadership skills in their respective stations. They had remodeled the way they utilized relationship building, agility and adaptability, and innovation and creativity to cope with the challenges of the evolving world. In today's competitive and ever-changing rules and policies of the government system, teachers are needed to have leaders that can support them and give them proper direction so they can fully provide the best education to their students. These instances motivated the researcher to conduct this study as it could be a basis to give recommendations and craft a capability-building plan that could help them boost their skills and enthusiasm to lead in promoting quality education to lifelong learners for our nation's sustainability, growth, and development.

Current State of Knowledge

Leadership in the Philippines, even from the grassroots point of view, is full of challenges considering that the crisis penetrates all sectors of society (Aladano, 2016). Political and educational problems are the most publicized because they affect the economy. It is common knowledge that remittances from overseas foreign workers primarily support the country's economy. However, this condition has disintegrated families and society. The greatest leadership challenge for the government is to employ its people so they do not have to work abroad.

In connection with this, the education sector has been characterized by yearly budget cuts, soaring tuition, and other fee hikes, the highest dropout rate in recent years, unbridled and still unresolved cases of graft and corruption, and systematic government neglect of the education sector. Whether the qualitative standards are equally high is another issue. It is a difficult question to answer since there is little concordance between the aims and accomplishments of education in the Philippines.

Amidst these issues, the popularity of American-style management techniques in the Philippines implies an inevitable transition from the traditional values rooted in interdependent collectivism to the "modern" values of independent individualism. It is argued that an indigenous style of Filipino management is viable and imperative, which recognizes the salience of collective identities in organizations. Based on a theory of social categorization, a conceptual model of management through inter-group relations is presented. The main contention is that, in place of a dysfunctional conflict between Americanized management tactics and contemporary Filipino values, organizational effectiveness could ensue from a "synchronic synergy" between Filipino-style management tactics and the social categorization effects of intra-group convergence and inter-group divergence (De Leon, 2015).

Similarly, Aquino et al. (2021) found that the level of leadership practices implemented by school administrators was similar when grouped according to age, number of years as an administrator, outstanding achievement, and the type of school being managed. These results suggest that school heads' leadership practices are comparable when the respondents are grouped according to the earlier profile variables.

in relation to teaching performance, Ereje & Ambag's (2020) findings revealed that the teachers' performance was highly satisfactory as assessed by students. Moreover, there is a significant difference in teachers' performance as considered by headteachers and students. There are an essential relationship and weak positive correlation between teachers' Performance on learning outcomes of students' first periodic test and the assessments of students as to knowledge of the subject matter and pedagogical approaches, except for the reflective practice, which has a very weak positive correlation. Constructivism acquired the highest mean among the pedagogical methods, while the deliberative process got the lowest.

Furthermore, Pa-alisbo (2017) study revealed that teachers are moderately competent in 21st-century skills. They have evaluated themselves as very satisfactory in terms of the NCBTS. A significant correlation between teachers' skills and job performance was also revealed. Lastly, there is no significant difference between both when grouped according to profile. Therefore, the teachers' skills complement the NCBTS. It can be a perfect tool to assess job performance because they are all anchored in the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) road map. The DepEd, with its programs, projects, and initiatives, goes hand in hand with the NCBTS. It is recommended that DepEd

firmly implement the triangulation method of assessing teachers' job performance by means of intensive monitoring from the highest down to the lowest ranks other than just mere self-assessment.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on the Great Man Theory of Leadership, which states that great leaders are born, not made. This theory stands that these individuals come into the world possessing specific characteristics and traits not found in all people. These abilities enable them to lead while shaping the very pages of history. Under the great man theory, prominent leaders throughout history were born to lead and deserved to do so due to their natural abilities and talents.

The Great Man Theory was established in the 19th century by proponents such as historian Thomas Carlyle (1840). He believed that the world's history is nothing more than a collection of biographies belonging to great men. The Great Man Theory of Leadership centers on two main assumptions: Great leaders are born possessing certain traits that enable them to rise and lead, and Great leaders can arise when the need for them is great. According to the supporters of this theory, leaders are born with the attributes necessary to set them apart from those around them, and these traits enable them to assume roles of authority and power. According to this theory, great leaders are heroes who accomplish extraordinary feats against the odds on behalf of followers.

Furthermore, teachers' job performance is anchored on the Theory of Performance of Campbell (1990) in his model, Campbell differentiates performance components (e.g., job-specific task proficiency), determinants of job performance components, and predictors of these determinants. Campbell describes the performance components as a function of three determinants (1) declarative knowledge, (2) procedural knowledge and skills, and (3) motivation. Declarative knowledge includes knowledge about facts, principles, goals, and the self. It is assumed to be a function of a person's abilities, personality, interests, education, training, experience, and aptitude-treatment interactions. Procedural knowledge and skills include cognitive and psychomotor skills, physical skills, self-management skills, and interpersonal skills. Predictors of procedural knowledge and skills are again abilities, personality, interests, education, training, experience, and aptitude-treatment interactions—and additionally practice. Motivation comprises choice to perform, level of effort, and persistence of effort. Campbell does not make specific assumptions about the predictors of motivation. He assumes that there are interactions between the three types of performance determinants but does not specify them in detail (cf. Campbell et al., 1996). In his model, Campbell (1990) largely neglects situational variables as predictors of performance (cf. Hesketh & Neal, 1999, for a discussion of this issue).

Campbell et al. (1996) summarized studies that identified job knowledge and job skills—as measured by work sample tests—as predictors of individual performance. Moreover, ability and experience were predictors of job knowledge and skills but did not directly affect job performance. Campbell et al. interpret these findings as support for their model, with declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation acting as the only direct determinants of performance.

These theories are intended to focus on determining the level of leadership skills of school department heads in relation to teachers' performance. To understand the level of leadership skills, will systematically identify the skills needed for school department heads to provide an effective recommendations that can be used to achieve the school's objectives and goals. The findings of this study will strongly help build the foundation to address the much-needed skills in the recommendation.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the level of leadership skills of School Department Heads in relation to the level of teachers' performance in one of the mega schools in a large-size division in Central Philippines during the School Year 2022-2023. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions: what is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, grade level assignment, and length of service; what is the level of leadership skills of school department heads in terms of the areas relationship building, agility and adaptability, and innovation and creativity; what is the level of teachers' performance when grouped according to the aforementioned variables; is there a significant difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables; is there a significant difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables; and is there a significant relationship between the level of leadership skills of school department heads and the level of teachers' performance?

Research Methodology:

This section presents the research design, data gathering procedure, other instrumentation, and statistical tools. It also discusses the parameters, especially the statistical tools, the respondents, and the study's locality.

Research Design

The descriptive research design using a quantitative approach was used in this study. Descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon. It does not control or manipulate any of the variables but only observes and measures them (McCombes, 2019). With this design, the researcher was able to identify the level of leadership skills of school department heads. Also, it enabled the researcher to determine the prevailing problems that affect the performance rating of the teachers. Likewise, it was also determined if the level of leadership skills differs when they are grouped according to their age, grade level, and length of service.

Study Respondents

The respondents of the study were the permanent public school teachers of a mega school with a total population of 194. Since the number of respondents is quite large, a sample of 130 was taken using the Cochran formula (1977). Then, a stratified random sampling technique was used to determine the number of respondents in each department. To get the percentage, the number of respondents from each department was divided by the total number of respondents and multiplied by the sample size. The respondents were randomly selected by the researcher from each department using the lottery technique.

Instrument

The researcher used a self-made questionnaire as a data collection instrument. This enabled the researcher to adequately gather the needed information to complete the study and ensure reliability. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, wherein the first part pertains to the demographic profile of participants, such as age, grade level assignment, and length of service. The second part of the questionnaire covered 30 items which focused on assessing the level of leadership skills of school department heads in terms of relationship building, agility and adaptability, and innovation and creativity, with 10 items for each area. Each item was rated on a scale of 1 to 5, using a 5-point Likert scale rating with 5 as always, 4 as often, 3 as sometimes, 2 as rarely, and 1 as rarely.

Data Gathering and Procedure

After administering the validity and reliability, upon approval of the schools division superintendent, the questionnaires were administered to target respondents. The questionnaires were gathered, recorded, and analyzed. The data gathered from the responses of the respondents were tallied and tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. The encoded data was computer processed using the SPSS.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objectives 1 to 3 employed a descriptive analytical scheme, using the frequency count and percentage as a statistical tool to assess the profile of respondents, mean to assess the level of leadership skills of school department heads across the three areas, and level of teachers' performance when grouped according to the grouping variables. Objective 4 and 5 utilized a comparative analytical scheme, applying the Mann-Whitney U test to determine significant differences in the level of leadership skills of school department heads and teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables. Objective 6 employed a relational analytical scheme, using Spearman rho to determine the significant relationship between the leadership skills of school department heads and teachers' performance.

Ethical Consideration

By guaranteeing the confidentiality of the respondents' answers and upholding their anonymity during the whole research process, the study made a concerted effort to reduce the possibility of harm to its target respondents in accordance with Republic Act 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The researchers also requested their free and informed consent up front.

Results and Discussion:

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered to carry out the predetermined objectives of this study.

Profile of Respondents

Table 1.

Profile of the respondents according to Age, Grade Level Assignment, and Length of Service

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
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Age	Younger (below 39 years old)	68	52.30
	Older (39 years old and above)	62	47.70
Grade Level Assignment	Lower (Grade 7 to Grade 8)	62	47.70
	Higher (Grade 9 to Grade 10)	68	52.30
Length of Service	Shorter (Less than 11 years)	73	56.20
	Longer (11 years and more)	57	43.80
Total		130	100

Table 1 summarizes the analysis that aimed to determine the profile of the respondents as presented in terms of age, grade level assignment, and length of service. As presented, younger respondents aging 39 years old and below and older respondents aging 39 years old and above are almost equal in number showing 52.30% and 47.70% respectively but with the younger group dominating the respondents. Grade level assignment showed 47.70% for the respondents assigned in the lower grade of Grade 7 and 8 while 52.30% of the respondents dominated the group teaching in the higher grades of Grade 9 to 10. Moreover, length of service revealed 56.20% on the shorter group with less than 11 years experience in teaching and 43.80% on the longer group with 11 years and more teaching years in the field. The data indicated that majority of the teachers are below 39 years old or younger, and most of the respondents are assigned in higher grade level. In addition, majority of the teacher-respondents are new to the service with less than 11 years of experience.

Level of Leadership Skills

Table 2

Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Relationship Building

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The department head can...		
1. give constructive feedback and recognition	4.67	Very High Level
2. understand how performance is measured	4.72	Very High Level
3. clearly communicate performance expectations	4.65	Very High Level
4. effectively communicate information	4.64	Very High Level
5. explain reasons behind decisions made	4.56	Very High Level
6. handle disagreements professionally	4.61	Very High Level
7. provide guidance in achieving school goals	4.63	Very High Level
8. create a trusting and open environment	4.59	Very High Level
9. treat everyone fairly	4.63	Very High Level
10. make you feel a valued part of the team	4.70	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.64	Very High Level

Table 2 shows the Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of relationship building which obtained an overall mean of 4.64 interpreted as "Very High Level". It was revealed that item 5 "explain reasons behind decision made" obtained the lowest mean of 4.56 interpreted as "Very High Level" whereas item 2 "give constructive feedback and recognition" have the highest mean of 4.72 interpreted as "Very High Level".

This implies that school department heads have few issues in providing explanations for decisions they had come up to, they have difficulties in giving detailed answers as to why decisions are made. This also shows that they greatly understand the process they have to follow to gauge their subordinate's performance. This agrees with the study of Sinnema et.al. (2021) whose data revealed that leaders tend to avoid discussion of problem causes, advocate more than inquire, bypass disagreements, and rarely explore logic between solutions and problem causes. There was a significant relationship between belief type and the likelihood that leaders will test the validity of those beliefs—beliefs about problem causes were the least likely to be tested. The patterns found here are likely to impact whether micro and mesosystem problems, and ultimately exo- and macrosystem problems, are solved.

Table 3

Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Agility and Adaptability

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The department head can...		
1. adapt to different work environments	4.68	Very High Level
2. speed up learning process to learn new task at work	4.58	Very High Level

3. face challenges anchored with the job	4.71	Very High Level
4. stay motivated when taking on a new project or task	4.68	Very High Level
5. adjust to changes brought about by challenges in education process	4.65	Very High Level
6. adapt to significant change in the workplace and in the education system	4.72	Very High Level
7. readily adjust work style when working with a team	4.61	Very High Level
8. embody accountability	4.66	Very High Level
9. work and plan proactively	4.69	Very High Level
10. demonstrate competency and flexibility at work	4.71	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.67	Very High Level

Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Agility and Adaptability revealed an overall mean of 4.67 interpreted as "Very High Level". Lowest mean was on item 2 "speed up learning process to learn a new task at work" with a mean of 4.58 interpreted as "Very High Level" and the highest mean on items 6 "adapt to significant change in the workplace and in the education system" with a mean of 4.72 interpreted as "Very High Level".

This implies that school department heads are slightly hesitant and are challenged to try new methods and strategies that would make their work easy. They are having limited issues with learning new techniques in working that would accomplish a certain task faster. It was also shown that department heads can readily adapt to significant changes in the workplace and in the educational system. This was supported by Villar et.al. (2021) who found out the importance of interpersonal skills, teaching and learning skills for school leaders looking to continue school improvement efforts in urban and rural school settings. Further, school leaders may have allowed themselves to be overcome by adversity, as has been observed. They have "sustainability crisis" with various challenges faced as school officials as they tried to sustain school reform efforts.

Table 4

Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Innovation and Creativity

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The department head can...		
1. embody strong positive personality traits	4.75	Very High Level
2. share vision and goals clearly with everyone	4.66	Very High Level
3. set goals for innovation and new ideas	4.62	Very High Level
4. give equal opportunity for participation and decision making	4.69	Very High Level
5. support knowledge sharing and creativity at work	4.73	Very High Level
6. innovate and take some risks	4.58	Very High Level
7. supports avoidance of unnecessary bureaucracy	4.61	Very High Level
8. contribute and guide teachers to attainment of school goals	4.73	Very High Level
9. implement techniques for increasing motivation and performance	4.62	Very High Level
10. practice practical and logical to problem-solving	4.72	Very High Level
Overall Mean	4.67	Very High Level

Table 4 on the Level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Innovation and Creativity revealed an overall mean of 4.67 interpreted as "Very High Level". It also revealed the lowest mean on item 6 "innovate and take some risks" with a mean of 4.58 interpreted as "Very High Level" whereas highest mean was on item 1 "embody strong positive personality trait" with a mean of 4.75 interpreted as "Very High Level".

This implies that school department heads are wary to try and innovate new things as they are commonly scared to take risks and don't want to leave their comfort zones. It also shows that as leaders they possess a strong character that enables them to lead and perform their duties and responsibilities mandates by their position. This was anchored on the study of Janssen (2018) who found out that to have a continuous flow of innovation and to achieve goals, individual employees need to be skilled to innovate. What is more, employees' innovative work behavior is comprehended as a specific form of extra-role performance related to discretionary employee actions in connection to generating idea, promoting, and realizing it.

Level of Teachers' Performance

Table 5

Level of teachers' performance when grouped according to variables

Variable	Category	Mean	Interpretation
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Age	Younger	4.76	Outstanding
	Older	4.67	Outstanding
Grade Level Assignment	Lower	4.69	Outstanding
	Higher	4.73	Outstanding
Length of Service	Shorter	4.77	Outstanding
	Longer	4.64	Outstanding

Table 5 revealed the level of teacher's performance when grouped according to variables. When grouped according to Age both younger and older group have outstanding performance with the younger group having the highest mean of 4.76 compared with the older group with 4.67. When grouped according to Grade Level assignment, it was revealed that both groups have outstanding performance with the higher group obtaining the highest mean of 4.73 compared with the lower group with a mean of 4.69. When grouped according to length of service both groups obtained an outstanding performance with the shorter group obtaining the highest mean of 4.77 and the longer in service with 4.64.

This implies that teachers demonstrate outstanding performance in the field of teaching. They are commonly motivated to work as they are young, handling higher level of grade assignment, and are full of energy and drive for the profession. This is adheres with the study of Abarro (2018) who found out that variables such as civil status, highest educational attainment, and local seminars attended and scholastic performance are factors affecting the performance of teachers, while, sex, age, types of family, religion, type of high school attended, LET performance, length of service, annual salary, number of preparations in teaching, international/national/ regional seminars attended do not affect the performance of teachers.

Comparative Analyses in the Leadership Skills of School Department Heads

Table 6

Difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Relationship Building, when grouped and compared according to variables.

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	68	68.68	1892.000	0.283	0.05	Not Significant
	Older	62	62.02				
Grade Level Assignment	Lower	62	64.25	2030.500	0.700	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	68	66.64				
Length of Service	Shorter	73	69.27	1805.500	0.169	0.05	Not Significant
	Longer	57	60.68				

The difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Relationship Building, as perceived by teachers when they are grouped and compared according to Age obtained a p-value of 0.283, according to Grade Level Assignment obtained a p-value of 0.700, and according to Length of Service with 0.169 respectively, which are greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of leadership skills of the department when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables in the area of Relationship Building" is accepted.

This implies that regardless of all the variables, head teachers were able to build relationship with their subordinates and the way they employ their leadership. These negates with the study of Sanchez et al. (2020), which revealed that teachers who were older within the school setting perceived themselves as being less engaged and intimate in a relationship, as related to the school climate, while those with principals for a shorter amount of time and only a bachelor's degree (perhaps more novice) perceived the principals' practices more positively.

Table 7

Difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Agility and Adaptability when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	68	71.19	1721.000	0.052		Not Significant
	Older	62	56.26				
Grade Level Assignment	Lower	62	65.85	2086.500	0.914	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	68	65.18				
Length of Service	Shorter	73	70.42	1721.500	0.070		Not Significant
	Longer	57	59.20				

The results presented in Table 7 revealed the difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area of Agility and Adaptability as perceived by teachers when they are grouped and compared according to age computed the p-value of 0.052, according to grade level assignment with 0.914 and according to length of service with 0.070 which is greater than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of leadership skills of the department when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables in the area of Agility and Adaptability" is accepted.

This suggest that department heads, regardless of all the variables, could provide fast instruction clearly that are relevant and salient to guide and improve teacher performance under their tutelage. This conforms with the study of Graham (2020) who founds out that head teachers' years of experience ranged from less than one to 41 years. Four classroom types were identified: 1) positive emotional climate/lower academic demand, 2) high overall quality, 3) mediocre quality, and 4) low overall quality. No significant differences between the four classroom types were found in relation to teachers' years of experience. Years of experience had no significant difference for head teachers Agility and Adaptability.

Table 8

Difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area Innovation and Creativity when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	68	71.72	1685.000	0.036		Significant
	Older	62	58.68				
Grade Level Assignment	Lower	62	66.39	2053.000	0.785	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	68	64.69				
Length of Service	Shorter	73	71.10	1671.500	0.041		Significant
	Longer	57	58.32				

Difference in the level of leadership skills of school department heads in the area Innovation and Creativity as perceived by teachers when they are grouped and compared according to variable of grade level assignment obtained the p-value of 0.785 which is greater than the level of significance 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of leadership skills of the department heads when grouped and compared according to the variable of grade level assignment in the area of Innovation and Creativity" is accepted. On the other hand, when they are grouped according to the variables of age revealed a p-value of 0.05, and on length of service with 0.041 which is lower than the level of significance 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of leadership skills of the department heads when grouped and compared according to the variable of age and length of service in the area of Innovation and Creativity" is rejected. This implies that age and length of service of teachers matter in department heads' way of utilizing innovation and creativity, whereas grade-level assignments showed no significance. The teacher's age and length of service are significant as their department heads design innovations and manifest creativity in the field, he usually considers this as one important factor in employing any type of leadership skills as this dictates the success or failure of any endeavor he would employ. As teachers grow seasoned with time and in their respective position the further their expectations and standards became high in terms of recognizing the innovative and creative skills of their department heads. These results contradict the study of Aquino et.al. (2021) who finds out that the level of leadership practices implemented by school administrators are not significantly different when they were grouped according to age, number of years as an administrator, outstanding achievement, and the type of school being managed. These results suggest that the level of leadership practices of school heads is comparable when the respondents are grouped according to the profile variables mentioned earlier.

Comparative Analysis in the Level of Teachers' Performance

Table 9

Difference in the level of of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean Rank	Mann Whitney U	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Age	Younger	68	71.47	1702.000	0.057		Not Significant
	Older	62	58.95				
Grade Level Assignment	Lower	62	66.17	2066.500	0.846	0.05	Not Significant
	Higher	68	64.89				
Length of Service	Shorter	73	71.61	1634.500	0.035		Significant
	Longer	57	57.68				

Table 9 on difference in the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to variables of Age revealed a p-value of 0.057, according to grade level assignment with 0.846 which is greater than the level of significance 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to aforementioned variable of age and grade level assignment" is accepted. However, when group according to length of service it revealed a p-value of 0.035 which lesser than the level of significance 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant difference on the level of teachers' performance when grouped and compared according to the variable of length of service" is rejected.

This implies that teachers' age and their grade level assignment have no direct impact on the way they perform and do their duties and responsibilities in each of their posts. Whereas their length of service greatly influences their performance as they stay longer in the service, they gather more knowledge and gain more experience in employing varied teaching techniques and strategies for a more effective and efficient teaching and learning process. This conforms with the study of Yazon & Manaig (2017) who concluded that when teachers were grouped according to highest educational attainment, academic rank, and years in service, significant differences between their mean performance exist. The higher the level of education, academic rank, and the longer the teacher's length of service, the better the performance. It was also concluded that teachers' varying philosophies and teaching styles do not predict their performance.

Relational Analysis

Table 10

Relationship between the level of leadership skills of school department heads and level of teachers' performance

Variable	Rho	p-value	Sig. level	Interpretation
Level of Leadership Skills	0.276	0.001	0.01	Significant
Teacher's Performance				

Table 10 on the relationship between the level of leadership skills of school department heads and the level of teachers' performance revealed a p-value of 0.001 which is lower than the significant level of 0.01. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant relationship between the level of leadership skills of school department heads and teachers' performance" is rejected.

This implies that school department heads' level of leadership skills employed has a direct influence on the way teachers perform in each of their respective stations. The way they provide support and utilize leadership skills directly affects the performance of teachers under their tutelage. Department Heads' leadership skills that are well-suited to each situation directly provide a significant effect on the way each teacher performs in achieving school goals set. This conforms with the study of Tantua & Barikuma (2017) whose findings show that there is a significant relationship between workplace Innovation and Creativity and the job performance of employees of hotels in Rivers State. Specifically, anger management and empathy significantly correlated with the job performance of employees of hotels in Rivers State. The study recommends that managers and employees should develop key Innovation and Creativity, to form and uphold stronger relationships within teams and maintain a positive work environment which is the most critical part of human relations skills.

Conclusion:

Teachers in the field are composed of educators who are just new in the service, they are young and commonly assigned to the higher grade level. The school department heads' leadership skills proved to be effective as they possess an exceptionally high level of Relationship Building, Agility, Adaptability, Innovation, and Creativity. Regardless of teachers' age, grade level assignment, and length of service, they demonstrate outstanding performance as they dutifully do their duties and obligations as mentors. The leadership skills of school department heads are commendable as they manage to lead their subordinates in a very effective and efficient manner. The teacher's age and length of service determine how department heads practice their Innovation and Creativity. The more tenured and seasoned teachers are, the more they value a department head that is well-experienced in dealing with the teachers under their care. More so, the more they expect their department heads to innovate and manifest creativity in their craft. The length of a teacher's tenure in the field of education is a determining factor in the way department heads perform their duties and responsibilities as leaders, the more a teacher is seasoned with experience and ripened with time, the more he values the importance of a department head that could demonstrate his role effectively and efficiently. The school department heads may employ and tailor-fit their leadership styles to the teachers under their tutelage, as this could directly influence the way the teachers perform. This leadership style could determine the attainment of school goals and objectives.

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