

EDUNNOVATE: revolutionary curriculum planning and design under the new trends in Philippine education

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Abstract: Revolutionizing a curriculum required careful and comprehensive process. This study explored and examined school heads' strategies and styles in the formulation and modification of curriculum relative to the local culture or needs of the school and the learners. It employed a descriptive research design where it was participated by 150 randomly selected school heads in the Philippines. Researcher-made survey questionnaire was used. Results revealed that school heads highly utilized participatory leadership as dominant strategy and style in leading and supervising the formulation and modification of curriculum based on local culture. Further, school heads highly perceived that instructional trends contain the use of multiple instructional strategies or differentiated instruction to deliver meaningful and retentive teaching and learning process. Thus, school heads should utilize participatory leadership as primary and dominant strategy and style for formulation and modification of curriculum because school heads can comprehensively solicit and collect accurate and reliable data through consistent participation of the stakeholders. However, school heads can also utilize different strategies or combinations of different strategies as local conditions may require.

Keywords: school heads, curriculum, planning, design, new, trends, strategies

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INTRODUCTION

School heads are leaders and managers of the school. Primary duties and responsibilities of teachers contain sound and consistent provision of quality-based education. One of them is to ensure that curriculum and the instructional processes are in line with the current trends and

demands of the 21st Century teaching and learning process. It is viewed that changes naturally occurring in educational landscape where it immensely influences the value and styles of school leadership and governance particularly in the design and development of curriculum. As such, responsive and relevant curriculum design is of an essential consideration which school heads are expected to emphasize. The reformations and modifications of the standardized teaching and learning competencies are anchored with have been given by the national government aligned to the national educational thrusts and objectives. In this regard, school heads are also burdened with the skills and abilities of ensuring that the curriculum and other instructional aspects are properly implemented and positively engaged learners into meaningful and retentive learning.

Curriculum modification and reformation are terms used interchangeably to present amendments to its contents. Commonly, modification and reformation of the contents exceed to the standards lay by the department. Teachers and school heads comprehensively plan and design additional teaching and learning competencies based on the present situations and conditions they encounter. Part and parcel of the modifications of curriculum is the inclusion of creative and innovative teaching strategies, methods, approaches and materials that may potentially influence positive learning experiences. In the study of Sigilai and Bett (2023) reveals that school heads consistent design and implementation of teachers' enhancement program enable them to relevantly create and modify curriculum. Also, as shown in the study of Day et al. (2016) which shows that successful principals directly or indirectly achieve and sustain improvement over time through combining transformational and instructional leadership strategies. In addition, Priestley et al. (2012) concludes that school heads strategies and styles in formulating and modifying the curriculum vary from context to context based upon on certain environmental conditions.

Consequently, as school heads perform other functions other than instructional leader and manager, one concealed function of school heads is their engagement to design and develop school-based curriculum that is responsive to the local needs of learners and teachers to deliver quality-based instruction. In this regard, school heads are expected to possess knowledge, skills and passion to continually engage their teachers in modifying curriculum based on the standards provided by the department. So, the researchers observed that school heads are most often than not, less engaged in dealing with instructional concerns. In fact, based from the collective observations of researchers, school heads only pass down instructional-related work to teachers who have the potential to complete the tasks properly. In view of these conditions, the researchers ignited their interest in exploring school heads' strategies use and styles utilized in the formulation and modification of curriculum based on the local culture and current trends in education.

Research Objectives

This study explored school heads' strategies and styles in the formulation and modification of curriculum based on the local culture or needs of the schools, teachers and learners. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. describe school heads' strategies and styles in the formulation and modification of curriculum as to participatory leadership, culturally-responsive leadership and needs assessment;

2. describe school heads' perceptions on the current educational trends as to instruction, classroom management and assessment; and
3. recommend best strategies for school heads in modifying and formulating curriculum based on local culture or needs of the schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized descriptive research. As defined by Siedlecki (2020), descriptive research is a quantitative method that is described as the collection of numerical data for the statistical analysis of a sample data set in a population. Here, the study explored school heads' strategies and style in the formulation and modification of curriculum based on the local culture or needs of the schools, teachers and learners. In addition, the study specifically described school heads' strategies and styles in formulating and modifying curriculum as to participatory leadership, culturally-responsive leadership and needs assessment. Further, the study described school heads' perceptions on the current educational trends as to instruction, classroom management and assessment. Lastly, the study recommended best strategies and styles for school heads in formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture.

Respondents and Locale of the Study

The subject respondents of the study were the 150 randomly selected school heads among selected public schools in the Philippines. The selection of the respondents was based on the willingness of the school heads to participate in the study. The researchers posted a call for participants in their social media account.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made-survey questionnaire which contained two (2) parts. For part 1, it contained items relating to school heads' strategies and styles in formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture as to participatory leadership, culturally-responsive leadership and needs assessment. On the other hand, part 2 contained items relating to school heads' perceptions on the current educational trend as to instruction, classroom management and assessment.

The developed survey-questionnaire used a 4-Likert Scale. For part 1, it used 4-Likert Scale such as: 4-Highly Utilized, 3-Utilized, 2-Not Utilized and 1-Highly Not Utilized while for part 2, it made used similar scale however with different verbal description such as: 4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree and 1-Strongly Disagree. The researcher-made survey questionnaire underwent reliability testing through pilot testing among non-included respondents who were participated by 15 school heads. The result of reliability testing obtained a Cronbach Alpha of .714 for items in part 1 while .829 Cronbach Alpha result for items under part 2. These results signified that all items among three parts were "Acceptable."

Data Analysis

The researchers sent a formal letter of request to the respondents' immediate head and informed consents to the subject respondents. In this line, the researchers established active and consistent line of communication through their social media account. Google form was used in order to administer the survey-questionnaire. Link was shared through the respondents' social media account. When all the data have been collected and encoded on a digital facility created by the researchers through MS Excel, appropriate statistical tools were applied.

Apparently, relevant statistical tools were used such as mean, standard deviation and general weighted mean. Specifically, these tools were used in order to describe school heads' strategies and styles in formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture as to participatory leadership, culturally-responsive leadership and needs assessment and to describe school heads' perceptions on the current educational trends as to instruction, classroom management and assessment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

School heads' strategies and styles in the formulation and modification of curriculum based on local culture

School heads highly utilized participatory leadership as dominant strategies and styles in formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture in their respective schools. This means that school heads institute strong collaboration with teachers, parents, experts and other stakeholders in the community to craft, select and decide the best elements and indicators for teaching and learning process to be interjected or added as amendment on the curriculum. In addition, the result shows that school heads conduct regular consultations and dialogue among locals where they emphasized the prevailing local culture and the dynamics which affect current educational landscape in the community.

On the other hand, although culturally-responsive strategies and needs assessment obtain lower mean scores over than participatory leadership, this does not escape the fact that they are also significant as good strategies for formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture. Notably, culturally-responsive strategy is also utilized by school heads. This indicates that school heads thread local culture, traditions and values directly based no their exposure to community. Apparently, in this strategy, school heads directly drawn and utilized local history and literature into the curriculum. Meanwhile, needs assessment is also utilized by school heads. This shows that school heads also proceed with the careful and comprehensive evaluation on the prevailing needs of their stakeholders. Also, school heads conducted surveys and identified gaps pertaining to curriculum.

In other words, school heads perform scientific examination on the needs and demands before formulating and modifying contents of curriculum based on local culture. The results affirmed the study of Bailey (2021) which reveals that principals construct a culture of trust for teachers and prioritized collaborative work practices in formulating and modifying curriculum. Also, similar study concludes that principals as leaders of the schools set writing goals and monitory fidelity of implementation of the curriculum. As substantiated by the study of Nader et al. (2019) which

asserts that school heads should be instructional leaders where they should emphasize the value of instruction in the formulation of localized curriculum.

School heads' perceptions on the current educational trends

School heads highly perceived as they strongly agreed that instructional trends are dominantly surfacing the local educational landscape. This means that there is a positive perception shared by school heads on the value of instruction specifically, differentiated instruction. They expressed that differentiated instruction is the new breed and trend of instructional strategies that are to be emphasized by school heads and teachers in considering formulating, revising or modifying the curriculum based on local culture. Further, the results show that school leaders are also concerned with the multiple and wide-ranging instructional approaches that teachers may utilize in order to obtain meaningful teaching and learning experiences. On the other hand, school heads perceive classroom management trends as second to the most prioritized element. This means that classroom management trends as perceived by school heads contain no less than the actual and practical illustrations of concepts and principles. Lastly, school heads also emphasized current trends in assessment in which school heads perceived the same by using authentic assessments. School heads emphasized that authentic assessment rather than paper-pen assessment, is the current and highly surfacing trend in assessment element. In this line, use of practical and real-life situations are encouraged specially on principles and concepts reflecting local culture, values, beliefs and the like. The results supported the study of Chan (2019) reveals that instructional strategies and styles of school heads affect curriculum formulation. Also, the study shows that understanding common challenges and emerging roles of school heads in social and political settings helped them to better attune curriculum and current educational trends.

Recommended strategies and styles in modifying and formulating curriculum based on local culture

Based from the results of the study, school heads should dominantly used participatory leadership as strategy and style in modifying and formulating curriculum based on local culture. Participatory leadership enables school heads solicit comprehensive and collective ideas from different classes and groups in the community. Collecting different ideas and beliefs can be considered as an integral mechanism for creating and modifying curriculum because it is where the primary data and accurate statements can be gathered. In doing so, school heads should create regular consultations, dialogues and symposium to be attended by different groups of locals. In this line they can discuss certain areas and dynamics of local culture which can be interjected to the present curriculum. On the other hand, it is also recommended not only to use single strategy and style in formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture. When necessity arises and conditions prompt school heads to divert from one strategy to other, it can be recommended to use these three strategies and styles dependent on the conditions.

CONCLUSION

School heads highly utilized participatory leadership as dominant strategy and style in leading and supervising the formulation and modification of curriculum based on local culture. Further, school heads highly perceived that instructional trends contain the use of multiple instructional strategies

or differentiated instruction to deliver meaningful and retentive teaching and learning process. Thus, school heads should utilize participatory leadership as primary and dominant strategy and style for formulation and modification of curriculum because school heads can comprehensively solicit and collect accurate and reliable data through consistent participation of the stakeholders. However, school heads can also utilize different strategies or combinations of different strategies as local conditions may require.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends further investigation on the relationship of school heads' strategies and styles and their perceptions on the current educational landscape. Further, the study also recommend to explore and examine teachers' experiences in contextually formulating and modifying curriculum based on local culture. In addition, the study recommends the use of three groups of respondents and mixed method research to further investigate school heads, teachers and learners' perceptions of curriculum formulation and modification based on local culture and current educational trends.

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