

DECISION-MAKING COMPETENCIES CORRELATE TO ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHING- LEARNING ENHANCEMENT IN ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR DIVISION: AN EXPRESSION OF EXTRAORDINARY SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

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Management in Teaching– Learning Enhancement: Evidence of
Extraordinary School Governance in the Zamboanga del Sur Division

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between school administrators' decision-making competencies and administrative management in enhancing the teaching–learning process in the Zamboanga del Sur Division. Specifically, it assessed administrators' competencies in determining the type of decision, identifying necessary information,

involving stakeholders, establishing priorities, and anticipating decision outcomes, as well as their administrative management practices in planning, organizing, implementing, and coordinating school programs. A descriptive survey research design was employed using a self-developed, validated questionnaire administered through purposive sampling to school administrators and teachers with at least three years of service. Descriptive statistics, t-test, z-test, and correlation analysis were utilized to analyze the data. Findings revealed that school administrators consistently demonstrated high levels of decision-making competencies and administrative management practices, particularly in stakeholder involvement, organizing, implementation, and planning. Both administrators and teachers shared similar perceptions regarding these competencies and management practices, as evidenced by the absence of significant differences between their responses. Likewise, correlation analysis indicated no significant relationship between decision-making competencies and administrative management. Despite this, the consistent application of sound decision-making and effective management practices contributed positively to teaching–learning enhancement and reflected extraordinary school governance. The study concludes that inclusive decision-making, strategic planning, effective organization, and collaborative leadership remain essential in strengthening school governance and improving educational outcomes.

Keywords: decision-making competencies, administrative management, school leadership, teaching–learning enhancement, school governance, instructional leadership, participative decision-making, educational administration

Introduction

School administrators are expected to be exemplary leaders. They are entrusted with leadership roles because of their educational training, professional competence, experience, and ability to guide institutions toward excellence. As visionary leaders, school administrators are responsible for ensuring the continuous improvement of school programs and practices. They must possess a deep understanding of their school's past and present performance and be capable of clearly communicating their ideas and expectations to teachers and staff. Furthermore, administrators must remain responsive to the demands of a rapidly changing global environment while maintaining a balance between institutional goals, school policies, and sound educational practices.

Decision-making is widely recognized as the core of the administrative process and effective school leadership. School principals and teachers encounter numerous challenges in both instructional and administrative

functions, many of which hinder the achievement of school objectives. The ability of school administrators to make sound and timely decisions is therefore crucial in addressing these challenges and improving school effectiveness.

The concept of competence has become well established in organizational and educational literature. Spencer and Spencer (1993) define competencies as the underlying characteristics of an individual that are causally related to effective or superior performance in a given role. These competencies serve as indicators of an individual's ability to perform tasks according to established standards and criteria.

School administrators play a vital role in overseeing the daily operations of educational institutions. Their responsibilities include supervising teachers and staff, setting institutional goals, managing resources, communicating with stakeholders, and ensuring the effective delivery of instructional programs. In elementary and secondary schools, administrators—commonly referred to as principals—serve as a crucial link between students, teachers, parents, and the wider community. Their effectiveness largely depends on their leadership and decision-making competencies.

Abbott (1974), as cited by Aquino (2000), identified key decision-making competencies that contribute to effective school management. These include the ability to differentiate among types of information, determine

the appropriate amount and type of information needed for decisions, involve relevant stakeholders, establish priorities, and anticipate both intended and unintended consequences. These competencies are essential in minimizing negative outcomes and enhancing administrative effectiveness.

Research highlights the importance of participative decision-making in school administration. Teachers are central to the management and success of schools, and their involvement in decision-making fosters collaboration, commitment, and a shared sense of responsibility. Studies indicate that neglecting teacher participation often results in conflict, reduced morale, and resistance, which ultimately hinder the attainment of school goals. Conversely, involving teachers in decision-making promotes cooperation, dedication, and institutional support (Udo & Akpa, 2007).

Participative decision-making represents a shift from traditional top-down management to a more inclusive and collaborative leadership approach. Glew et al. (1995) describe it as an effort by higher-level administrators to provide subordinates with greater influence over organizational decisions. Jewell (1998) further emphasized that this approach helps prevent the “nobody asked” syndrome by encouraging employees to contribute ideas, better understand organizational issues, and more readily accept decisions that affect them.

Effective school management is grounded in the core managerial functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. School

administrators are expected to act as instructional leaders, planners, supervisors, and facilitators of professional growth. A positive school climate characterized by openness, trust, and collaboration enhances teacher motivation, innovation, and instructional effectiveness (Short et al., 1991). In the context of Zamboanga del Sur, several socioeconomic and organizational factors influence school performance. The province is predominantly agro-based, with many families belonging to low- to lower-middle-income groups. These conditions contribute to challenges such as student absenteeism, limited instructional resources, frequent interruptions in classroom instruction, and inadequate educational facilities. Achievement test results in the Zamboanga del Sur Division from 2015 to 2018 consistently fell below the Department of Education's target proficiency level of 75 percent, indicating persistent concerns regarding academic performance.

Other factors affecting teaching and learning include non-instructional assignments given to teachers, limited availability of instructional materials and educational technology, leadership challenges, and insufficient participatory governance. These realities underscore the need for effective administrative management supported by strong decision-making competencies.

In view of these challenges, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study to determine the relationship between decision-making

competencies and administrative management in enhancing the teaching-learning process in the Zamboanga del Sur Division. This study aims to provide empirical evidence on how effective decision-making contributes to extraordinary school governance and improved educational outcomes.

Methods

The study employed the descriptive survey method of research. This method was considered appropriate because it aims to describe the existing conditions, practices, and phenomena as they occur in the present situation. The descriptive survey method focuses on gathering data to determine the current status of variables without manipulating them.

According to descriptive research literature, this method is used to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied. It does not seek to explain cause-and-effect relationships but rather to present an accurate profile of situations, conditions, or perceptions through systematic data collection and analysis.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study was a self-developed questionnaire-checklist designed to gather data from school administrators

and teachers who served as respondents. The questionnaire-checklist consisted of two major parts:

- Part I focused on the decision-making competencies of school administrators for teaching–learning enhancement.
- Part II dealt with administrative management practices for teaching–learning enhancement.

Before the construction of the questionnaire-checklist, the researcher reviewed relevant books, master’s theses, dissertations, online resources, and other related literature to ensure content relevance and adequacy. The instrument was developed based on established theories and concepts related to decision-making competencies and administrative management. A draft questionnaire containing items aligned with the study’s objectives and sub-problems was then prepared.

Validation of the Research Instrument

After the questionnaire-checklist was developed, it was submitted to the researcher’s adviser for careful evaluation and refinement. Necessary revisions were made to ensure clarity, alignment with the research problems, and appropriateness of content. The revised instrument was then

presented to the Panel Members of the Graduate School of Southern Mindanao Colleges for further validation.

All comments and recommendations from the panel were incorporated into the instrument. The final version was subsequently submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval. After approval, the questionnaire was converted into an online survey using Google Forms and subjected to a dry run among school administrators and teachers in the Pagadian City Division who were doctoral degree holders and not included in the actual respondents. Feedback from the dry run was reviewed, and further refinements were made before finalizing the questionnaire for actual data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the administration of the online questionnaire, the researcher formally requested permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Zamboanga del Sur to conduct the study. Upon approval, the permission letter was attached to the online questionnaire and disseminated through school principals.

The respondents included school administrators and teachers who had served for three years or more in junior high schools within the Zamboanga del Sur Division. The researcher ensured that all respondents

completed the questionnaire fully by enabling the required response option in the Google Form, preventing unanswered items.

Sampling Design

The study utilized a purposive sampling technique. School administrators and teachers who met the criteria of having at least three years of service were deliberately selected as respondents due to their sufficient experience and direct involvement in administrative and instructional decision-making processes. This sampling design ensured that respondents possessed the relevant knowledge and experience necessary to provide valid and reliable data for the study.

Results

Decision-Making Competencies of School Administrators

The findings reveal that school administrators consistently demonstrated strong decision-making competencies in support of teaching–learning enhancement in the Zamboanga del Sur Division.

Skill in determining the type of decision was *always applied*, with an overall mean of 5.17. Administrators showed sound knowledge in making decisions related to administrative functions, instruction, personnel, and finance ($\bar{x} = 5.29$). They ensured that decisions were properly implemented and evaluated ($\bar{x} = 5.20$) and demonstrated awareness of the

implications of decisions in relation to information requirements and stakeholder involvement ($\bar{x} = 5.17$).

Skills in determining the type of information needed to reach a decision were *almost always applied*, with an average mean of 5.15. Administrators ensured that relevant information was gathered prior to decision-making ($\bar{x} = 5.24$), recognized the time-bound nature of the decision-making process ($\bar{x} = 5.18$), and collected sufficient information pertinent to identified problems ($\bar{x} = 5.17$).

Skills in determining the appropriate involvement of other stakeholders in decision-making were *always applied*, yielding the highest mean among decision-making variables (5.27). Administrators encouraged the participation of teachers, pupils, and parents ($\bar{x} = 5.52$), demonstrated the ability to determine appropriate levels of teacher involvement in decision implementation ($\bar{x} = 5.46$), and exercised dependable judgment regarding stakeholder participation ($\bar{x} = 5.40$).

Skills in establishing priorities for action were *almost always applied*, with an overall mean of 5.08. Administrators identified problems requiring immediate attention ($\bar{x} = 5.16$), demonstrated prudence in determining which activities should be implemented or deferred ($\bar{x} = 5.13$), and anticipated the consequences of immediate or delegated actions ($\bar{x} = 5.08$).

Skills in anticipating both intended and unintended consequences of decisions were likewise *almost always applied*, with an average mean of 5.14. Administrators exhibited competence in various decision-making situations ($\bar{x} = 5.23$), recognized that decisions may resolve one problem while creating another ($\bar{x} = 5.15$), and demonstrated the ability to estimate system outcomes ($\bar{x} = 5.13$).

Overall, the decision-making competencies yielded a grand mean of 5.16, indicating that these competencies were *almost always applied* by school administrators to enhance teaching–learning processes—an expression of extraordinary school governance.

Administrative Management Practices of School Administrators

With regard to administrative management, the results indicate that these practices were consistently and effectively applied by school administrators.

Organizing ranked first among the management functions, with an average mean of 5.38. Administrators analyzed the organizational structure of schools and offices ($\bar{x} = 5.48$), properly structured aims and objectives ($\bar{x} = 5.41$), and systematically arranged activities and programs ($\bar{x} = 5.37$).

Implementation ranked second, with an average mean of 5.37. Administrators carried out plans effectively ($\bar{x} = 5.51$), provided clear

implementation guides ($\bar{x} = 5.45$), and determined appropriate instructions prior to execution ($\bar{x} = 5.37$).

Planning was also *always applied*, with an average mean of 5.34. Administrators implemented plans on weekly, monthly, and yearly schedules ($\bar{x} = 5.47$), established programs for school improvement ($\bar{x} = 5.46$), and prepared master plans to guide classroom instruction ($\bar{x} = 5.38$). Coordination was *almost always applied*, with an average mean of 5.13. Administrators facilitated coordination through teacher guides ($\bar{x} = 5.24$), coordinated planning and organizing to address personnel limitations ($\bar{x} = 5.23$), and aligned school activities toward institutional objectives ($\bar{x} = 5.08$).

The overall mean for administrative management was 5.36, indicating that these practices were *always applied* in support of teaching–learning enhancement and extraordinary school governance.

Comparative and Inferential Analysis

The t-test analysis revealed no significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers regarding decision-making competencies (computed $t = 0.429$, tabular value = 2.306). Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that both groups shared similar perceptions.

Similarly, the z -test results showed no significant difference between administrators' and teachers' responses concerning administrative management practices (computed $z = 0.95$, tabular value = 1.96). This further supports the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Moreover, the correlation analysis between decision-making competencies and administrative management yielded a computed z value of 1.44, which is lower than the critical value of 1.96, indicating no significant relationship between the two variables in relation to teaching–learning enhancement.

Expression of Extraordinary School Governance

The findings affirm that decision-making competencies and administrative management practices are integral to effective school supervision. Although no significant relationship was found between the two variables, the consistent application of these competencies by school administrators contributes substantially to the enhancement of teaching–learning processes.

School administrators demonstrated competence in decision-making, inclusive governance, strategic planning, organization, implementation, and coordination. These practices foster collaboration, inspire teachers, and promote collective responsibility toward achieving institutional goals—thereby exemplifying an expression of extraordinary school governance.

Discussions

1. The skill in determining the appropriate type of decision was consistently applied by school administrators. They demonstrated competence in making decisions related to administrative operations, instructional supervision, personnel management, and financial concerns. Administrators also ensured that decisions were properly implemented and evaluated, showing awareness of their implications in terms of information requirements and stakeholder involvement.
2. The skill in identifying the type of information needed to arrive at a sound decision was almost always applied by school administrators. They ensured that relevant and sufficient information was gathered before decision-making, recognized the time-bound nature of the process, and collected data necessary to address identified concerns effectively.
3. The skill in determining the appropriate involvement of stakeholders in decision-making was consistently applied by school administrators. They encouraged the participation of teachers, learners, and parents, and demonstrated sound judgment in determining the level and nature of stakeholder involvement during decision implementation.

4. The skill in establishing priorities for action was almost always applied by school administrators. They identified issues requiring immediate attention, exercised prudence in determining which activities should be implemented or deferred, and demonstrated the ability to anticipate the consequences of immediate or delegated actions.
5. The skill in anticipating both intended and unintended consequences of decisions was almost always applied by school administrators. They displayed expertise across various decision-making situations and recognized that decisions may resolve certain issues while potentially creating new challenges, reflecting an understanding of system-wide outcomes.
6. Planning was consistently applied by school administrators through the preparation and implementation of weekly, monthly, and annual plans. They developed programs aimed at improving school operations and prepared master plans to guide teachers in formulating classroom-based plans and programs.
7. Organizing was consistently applied by school administrators by analyzing the school's organizational structure, aligning objectives with strategic approaches, and systematically arranging activities and programs to ensure efficiency.

8. Implementation was consistently applied by school administrators through the execution of approved plans and programs. Clear implementation guidelines and appropriate instructions were provided prior to actual implementation.
9. Coordination was almost always applied by school administrators by facilitating collaborative planning and organizing efforts, addressing personnel limitations, and ensuring that all school activities contributed to the achievement of institutional goals.
10. Overall, findings on the five decision-making competencies indicate that determining stakeholder involvement, identifying the type of decision, identifying necessary information, anticipating decision consequences, and establishing priorities for action were almost always applied by school administrators to enhance teaching–learning processes in the Zamboanga del Sur Division, reflecting extraordinary school governance.
11. In terms of administrative management, the four variables—planning, organizing, implementing, and coordinating—were found to be consistently applied by school administrators to support teaching–learning enhancement.
12. The test of significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers regarding decision-making competencies revealed that the computed t -value was lower than the

critical value. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant difference in the perceptions of the two respondent groups.

13. The test of significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers regarding administrative management showed that the computed z -value was lower than the critical value. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant difference between the responses of the two groups.
14. The test of the relationship between decision-making competencies and administrative management for teaching–learning enhancement revealed that the computed z -value was lower than the critical value, indicating that there was no significant relationship between the two variables.