

Teachers' Leadership, Decision-Making, and Innovative Skills amidst Modernizing Technology

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Abstract

It is common knowledge that teachers' classroom performance is closely tied to their leadership qualities and collective expertise. In this context, this paper analyzed the leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills of high school teachers in a District in La Castellana, Negros Occidental, during the SY 2020-2021. Using census or complete enumeration, all 83 public high school teachers responded to a self-made, 50 -item questionnaire, which has hurdled the validity and reliability tests. Data were subsequently analyzed according to the research problems stipulated in the objectives of the study. The study's three major variables on teachers' leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills were analyzed using the mean as one of the measures of central tendency. The ensuing analysis showed a high level of leadership skills in directing, supporting, and delegating ($M=4.15$; $SD=.557$). Nonetheless, a moderate level surfaced in teachers' coaching skills ($M=3.35$; $SD=1.067$). Another high level of decision-making skills was found in decision quality ($M=3.97$; $SD=.675$), team commitment ($M=4.09$; $SD=.553$), and time constraints ($M=3.94$; $SD=.687$). The same data showed a high level of innovative skills under all three mentioned sub-groupings. This paper calls for the allocation of needed resources for teachers' capability-building, particularly in mentoring and designing lessons in their discipline that use the 21st pedagogy, assessment style, and technology.

Keywords: Education, leadership, decision-making, innovative skills, Negros Occidental, Philippines

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Introduction

Nature of the Problem

The nation's quality depends on the people's quality and standards. Whereas the quality of the people depends basically on the quality of education the teachers give, effective education requires competent teachers (Lawrence, 2015). The teacher is the dynamic force of the educational system. Education without a teacher is like a body without a soul, a skeleton without flesh and blood, or a shadow without substance (Deb & Ghosh, 2014). Through the ages, technology has evolved into modernization (Meier, 2016). It has a tremendous influence in molding the various skills of high school teachers, namely, their leadership skills, decision-making skills, and innovation as they fulfill their professions. These skills made a vast difference to the outcome of their job as various technologies guided and helped them perform effectively (Nueva, 2019). Through computers, the internet, and different media platform, teachers have developed numerous changes in how they address their students in different generations (Espinosa, 2017). Thus, the decision-making skills of high school teachers are crucial in every situation inside and outside the classroom (Brockbank, 2017).

In addition, with the integration of modern technology, some teachers with long years in service take up much time to cope with and utilize technology. The researcher observed that they take more time to manipulate high-end gadgets and software because they have adapted well to traditional teaching. Though the operation of such applications and software lacks the efficiency and efficacy of applications software, thus making them low in productivity in related endeavors. This is cause for concern because schools should teach 21st-century skills. There is still a considerable proportion of teachers who struggle with modern technology to deliver quality education (Francis, 2017). This is considered a gap that the researcher has identified. Integrating modern technology brings a different view of students' learning environment. Thus, when teachers are not well adapted to it, they tend to decline in leadership, decision-making, and especially in the innovation of new learnings. The researcher believes there is still a way to improve each educator's teaching quality with modern technology.

Hence, this study motivated the researchers to determine the leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills of high school teachers amidst modernizing technology.

Current State of Knowledge

This section highlights three major variables of this paper- leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills of teachers.

At the forefront is leadership, the ability to inspire trust and cooperation among team members to achieve an organization's objectives. Lualhati (2019) supported this principle by discussing how a leader motivates, encourages, and stimulates the members to work hard. In school settings, teachers act as leaders all day long. Harrison and Killion (2007) wrote about how teacher-leaders take on various responsibilities to enhance academic and student achievement. These positions, whether formally or informally distributed, increase the school's overall potential for development. Many teachers can act as leaders among their peers because teachers are capable of leading in a variety of ways. The qualities demonstrated by teacher leaders, such as integrity, commitment, strong communication skills, expertise, courage, discernment, focus, generosity, initiative, passion, positive attitude, problem-solving abilities, and responsibility, align consistently with those identified by Maxwell (1999).

Next is the decision-making, the process of specifying the nature of a particular problem and selecting available alternatives to solve the problem. Okumbe (1998) indicates that a problem precedes any decision and that there must be several alternative courses of action from which an optimum course will be selected. In school settings, giving a situation some serious thought, deciding the desired outcome, finding the paths to get there, and then choosing the best one to achieve the goal are all steps in the decision-making process. Decisions made by teachers regarding the topics mentioned earlier will eventually affect how well students learn. Esmane and

Balo (2015) intimated that excellent decision-making skills for effective leadership go beyond the school administrators' attributes.

Finally, this paper defines innovation as "something new or different introduced" and the action of innovating as the "introduction of new things or methods" (Taylor, 2017). Innovation in teaching is any new practice or method of teaching, assessment, or communication initiated by the participants. Carungay and Tsuruoka (2002) opined that innovative teachers had good behavior, perceptions, and attitudes toward all foci of innovations. Experimentation and diversification marked the peak stage of innovativeness.

The respondents' groupings by age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment complete the picture of the current state of knowledge. These four groupings are expected to help define the data more clearly in the succeeding sections.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on three theories, one of which is the Situational Leadership II Model Theory developed by Hersey and Blanchard in 1993, which was based on the situational leadership II (SLII) style approach between the four different types of followers, namely: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating (Marques, 2015; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). The four leadership styles represent different levels of supportive behavior or consideration, as well as directive behavior or initiating structure. There is no single best leadership style; instead, depending on the situation, any of the four leadership approaches could have merit and be successfully implemented (Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017; Bos-Nehles et al., 2017). The second theory is that the Vroom-Yetton-Jago Decision Model is utilized to establish the framework of the study in terms of decision-making skills. This model explains that three factors influence the decisions made by an individual. These factors are quality, commitment, and time constraints. Time constraints speak of the availability of time in processing a decision, that is, to involve colleagues in consulting the decision to achieve better quality. Finally, the third theory is that continuous improvement drives an organization to be analytical, creative, and innovative in finding ways to become more competitive and effective at meeting stakeholders' expectations. The Total quality management (TQM) of W. Edwards Deming (1940) is a set of concepts that can be used to guide school improvement (Gomes & Panchoo, 2017). The goal of improving educational quality should also be dependent on the involvement of each member of an academic organization.

Objectives

This paper aimed to determine the level of leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills of high school teachers in the midst of modernizing technology during the School Year 2020-2021. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions: 1. What is the level of leadership skills of teachers in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating? 2. What is teachers' level of decision-making skills in terms of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraints? 3. What is teachers' level of innovative skills in terms of work simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment? 4. What is the level of teachers' leadership skills when grouped by age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment? 5. What is the level of teachers' decision-making skills when grouped according to the variables mentioned in Objective 4? 6. What is the level of teachers' innovative skills based on the same variable groupings in Objective 5?

Methodology

Research Design

This paper used the descriptive research design, deemed most appropriate in determining the teachers' level of leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills. Bueno (2016) claims that the descriptive research design is suitable for studies that determine what prevails in the present conditions or relationships, held opinions and beliefs, processes and effects, and developing trends. It also seeks to determine relationships between or among study variables, explores causes

of phenomena, tests hypotheses, and develops generalizations, principles, or theories based on its findings.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were all 83 public high school teachers chosen via complete enumeration.

Instruments

This paper used a self-made, 50-item questionnaire to gather the data, mainly from the teacher-respondents. It was subjected to validity (4.87- excellent) and reliability (0.933 for leadership skills, 0.882 for decision-making skills, and 0.871 for innovative skills). All of them were interpreted as worthy and good, respectively). The questionnaire consists of two parts: Part 1 contains items on respondents' demographic profiles, while Part 2 is the questionnaire proper, dealing with those three major study variables. There were five (5) questions in each significant variable.

Procedures

After the research instruments' validity and reliability were established, the researcher requested and was granted permission by the school principal to administer the research instruments to respondents. After retrieving the filled survey questionnaire, the responses were encoded and subjected to data analysis, courtesy of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Likewise, statistical tables were constructed per consideration of the objectives stated in this study. The results were presented according to the sequence of the objectives.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objectives 1-6 used the descriptive analytical scheme and mean as a statistical tool to determine the teachers' leadership level, decision-making, and innovative skills based on variable groupings enumerated in the objective section.

Ethical Considerations

The design and conduct of this study were in accordance with the recognized research standards. The methodology of this study was presented to the principal, and the study was conducted with approval. The respondent was properly oriented about the information to be presented and the confidentiality of the personal information in this study. Moreover, this research paper strives to minimize the risk of harm to its target respondents by assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses and protecting their anonymity throughout and beyond the research process. At the onset, this researcher secured their free, prior informed consent and assured them of their right to withdraw from their research participation if deemed necessary.

Results and Discussions

This section discusses the study results based on the sequence in the objectives section. The study's first objective was to determine the level of teachers' leadership skills in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating.

Data gathered showed a high level of teachers' leadership skills in directing ($M = 4.15$, $SD = .557$). The highest of 4.40 went to an item providing evidence of how teachers keep pace with the ever-changing educational innovations. In contrast, the lowest mean score of 3.89 was evident in how teachers explain the working system to new staff or teachers. The results mean that teachers are highly dedicated despite the continuing challenges in the learning environment. Professional commitment includes a dedication to one's profession and a willingness to fulfill the duties and responsibilities required by profession (Lachman & Araya, 1986). Professional commitment can be defined as identifying individuals with their profession by seeing their

profession as the center of their life. The knowledge, experience, and experience they have gained while doing their profession are factors for this (Ataç, 2019). Commitment to a profession enables people to perform higher in their profession.

Meanwhile, data gathered shows a moderate level of teachers' leadership skills in coaching ($M= 3.35$, $SD = 1.067$). Getting the highest mean scores of 3.42 were two items describing how respondents demonstrated with their co-teachers the details of the new education setup and how they offered clear instructions and regular follow-up with both co-teachers and students. Contrasting this finding and getting the lowest mean score of 3.20 was an item depicting how a teacher spent time observing and mentoring fellow teachers to improve their teaching craft. In other words, to coach moderately, the teacher's respondents explain to their co-teachers the procedure in the new standard way of teaching as well as present lucid directives and cooperate well with fellow teachers and learners as well and that mentors struggle to navigate relationships with their co-teachers as well as with their administrators and students (Gardiner & Weisling, 2018). Thus, the quality of these relationships affected their sense of efficacy and mentoring ability. The quality of these relationships affected their sense of effectiveness and mentoring capacity. Lualhati's (2019) article confirms that familiarity with the nature of the organization is vital; technical knowledge and expertise are fundamentally required to lead the group. Communication and social skills are also necessary; the ability of the leader to interact, be sensitive to how others feel, and communicate clearly with a group of people promotes harmony within the organization.

Further analysis shows a high level of teachers' leadership skills in supporting ($M= 4.06$, $SD = .713$). Obtaining the highest mean of 4.30 is an item that describes the mutual kind of support among teachers to aid them in making sound decisions. The opposite came out in an item with a mean of 3.91 and suggested how teachers assign tasks while providing the needed support. This suggests that leadership skills' sub-area on supporting highly sustains the teacher respondents' sound decisions. Self-determination and social support offer two definitions for teacher support. The self-determination view suggests that teacher support occurs when students perceive cognitive (Skinner et al., 2008), emotional (Skinner and Belmont, 1993), or autonomy-oriented support from a teacher during the student's learning process (Wellborn and Connell, 1987). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), individuals do work and complete tasks based on their values, interests, and hobbies, but others close to them can influence their related emotions and motivations. However, they may need more help in providing aid to assigned tasks. Marshik et al. (2017) emphasize that teachers have difficulty assigning tasks to learners, which concurs with Ciulla (2017) that schools thrive when leadership is shared, and decisions are made collaboratively.

Subsequent analysis of the data gathered showed a high level of teachers' leadership skills in delegating ($M= 3.80$, $SD= .803$). The highest mean of 4.07 went to an item that describes how teachers shared responsibility for goal-setting and strived not to interfere with their work. The opposite (3.56) was found in an item, illustrating how they gave students manageable tasks and refrained from establishing a personal relationship with them. This further reveals how they delegated and shared responsibilities without necessarily obstructing their co-teachers work. Teachers often face challenges (Ha Le et al. 2018) while structuring collaborative activities to monitor students' on-task behavior and establish teamwork beliefs and behaviors. Luahalti (2019) supports this finding that communication and social skills are also necessary; the ability of the leader to interact, be sensitive to how others feel, and communicate clearly with a group of people promotes harmony within the organization. Structuring collaborative activities with students of various beliefs and behaviors could be intricate; however, the activity is plausible with the teacher's high management and leadership skills.

Level of Teachers' Decision-Making Skills in Decision Quality, Team Commitment, and Time Constraint

The study's second objective aimed to determine teachers' decision-making skills regarding decision quality, team commitment, and time constraints.

The data analyzed illustrates the high level of teachers' decision-making skills in decision quality ($M= 3.97$, $SD = .675$). Item no. 2 got the highest mean of 4.31 points to teachers' willingness to give time to participate in decision-making about allocating resources, professional development, or students' assignments. On the flip side, the lowest mean score of 3.27 goes to item no. 4, mentioning teachers' personal bias on mundane issues that have little or zero effect on their decisions. The results suggest teachers' decisiveness and willingness to participate in decision-making for the professional improvement of the school and learners.

The core of cognition in teacher decision-making is that teachers do not just implement the curriculum in the classroom but rather, as decision-makers, solve the problem in a complex teaching context. Their ability to solve problems is co-shaped by their cognitive ability and the traits of the educational context (Zhang, 2017). The ability of teacher decision-making is particularly affected by the specific environment in which the problem is solved and the corresponding strategies adopted (Lee & Porter, 1990).

In addition, data gathered also showed a high level of teachers' decision-making skills in team commitment ($M = 4.09$, $SD = .553$). Item 5 obtained the highest mean of 4.22, which suggests how teachers support and encourage their fellow teachers. This contrasts with item 3 on the need to consistently get feedback from teachers and other stakeholders. Teacher-respondents might still be digesting feedback from outside sources, teachers, and stakeholders regarding decision-making.

Participation in decision-making and teachers' commitment are two sides of the same coin. They are essential ingredients for the proper functioning of organizations, including institutions of learning and secondary schools, which mainly brings transformational and positive changes Ojukuku & Sajuyigbe (2014). In addition, according to Sen (2012), teachers' participation in decision-making helps the school administration to achieve organizational objectives.

Further, the same data showed a high level of teachers' decision-making skills in time constraints ($M= 3.94$, $SD = .687$). Getting the highest mean of 4.31 is item 3; item 5 got the lowest at 3.48. This result shows teachers prioritize stakeholders' concerns despite hectic schedules, leaving family-related obligations in the backseat. Passionate teachers may feel "energy, determination, conviction, commitment, and even obsession" (Day, 2009). In addition, passionate teachers may experience emotional or bodily stress because "the processes of teaching and learning are rarely smooth, and the results are not always predictable" (Day, 2009).

Level of Teachers' Innovative Skills in Work Simplification, Innovative Strategies, and Authentic Assessment

The third objective of the study aimed to determine the level of teachers' decision-making skills in terms of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraints.

The analysis that followed showed a moderate level of teachers' innovative skills in work simplification ($M= 3.94$, $SD= .488$). The highest mean of 4.43 goes to an item depicting how teachers look at their daily schedules, while the opposite score goes to another item describing how they create a curriculum map to plan. This provides evidence of the respondents' highly innovative skills, with curriculum mapping at the bottom of their priorities. Calichman (2019) supports this by describing work simplification as the systematic use of common sense in the quest for better and easier methods of accomplishing the work.

Another high-level result showed up in the level of teachers' innovative skills in innovative strategies ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .484$). Obtaining the highest mean of 4.22 is item 3, which speaks about promoting a creative climate and inspiring co-workers to develop original ideas or

solutions. Scoring the lowest is item 4 at 4.12, pointing to how teachers ensure the integration of appropriate technologies to maximize learning and teaching, starting from the curriculum design, instructional strategies, and learning environments. This, in turn, harmonizes with Lewis's (2021) that emerging technologies and industry innovations continue to evolve to accommodate new workplace priorities and future generation needs.

Moving on, subsequent results of data analysis indicate a high level of teachers' innovative skills in authentic assessment ($M=4.16$, $SD=.593$). Scoring the highest is item 3, which describes teachers' preparedness to face the challenge of the 21st-century assessment approaches. Scoring the lowest is item 5, with a mean of 4.10, explaining how teachers examine the correlation between learners' performance tasks and their mentoring assessments. When closely examined, the gap between the scores appears unremarkable, considering how close they are. Nonetheless, Wahyuni et al. (2021) suggest that authentic assessment must include assessing employees based on their work, using a cooperative and collaborative process, assessing what employees can do, and making assessment part of the learning process.

Level of Teachers' Leadership Skills in Selected Areas when Grouped according to Selected Variables

The fourth objective of the study aimed to determine the level of teachers' leadership skills when grouped according to age, civil status, length of service, and highest education.

The ensuing analysis showed a moderate level of teachers' leadership skills in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, with the younger group obtaining a moderate level and the seasoned group getting a high-level rating, respectively ($M=3.49$, $SD=.746$ for the younger group; $M=4.17$, $SD=.668$ for the seasoned group). It is evident that more seasoned teachers have higher means for all areas of leadership skills. This indicates that seasoned teachers usually perform more as leaders than their younger counterparts. Similarly, this study conforms with Aquino, et al. (2021); experienced teachers seem to have a more advanced understanding of their learners' capabilities, preferred learning methods, educational requirements, and motivation than less trained teachers.

Subsequent results appear to have replicated the previous paragraph. When grouped by civil status, teachers' level of leadership skills in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating obtained a rating of moderate and high levels ($M=3.46$, $SD=.775$ for single teachers and $M=4.10$, $SD=.675$ for married), respectively. Married teachers are more inclined to do multiple works and manage their time since they are already capable of handling responsibilities beyond their job. That reflects the higher mean values for most of the items in leadership Tominez & Dela Cruz (2015).

Meanwhile, teachers' leadership skills in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating based on groupings by the length of service show a moderate level for the shorter-tenured group and a high level for the longer-tenured group, respectively ($M=3.48$, $SD=.776$; $M=4.14$, $SD=.648$). Not surprisingly, longer-tenured teachers are more likely to be good leaders because leaders are developed and honed through and with experience, a finding aligned with Webber and Nickel's (2021) study of Sustainable Teacher Leadership, which found that longer-tenured teachers perform better in terms of leadership abilities than those with shorter tenure.

Moving on, the data analyzed showed the high level of teachers' leadership skills in directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating when grouped by educational attainment ($M=3.70$, $SD=.770$ and $M=4.25$, $SD=.674$). This suggests that respondents regard directing as a responsibility as agents of change rather than merely describing and informing what and how the systems operate. Coaching involves giving instructions, but the scope varies depending on the respondents' educational attainment. The greater the degree, the more specific the instructions given to co-teachers or students. The results align with Tominez and Dela Cruz's (2015) research. They found that more experienced teachers are more successful in fostering a positive learning environment, resolving interpersonal conflicts, communicating learning priorities, and deciding

learning outcomes. They also clarified that teachers with greater training are prepared to exhibit better preparation abilities, including a more orderly display of their instructional resources. Similarly, several variables have been linked to teacher effectiveness, including certification, preparation, coursework, experience, and professional regulatory examination.

Level of Teachers' Decision-Making Skills in Selected Areas when Grouped according to Selected Variables

The fifth objective aimed to determine teachers' decision-making skills when grouped according to the abovementioned variables. The four sections that follow discuss these results.

Firstly, data subjected to statistical analysis showed a high level of teachers' decision-making skills when analyzed by age groupings on the sub-areas of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraint in general ($M = 3.80$, $SD = .891$ and $M = 4.13$, $SD = .524$) both for younger and seasoned teachers, respectively. Expectedly, seasoned teachers showed higher decision-making skills than their younger counterparts, a result supported by Koni and Krull (2018). They wrote that novice teachers could not capture events to reach long-term instructional objectives. The same paper shows that younger teachers have a different focus than older teachers. As seconded by Coruh and Vural (2019), younger teachers are not as efficient as the more senior teachers in decision-making since younger teachers tend to be somewhat impatient. Thus, based on this result, teachers with long years in service tend to have better decision-making abilities, be more efficient and patient, and improve their decision-making skills.

In duplication of the results of the previous paragraph, this section also showed a high level of decision-making skills of teachers in terms of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraint based on groupings by civil status ($M = 3.81$, $SD = .585$ for the single group; $M = 4.13$, $SD = .532$ for the married group). Teachers, mostly the married ones, dealing with more significant roles in work and personal life, are already equipped to make sound decisions while supporting and engaging with other institution members and the community. These results again favor, Tominez & Dela Cruz (2015); teachers with family responsibilities manifest a higher teaching performance in dealing with diverse learners, the community, and their personal and professional advancements. Thus, Alkin's (1992) paper states that "decisions are made daily in school about the conduct of work, the distribution of resources, and short-term goals."

This section now illustrates the high level of teachers' decision-making skills in terms of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraint when analyzed according to the length of service ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .571$ for shorter tenured teachers; $M = 4.15$, $SD = .527$ for longer-tenured teachers). Coruh and Vural (2019) opine that avoidant decision-making is more common among teachers with 1-10 years of experience than those with more experience. Simply put, younger teachers try to avoid making decisions and panic in search of solutions. As a result, teachers with more years of experience can make better decisions than those with lesser years of experience. Penny (2016) claims that no single decision-making process suits every; however, Vroom-Yetton provides a variety of methods and guides you to the ideal one for your situation. If speed and decisiveness are required, it will steer you toward an autocratic approach. If collaboration is needed, it will guide you toward a more democratic approach. This leads to the conclusion that extended years of employment are connected with teachers being more productive, effective at time management, and participating in decision-making.

Moving on, this section now shows the high level of teachers' decision-making skills in the sub-areas of decision quality, team commitment, and time constraint when analyzed by educational attainment ($M = 3.89$, $SD = .554$ for lower educational attainment group; $M = 4.34$, $SD = .516$ for higher educational attainment group). Not entirely surprisingly, low ratings were observed among the teachers who are younger, single, new, and with lower educational attainment (LEA). Low ratings were again found among the younger, single, with shorter length of service and lower degree attained teacher respondents; however, civil status and length of service jointly got the same low result. This is interpreted to mean that the decision-making skills

of these teachers are predominantly on time constraints, where teacher respondents lack time for other responsibilities, particularly in the form of family-related obligations. The bulk of work given to teachers during this pandemic has brought the dilemma of feeding the family first or complying with the needed report. Regardless, the decision to work to provide and still have family time is a top priority. Additionally, Stronge (2007) mentioned that teachers with better-specialized preparation could afford learners more varied learning opportunities. He further expounded that effective teachers advance in their education; they study and grow professionally because they want to model to their students that education and learning are essential. They serve as compelling examples of all-time learners to their learners as they find ways to advance professionally. Highly prepared teachers recognize how pupils learn and how they must be taught. Additionally, their understanding of pedagogy makes them better distinguish individual pupil needs and modify their teaching to enhance the overall learner's outcome.

Level of Teachers' Innovative Skills in Selected Areas and Variable Groupings

The sixth objective illustrates the level of teachers' innovative skills when grouped according to age, status, length of service, and highest educational attainment.

Data gathered showed a high level of innovative skills when grouped by age, on the sub-area work simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment ($M= 3.96$, $SD = .565$ for the younger group; $M= 4.21$, $SD= .622$ for the seasoned group). Generally, older teachers are more innovative than younger ones. Experienced teachers are more likely to develop strategies that enhance the system based on previous achievements and learnings. Gluchmanova (2019) has also pointed out that teachers should be innovative leaders by responding to the changes in technologies and the behavior and needs of their clients. In summary, this section gave light and authenticity to Wizel's (2017) paper, where he defined innovation as any new practice or method of teaching, assessment, or communication initiated by the participants. The action does not need to be considered innovative in the educational arena (i.e., it does not have to be the first time anyone has ever tried the action) but does need to include risk-taking and entrepreneurship on the part of the teachers.

This section now reports a high level of teachers' innovative skills in the same three sub-areas of work simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment when grouped by civil status. ($M= 3.98$, $SD = .612$ single; $M= 4.17$, $SD = .592$ married). These teacher respondents may have their innovativeness in them on various grounds. Overall, married teachers have greater mean values for most of the items under innovative skills, which suggests that these experienced teachers are more capable of influencing the whole workplace with creativity and innovativeness.

Meanwhile, this particular section shows the high level of teachers' innovative skills in work simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment when they are grouped according to the length of service ($M= 3.94$, $SD = .547$ for the shorter-tenured group; $M= 4.22$, $SD = .624$ for the longer-tenured group). Not surprisingly, most of the items under the column of the longer-tenured group got the highest ratings. This suggests that experience in teaching can be associated with being innovative and developing new strategies.

Kocasarac (2021) supports this finding that the longer teachers teach, the higher and more efficient their innovative skills become. Innovativeness in the teaching field could mean adopting new strategies to cater to the needs in learning and the willingness to embrace needed changes in plans. This, in turn, would require experienced teachers to demonstrate a systematic flow of work.

Lastly, this section reports the same high level of teachers' innovative skills in work simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment when grouped according to educational attainment ($M= 3.99$, $SD = .575$ for lower educational attainment group; $M = 4.40$, $SD= .597$ for higher education attainment group). As expected, the same low results surfaced among younger, single teachers with shorter service lengths and lower educational attainment. Thus, the result agreed with the study of Aquino et al. (2021) that teachers with shorter relevant experience showed poorer academic quality relative to those who spent more time in the school

system. School heads who have obtained their doctorate degrees get a greater level of leadership practices than those holders of master's degrees.

Conclusion

In general, this paper found a high level of teachers' leadership, decision-making, and innovative skills in an Elementary School in Southern Negros in Negros Occidental, Philippines. On leadership skills, teachers scored high in the constructs of directing, supporting, and delegating but got a moderate rating in coaching. Their decision-making skills, in turn, all got a uniformly high-level rating in decision quality, team commitment, and time constraints. The same results turned out in their innovative skills in work, simplification, innovative strategies, and authentic assessment. The findings of this paper calls for the allocation of needed resources for teachers' capability-building, particularly in mentoring and designing lessons in their discipline that use the 21st pedagogy, assessment style, and technology.

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