

Competitive Edge of the School Heads in Bulusan District

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ABSTRACT:The study determined the competitive edge of the school heads in the Bulusan District relating to their accomplishments, psychosocial attributes and personality, ICT skills, and research and innovation, their competitive edge when grouped according to their profile, and identify the challenges encountered in performing their duties and responsibilities. The researcher applied the quantitative method in this study. The 21 school heads in Bulusan District were selected using purposive sampling. The researcher used a questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering data and unstructured interviews for the challenges met. Frequency count, weighted mean, general weighted mean, and rank is used as a statistical tool to analyze the data. When the competitive edge is grouped according to the profile, the psychosocial attributes and personality, and ICT skills of school heads are highly competent based on age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. While in terms of accomplishment, it was observed that along the profiles, school heads are moderately competent and in terms of research and innovation, school heads are less competent. In terms of training, it is reflected that training attended by school heads was not related to achieving a competitive edge of the school heads. The primary problems of the school heads are the problem in identifying one's competence, unequal access to training, lack of community support, funding issues, lack of confidence of school heads, and difficulty in managing and facilitating teachers as beginner school heads. An action plan is proposed to address the challenges met by school heads.

KEYWORDS : *competitive edge, school heads, profile, challenges*

I. INTRODUCTION

A school is a place that provides an avenue for learning and teaching through the guidance of teachers and manages by the school heads. They must be equipped with the ability to fully manage and supervise all aspects of school. They provide coaching and mentoring to teachers to improve the delivery of different teaching strategies to be used for a variety of pupils with different needs. They also plan and do financial tasks. We are increasingly put in situations as a society and as individuals where we must make difficult decisions, where we must manage numerous agendas and communities, and where there are frequently no simple, correct, or immediate solutions (Thomson, 1999). They are also the decision-maker inside the school if there is a problem occurred.

In 2003, there was a competency framework for Southeast Asian School Heads which was developed by the SEAMEO INFOTECH (Southeast Asian Minister of Education Organization Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology) wherein it provides a common foundation for defining the skills and attributes needed to perform well their roles and lead the school to success and excellence. Only a few would argue in managing effectively the organization, requires a shift to a new standard where excellence and sustainable competitive advantage can no longer be found on traditional and scarce resources (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

In this field of work, the school heads must possess abilities or skills that can be an advantage to others and can help the school, teachers, and students. But how it can be achieved if they are lacking competencies that a school head may have? According to DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2007, which is the Revised Guidelines on Selection, Promotion, and Designation of School Heads, the school head is responsible for the administrative and instructional supervision of the school. They are expected to have three dimensions namely: Educational Leadership, People Leadership, and Strategic Leadership.

The Republic Act No. 9155, an act also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, states that the school head shall be both the instructional leader and administrative manager. Wherein he/she is

accountable, responsible and have the authority to implement the school curriculum and be accountable for higher learning outcomes, develop school educational programs and school improvement plan, introduce new and innovative modes of instruction, administer and manage all personnel, physical and fiscal resources, and encourage staff development.

Not all have the chance to be a school head, some choose to pursue their teaching career but some are brave enough to accept the challenge to be the leader of the school. One has a dream to inspire and encourage not just learners and teachers but also stakeholders who play a boundless role in supporting the school improvement plans and activities. Some take the principal test or the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads (NQESH) which is administered by the National Educators Academy of the Philippines and opens new opportunities to aspiring teachers to enable them to be full-pledge Principals.

For this reason and situation, the researcher is motivated to conduct a study that identifies the competitive edge of the school heads here in Bulusan that they can offer and showcase for improvement of the school. The researcher believes that through this study the school heads will reflect on the projects and innovations that have been done in their school that they contribute and also on their relationship with every people inside and outside of the campus and how they handle the situations that arise during their journey as a school head. And especially this study gives way to every school head to have a self-assessment of their advantages over other school heads which can be their strength and weakness they have that needs improvement for them to fully perform their functions as administrator and manager.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study determined the competitive advantage of the school leaders in the Bulusan District for the academic year 2021–2022. This study employed a descriptive research design to learn more about current conditions. It employs a survey to gather the age, sex, civil status, length of service, educational attainment, and training of the respondents to identify the demographic profile of the school heads. Attached also in the survey, is the section on the competitive edge of the school head in terms of accomplishment, psychosocial attributes and personality, ICT skills, and research and innovation. Also, the researcher used an unstructured interview to distinguish the challenges met by the schools in performing their duties and responsibilities.

The respondents of the study were 20 primary school heads in the Bulusan District, including principals, head teachers, and teachers in charge (TIC). The gathered data in this study were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using a statistical tool including frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and general weighted mean.

The Respondents

The respondents are identified by utilizing purposive sampling, all school heads are from the elementary level in the Bulusan District, Division of Sorsogon, and in administering the survey, the researcher used total enumeration. It was composed of seven (7) of them are principals, three (3) school heads, and ten (10) teachers in charge. The informants covered nine (9) aged 46 and above, six (6) aged 36-45, and five (5) 35 and below. Most of them are male with a total of 11 and 9 females. There were 12 married, 7 single, and 1 widow. In the group of informants, 13 are college graduates, 5 are master's degree holders, and 2 are doctorate degree holders. Also, from the informants, there are 16 who rendered their service for 10 years above and 4 who are 10 years below in the service. Most of them attended local training and few national and international level. It was explained to the informants that their profile is highly confidential and will not be revealed in the study. Pseudonyms were used for their names for the purpose of confidentiality.

The Instrument

The main instrument that was used is a survey questionnaire which is divided into two parts. The first part covers the demographic profile of the respondents along with the variables of age, sex, civil status, length of service, educational attainment, and training. Then the next part of the survey questionnaire is the competitive edge of the respondents along with the variable of accomplishment, psychosocial attributes and personality, ICT skills, and research and innovation. The competitive edge of the respondents was assessed through the Likert scale.

Additional to the instrument is the unstructured interview that caters to the challenges met by the school heads in managing and performing their duties and responsibilities. The survey and unstructured interviews were answered by the school heads.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher sought approval through formal communication with the concerned office and secured an endorsement from the School Division Superintendent of the Department of Education Sorsogon Province, as well as from the Officer in Charge District Supervisor and school heads in the elementary level of Bulusan District.

After the approval of the request, the researcher disseminated the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher used a questionnaire for the competitive edge of the school heads, and an unstructured interview for the challenges met. The administration of questionnaires was last October 10-12,2022, to the schools in the Bulusan District. The questionnaires were retrieved on the same date mentioned above with a 100% retrieval rate. Upon retrieval, the researcher informed the thesis adviser that the questionnaire was being tallied and computed for the tabulation process. All the data provided by the respondents were kept private and confidential.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data for the first problem, which determines the school heads' profile from age to length of service, was consolidated, tabulated, analyzed, and treated using frequency count and percentage. Meanwhile, frequency count and rank were used to treat the data on training attended due to multiple responses from the respondents. The general weighted mean was employed in problem number two to determine the competitive edge of the school heads.

Accordingly, the general weighted mean, frequency count, and rank for the challenges encountered were utilized to determine the association between the demographic profile and the competitive edge of the school heads.

The researcher used a modified Likert scale to interpret the overall results. This scale was adopted from the study of Dalayan and Estrellado(2022), as presented below:

Scale Interpretation

4.21-5.00	Highly Competent
3.41-4.20	Competent
2.61-3.40	Moderately competent
1.81-2.60	Less Competent
1.00-1.80	Least Competent

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Profile of the School Heads in Bulusan District.

section covers the profile of the school heads in terms of age, sex, civil status, years in service, educational attainment, and training. Frequency and percentage were used in data analysis.

Table 1.1 :Profile of the School Heads in Bulusan District

Profile according to:	Frequency	Percentage
A. Age		
1. 35 and below	5	25%
2. 36-45	6	30%
3. 46 and above	9	45%
B. Sex		
1. Male	11	55%
2. Female	9	45%
C. Civil Status		
1. Single	7	35%
2. Married	12	60%
3. Widow	1	5%
D. Highest Educational Attainment		
1. College Graduate	13	65%
2. Master's Degree Holder	5	25%
3. Doctorate Degree Holder	2	10%
E. Length of Service		
1. 10 years below	4	20%
2. 11 years above	16	80%

The data shows that most school heads are 46 and older, while few are 36-45. Meanwhile, 25% of them are aged 36 to 45. This may imply that those aged 46 and up are getting appointed as school heads since they have greater expertise in the area and may have a high rank, such as full pledged principals. Based on the researcher's interview, it may also show that school heads in their 35s and below are new to the field of managing and administering the school, whereas school heads aged 35-46 are relatively young and have been in the service for a long time and have gained some experience both in teaching and managing the school.

Relevant to this, the findings of Guiab and Ganal (2014) on the demographic profile of public school heads and school-related problems show that most school heads are in the age bracket of 46 and older. It may indicate that young school teachers need to be encouraged by administrators so that they can replace the old ones.

The table also shows that most school heads are male, with a frequency of 11. It may imply that males have been given more opportunities to be school heads in the district and may be more capable of handling the responsibility of school heads. Contrary to the present study's finding, Guiab and Ganal (2014) found that most school heads in the elementary schools in Alicia East District and Alicia North District in Isabela were female rather than male.

The table further reveals that most school heads in the Bulusan District are married, with a frequency of 12 or 60%. It may imply that most of them are married due to their age which is already in the bracket of getting married. It may also indicate that single school heads who are new and young in DepEd have a lot of responsibilities to their parents and may not have in mind to settle down because they may be longing for the experience of being single. However, the civil status may indicate that it affects the school heads in terms of professional growth since they have other obligations and responsibilities outside the school premises.

Likewise, in the study by Suyitno (2020) titled Instructional Leadership of School Principals and their Schools' National Achievement Test Performance: A search of Relationship, the majority of the school heads are married, and few are single and a widow. Hence, these findings reveal that civil status affects their roles as communicators.

Additionally, the table shows that 13 school heads are college graduates, five are master's degree holders, and two with doctorate degrees. This may imply that most school heads do not pursue higher studies because of hectic schedules, duties, and other responsibilities given to them. It may also indicate that they do not pursue their master's or doctorate because they don't want to be stressed or challenged financially. According to one of the respondents,

"I don't pursue graduate studies due to lack of funds, and I don't want to be stressed about schooling. Being a school head is already stressful work."

Based on DepEd Order No. 42 s. 2007, the guidelines on the selection, promotion, and designation of school heads, a school head is responsible for administrative and instructional supervision. They must possess the three leadership dimensions. Further, it is stated in Section D, letter A of the department order that educational attainment has a corresponding point of 20.

In terms of length of service, the table reveals that most school heads have more than ten years of experience with a frequency of 16, while only four are ten years and below in service. It may be implied that the school heads' role is in the hands of more experienced school heads, and new school heads need to be encouraged to cope with the responsibilities and obligations of school heads. It may also indicate that higher authorities trusted the school heads who have been in service for more than ten years. In the study of Boniao et al. (2020) on the School Heads' Leadership Styles in Public Schools, Sub Congressional District III, Bohol, the results show that most school heads have already served 11 to 15 years in service. The study also found that the school heads' leadership styles did not significantly influence the length of service.

Table 1.2
Training Attended by the School Heads

Training	Frequency	Rank
Local	87	1
National	12	2
International	6	3

Table 1.2 shows that school heads have six training at the international level, 12 at the national level, and 87 at the local level. This may indicate that training at the local level offered by DepEd Region V and the SDO of Sorsogon is attended by most school heads. Also, due to registration fees and venue, only a few are interested in the training and seminars at the national and international levels. It may also imply that the international training was not a priority due to the limited budget for school maintenance and other operating expenses. It may also mean that training at these two levels were too expensive.

Contrary to the findings of the study by Peregrino et al. (2021) on School Heads Competence and Qualifications: Its Influence on School Performance, the training for international got higher frequency than local level. However, similar to the present study, most school heads were found to be ten years above in the service. As a result, the school heads' profile in terms of the level of training attended, years of service, and performance for three years don't have a significant relationship with the school performance.

2. Competitive Edge of the School Heads in Bulusan District.

The table presents the competitive edge of the school heads in terms of accomplishments, psychosocial attributes and personality, ICT skills, research, and innovation. The weighted mean and the average weighted mean were used for data analysis.

Table 2A
Accomplishments

Accomplishments	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Remarks
1. Implements projects	4.8	Highly Competent
2. Awards Received	2.4	Less Competent
3. Craft School Improvement Plan	4.6	Highly Competent
4. Facilitated training	4.2	Competent
5. Published articles in a journal/newspaper/ magazine of wide circulation	1.75	Least Competent
Overall Mean	3.55	Competent

Table 2A shows the competitive edge of the school heads in terms of accomplishments. It shows that the general weighted mean is 3.55, interpreted as competent. It was revealed that the implementation of projects has a weighted mean of 4.8, and the crafting of the School Improvement Plan got a weighted mean of 4.6, which both have the descriptive remarks of highly competent. In contrast, the facilitated training earned a 4.2 weighted mean, interpreted as competent. The awards received got a weighted mean of 2.6, interpreted as less competent. The published articles in a journal/ newspaper/ magazine of wide circulation got a weighted mean of 1.75 which is interpreted as least competent. It may imply that school heads were focused on implementing projects in their school that are based on their crafted SIP. Further, this indicates that they aren't interested in publishing articles or receiving awards. It may imply that school heads are not striving hard to be better since they are contented with what they have, and it may entail another work or burden that needs to be accomplished.

Table 2B
Psychosocial Attributes and Personality

Psychosocial attributes and Personality	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Remarks
1. Adjust to the variety of personalities, ranks, and informal groups present in the organization	4.6	Highly Competent
2. Internalizes work changes with ease and vigor	4.55	Highly Competent
3. Accepts constructive criticisms objectively, whether from his subordinates, peers, or superiors	4.75	Highly Competent
4. Observes proper decorum in relating with superiors and peers	4.85	Highly Competent
5. Take the initiative to organize work groups and adopt procedures and standards at his level	4.55	Highly Competent
6. Thinks logically and acts accordingly	4.7	Highly Competent
7. Considers alternatives and recommends solutions when faced with problems and situations	4.75	Highly Competent
8. Gives convincing recommendations and suggestions	4.7	Highly Competent
9. Acts quickly and makes the best decision possible	4.75	Highly Competent
10. Exercises flexibility	4.8	Highly Competent
11. Exercises a high degree of tolerance for tension resulting from the increasing volume of work, organizational change,	4.65	Highly Competent

environmental conflicts, etc.		
12. Uses coping mechanisms to handle creatively tensions resulting from one's work	4.5	Highly Competent
13. Controls negative manifestations of emotions	4.5	Highly Competent
14. Performs his duties and functions in a tension-laden situation satisfactorily	4.6	Highly Competent
15. Channels negative emotions to positive and constructive endeavors	4.65	Highly Competent
Overall Mean	4.66	Highly Competent

The table shows the competitive edge of the school heads in Bulusan District in terms of psychosocial attributes and personality. It revealed that the general weighted mean, along with psychosocial attributes and personality, is 4.66. Meanwhile, adjusting to the variety of personalities, ranks, and informal groups present in the organization has a weighted mean of 4.6. Internalizes work changes with ease and vigor has a 4.55 weighted mean; 4.75 weighted mean in accepts constructive criticisms objectively, whether from his subordinates, peers, or superiors; and 4.85 weighted mean in observes proper decorum in relating with superiors and peers.

The parameter takes the initiative to organize work groups and adopt procedures and standards at his own level has a weighted mean of 4.55; 4.7 in thinks logically and acts accordingly; 4.75 in considers alternatives and recommends solutions when faced with problems situations; 4.7 in gives convincing recommendations and suggestions; 4.75 in acts quickly and makes the best decision possible; 4.8 in exercises flexibility; 4.65 in exercises a high degree of tolerance for tension resulting from increasing volume of work, organizational change, environmental conflicts, etc.; 4.5 in uses coping mechanisms to handle creatively tensions resulting from one's work and controls negative manifestations of emotions; 4.6 in performs his duties and functions in a tension-laden situation satisfactorily; and 4.65 weighted mean in channels negative emotions to positive and constructive endeavors.

All indicators earned a descriptive remark of highly competent. This may describe that school heads have high morale and have healthy relationships with colleagues. Also, they may be capable of handling their emotions, so it will not affect their role. It may imply that school heads have a sense of kindness in themselves before they enter the field, and it is their nature.

Table 2C
ICT Skills

ICT Skills	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Remarks
1. Create documents, worksheets, and presentation	4.75	Highly Competent
2. Access the internet	4.95	Highly Competent
3. Send messages with attachment	4.8	Highly Competent
4. Access the DepEd website, portal, and link	4.85	Highly Competent
5. Start or join a meeting and present or share an entire screen, a single window, or a single chrome tab	4.8	Highly Competent
Overall Mean	4.83	Highly Competent

The table shows that the general weighted mean for ICT skills is 4.83. In line with this, the indicator creates documents, worksheets, and presentations has a 4.75 weighted mean, access the internet has a 4.95 weighted mean, sending messages with attachments has a 4.8 weighted mean, access DepEd website, portal and link with a 4.85 weighted mean, and start or join a meeting and presents or shares an entire screen, a single window or single chrome tab has a 4.8 weighted mean. All the indicators have a descriptive remark of highly competent.

This indicates that the principals in the Bulusan District are ICT experts. It could imply that they have a skill that greatly assists them in complying with reports and presenting to others through technology. It may also indicate that, despite rapidly changing technology, the school can keep up with the new generation.

As shown in the result of the study by Alayan (2022) entitled School Heads' Technological Leadership and Teachers' ICT Integration in Instruction in the Public Elementary Schools in the Division of Quezon, encouraging the use of technology in schools rely on the capacity of the school heads to visualize, empower, inspire, guide, and collaborate with the teachers.

Table 2D
Research and Innovation

Research and Innovations	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Remarks
1. Action research conducted at the school level	2.6	Less Competent
2. Action research conducted at the district level or division level	2.0	Less Competent
3. Conceptualized innovation	3.75	Competent
4. Started or Fully implemented the innovation	3.6	Competent
5. Develop innovation is adopted by the district or division	2.25	Less Competent
Overall Mean	2.84	Moderately Competent

The table reveals that research and innovation have a general weighted mean of 2.84 which means moderately competent. Under this is the indicator action research conducted at the school level with a 2.6 weighted mean which is interpreted as less competent; action research conducted at the district level or division level with a 2.0 weighted mean interpreted as less competent; conceptualized innovation with a 3.75 weighted mean interpreted as competent; started or fully implemented innovation with 3.6 weighted mean interpreted as competent; and develop innovation adopted by the district or division with a 2.25 weighted mean interpreted as competent.

This could mean that school principals should work on developing action research that can be used to solve educational problems in their school and that can be adopted by the district and, eventually, the division. They may also need to develop innovative ideas that can be implemented at the district and division levels. This may also imply that most school leaders are not well-versed in action research. In addition, it may suggest that without additional research, they may fall behind in action research and that it may not have been the focus of the training they received. The result of the study by Abu-Shreah and Zidan (2017) entitled The Degree of School Principals Practicing Innovation and its Relation with the Teachers' Professional Development, shows that creative school heads focus on creating a strong relationship between themselves and the teachers. He motivates them to be creative and innovative and may lead them in developing their profession through practical workshops and numerous programs that aid in the innovation of teachers and students.

3. 3. Competitive edge of the school head when grouped according to their profile

The following table presents the competitive edge of the school heads when grouped according to their profile. The weighted mean is used for data analysis.

Table 3
Competitive Edge of School Heads based on Age in terms of Accomplishment, Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality, ICT Skills, and Research and Innovation

AGE GROUP	General Weighted Mean			
	Accomplishment	Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality	ICT Skills	Research and Innovation
35 and below	3.16	4.4	4.88	3.08
36-45	3.06	4.71	4.90	2.93
46 and above	3.62	4.77	4.76	2.63

The table presented shows the competitive edge of school heads based on age in terms of accomplishment. It was revealed that the general weighted mean of the age group 35 and below is 3.16, which is interpreted as moderately competent. The age group 36-45 has a general weighted mean of 3.06 which means moderately competent. Meanwhile, those in the age group of 46 and above have a 3.63 general weighted mean interpreted as competent. According to the respondents,

“Being new to the field and young, it was hard for me to accomplish more vision for the school. I’m also not confident about being a facilitator in seminars and training. Also, I did not pursue graduate studies, so I’m not knowledgeable enough to do action research.”

It may indicate that school heads in three age groups don’t mind being an awardee and may not have time for publishing articles in wide circulation due to many papers works to be done. Also, it may imply that both age groups of 35 and below and 36-45 need more improvement to acquire more awards in different aspects. Additionally, it may suggest that young school heads are still gaining more knowledge and experience as school heads. Finally, older school administrators may have extensive training to develop additional projects as a means of accomplishment. These may reflect that young school heads may implement more programs that make them entitled to gaining awards and should also try to publish journals. Contrary to the results of the study by Fullo (2012), School Programs and Interventions of Sabang Elementary School, in which the respondents are the teacher and the parents, it concludes that teachers and parents need to work hand in hand collaboratively with each other in facilitating the implementation of school programs and interventions.

In terms of psychosocial attributes and personality, in the age group of 35 and below, the general weighted mean is 4.4; the age group of 35-45 has a general weighted mean of 4.71; and the 46 and older have a general weighted mean of 4.77. The results entail that all age group is highly competent in terms of psychosocial attributes and personality. School heads in Bulusan District have a high degree of morale and social consideration, as reflected in the statements of one of the respondents.

“As time passed, I met a lot of teachers and people in different barangay that support the school. I learned that listening to what they say is the best way to communicate with them since you will know the problem and how it will be solved through the help of teachers. You will know how to adjust to a different community.”

It may mean that age does not measure how good the school heads are. They may continue showing good traits and positive outlooks since they are role models for teachers and learners. It may also imply that young and old school heads in the Bulusan District were well-educated in dealing with others and handling situations. Additionally, it may mean that both young and old school heads don’t want to stress their lives, so as a coping mechanism, they treat every situation with a positive mind and a high degree of tolerance. The findings of the study by Hesbol (2019) entitled the Principal Self-Efficacy and Learning Organizations: Influencing School Improvement, conclude that when principals gain mastery experience, which shows their aptitude and confidence to run a successful school, their self-efficacy and perceptions of the school as a learning organization grow with time. Another option is that veteran administrators may be more socialized by the environment of their schools, which would normalize how they see themselves and their institutions.

In terms of ICT skills, the age group of 35 and below, it got a 4.88 general weighted mean, 4.90 general weighted mean in the age group of 36-45, and 4.76 general weighted mean for the age group of 46 and above. This may indicate that school heads in Bulusan District are highly competent regarding ICT skills. According to one respondent,

“It has been said that life begins at 40, so I’m striving to cope with the technology. I don’t want to burden my ICT coordinator at school. I need to study how technology can be useful as a school head.”

It may imply that through fast-changing technology, school heads aged 46 and above can keep up with it, but they may have a refresher or a set of training for them to be updated on the technology. It may also indicate that young school heads are very persistent in upgrading their skills in ICT. Contrary to this, the study of Dalayan and Estrellado (2021) on the Computer Competency of Elementary Teachers in Magallanes North District Amid the Pandemic, revealed that age does not affect competence in ICT since teachers always use it in the teaching-learning process. But as the generation ages, there is also a decrease in the competency in the use of computers, so teachers should attend more training related to enhancing ICT competencies.

In terms of research and innovation, the age group of 35 and below has a general weighted mean of 3.08; the age group of 36-45 has a general weighted mean of 2.93; and the age group of 46 has a general weighted mean of 2.63. This may mean that the school heads are moderately competent in research and innovation. According to one respondent,

“Kay madalina man langakomagretire, habo ko namastress, habo ko namagparaisippa sin kunnanunanu. Bastanacomply ko man an mga in aayona reports nan nakapasaako on time, okay naako dun. Kunbata pa kuntaako, siguromaginginteresadoako sun namga action research nan mga projects naipromotesa district.”

(Since I’m retiring soon, I don’t want to be stressed and don’t want to think of anything as long as I comply with the reports on time. If I’m still young, I will be interested in action research and promoting projects to the district.)

It may suggest that younger school heads are more imaginative and creative in conceptualizing innovation that will solve some of their problems in school and maybe surely help both teachers and learners. It may also imply that school heads aged 46 and above don’t have the knowledge about action research and may don’t have extra effort to know and learn about it. This indicates that they may need to pursue action research and develop innovation that the district and the division of Sorsogon may adopt.

Table 4
Competitive Edge of School Heads based on Sex in terms of Accomplishment, Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality, ICT Skills, and Research and Innovation

SEX GROUP	General Weighted Mean			
	Accomplishment	Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality	ICT Skills	Research and Innovation
Male	3.34	4.67	4.9	3.23
Female	3.53	4.63	4.73	2.28

The table shows the competitive edge of school heads based on sex in terms of accomplishments. It reveals that males have a general weighted mean of 3.34 and females have a general weighted mean of 3.53. The results suggest that the male is moderately competent while the female is competent in achieving accomplishments. According to one respondent,

“Even though I am female, I disagree that males are better than us. So, I try to develop more projects that will cater to the need of the learners. I have the reading program that will help learners who are slow readers.”

This may suggest that both sexes struggle to receive awards in various training in the workplace. It may also imply that neither gender has the time to write and publish widely distributed articles. It also implies that women are more confident than men in facilitating training. Additionally, women are more interested in project implementation. It also indicates a call for the attention of both sexes to publish a journal on a platform with a large circulation and aim for an award. It may imply that men should be aware that being a facilitator is advantageous because it demonstrates their talent and ability to manage an event.

The study of Floresca (2014) on the Management Practices of School Heads indicated that the gender of school heads doesn’t affect the practices implemented in the school. Both sexes can perform academically as long as they perform their duties respectively.

While in terms of psychosocial attributes and personality, it indicates that the general weighted mean of the male is 4.67 and 4.63 for the female. As reflected in one of the statements of the respondents,

“Gender is not a hindrance in dealing with people. It’s how you treat the people around you. Every school head must be open-minded and be open to all possibilities.”

This suggests that both males and females are highly competent in this area. Both have excellent mental health and social skills. It may indicate that sex does not define how the school will react to the situation in dealing with themselves and how they deal with their teachers and stakeholder. This implies that school heads may keep in mind that they perhaps take the initiative in every work and successfully carry out their work in a stressful environment. It may suggest that both sexes may exercise a coping skill that will deal with the tensions brought on by one’s profession in a creative manner. In the study by Cobanoglu and Yurek (2018), which is the School Administrators’ Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Leadership Styles, the administrators’ self-efficacy beliefs do not significantly differ according to their gender. In other words, men and female administrators share similar self-efficacy beliefs.

The table reveals that males and females got a general weighted mean of 4.9 and 4.73, respectively, in ICT Skills. This may indicate that both male and female school heads are highly competent in ICT, as reflected in the quoted text of the respondent.

“ICT is not a gender-based tool. Both males and females need to know this since in every report of school heads, ICT is highly convenient for easy preparation and saves more time.”

This may imply that both sex groups know ICT. It may also indicate that both participate in training regarding the use of ICT. Also, it may mean that both sex groups can cope with fast-changing technology. Based on the study by Dalayan and Estrellado(2021), sex does not affect the computer competencies of teachers when it comes to using Microsoft Word and web browsing. However, gender affects the teacher's proficiency with Excel, PowerPoint, and video conferencing when teachers are not accustomed to adding graphic designs and effects to presentations and when teachers find it difficult to use Google Meet due to infrequent use.

And in terms of research and innovation, both sex groups have a low general weighted mean of 3.23 and 2.28 for males and females, respectively. This may suggest that males are moderately competent while females are less competent, as revealed in the respondent's quoted text.

“As a male, when it comes to innovation, we are more advanced than females since we can do the hard labor to accomplish the proposed projects at the school level.”

Therefore, it appears that both genders are unfamiliar with action research. It also implies that both sexes may have limited expertise in its design, resulting in a complete lack of action research conducted at the school and district/division levels. In addition, it may indicate that both sexes may still implement innovative projects at their school without submitting proposals to the district or division. It may imply that both groups may collaborate on action research at the district and division levels as well as innovative projects that the district and division will adopt.

The results were supported by the study of Abu-Shreah and Zidan (2017), which revealed that several factors contribute to the equality of the two genders, especially the experience of school heads, the similar conditions of learning and training before they became school heads, and the training programs for professional development.

Table 5
Competitive Edge of School Heads based on Civil Status in terms of Accomplishment, Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality, ICT Skills, and Research and Innovation

CIVIL STATUS	General Weighted Mean			
	Accomplishment	Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality	ICT Skills	Research and Innovation
Single	3.39	4.45	4.83	3.15
Married	3.43	4.8	4.9	2.65
Widow	3.4	4.4	4.0	2.8

The table presents the competitive edge of school heads based on civil status in terms of accomplishments. It reveals that those with single civil status have a general weighted mean of 3.39 (moderately competent), 3.43 (competent) general weighted mean for those married, and 3.4 (moderately competent) general weighted mean for the widowed. Thus, the three statuses don't differ much in the general weighted mean. It was also shown in the quoted text of the respondents.

“Sometimes, being married is the way to be inspired. In every training I facilitated, my family is always my inspiration.”

“As a widow, I cannot strive hard for more accomplishment as long as I comply with the needed report. It's hard for me since I stand as a mother and at the same time father for my daughter, and also I don't

have anyone to do the house chores, so my focus, when I go home, is divided into my obligation for my child and my take home reports that need to be done.”

This may imply that civil status affects the school heads in terms of accomplishment since they have other obligations and responsibilities outside school. It also may mean that being married inspired them to achieve accomplishments because they have a family. Additionally, it may imply that those with single status are pressured with their obligation to their parents. At the same time, widowed school heads may have difficulty being solo parents, resulting in low accomplishments output. Contrary to the present study's findings, Floresca (2014) revealed that the civil status of the school heads does not bear significance in the planning and communication of programs implemented.

The school heads' psychosocial attributes and personalities based on civil status, it can be gleaned that those with single status have a general weighted mean of 4.45, while a general weighted average of 4.8 for the married and 4.4 for the widow. This indicates that these three groups are highly competent regarding psychosocial attributes and personality. According to one respondent,

“Everything that happens to me at school, I share it with my wife, and through shared experience, I can handle the problems that arise and the stress I encounter. Also, being married, the practice of how you will deal with people starts from home wherein you need to get along with your in-laws and partner so I have the knowledge on how to deal with the community.”

It may entail that civil status has no bearing on how school administrators deal with different personalities and groups they encounter, taking the initiative at work, responding quickly and making the best decisions, considering suggestions, controlling their emotions, or working in a stressful environment. It further implies that the psychosocial attributes and personality do not change even if the school heads marry or become a widow.

Based on this result, school administrators must maintain their current attitude, as their field of work is highly stressful and requires the completion of extensive paperwork. They must also ensure that their teachers are stable mentally and physically. Such a notion is supported by the study of Odanga et al. (2015) entitled the Influence of Marital Status on Teachers' Self-Efficacy in Secondary Schools of Kisumu Country, Kenya, where teachers and the majority of them claimed that marriage enhanced teachers' confidence in their ability to manage classrooms. This was because married people were viewed as emotionally stable, and having kids made a teacher more tolerant. Married female teachers were less strict with female students, whom they perceived as competitors.

In terms of ICT skills, the result shows that those in single status got a general weighted mean of 4.83, 4.9 for married, and 4.0 general weighted mean for widow. This suggests that single and married school heads are highly competent in ICT while those widowed are competent but still need improvement in all aspects. It was also revealed in the quoted text of the respondent.

“When I become a widow, all the responsibility went to me, so when I go home, I don't have much time to learn the new trends in technology because I'm more focused on the household chores and being a parent. But still, I try my best to cope with the fast-changing technology.”

It may imply that civil status has something to do with the ICT skills of the school heads. It may also indicate that status may affect the competency of the school heads in terms of responsibilities that she is undertaking and result in less time to use their skills and improve them. It may be suggested that the widow may allot time to discover more about the use of ICT that will significantly help her administer the school and jurisdiction.

While in terms of research and innovation, the table shows that single school heads got a general weighted mean of 3.15 in research and innovation, married school heads got a 2.65 general weighted mean, and widowed school heads got a 2.8 general weighted mean. It indicates that single, married, and widowed school heads are moderately competent. According to one respondent,

“Conceptualizing innovation and making it happen at school is not easy, but for a single school head like me, I can have more time for it since I don't have responsibilities, unlike those married school heads that have other obligations when they go outside the school premises.”

This suggests that they might need improvement in conducting action research and applying innovation at the district and division levels. It also implies that civil status affects the research and innovation of school heads. Also, due to the responsibilities everyone has, conducting action research and implementing it is being

neglected. However, in terms of conceptualizing innovation, it can be inferred from the results that single school heads are very active since they are not pressured with their life, unlike those who are married and widowed with great family responsibilities.

Table 6
Competitive Edge of School Heads based on Highest Educational Attainment in terms of Accomplishment, Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality, ICT Skills, and Research and Innovation

Highest Educational Attainment	General Weighted Mean			
	Accomplishment	Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality	ICT Skills	Research and Innovation
College Graduate	3.2	4.65	4.82	2.82
Master's Degree Holder	3.84	4.55	4.76	2.2
Doctorate Degree Holder	3.4	5.0	5	4.2

The table presented is the accomplishment based on the highest educational attainment of school heads in terms of accomplishments. There is a 3.2 general weighted mean for college graduates, a 3.84 general weighted mean for the master's degree holder, and a 3.4 general weighted mean for the doctorate. It was revealed in the quoted text of the respondent.

“When your superior gives you the assignment to facilitate the training, it was always a go since I am confident to talk in front of many people. And I'm aware that facilitating training gives me more confidence, and those certificates will help me have the edge over others.”

The findings suggest that college graduate doesn't have the confidence to build their name and achieve more accomplishments because they don't pursue graduate studies. Also, it may imply that master's degree holder school heads are graduates with fresh ideas for innovation. This indicates that all school heads may need further improvement to receive awards and try to publish journals or articles because it may be an advantage. As stated in the study of Floresca (2012), there is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers in terms of highest educational attainment on the management practices of the school heads in which implementation of programs and projects are aligned.

In terms of school heads' psychosocial attributes and personalities based on the highest educational attainment, the general weighted mean of college graduates is 4.65, 4.55 for master's degree holders, and 5.0 for doctorate holders. According to one respondent,

“When you enroll in graduate studies, there are a lot of professionals and stakeholders you will encounter when you have your thesis or dissertation. In my case, I met many people during my dissertation, and I discovered that it is advantageous to meet them during your professional development stage, as it will aided me in adjusting to different personalities, being emotionally stable, and having a high level of tolerance. And also, through experience, you can have better decision-making.”

This suggests that having the highest educational attainment also has a high social relationship with the people around them and a more stable emotional and mental state. This may indicate that the highest educational attainment does not necessarily define school heads' psychosocial attributes and personality traits. Accordingly, there will be a harmonious relationship in the field of work even if school heads do not pursue further education because they are already good and considerate, can work in a stressful environment, have a high tolerance level, can think logically, and act accordingly.

While in terms of ICT skills, the table reveals that college graduates got a 4.82 general weighted mean and 4.76 and 5.0 general weighted mean for master's degree holders and doctorate holders, respectively. This may mean that the three groups are highly competent, and your higher educational attainment is an advantage in having ICT skills. This is reflected in the quoted text of the respondent below.

“Even though I don't pursue graduate studies, I can keep up with those with a master's degree and doctorate. I learned a lot from online training and seminar workshops that improved my ICT skills.”

It may imply that the highest educational attainment bears no significance in having ICT skills since it is not compulsory for the school heads to pursue studies in master's degree and doctorate to be ICT experts. Further, it suggests that a school head can attain an ICT skill by participating in training and seminar-workshop. However, in the study of Dalayan and Estrellado (2021), they found that engaging in more advanced studies

exposed teachers to more computer applications since, in graduate schools, ICT tools are commonly used in presenting reports, researching, and communicating with professors and colleagues.

And terms of research and innovation, it shows that college graduates got a general weighted mean of 2.82, 2.2 for master's degree holders, and 4.2 for doctorate holders. Based on the results, it can be interpreted that in terms of research and innovation, college graduates are moderately competent, master's degree holders are less competent, and doctorate holders are competent. It was revealed in the quoted text of the respondent.

"It's been a long time since I graduated with a master's degree. Action research was not tackled then, so I don't know much about it."

The findings also suggest that doctorate holders have conducted action research and developed more innovative projects that contribute to the improvement of the school. Still, they may try to propose it to the district and division level for it to be adopted. Also, it implies that college graduates and master's degree holders know little about action research. This notion is supported by the findings of Basas and Pacadaljen (2021), who found that senior high school administrators with a higher level of education who have received research funding, presented research studies at a research conference, and received research awards were more likely to be competent in the area of research integrity and ethics.

Table 7: Competitive Edge of School Heads based on Highest Educational Attainment in terms of Accomplishment, Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality, ICT Skills, and Research and Innovation

Length of Service	General Weighted Mean			
	Accomplishment	Psychosocial Attributes, and Personality	ICT Skills	Research and Innovation
10 years and below	3.6	4.35	4.85	2.4
11 years and above	3.57	4.74	4.82	2.85

The table presents school heads' accomplishments based on their service length. It shows that school heads ten years below in service got a 3.6 general weighted mean, and those ten years above in service got 3.57. This may indicate that both groups are competent in terms of accomplishment. According to one of the respondents,

"I will be retiring soon. Due to age, I no longer have the strength to do more for the project. I cannot do more hard labor. Also, I allow those young school heads to facilitate the training and seminars. This will help them more in the future."

In addition, both groups are competent; however, they may need to improve their award attainment, as it may be a significant competitive advantage in their field. Also, it may imply that those ten years older in the service do not exert greater effort due to a lack of motivation. Further, it may also suggest that those ten years of service or more have reached a plateau. Contrary to the results of the present investigation, the study by Floresca (2014) entitled Management Practices of School Heads, testified that more experienced teachers are more satisfied than younger teachers as they know their school heads better for an extended period than those less experienced teachers. Hence, this implies that school heads should fairly distribute the duties and responsibilities of teachers regardless of their length of service.

In terms of psychosocial attributes and personality, the table shows that school heads ten years below in service got a general weighted mean of 4.35, and those ten years above in service got a 4.74 general weighted mean in terms of psychosocial attributes and personality. The results suggest that both are highly competent. According to one respondent,

"Being new to the field, I'm still adjusting to various personalities. I'm still learning how to handle my teachers and how to have good judgment when tension arises between colleagues."

In addition, length of service does not affect the personality trait and social relations of school heads with the community and stakeholders. It may also imply that all school heads are excellent at dealing with themselves and making good decisions. It likewise indicates that those ten years and below in service are still adjusting to the personalities, ranks, and informal groups, controlling their emotions, and performing duties and responsibilities satisfactorily. Additionally, it may imply that the higher length of service, the higher the psychosocial attributes and personality.

It can be gleaned from the table that the ICT skills of school heads ten years below in service got a 4.85 general weighted mean, and 4.82 for those ten years above in service. This may mean that both are highly competent in using skills in ICT; however, it may imply that school heads who are ten years below are more skilled than those who are ten years above in the service. According to one respondent,

“Due to age, I have difficulty coping with the technology. I cannot keep up with the young school heads. I can do the basic use of Microsoft office, but when there are formulas in excel, I need to insert different figures and designs to make them presentable. I usually asked the ICT coordinator to help me.”

The results imply that new school heads have a broad grasp of advanced technology and use creativity to practice their ICT Skills. Contrary to the present study's findings, Encinares and Benavides (2022) found that teachers who have been in the service for a long time have a higher level of ICT skills and develop more ICT skills over the years than teachers that are new in the service.

The table shows the research and innovation of school heads based on length of service, where those ten years below in service got a general weighted mean of 2.4, and those ten years above in service got a general weighted mean of 2.85. The results indicate that those ten years below in service are less competent than those above. According to one respondent,

“I don't know much about action research, so I never attempt to conduct it, and I'm still taking on new responsibilities since becoming a classroom teacher last year. I've begun implementing new projects.”

It may indicate that school heads ten years above in the service have done more action research and innovation that is fully implemented in school. It further means that the higher the length of service, the more the school heads grasp the knowledge about action research and innovative ideas. Similarly, on the findings of the study of Basas and Pacadaljen (2021), experienced senior high school administrator is more competent in conducting research than those who have no research conducted in the field. Moreover, school heads who are into research are enthusiastic about conducting research and implementing policies and initiatives in their authority.

4. Challenges Met by the School Heads

This part presents the challenges the school heads face in managing the school, teachers, and stakeholders. To further elaborate and discuss the difficulties met by school heads, the following narratives are offered as representations of their voices. This was based on the unstructured interviews, where six themes were formed.

The main themes were a) problems in identifying one's competence, b) unequal access to trainings, c) lack of community support, d) funding issues, e) lack of confidence of School heads, and f) difficulty in managing and facilitating teachers as beginner School Heads. These themes were presented directly by utilizing quoted interview text. Codenames were adopted to observe the greatest confidentiality of the research participants.

Problems in identifying one's competence

The interview revealed that some respondents don't have problems in their school, which may be hard to believe since there may be no perfect school. According to them, they don't want to stress out their lives due to their age.

“Wara man akoproblemananaimod kay very active man an community nan very supported man saako an akomgamaestra”

(I don't have any problem because the community is very active, and my teachers are with me and support me always.)

-(School Head A)

“Waraakoproblema kay di ko nayunparaisip kay makadagdaghak stress nan indadaranunannahaknamudinisaeskwelahan an kunnanunamga project.”

(I don't have any problem with my work because I don't want to stress myself out of that, and we help each other to realize the project.)

-(School Head B)

This may imply that school heads don't address their problems to prevent them from being stressed. It may indicate that they were not focused on the problems and didn't want to see it well, where there are many unresolved problems in the school.

According to Hadebe (2013), leadership abilities contribute to a school's distinctiveness. These abilities were evident in the head's commitment to go above and beyond in curriculum perception, customer happiness, and connection building. It was apparent from the study that a school head needed to be more than a manager to elevate the institution.

Unequal access to training

It was revealed from the unstructured interview that most respondents are having trouble with the lack of opportunity to be included in the training. Quoted texts are presented below to emphasize their problems.

“Lack of opportunity to be included in the training is one of my problems since only a few are chosen, and I’m still not confident when dealing with people like presenting in the meeting. Community support is also a problem for me since we expect them to have their counterpart in every project we need to implement. Also, I need technical support from my superiors to consult the decision I will make.”

-(School Head C)

“One problem I have is the lack of opportunity to be included in the training since only a few are chosen. Next is, when it comes to managing and facilitating the teachers, since I’m new to the field, I’m in my transition period. Also, the innovation culture, I only have limited knowledge about it. And due to other responsibilities specifically, I have a teaching load. It is hard for me to manage the time.”

-(School Head D)

“Due to limited slots, it is hard to be included in the list of participants in the training, and only those who the higher-ups know are chosen. Sometimes the lack of initiative and motivation also affects the function of school heads. Another problem is the lack of confidence in dealing with people since it’s my weakness. Almost everyone's problem is community support. Like here, I can say that they are active in terms of manpower, but sometimes it’s tough to reach them since they have other obligations at home. Next is the innovation culture since DepEd only focuses on curriculum innovation. Many projects have been proposed, by most of them are rejected. Lastly, time management since I’m used to procrastinating when it’s time for a deadline.”

-(School Head E)

This may imply that school heads have limited access to training due to the padrino system where only those close to higher-ups could participate. It may also indicate that they don’t have the courage to volunteer themselves when asked of the interested participants. Contrary to the findings of the study of Wibowo et al. (2021), administrative regulations and the school principal's history and motivation should be considered when deciding whether to participate in training. The realization of educational objectives is unified by a shared vision for achieving high-quality education.

Lack of Community Support

Based on the interviews conducted by the researcher, it was revealed that lack of community support is one problem for most school heads. Lack of community support may affect the school heads' function. The following quoted text is presented to accentuate the problems the school heads met.

“An mga reports annaproblemahan ko kay minsansarabay an parasahantasagadagad an deadline kaya nagkacrammingako, sayo pa an support san baranagay kay maskinanu an himuondiyodiyo an nagbubutwakun may pameeting or bayanihan. Taposkulang an kaaraman ko sa action research”

(Overlapping reports and rush submissions made me cram all the time. Another problem is the lack of community support. Every time I called for a meeting or bayanihan, very few attended. Then I have limited knowledge about action research.)

-(School Head F)

“Pinaproblemapermi san sayona school head an community support kay di man interona barangay is active nan mapagalankunwara sun kay an eskwelahan man bagankulang man naimudan kay kaipuhanbagadapat partnership para mas maimplemet an project kay di man kaya namaestrahak nan principal an makiwag”

(Since not all barangays are active in providing support, it is very difficult for the school. Therefore, the school requires a partnership to implement projects, as teachers and the school cannot do everything alone.)

-(School Head G)

”An support san barangay an sayosapoblema san eskwelahan kay dire maging successful an sayona project kunwaniradanon. Nan minsan an training di man interonatagan chance kay limited lang an slot.”

(The support from the barangay is one of the problems of the school because projects cannot succeed if there is no help from others. Then training has only limited slots.)

-(School Head H)

This may suggest that a lack of community support is a problem that must be addressed immediately, as the school may be rendered ineffective without it. Collaboration is necessary for the success of the school's projects, as the school cannot accomplish everything independently. It needs assistance from others. As stated in DepEd order no. 24 s.2008, the BrigadaEskwela is a nationwide program for school maintenance that enlists the help of all education stakeholders to ensure that public schools are ready for use for the start of classes. Local communities, parents, alumni, civic groups, corporations, NGOs, private people, teachers, and even students give their time and skills to perform small- to medium-sized school repairs and maintenance tasks during this one-week event.

Funding issues

The unstructured interviews showed that some are having trouble with funds. The quoted texts below highlight the problems encountered by the school heads.

“An makaupodsa training kay minsan di man akonapili kay ankilalang an inbutang nan kun sin o an haranisa higher authority. Nan sayo pa nanapagalan ko an kulang an source of fund kay di man interopuwedeiasasa MOOE kay di man magahom, maskisabulsa san school head di man gihaponkakayanon. Kaya maskidaghanon an maisipmona project and innovation kunkulang an budget di man gihaponmaipaimplement.”

(The lack of opportunity to be included in the training is one problem I encountered because those close to the higher authority were those given a chance to participate in trainings. The lack of a source of the fund since the school MOOE cannot fully support the projects to be implemented, even the money from the own pocket of the school head. Even though you have a lot of ideas and innovative projects, it is useless if you don't have enough funds.)

-(School Head I)

“An financial aspect kay dire nakaimplementbastabastakunkulang an kwarta kay irogsaamosadaylang an MOOE kay small school lang, kaipuhan sin may outside partner pa bukodsahalisa LGU kay more on repairs man langyadto, pan o nahakkun an need cash? Kaya mapagalmagkiwagkunkulang an budget”

(The financial aspect is one problem since we cannot implement projects with limited resources and funds, especially like us, with minimal MOOE. We need an outside partner besides LGU, which only focuses on repairs. What if we need cash instead? It's hard to function well with limited funds.)

-(School Head J)

The above entails that the lack of funds affects the function of the school heads. Accordingly, the crafted and proposed projects and innovations may not be successful without adequate funding. Aside from local funds, school heads cannot sacrifice their salary for school projects since it may cost them a lot. In the study by Rico (2021), it was concluded that the level to which MOOE, SEF, and other financial resources were utilized was effectively carried out, and the improvements it brought to the school's facilities and services for both instructors and students were highly gratifying. The greater the utilization of MOOE, SEF, and other financial resources, the better the school's future will be. Due to the successful implementation of MOOE, the respondents' opinions of the welfare and enhancement of educational facilities and services for students and teachers in terms of academic success and other school performance metrics have improved.

Lack of Confidence of School Heads

One responsibility of the school head is to communicate with others. The conducted interview revealed that some school heads are dealing with a lack of confidence when facing and communicating with people. The following quoted texts reflect this problem.

“Even though I have been a TIC for many years, I'm still not confident dealing with the stakeholders. I'm also having trouble with community support since it's very minimal. The lack of opportunity in the training to be included is another problem for me. The chance is only given to those who the higher-ups know. Next is managing and facilitating teachers because it is rare to have training for this. Due to my teaching load, I have poor time management, which is sometimes the reason for late submission of reports.”

-(School Head K)

“Due to limited slots, it is hard to be included in the list of participants in the training, and only those who the higher-ups know are being chosen. Sometimes the lack of initiative and motivation also affects the function of school heads. Another problem is the lack of confidence in dealing with people since it’s my weakness. Almost everyone's problem is community support. Like here, I can say that they are active in human resources, but sometimes it’s tough to reach them since they have other obligations at home. Next is the innovation culture since DepEd only focuses on curriculum innovation. Many projects have been proposed, by most of them are rejected. Lastly, time management since I’m used to procrastinating when it’s time for a deadline.”

-(School Head L)

The above statements suggest that even though school heads have been in the service for a long time, they still struggle with themselves on how to deal with others. It may indicate they are less confident in talking with stakeholders. It was supported by the study of Oyer (2015), which indicated a strong and favorable relationship between humility and confidence and between these two traits and leadership effectiveness. The findings confirm the significance of confidence and humility as characteristics of good leadership and may have significant ramifications for educational leadership.

Difficulty in managing and facilitating teachers as beginner School Heads

It was revealed that novice school heads struggle with facilitating and managing the teachers under their jurisdiction. This is reflected in the quoted texts of the respondents below.

“As a new school head (TIC), one of my problems is the lack of training in managing and facilitating teachers. That is why I always ask my co-school head how to handle these matters and avoid individual differences with my co-teachers. I always ask about their opinions/ideas before making a decision. To cope with my poor time management, I started to know what urgent and not urgent tasks are and spend less time on activities that are not important to gain time for activities that are not urgent but important. I also reduced my teaching load to utilize my time for some tasks as a school head.”

-(School Head M)

“Since I’m new to being a school head, I’m still adjusting to managing and facilitating the teachers. And I don’t have the opportunity to be included in the training because of limited slots.”

-(School Head N)

“As of now, since I’m new to the field of administration, I’m struggling in managing and facilitating teachers.”

-(School Head O)

The above statements imply that neophyte school heads are adjusting from being classroom teachers to being school heads who administer and manage teachers. It may indicate that they need technical support from supervisors due to a lack of training in managing and helping teachers. Arrieta (2020) revealed similar findings regarding the absence of orientation and other similar activities for new school administrators. The participants discussed how the lack of mentoring, orientation, a clear transition, and a transfer of responsibilities made it difficult for them to adapt to their new academic leadership roles. They had to figure things out independently and gain experience to become self-assured educational leaders. It is recommended that newly appointed and incoming academic leaders have access to an introductory training program that addresses leadership development, mentoring, transitional procedures, orientation, and turnover.

5. Proposed Action Plan to Address the Challenges Encountered by School Heads

This section covers the proposed output which emerged from the results of this study. It includes the key result areas, objectives, activities, persons involved, budgetary requirements, time frame, and expected outcome.

Rationale

DepEd Order No. 50 s. 2020, entitled the DepEd Professional Development Priorities for Teachers and School Leaders for School Year 2020-2023, strongly supports the achievement of the continuous upskilling and reskilling of teachers and school leaders that will result in improved learning results. To attain the goal of the K-12 Program, under DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2015, the department needs to enter into partnerships with different groups for its students, teacher training, use of facilities, and additional resources.

This action plan will address the problem of identifying one's competence, unequal access to training, lack of community support, funding issues, lack of confidence, and difficulty managing and facilitating teachers as beginner school heads.

Objective

This work plan was developed for the following purposes:

General Objective

The main goal of this plan of action is to address the challenges encountered by the School Heads in Bulusan District.

Specific Objectives

1. To give school heads the opportunity to be included in the training and enhance their capabilities in administering and managing teachers
2. To address the problems encountered by the school heads in terms of community support and funds
3. To boost the self-confidence and competence of school heads

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Majority of the school heads are 46 and older. Males have the opportunity to be school heads, and most of them are married and college graduates. Only a few of them pursue graduate studies. School heads are composed of administrators who are ten years and above. Generally, all of them attended local training.
2. The school heads of the Bulusan district are highly competent in terms of psychosocial attributes, personality, and ICT skills. At the same time, they are competent in accomplishment and moderately competent in research and innovation.
3. When the competitive edge is grouped according to the profile, school heads' psychosocial attributes, personality, and ICT skills are highly competent based on age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of service. While in terms of accomplishment, it was observed that school heads are moderately competent along the profiles, and in research and innovation, school heads are less competent. In terms of training, it is reflected that training attended by school heads was not related to achieving a competitive edge of the school heads.
4. The primary problems of the school heads are unrecognized problems on competence, equity access to trainings, community support, funding issues, lack of confidence, and being a neophyte school head.
5. A proposed Project SCORE School were designed to improve the competitive edge of the school heads and address their issues.

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. School heads may be encouraged to participate in training, seminars, and workshops addressing the unrecognized competence and professional development problem at the international level and pursue graduate studies.
2. The higher administrators may coordinate with the local government unit to support and implement proposed school projects and may encourage school heads to conduct action research.
3. The Department of Education may give a lot of technical assistance to the school heads to be empowered and conduct free seminars and training workshops to enrich their potential and think more outside the box.
4. A crafted Project SCORE School may be implemented to enhance the school heads' potential, address their issues, and help them improve their administration and management skills.
5. The researcher may submit the proposed Project SCORE School to the Schools Division Office for review and implementation.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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