



ENHANCING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP, SUPERVISORY, AND COPING SKILLS STRATEGIES AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HEADS IN A DIVISION

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Abstract: Improving elementary school heads' supervisory, coping, and instructional leadership abilities within a division is essential to creating a vibrant learning environment. With these abilities honed, these leaders can encourage their workers, overcome obstacles, and improve the general academic success of their schools. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study thoroughly explores instructional leadership strategies, supervision, and coping skills among 255 school administrators in Zambales, Philippines. Statistical and thematic analyses reveal administrators' openness to diverse instructional strategies, emphasizing increased classroom presence and collaborative professional growth. Instructional supervision roles show strengths in teaching and guiding but areas for improvement in goal setting. Coping skills exhibit high agreement, indicating diverse strategies in emotional coping, problem-solving, and interpersonal relationships. Although no significant correlation emerged between coping skills and instructional strategies, a positive correlation was found with instructional supervision, notably in roles like teacher, guide, gatekeeper, and consultant. Regression analysis highlights the substantial contribution of roles such as "Administrator as a Gatekeeper" in predicting coping skills. Administrators' coping mechanisms encompass time management, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, well-being through physical expression, and support systems. Building on these findings, a proposed 12-month action plan is introduced to enhance administrators' capabilities. It includes needs assessment, tailored training development, pilot implementation, and full-scale execution with workshops and peer learning sessions. The plan emphasizes ongoing monitoring, feedback mechanisms, and flexibility for refinement, involving a cross-functional team, facilitators, leaders, and mentors. Aligned with study recommendations, it fosters collaborative discussions, tailored professional growth, and supportive communities, aiming to enhance instructional strategies, supervisory roles, and coping capabilities for a more effective educational leadership team in Zambales, Philippines.

Keywords: Social Science, Instructional Leadership, Supervisory and Coping Skills of School Administrators, Mixed Method, Zambales, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The global educational landscape has witnessed a transformative shift in recent years, marked by an increased emphasis on instructional leadership, innovative supervisory approaches, and the crucial role of school administrators. These observed transformations, spanning continents, highlight the vital role of school leaders in influencing educational results. Educational research and investigations conducted across various regions, including Europe, North America, Asia, and beyond, consistently acknowledge the intricate characteristics of instructive direction and its significant effect on school atmosphere, teacher contentment, and student accomplishments. Fostering a culture of teacher leadership has significant implications for student learning and achievement. Research conducted by Scaletta & Hughes (2020) indicates that teachers who assume leadership roles are more likely to advocate for innovative instructional practices and positively influence student outcomes. School administrators worldwide confront various challenges within this global context, demanding astute decision-making skills and effective stress-management strategies (Daing & Mustapha, 2023). Widespread global research emphasizes the crucial necessity of equipping administrators with the necessary skills and support structures to navigate the intricacies of their roles effectively. From the United States to Europe, studies have underscored the significance of leadership training programs and resilience-building initiatives for educational leaders (Pitpit, 2020). Mentorship programs, as discussed by Frei et al. (2010), identify essential characteristics such as ongoing support, empowerment, and the establishment of professional networks. These characteristics



contribute significantly to the development of mentors and mentees alike, enhancing their resilience and capacity to manage stress in dynamic work environments. Moreover, Kairuz et al. (2016) emphasize that time management skills are particularly vital for students balancing academic responsibilities with part-time employment or other commitments. Their findings suggest that students with well-developed time management abilities report lower levels of stress and higher satisfaction with their academic experiences, reinforcing the dual function of these skills as both performance enhancers and stress mitigators.

However, while the global literature provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the challenges and strategies faced by school administrators, an ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) perspective reveals regional nuances. The ASEAN situational analysis sheds light on the unique educational context of Southeast Asia, encompassing countries like the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Administrators contend with distinct challenges and opportunities in the ASEAN region, shaped by cultural, socioeconomic, and political factors. Local research in ASEAN nations has delved into the intricacies of educational leadership and the specific demands placed on school administrators within the regional context. For instance, studies from Thailand and Indonesia have investigated leadership practices that align with ASEAN's emphasis on regional cooperation and collaboration in education (Wahyudi, 2020). These research efforts underscore the significance of adaptive leadership in navigating the complexities of the ASEAN educational landscape.

In contrast to the broader global and ASEAN literature, the specific local context of the Zambales Division in the Philippines presents unique challenges for school administrators. Research has highlighted that the increasing demands on educational leaders can lead to significant stress, impacting their effectiveness and decision-making capabilities. One study emphasizes that administrative stress can diminish leaders' ability to foster positive educational climates and effectively support their staff (Shoaib et al., 2022). Thus, understanding how social support systems can mitigate stress is essential for enhancing leadership efficacy. At the same time, global and ASEAN literature provides valuable insights into educational leadership and stress management; a note needs to be made in understanding the specific stressors and coping strategies relevant to the Division of Zambales.

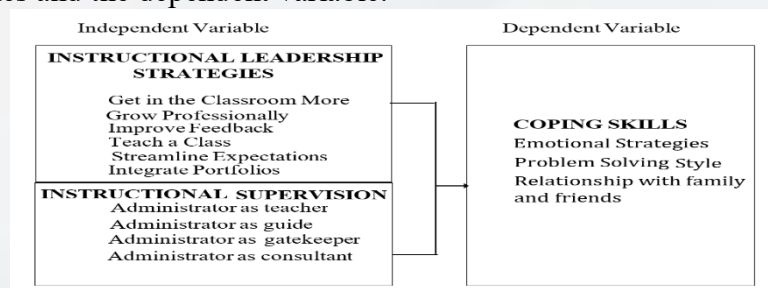
This study seeks to fill this void by examining the elements that impact administrators' coping abilities, particularly emphasizing instructional leadership and supervisory methods. The objective is to enhance coping skills, ultimately improving the Division of Zambales' educational quality. By delving into these dynamics, administrators can better cultivate resilient leadership, refine their supervision strategies, and enhance the overall educational landscape of the region. This study is motivated by the need to bridge the divide between global, ASEAN, and local literature, offering insights into the challenges and strategies relevant to school administrators in the Division of Zambales. The potential implications of this research are significant, ranging from informing policy and practice in the Philippine educational context to contributing to the broader discourse on effective educational leadership and stress management strategies.

FRAMEWORK

The current study intends to address these constraints by studying how instructional leadership techniques and supervision practices influence coping skills among school administrators in the Philippines' Zambales Division. This research, as shown in Figure 1, aims to reveal the intricate linkages and interactions between these variables, providing a fuller understanding of the issues faced by school administrators. The study aims to provide practical recommendations to improve their effectiveness and well-being within the Zambales Division's specific educational setting. The complicated interaction between the dependent and independent variables is depicted in Figure 1.

Schematic Diagram

Figure I: The schematic diagram presentation showing the interplay of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study results are significant to school administrators, providing many insights that may enhance their duties. Through an in-depth exploration of their school's instructional supervision methods and coping mechanisms, administrators may effectively negotiate the many problems they encounter. Developing a more profound comprehension and flexible methodology for diverse circumstances might give individuals the necessary skills to surmount problems more effortlessly. Additionally, the research emphasizes the significance of fostering patience in decision-making and problem-solving, resulting in more seamless job performance. This research allows administrators to strengthen their leadership effectiveness and provide a favorable climate for optimal learning and development.

The research is relevant to teachers as it offers valuable insights into coping techniques for managing stress. Teachers may successfully handle the stress of rigorous work requirements by understanding how their jobs connect with coping techniques. Equipped with effective coping strategies, individuals are more proficient in preserving their overall well-being and effectively confronting various problems. The outcomes resonate within the educational environment, ultimately yielding student benefits by improving the learning process and the overall quality of education.

The findings of this study have far-reaching ramifications for future researchers, particularly within the domain of academic research. The results of this study provide a vital source of information for future scholars making similar inquiries. Using research findings, prospective scholars can expand upon the current knowledge foundation and make valuable contributions to this discipline's growing corpus of study. Moreover, the study's results can serve as benchmarks for conducting comparative research, aiding subsequent researchers in assessing evolving patterns and temporal changes.

With a view toward the broader implications, the researcher foresees that the study results will spark school officials to acknowledge the crucial significance of coping skills. Cultivating personal qualities and implementing instructional leadership tactics and adequate supervision can facilitate ongoing professional growth and development. These findings will motivate administrators to use proactive stress management and problem-solving strategies. This approach enhances their well-being and positively impacts the educational atmosphere they foster.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized the Mixed Method sequential explanatory design. Quantitative data was gathered and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data. This design offered a deeper understanding



and facilitated clarification of findings. The quantitative data is used to verify or validate your qualitative conclusions.

A descriptive correlational methodology was used for the quantitative aspect, and a qualitative approach was used to elicit feedback from school administrators about their coping skills. The collected data were quantitatively examined using descriptive methods to identify the instructional leadership tactics, instructional supervision, and coping abilities of school administrators in the Zambales Division (modified from the original). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was performed to determine whether instructional leadership techniques, instructional supervision, and coping abilities were substantially connected among Zambales division primary school administrators. Multiple regression analysis was used in the study to find the characteristics predicting elementary administrators' coping skills. In addition, an open-ended question-and-answer session with ten randomly selected school administrators was held to gather their perspectives on coping techniques.

Research Site

This study was carried out in the Zambales Division, a province in the Philippines located in Central Luzon, with Iba as its capital. Pangasinan borders Zambales to the north and northeast, Tarlac to the east, Pampanga to the southeast, Bataan to the south, and the South China Sea to the west. It is Central Luzon's second-largest province, with a total land area of 3,830.83 square kilometers (1,479.09 square miles), including the autonomous city of Olongapo. Mangoes are well-known in the region, and they are plentiful from January to April.

Participants

There were 255 primary schools in this division, and school administrators served as the survey's respondents for each one of them. In this study, a census was used, which involves a comprehensive enumeration or count of every unit in a population. Because their participation was essential for the data sought, all school administrators in the division of Zambales were deemed respondents. Given the division's relatively tiny population of school administrators, a comprehensive enumeration was deemed necessary to provide an accurate representation.

Instrumentation

Construction and Development. The survey instruments have three parts. The questionnaire contained thirty (30) indicators on Instructional Leadership Strategies, twenty (20) indicators on Instructional Supervision, and thirty-five and thirty-five indicators (35) on Coping Skills, which will solicit answers from the school administrators in the division of Zambales. This survey questionnaire has been used and validated in the Bukidnon division. The researcher asked permission from Talde (2023), the questionnaire's owner.

Validation and Reliability.

Since this questionnaire is adapted from Talde (2023), additional validation was deemed unnecessary. However, to ensure reliability, the researcher conducted a pilot test in one of the districts within the division of Zambales, involving ten respondents. Cronbach's alpha was employed as the reliability index for all items, resulting in a reliability index .852. No item scored below .700, indicating satisfactory reliability. Consequently, no revisions were made to the questionnaires, and the data gathering proceeded with the targeted respondents in the division of Zambales

Data Collection



To guarantee a well-organized and systematic data-gathering approach, the researcher got permission from the Research and Ethics Board (REB) of Columban College Incorporated and the Dean of the School of Teacher Education. She then obtained authorization to perform the survey questionnaire from the division office of Zambales, the superintendent, the public school district supervisors, and the principals. A cover letter accompanied the instrument to clarify the study's aims, possible risks, benefits, and confidentiality. The data collection process spanned the entire academic year of 2023-2024. Following the collection of questionnaires, the data underwent verification, tallying, tabulation, presentation, and evaluation, with the results integrated into the main text of the study. The researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards and disclosure requirements, ensuring the comprehensive collection of all necessary documentation.

For Problem number 6, the researcher directly inquired with the school administrators about their self-assessment of coping skills mechanisms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing a descriptive correlational design for quantitative analysis and a qualitative method for gathering feedback from school administrators on their coping skills. The study took place in the division of Zambales, Philippines, encompassing 255 elementary schools, with all school administrators as respondents. The research instrument was comprised of three parts, focusing on instructional leadership strategies, instructional supervision, and coping skills, and had 255 participants. The research methodology encompassed applying statistical analyses to analyze quantitative data, including measures such as mean, standard deviation, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression.

The research instrument, adapted from a previous study, underwent reliability testing through pilot testing. Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining necessary approvals, maintaining anonymity during survey distribution, and adhering to ethical standards. Thematic analysis was employed to scrutinize the feedback gathered from school administrators regarding their coping skills and strategies.

In assessing the level of instructional strategies administrators employ, the study found a moderately high attitude for change in the "Get in Classroom More" approach, with solid consensus on the importance of increased formal observations and informal walkthrough schedules. Administrators strongly agreed on the need to streamline expectations, with a robust consensus on establishing common visions and expectations. Regarding improving feedback, administrators generally agreed on the importance of providing constructive suggestions and timely feedback. However, nuanced perspectives were evident on the belief in no perfect lesson and the necessity of clear, practical examples. Administrators generally exhibited a positive attitude toward instructional strategies for teaching a class, with a consensus on the effectiveness of co-teaching and relationship-building. Administrators strongly agreed on leveraging social media and personal learning networks in professional growth while displaying nuanced perspectives on attending conferences and reading books.

Regarding integrating portfolios, administrators showcased a moderately high attitude for change, with a consensus on their value as a complement to the observation process. However, variations in perceptions emerged, particularly in measuring performance and improving instructional effectiveness. These findings collectively highlight administrators' openness to diverse instructional strategies, with opportunities for further exploration and discussion.

The study revealed nuanced perspectives in examining the level of instructional supervision among school administrators across various roles. When acting as teachers, administrators emphasized



problem-solving and developing teachers' skills, demonstrating a shared commitment to addressing challenges. As guides, administrators were perceived positively, particularly in embodying good role models and engaging in extracurricular activities, though areas such as assisting teachers in goal setting showed room for improvement. Administrators generally agreed on their responsibility to influence critical decisions in the role of gatekeepers, although variations emerged in perceptions of holding teachers accountable. Lastly, administrators exhibited a stronger inclination toward strategic management and goal setting when functioning as consultants, while aspects like monitoring teacher performance indicated a comparatively less pronounced focus. Overall, these findings highlight the multifaceted nature of instructional supervision roles, with areas of consensus and opportunities for enhancement.

Administrators demonstrated high agreement with coping skills across emotional strategies, problem-solving styles, and relationships with family and friends. Regarding emotional coping, administrators actively changed thoughts to regulate negative emotions and maintain calmness during stress, with a slightly lower emphasis on deliberately fostering positive emotions. Regarding problem-solving styles, administrators exhibited a strong inclination toward being perceived as objective, logical, complex, and intellectual while preferring a broader, strategic focus rather than immediate details. Administrators indicated a desire for closeness in managing relationships with family and friends but also expressed concerns about dependence and potential value discrepancies. Overall, these findings suggest administrators possess diverse coping skills, reflecting strengths and areas for potential growth, particularly in fostering positive emotions and navigating interpersonal dynamics.

The examination of data revealed that there is no notable correlation between coping skills and instructional strategies. Conversely, a meaningful positive correlation emerged between coping skills and instructional supervision. This suggests that administrators who demonstrate proficiency in instructional supervision, particularly in roles like teacher, guide, gatekeeper, or consultant, are more likely to possess robust coping skills. This underscores the notion that certain facets of instructional supervision significantly contribute to administrators' coping abilities.

Consequently, the hypothesis asserting no significant relationship between coping skills and instructional strategies and instructional supervision was rejected. The findings underscore the importance of exploring the nuanced connection between specific roles within instructional supervision and administrators' coping capacities.

The regression analysis revealed a significant and robust relationship between administrators' coping skills and specific roles within instructional supervision, particularly as gatekeepers, guides, and consultants. The predictors collectively explained approximately 69.7% of the variability in coping skills, signifying their substantial contribution. "Administrator as a Gatekeeper" emerged as the most influential predictor, followed by "Administrator as a Guide" and "Administrator as a Consultant." The equation derived from the predictive model, incorporating these roles, displayed considerable significance, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis asserting that no variables, individually or in combination, effectively predict coping skills among administrators.

The findings emphasize the pivotal role of specific instructional supervision in forecasting administrators' coping abilities.

School administrators employ diverse coping mechanisms to manage the challenges inherent in their roles, revealing six distinct themes. The first theme, "Time Management Challenges and Strategies," emphasizes extended work hours, to-do lists, and relaxation techniques. The second theme, "Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution," underscores proactive approaches, discussions, and fulfilling commitments. The third theme, "Emotional Intelligence and Communication," highlights effective communication, emotional expression, and interpersonal skills. "Well-Being



through Physical and Emotional Expression," the fourth theme, encompasses relaxation techniques, physical activity, and holistic lifestyle choices. The fifth theme, "Support Systems and Social Connections," emphasizes social support, positive interactions, and addressing stressors within school settings. The final theme, "Variety of Coping Mechanisms," advocates for a diverse toolkit for stress management, acknowledging the uniqueness of individuals' experiences. Overall, these themes shed light on the multifaceted strategies administrators employ to foster well-being and navigate the complexities of their roles.

The proposed action plan is centered on leveraging the study's findings to enhance instructional leadership strategies, instructional supervision, and coping skills among school administrators. The plan involves a phased implementation approach, beginning with a detailed needs assessment and planning, followed by the development of tailored training modules and resources addressing specific areas for improvement. A pilot implementation phase with feedback mechanisms precedes the full-scale rollout of the action plan. Objectives include enhancing proficiency in instructional strategies, strengthening supervision roles, improving emotional intelligence, fostering a supportive organizational culture, and cultivating a growth mindset. Strategies encompass tailored professional development, role-specific training, emotional intelligence workshops, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Key stakeholders, including a cross-functional team and peer mentors, will be involved. The timeline spans 12 months, with regular check-ins for adjustments, ensuring a systematic and adaptive approach to promoting effective instructional leadership and coping skills among administrators.

CONCLUSION

Administrators display a moderately high attitude toward change in employing instructional strategies, emphasizing the importance of increased classroom presence, streamlined expectations, constructive feedback, teaching roles, professional growth, and portfolio integration. While there is a consensus on these strategies, nuances in perspectives suggest opportunities for further exploration and discussion, indicating administrators' openness to diverse instructional approaches.

Instructional supervision roles among administrators reveals nuanced perspectives. Positive views emerge when administrators act as teachers, guides, gatekeepers, and consultants, but variations exist. The study highlights areas for improvement, particularly in guiding teachers' goal setting and holding them accountable. Overall, the multifaceted nature of instructional supervision roles is evident, providing a foundation for both consensus and enhancement opportunities.

Administrators exhibit high agreement in coping skills, spanning emotional regulation, problem-solving styles, and relationships. While strengths are evident, areas for potential growth include fostering positive emotions and navigating interpersonal dynamics. The findings suggest that administrators possess a diverse set of coping skills, emphasizing both their strengths and opportunities for development.

No significant correlation is found between coping skills and instructional strategies. However, a significant positive correlation exists between coping skills and instructional supervision roles, particularly as gatekeepers, guides, and consultants. This highlights the crucial role of specific instructional supervision roles in administrators' coping abilities, revealing a nuanced connection worthy of exploration.

A regression analysis identifies specific instructional supervision roles, notably "Administrator as a Gatekeeper," as the most influential predictor of administrators' coping skills, followed by "Administrator as a Guide" and "Administrator as a Consultant." These roles collectively explain a



substantial proportion of the variability in coping skills, emphasizing their significant contribution. The findings reject the null hypothesis, underlining the pivotal role of instructional supervision roles in predicting administrators' coping abilities.

School administrators employ diverse coping mechanisms, revealing six distinct themes: time management, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, well-being through expression, support systems, and a variety of coping methods. Each theme reflects administrators' strategies for managing challenges and fostering well-being, showcasing their commitment to comprehensive approaches. The study highlights the interconnected nature of physical and emotional health, emphasizing the importance of building support systems within educational institutions.

The proposed action plan stands as a comprehensive and dynamic strategy to elevate the capabilities of school administrators in instructional leadership and coping skills. By strategically aligning interventions with the identified needs revealed in the study, the plan ensures a tailored and nuanced approach. The phased implementation, involving key stakeholders and a deliberate feedback loop, reflects a commitment to adaptability and continuous improvement. Over the 12-month timeline, the plan aims not only to enhance instructional strategies and supervision but also to foster a resilient and growth-oriented mindset among administrators, ultimately contributing to a more effective and well-balanced educational leadership team.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

Through developing and applying efficient techniques to improve supervisory practices, instructional leadership, and coping skills among primary school heads within a particular division, this translational research seeks to close the gap between theory and practice. Tailored interventions will be developed and implemented using current research and needs assessments. With an emphasis on how these interventions affect school leadership practices and general well-being, the efficacy of these interventions will be assessed using quantitative and qualitative methods. The results will be shared to guide best practices and assist school administrators' continuous professional development initiatives.

The heads of elementary schools significantly impact how kids learn and how well schools operate as a whole. Navigating the challenges of education leadership involves effective supervisory methods, coping skills, and instructional leadership. However, many school heads need help to acquire and keep these abilities, especially while working in a particular division. Through the identification of practical methods for improving these abilities and the facilitation of their application in elementary schools, this translational research aims to close this gap.

The literature review will include important ideas on supervisory techniques, instructional leadership, and coping mechanisms for school administrators. The study will utilize theoretical frameworks and empirical research to determine optimal methods for improving these proficiencies and emphasize the significance of customized treatments that cater to the distinct requirements of elementary school administrators. This review will also examine effective leadership's effects on student achievement and initiatives to improve schools.

This study will use a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative techniques for data gathering and analysis. In order to determine the unique difficulties and training requirements of the division's elementary school heads, the study will start with a needs assessment. In partnership with stakeholders, such as district officials, teachers, and school administrators, customized intervention plans will be designed based on the needs assessment results and the body of current literature.



The interventions will include training sessions, workshops, mentoring schemes, and peer support networks to improve instructional leadership, supervisory techniques, and coping mechanisms. Pre- and post-intervention surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations will all be used to assess the efficacy of these treatments. While qualitative findings will be conceptually evaluated to uncover essential themes and patterns, quantitative data will be statistically assessed.

The study's findings will show how well the intervention measures worked to improve elementary school heads' supervisory techniques, coping mechanisms, and instructional leadership. The main conclusions will involve modifications to leadership techniques, upgrades to coping and stress management techniques, and improvements to teacher supervision and support. In order to support school administrators' continuous professional development initiatives and to educate best practices, the findings will be shared through reports, conferences, and scholarly publications.

This translational project aims to advance the field of educational leadership by developing and implementing effective strategies to enhance supervisory practices, coping skills, and instructional leadership among elementary school heads in a division. By bridging the theory-practice gap, this project seeks to advance educational administrators' professional growth and well-being, ultimately leading to better student outcomes and school performance.

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