

Enhanced Technical and Administrative Skills of School Heads in Bulan District

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Abstract: *The study aimed to determine the technical and administrative skills of the school heads as enhanced by the utilization the Department of Education (DepEd) Information System in Bulan District during the school year 2018-2019. It used the descriptive-survey method since a questionnaire was devised in gathering the primary data as reflected in the problem. The respondents were all the school heads in the elementary school in the four districts of Bulan. The statistical tools utilized were weighted mean and ranking. The findings revealed that the school heads sometimes used the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) and Enterprise Human Resource Information System (EHRIS) with overall weighted means of 2.20 and 2.01, respectively. Similarly, the technical skills of the school heads in using the EBEIS were enhanced since they become advanced beginner with an average of 2.37 whereas they become competent when the EHRIS was utilized. On the other hand, the school heads became competent in their administrative skills when EBEIS and EHRIS were utilized. Moreover, the top five problems encountered by the teachers in utilizing the DCP package are insufficient ratio of computers available in school e-classroom with sum of ranks of 82 followed by high cost of ICT equipment parts, accessories and consumable supplies with sum of ranks of 97. Then the lack of available room that can be used as e-classroom with rank sum of 110 and the other two problems are lack of counterpart support from stakeholder in the sustainability of the program (rank sum=115) and minimal allocation for maintenance or expenditure towards the development of ICT related facilities (rank sum=134). With these, an action plan was crafted in order to enhance their technical and administrative skills in utilizing the DepEd Information System. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: The school heads do not regularly used the DepEd Information System; the technical skills of the school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System along EBEIS were enhanced since they became competent while advanced beginner relative to EHRIS; the school heads' administrative skills were enhanced because they became competent in utilizing the EBEIS and EHRIS; the foremost problems identified by the school heads in using the DepEd Information System are the ratio of computers available in school e-classroom is insufficient, the ICT equipment parts, accessories and consumable supplies are expensive, and the lack of available room that can be used as e-classroom; and the proposed action plan was designed to enhance the technical and administrative skills of the school heads in the utilization of DepEd Information System. The following recommendations were identified based on the conclusions: The school heads may be provided with capability building activities such as training, workshops and seminars with emphasis on utilization of EBEIS and EHRIS; the school heads may continually improve their technical skills in utilizing the DepEd Information System through constant use of the system in order to improve their competency level; the administrative skills of the school heads in using the DepEd Information System may be continually enhanced by providing additional ICT resources; the foremost problems encountered by the school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System may be addressed and given attention if the fund is available; and the action plan may be tried for implementation and if found feasible, be submitted to the Division Office for future adoption.*

Keywords: Enhanced Technical and Administrative Skills

1. Introduction

The education system, teaching methods, and learning environment have been revolutionized by technology, which posted complex challenges. As a result, the said activity has reached all sectors of the population and the information had been accessible to all. With this, the students and teachers today are regarded as digital natives and digital immigrants, respectively; wherein the latter are working with students whose entire lives have been immersed in the 21st century media culture.

In effect, the teaching methods need to be innovative which require the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) since it becomes one of the building blocks of modern society. Many countries are now understanding the importance of ICT and mastering the basic skills and concepts of it as part of the core of education. Organizations, experts and practitioners in the education sector increasingly recognizing the importance of ICT in supporting educational improvement and reform.

A report made by the National Institute of Multimedia Education in Japan, proved that an increase in student exposure to educational ICT through curriculum integration has a significant and positive impact on student achievement, especially in terms of knowledge-

Comprehension, practical skill and presentation skill in subject areas such as mathematics, science, and social study.

Moreover, the DepEd ICT4E states that the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is radically transforming the way we live. It is pervasive in our work, study and personal lives. Educators have recognized that there is a need to equip learners with the necessary skills and experiences that will enable them to become contributors of the global community. The potential of using ICT for educational purposes was viewed as a great opportunity by educators. Likewise, it was agreed by Falk and Carlson (1992) that such technologies are not a threat, but rather, they present a good opportunity for teaching and learning.

In the same way, the Philippine government found measures to cope with this global upgrade. The Department of Education (DepEd) believes to the premise that technology is a powerful tool for learning. It has various thrusts and programs being implemented in order to support the welfare of the youths towards productivity. With the legal mandate of promoting the right of all citizens to take appropriate steps in making education accessible to all, it is geared towards the transformation of education through the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP).

In addition, the DepEd Order No. 78, series of 2010 or simply the implementation of the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP), every recipient school will receive an e – classroom package that will be used to provide public schools with appropriate technology to enhance the teaching – learning process inside the classroom. The said program aims to provide public schools with appropriate technologies that would enhance the teaching-learning process and meet the challenges of the 21st century. This million-peso program envisions addressing the ICT infrastructure backlog of both elementary and secondary schools throughout the country and improving teachers' competencies to teach effectively. However, many challenges and setbacks are faced by the department along with the implementation of the program.

Through this program and the combined efforts of other government agencies and the private sector, 5409 public secondary schools have been provided with at least one computer laboratory each. This ranges from 10-20 computer units including other peripherals depending on the agencies providing the computer units. In public elementary school DepEd computerization program started in 2013. Every recipient school received an e – classroom package that used to provide public elementary schools with appropriate technology to enhance the teaching – learning process inside the classroom.

With the use of computers, the teachers, students, researchers and school administration derive benefits. Teachers use a computer to research on teaching materials to broaden their knowledge so that it can be passed interactively and easily to students. Computers are used by students as reference tools. They use computers to browse the Internet to look for information. Researcher uses a computer for collecting and processing data. School administration uses computers for an administrative purpose like, Record keeping, library management, result processing, and document printing, etc. to make sure that entire operation runs smoothly.

The computerization program can facilitate the transformation of school education, but to make this happen it is vital to bring a change in the mind set and culture of teachers, administrators, parents, and students. They should think of a way in which the use of computers will be relevant and aligned to the curriculum. Thus, harnessing ICT continues to be important challenge to educators and education.

The Bulan District which is composed of 4 districts having 61 schools. The said schools were recipients of the DepEd Computerization Program package that includes the Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS) and Enterprise Human Resource Information System (EHRIS). It was assumed that the school heads will be utilizing the information system in their administrative tasks. However, the researcher, who is a school head himself, observed that most of them have limited technical and administrative skills on the utilization of the systems included in the package. In the same manner, it is hoped that these skills may be enhanced.

Many studies have identified teacher's attitudes, beliefs and confidence as major determinants of ICT integration in teaching. Also, there were researchers conducted which have indicated that one barrier that prevents teachers from using ICT in their teaching is lack of self-confidence. Thus, this study serves as assessment and ongoing feedback mechanism research to inform decision and policy makers whether the DepEd computerization Program (DCP) is indeed contributing to the department's mission of providing equitable access to quality education for all Filipinos. Thus, it is worth to know what interventions and programs may be done to improve the DepEd Computerization Program through the output of this research.

Research Questions

The study aimed to determine the technical and administrative skills of the school heads in Bulan District as enhanced by the utilization of the DepEd Information System during the school year 2018 - 2019.

Specifically, it answered the following problems:

- 1) What is the extent of utilization of DepEd Information System along:
- 2) Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS); and
- 3) Enterprise Human Resource Information System (EHRIS)?
- 4) How does the utilization of DepEd Information System enhance the technical skills of the school heads along the identified variables?
- 5) How does the utilization of DepEd Information System enhance the managerial skills of the school heads along the identified variables?
- 6) What are the problems encountered by the school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System?

2. Methodology

This study determined the technical and administrative skills of the school heads as enhanced by the utilization the DepEd Information System in Bulan District during school year 2018-2019. The descriptive-survey method of research was used since it utilized a survey-questionnaire in order the gather the primary data from the respondents and unstructured interview was done so as to validate their responses.

A total of 57schools heads were involved in this study which came from the public elementary schools in the Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the Municipality of Bulan. The weighted mean and ranking were the statistical tools used in the analysis of data.

The Sample

The respondents of this study were the57school heads in the public elementary schools of Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 ofthe Municipality of Bulan. The distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 1. It can be shown from the table that of the 57 school heads, 12 or 21% of them were assigned in District I whereas 15 or 26% were destined in District II. Similarly, 14 or 25% of the school heads came from District III while 16 or 28% of them were from District IV.

The Instrument

The researcher utilized the survey-questionnaire to gather the response of the target respondents. The different problems enumerated in the study served as the guide in drafting the questionnaire.

The researcher structured questionnaire was sub-divided into four(4) parts. Part I focused on utilization of the DCP program, part II was about technical skills of the teachers/head teachers, part III focused on managerial skills, and part IV was more on problems encountered in the implementation of the program. A modified 4 – point rating scale were utilized in describing the extent of utilization of the program with the following response mode: 4 - Always, 3 - frequent, 2 - sometimes, and 1 - never. Along technical and managerial skills, the following rating scale was used: 5 - Expert, 4 - Proficient, 3 - Competent, 2 - Advanced Beginner, and 1 - Novice.

In order to establish the content validity of the instrument, the researcher consulted the adviser about the appropriate contents and was subjected to the critiquing of the panel members. Then, it was shown to the experts in the field such as research teachers and district supervisors who evaluated the questionnaire to find out if the instrument is understandable, has adequate items and is grammatically correct.

With the questionnaire in its final form, a dry run was conducted with the school heads from Matnog Central School on December 12, 2018. Afterwards, the researcher consulted with the adviser and drafted the final form of the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedures

Before the study was conducted, the researcher prepared a letter of request addressed to the Superintendent of DepEd Sorsogon Division and to four district supervisors of Bulan District to allow him to conduct a study on the target respondents and to administer the survey was sent on January 20, 2019. Upon the approval, the researcher also asked permission to the 62 elementary school heads to administer the survey.

On the other hand, it took 30 school days for the researcher to finish the administration of survey due to some school activity interruptions. The researcher was able to retrieve 57 survey-questionnaire out of 61 distributed questionnaires because of the heavy workload of the school heads that hindered them to accomplish the given survey sheet. A retrieval rate of 93.44% was attained. The data gathered were then tallied, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the appropriate statistical tools.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected from the survey were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted with the use of appropriate statistical measures and techniques. The weighted mean was used to determine the extent of utilization of DepEd Information System along enhanced basis education and enterprise human resource. The scale below was adopted to describe the extent of utilization:

3.50 – 4.00	Always
2.50 – 3.49	Frequent
1.50 – 2.49	Sometimes
1.00 – 1.49	Never

The weighted mean was utilized to determine the degree of enhancement in the technical and administrative skills of the school heads with the utilization of the DepEd Information System. The scale below was used to verbally describe such extent:

4.50 – 5.00	Expert
3.50 – 4.49	Proficient
2.50 – 3.49	Competent
1.50 – 2.49	Advanced Beginner
1.00 – 1.49	Novice

The ranking was utilized to identify the critical problems encountered by the school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System.

3. Results and Discussions

Based on the data collected, the following are the findings of the study:

- 1) The extent of utilization of DepEd Information System in terms of EBEIS has an overall weighted mean of 2.20 which is described as sometimes with visiting the site to gather information as the foremost activity with weighted mean of 2.17. Relative to EHRIS, it has an average of 2.01 which is verbally interpreted as sometimes with updating one's personal information as the mostly done activity with weighted mean of 2.21.
- 2) The technical skills of the school heads in using the EBEIS was enhanced because the overall weighted mean is 2.37 which is described as advanced beginner in which they are competent in logging in and out of the system. In terms of EHRIS, the school heads' technical skills were enhanced due to their competency level in utilizing the system with overall weighted mean of 3.29 with maintaining the teachers' account as the activity mostly competent.
- 3) The school heads' administrative skills along EBEIS were enhanced when they are proficient in its utilization having an average of 3.50 with inspiring the teachers to finish the task on time as the proficient skill.
- 4) In terms of EHRIS, the school heads' skills are proficient in assigning qualified personnel to manage the system, in following the protocol in the preparation and utilization of the online school registry, and in empowering them by providing school-based training on the preparation and utilization of the online with weighted means of 3.65, 3.67 and 3.89, respectively.
- 5) The top five problems encountered by the teachers in utilizing the DCP package are insufficient ratio of computers available in school e-classroom with sum of ranks of 82 followed by high cost of ICT equipment parts, accessories and consumable supplies with sum of ranks of 97. Then the lack of available room that can be used as e-classroom with rank sum of 110. The other two problems are lack of counterpart support from stakeholder in the sustainability of the program (rank

sum=115) and minimal allocation for maintenance or expenditure towards the development of ICT related facilities (rank sum=134).

- 6) An action plan may be designed to enhance the technical and administrative skills of school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System.

4. Conclusion

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

- 1) The school heads do not regularly used the DepEd Information System along EBEIS and EHRIS.
- 2) The technical skills of the school heads became competent in utilizing the EBEIS while they are advanced beginner in the usage of EHRIS.
- 3) The school heads' administrative skills were enhanced because they became competent in utilizing the EBEIS and EHRIS.
- 4) The foremost problems identified by the school heads in using the DepEd Information System are the ratio of computers available in school e-classroom is insufficient, the ICT equipment parts, accessories and consumable supplies are expensive, and the lack of available room that can be used as e-classroom.
- 5) An action plan was designed to increase the technical and administrative skills of the school heads in the utilization of DepEd Information System.

5. Recommendations

In the light of foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations were offered:

- 1) The school heads may be provided with capability building activities such as training, workshops and seminars with emphasis on utilization of EBEIS and EHRIS.
- 2) The school heads may continually improve their technical skills in utilizing the DepEd Information System through constant use of the system in order to improve their competency level.
- 3) The administrative skills of the school heads in using the DepEd Information System may be continually enhanced by providing additional ICT resources.
- 4) The foremost problems encountered by the school heads in utilizing the DepEd Information System may be addressed and given attention if the fund is available.
- 5) The action plan may be tried for implementation and if found feasible, be submitted to the Division Office for future adoption.
- 6) Further studies may be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the action plan and the inclusion of other variables which are not included in this study.

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