

Administrative Leadership of High School Principal: New Normal Education, Stress and Anxiety

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Abstract: The aim of this article is to search for the administrative leadership of high school principal in the new normal education. It further identifies the effect of the learning modalities on the stress and anxiety of the teachers and the administrator. The research used descriptive comparative research through observation and informal conversation. The study concluded that the administrative leadership of the high school principal in the new normal education contributed to the academic performance of the students and teaching performance of the teachers. However, the burden of works of the principal monitoring the different learning modalities in the new normal education causes the principal to stress, depression and anxiety. Stress developed from the excessive work load. Depression, although not so severe merely a feeling of dizziness and anxiety developed from a fear of unattainment of school objectives. The school principal then needs a relaxation hour to overcome such feelings. Enough sleeping habits might be recommended to play safe in their unpleasant health condition. Moreover, the practice of praying five times a day has great contribution to delineate the feeling of stress, anxiety and depression. The good practice of prayer has much influence of one's negative feelings towards success, because prayer stabilize the condition of one's mind and body through complete submission to will of the Almighty Lord, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate and the Rescuer of devotees.

Keywords: Administrative leadership, New normal education, Stress, Anxiety.

1. Introduction

In 2019, almost all educational system in the whole country of the Philippines have encountered problems. School administrators, teachers and students encountered the unpleasant feelings facing the continuity of education. In the later part of the year 2021, the top leaders of education have come up with an observation that the situation of the educational system has changed to New Normal Education. New Normal in the sense that lockdown has been lifted and the observance of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases Resolution No. 169-A (IATF) health protocols has relaxed. The policemen and other authorities who are entrusted with the safety of the public showed lesser degree of strictness. The people can now group themselves, walk around without facemask and travel anywhere

without barriers. This is the description of the New Normal.

During the height of the severe cases of the COVID 19 Pandemic, the government ordered lockdown in the cities as well as in the provinces. This circumstance has forced the school administrators, teachers, students and other sector of the society to stay home and wait until the effect of the virus subside. The schools were closed everywhere. The continuing education diverts from the face-to-face classes to the use of different modalities such as modular learning, synchronous learning, e-learning and blended learning. These are the strategies practiced by the schools to continue education. Specifically, the teachers were forced to prepare module. Parents were forced to participate in the education of their children by collecting module from the school and assist the children in answering modules. The pupils were not allowed to visit their school, they were forced to adopt the self-pace modular learning. The educational institutions were forced to prepare module for the students in spite of the scarcity and limited resources of the school supplies and financial capability to provide these supplies.

2. Administrative Leadership of School Administrators

Everyone in the school system faced challenges to adjust themselves to the prevailing situations. Particularly, the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School has experienced the same malady. The students were not allowed to visit and claim their learning module. The parents have to come to school to pick-up the module of their children. The parents have to double or may be triple their efforts just to cope the school policies and the health protocols. In other words, the parents experiencing difficulties to handle the education of their children. Nonetheless, the school administrators have to operate the school with specific administrative leadership.

In the new normal education, Alcantara (2022) wrote that the field of education is highly volatile as it goes through many changes due to continuous research for better ways to deliver instruction. With its rapid changes and increasing complexity, today's world poses new challenges and places new expectations on our educational system. There is a growing recognition of the need to adapt and improve student

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preparation for productive functioning in a constantly changing and increasingly demanding environment. Thus, the school administrators were entrusted with innovative administrative leadership to cope with the prevailing situation in the new normal education. The school administrators have face the teachers with new strategic of leadership. In the first place, coping with the production of module and then monitor and supervise teachers to release the module to the parents.

Alcantara goes to say and even cited a reference that when facing this obstacle, it's important to keep in mind the educational system's intricacy as well as the plethora of issues that must be handled (Bar-Yam *et al.*, 2002). From teaching strategies to curriculum contents and digitized equipment, it can truly be said that the classroom of yesterday is different from the classroom of today. This is what we mean by a new normal education. The objectives of teaching and learning activities is now prepared with the concern of digital electronics learning. The school administrators are not only managing and supervising teachers but also includes the digital programs in computers, social media and internet. In the traditional education, not much attention is given to the computer literacy, before considered it as optional support to the teaching learning processes. Unfortunately, education today, the school administrators may have to consider in their decision the use of technology, which is in fact additional burden in budgeting and providing financial allocation. The efforts of the school administrators may have adjusted to the maximum limit to remedy the problem of education.

3. Administrative Leadership and Stress, Anxiety in the New Normal Education

The principal of Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School have to attain administrative activities to the last moment of sunset. Attending the observation of the surrounding environment for students' protection. Giving time to the moment of supervising new teachers in their new chosen career. Monitoring the old ones to activate their teaching method to the use of the computer system. And to look at the problems of students in their difficulties in answering their modules. Stress is the key term to describe the situation of the school administrators when doing their administrative leadership in their own respective schools. Huberman (1973) said that educational changes might be modest or huge; in a given system, the change could be the acceptance of a method that has already been utilized elsewhere, therefore an innovation is not always an invention. The element of conscious planning or intention, however, distinguishes an innovation from change in general. Clearly, it is important to make distinctions on which changes are good from which are not, so as to identify whether the purpose of education is being achieved. In the flight of the school administrators in the new normal education may have affected the administrative leadership. It is good, if it changes to better otherwise the school administrator might have been given too much burden that would develop in them anxiety, which may not be tolerable.

Alcantara (2022) described it as schools are grappling with the changing demands of society, things became harder due to

the outbreak of the corona virus in the epicenter which is Wuhan, China, in the December of 2019. The occurrence of COVID-19 has affected many aspects of life very swiftly and drastically, not only in the country (Philippines) but also in other parts of the world. Today, millions of lives have been put in peril. Hence, national and indeed nearby governments on a worldwide scale discover their possessed ways of reacting to the emergency that the pandemic impacts on individuals. To name a few of these sad disparities, businesses are shutting down, economies are dwindling, people are losing their jobs, food shortage is starting to occur. Clearly, activities in life have radically changed, for people would not know how to cope with the situation. Particularly, the school administrators have a hard time to adjust the teachers to the new normal as well as to manage the students' safety and move on to make the school activities to measure the school objectives.

Multiple studies have been conducted in the new normal education. They reacted differently to describe the behavior of people with pandemic effect on human. Tus, *et. al.* (2021) said in a citation that a developing global epidemic of rising mental health disorders is afflicting roughly one-third of the world's population (Riley, 2019). Mental well-being, in general, refers to the emotional and psychological well-being that determines how a person thinks, feels, and reacts to life's events (World Health Organization, 2019). Adolescence, which lasts from the age of ten to the age of nineteen, is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. This is the stage of a person's development when key physiological and mental changes occur. There are around 1.2 billion teenagers worldwide, with 10-20% of children and adolescents suffering from some form of mental illness (WHO, 2019). Remember that some studies have shown that a student's academic performance can be influenced by his or her mental health as early as primary school (Marryat, *et.al.*, 2017). Almost every adolescent is subjected to some type of educational progress, from basic school to higher education. In the sphere of education, the transition to puberty and high school is not uncommon. Although, in certain cases, the move to a new location is frequently accompanied by new challenges and people who can contribute to an immediate shift in student socialization and behavioral influences that trigger short-term and long-term consequences on their mental health (Van Rens, *et.al.*, 2017). Furthermore, several studies investigated the relationship between the mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress on academic performance, and results indicated a significant indication (Moreira de Sousa, *et.al.*, 2018; Sharma & Pandey, 2017; Wyatt, *et.al.*, 2017).

The burden of works of the school administrators in specific educational institution radically affect their health through stress, anxiety and depression. A person who is involved in physical activities and mental process is known to have a chance of getting depression accompanied with the anxiety and stress. In the new normal education everyone in the institution are ravaging in their health problems. Many teachers, students and school administrators are closely monitored to have the same interaction. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2019) emphasized that mental health is most commonly

associated when a person becomes fully aware of their abilities, can adapt to the normal stressors and problems in their life, can work within one's self-fulfillment and satisfaction efficiently, and can make the right contributions to society. It can be applied to an individual's ability to develop themselves harmoniously with or without other people and to deal with the circumstances of life efficiently. The administrators' leadership operates normally with the focus on teachers' efficacy and students' performance as the basic measures of school goal achievement.

4. Depression and Anxiety

A person who are exposed to abundant works and pressure condition alternatively experienced depression and anxiety. Tus, *et.al.*, (2022) emphasized that depression and anxiety are the most common types of mental disorders, and comorbidity is also prevalent with these two disorders, which means that depression and anxiety may be simultaneously present in one person. Many individuals with anxiety also have depression and vice versa (Beiter *et al.*, 2014). They further states that the most common mental disorders refer to two main diagnostic categories: depressive disorders and anxiety disorders. These disorders are highly prevalent in the world and impact the mood or feelings of affected persons. These symptoms range in terms of their severity from mild to severe and last for months to years (Holliday *et al.*, 2015). As a matter of fact, the World Health Organization, WHO (2017) described that these are diagnosable health conditions and are distinct from feelings of sadness, normal anxiety, stress, or fear that anyone can experience from time to time in their everyday lives. At a global level, it's been reported that over 300 million people are estimated to suffer from depression, while more than 250 million people are estimated to suffer from anxiety disorder (WHO, 2017). The number of individuals with common mental disorders such as depression and anxiety is rising on a global scale. More specifically in lower-income countries such as the Philippines because of the rapid growth of population, which results in more people living within the adolescent age, the age range when depression and anxiety most commonly occur (WHO, 2017). Although depression and anxiety both can and do affect people of all ages. The risk of becoming depressed is mainly affected by overload of work in the school experienced mostly by the school leaders while they are going to find solutions to some school problems. The school administrators are often loaded with too much work that could end up with depression and anxiety, in their minds the school cannot cope with the expectations for the students and teachers.

Moreover, the pervasiveness of mental health disorders within the Philippines is gradually being measured and shown to increase within youth (Cleofas, 2019). Depressive disorders are mostly associated with great feelings of sadness, loss of passion or engagement with tasks and hobbies, feelings of regret, low self-esteem, disturbed sleep cycles or eating habits, extreme fatigue, and poor concentration. Depression can be long-lasting or recurrent, substantially impairing an individual's ability to function at work or school and negatively view oneself, the environment, and the future (Schwarzer, 1984). Only limited studies on school administrators have found that

excessive sadness, a symptom of depression, is due to anxiety and stress that are related to too much work and unrests while for students are mainly academics and subjective factors (Zuorba, *et.al.*, 2017). School administrator of MSU-Sulu Laboratory High School have much feeling on worry associated with sadness due to the poor responsiveness of the parents to claim the module and the teachers are coming up with the worry on the evaluation outcomes due to late submission of module return.

On the other hand, anxiety disorders are distinguished from a subjective state of intense and controlled fear and anxiety. Psychologically, extreme causes of anxiety can cause someone to feel disconnected from oneself and even fearing insane (Bourne, 2010). Additionally, an anxiety disorder can also refer to a group of mental disorders such as generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, phobias, social anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (WHO, 2017). This is not observed among the school administrator and teachers.

5. Stress

Stress is the typical reaction of a person's physical and mental aspect towards any change that requires an adjustment or response to perceived threats in a person's life. May it be literal or imagined, stress affects the physiological and psychological well-being of people. In turn, these effects can result in several stress reactions, such as the fight-or-flight response (Seaward, 2018). In a conducted study amongst Filipino students, stress was positively associated with their everyday routine and significantly affected their mental state. Such routines that correlate with their stress response were ranked in the following order: academics, amount of workload, and time management (Dy, *et.al.*, 2015). Fortunately, the school administrator of MSU-Sulu Laboratory High School has strong Islamic faith foundation. The matters with stress are not so much affected. The teachers are also strongly followed the Islamic teaching, as such is not strongly affected by stress. The trust in the Almighty Lord has something to do with decreasing degree of stress possibility. Prayer to the Almighty Lord has a great impact of neutralizing stress among teachers and school administrator.

6. Academic Performance

Academic performance results from the measurements and outcomes of proper education. It is the point wherein an institution, principal, or even student has achieved their educational goals. May it be in the significance of learning presented through scales (Ward, *et.al.*, 1996). The academic performance of the youth remains an important factor for the development of society. Students who do well in school are better able to transition into adulthood and achieve a better understanding of the practicalities of life—resulting in what may come off as occupational success that may contribute to the improvement of oneself and the community (Regier, 2011). The case of MSU-Sulu, academic performance mainly measures academic success of the students which in turns influence by the administrative leadership of the school

principal. The teachers mainly involved in the evaluation process and reporting the outcome of the students' achievements.

7. Conclusion

Administrative leadership of the high school principal in the new normal education contributed to the academic performance of the students and teaching performance of the teachers. However, the burden of works of the principal monitoring the different learning modalities in the new normal education causes the principal to stress, depression and anxiety. Stress developed from the excessive work load. Depression, although not so severe merely a feeling of dizziness and anxiety developed from a fear of unattainment of school objectives. The school principal then needs a relaxation hour to overcome such feelings. Enough sleeping habits might be recommended to play safe in their unpleasant health condition. Moreover, the practice of praying five times a day has great contribution to delineate the feeling of stress, anxiety and depression. The good practice of prayer have much influence of one's negative feelings towards success, because prayer stabilize the condition of ones mind and body through complete submission to will of the Almighty Lord, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate and the Rescuer of devotees.

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