PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPLETERS IN THE APPLICATION PROJECTS FOR THE SCHOOL HEADS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SHDP)-FOUNDATION COURSE

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Abstract: The study determined the performance of the completers in the application project for the School Heads Development Program (SHDP)- Foundation Course in the Schools Division of Sorsogon. The respondents were 165 school heads composed of principals, head teachers and teachers in charge. It utilized descriptive method of study through documentary analysis of DepEd documents and survey. Self-constructed questionnaire and unstructured interviews were used as relevant tools to gather data from respondents. Frequency and ranking were used in analyzing data and reporting the findings.

The study findings revealed that SHDP-FC completers were mostly 40 years and above, females with MA units and occupies Principal 1 position. The concern of the completer's project implemented were focused on curriculum, assessment and support programs, school leadership, instructional leadership, and strategic human resource development. Majority of the completers passed the Foundation Course. The school heads who are middle-aged, females with higher educational attainment and high position recorded higher number of passers in the evaluation of application projects. The inadequacy of time to implement the application project was the leading problem encountered by the completers of the SHDP foundation course.

Keywords: Application Project, Completers, Foundation Course, Performance of School Heads, School Heads Development Program (SHDP), School Leadership.

I. INTRODUCTION

As we advance into the new millennium, education systems and educational institutions are increasingly encountering forces and challenges that demands change. In the 21st century school setting, there is a budding acknowledgement of school leadership influence to support change and provide for quality education. Moreover, school leadership has been recognized by several researchers as a main element in the efficacy of school in delivering its vision, mission, and mandates.

The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2015) through the Education Policy Outlook has highlighted the global trends in most education setting in years to come. These trends offer commonality rather than differences among education systems around the world. Driving change in schools, developing, and supporting school leaders, adapting teachers to new models of professional development, personalized and blended learning, leveraging on resources and building partnership with the community. School leadership refers to the persons or teams that direct, manage or lead education institutions at primary and secondary levels (Day, Gu and Sammons, 2016).

According to Nannyonjo (2017), leadership is a critical aspect of all social endeavors. In schools, talented leadership is essential to student achievement and that school leadership impacts all facets of education. However, she claimed that in many school systems, effective school leadership is far from the norm. It is often simply assumed that school leaders, irrespective of capacity, will discharge responsibilities and initiatives assigned to them. Moreover, programs to prepare and or support school leaders are either lacking or ineffective.

Meanwhile, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO INNOTECH) developed the Competency Framework for Southeast Asian School Heads. The Competency Framework was envisioned to provide a common foundation for defining what skills and attributes are needed of school heads in order to effectively carry out their roles and lead their schools to excellence and success.

In the Philippines, an act instituting a framework of governance for basic education specifies that the school head must exercise instructional leadership and sound administrative judgement of the school (Republic Act No. 9155). The Act is a declaration that the government recognizes the importance of a decentralized management system and stakeholder participation in the pursuit of quality education. Through this Act, the school heads are given the authority, accountability, and responsibility in managing all affairs concerning schools (Oracion, et al., 2020). It articulates that school heads are empowered with an overwhelming responsibility and expectations and therefore, must be competent, skillful, and prepared to meet the challenges in the exercise of his duties and functions.

Furthermore, the critical and urgent need to improve the state of basic education prompted the Philippine government to prepare, capacitate, and provide development programs to school leaders. This is to help them understand and advocate school improvement programs and projects and equip them with necessary competencies to execute actions which can build up to major accomplishments. As provided by Sindhvad (2009), for leaders to feel confident in their ability to lead change efforts, their jobs need to provide them the opportunity to set directions, build relationships and gain commitment from followers, and take the actions necessary to overcome obstacles.

Moreover, the task force on the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) Transformation (2019) emphasized that career progression programs for school heads should support them in the different leadership dimensions. This include (i) leading strategically, (ii) managing school operations and resources, (iii) leading teaching and learning, (iii) developing self and others, and (v) building connections. In the past few years, the NEAP having been mandated to respond to the demand for professional competence as well as management and leadership excellence for school leaders, has concentrated on leadership programs (Oracion, et al., 2020). In support to the K–12 reform, which specified that principals undergo workshops and trainings to enhance their skills in their role as academic, administrative, and community leaders, the Department of Education, through the NEAP and the Human Resource Development Division rolled out the School Heads Development Program (SHDP): Foundation and Advance Courses.

Along with this, the SHDP intended to improve the capacity of the school heads to manage their schools as well as prepare aspirants to handle the responsibilities of a school head (DM No. 192, s.2016). There are three modules in the training design: the school head as instructional leader, the school head as organizational leader, and the school head as exemplar. The program requires participants to embark on an application project, which involves identifying a specific school concern which, when addressed, would deliver the best impact on school measures in 3 to 6 months.

After the conduct of SHDP-FC face-to-face training to four batches, the NEAP through the Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) lead the monitoring and evaluation of the completer's application project and accomplishments. As a requirement for the issuance of certificate of project completion, a school head completer must obtain a rating of 85 and above in the evaluation (DM No. 192, s 2016). In SDO- Sorsogon, the monitoring and evaluation for batches 1-3 was done on July to August 2019 and batch 4, January 2020. However, not all school heads have been evaluated and informed of their rating. In the informal interview with the SDO-HRDD in-charge, the rating of completer could only be accessed through a request letter duly approved by the Dean of the NEAP because of data privacy concerns.

As one of the completers of SHDP-FC Batch 1, the researcher was driven to undertake this research to determine the performance and the impact of SHDP-FC on the school heads performance. Thus, this study determined the completers performance in their application project. This study also identified significant milestones and best practices in project development and implementation and the common problems encountered which affected the project implementation and completion.

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1.1. Statement of the Problem

This study determined the performance of the completers in the application project for the School Heads Development Program (SHDP) Foundation Course in the Schools Division of Sorsogon, School Years 2016-2019. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the foundation course completers of the School Heads Development Program (SHDP) in terms of:

a. age

b. sex

c. educational attainment

d. position title

2. What specific school concern was addressed by the completer's implemented project?

3. What is the performance of the completers in their implemented project?

4. How does the performance of the completers vary when grouped according to their profile?

5. What are the problems encountered by the completers in the implementation of the application project?

6. What seminar-workshop could be proposed based from the findings of the study?

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The School Heads Development Program (SHDP) Foundation Course is a capacity building for school leaders to enhance their skills in their role as academic, administrative, and community leaders. This is primarily intended to improve the capacity of the school heads to manage their schools as well as prepare aspirants to handle the responsibilities of a school head.

As a completion requirement and a requirement for the issuance of certificate of project completion, a school head completer must obtain a rating of 85 and above in the project implementation monitoring and evaluation. In SDO-Sorsogon, the monitoring and evaluation for batches 1-3 was done on July to August 2019 and January 2020 for batch 4. However, not all school heads have been evaluated and informed of their rating. This motivated the researcher to conduct a study to determine his rating and performance and be able to get the certificate of project completion, which is a requirement for reclassification and ranking of principals. Thus, this study determined the completers performance in their application project. This study also identified significant milestones and best practices in project development and implementation and the common problems encountered which affected the project implementation and completion.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study determined the performance of the completers in the application project for the School Heads Development Program (SHDP) Foundation Course in the Schools Division of Sorsogon. This covered the profile and performance in the application project of the school head completers of SHDP-FC from year 2016 to 2019 in Schools Division of Sorsogon. This study used descriptive research design, which aims to gather information about present existing conditions (Creswell, 1994).

Documentary analysis of DepEd files on SHDP-FC profile and performance along with constructed survey questionnaire and unstructured interview provided the data on the profile, specific school concern addressed by the completer's implemented project, and problems encountered by the completers in the implementation of the application project. The insufficient data from the HRDD was supplemented by researcher-made and validated survey instrument. With the difficulty and travel limitations brought by the COVID pandemic, most of the respondents were contacted and requested to submit accomplished survey instrument through e-mail, Facebook, and Messenger. An informal interview was also conducted which was done through email, messenger chats and text messages.

The responses of the school heads in their accomplished survey questionnaire and the data provided by the SDO-HRDD focal person were all kept private and confidential as per research ethics explained by Fraenkel (2003). Frequency and percentage were used for the profile and performance of the respondents. Frequency count was also used to determine how the performance of the completers vary when grouped according to their profile. Ranking was used for the problems encountered by the completers in the application project implementation.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the data gathered and interpreted, the following findings were obtained:

1. Result of the study revealed that out of 165 school heads completer of foundation course, 5 or 3% are aged 30 and below, 36 or 22% are aged 31-40, 63 or 38% are aged 41-50, and 61 or 37% are aged 51 and above, 81 or 49% are males and 84 or 51% are females, 7 or 4% holds Doctorate Degree, 12 or 7% with doctoral units, 48 or 29% with master's degree, 52 or 32% has master's units and 46 or 28% are baccalaureate degree holders, 5 or 3% are Principal 2, 66 or 40% are Principal 1, 43 or 26% are Head Teacher 3, 11 or 7% are Head Teacher 2, 8 or 5% are Head Teacher 1, and 32 or 19% are Teachers In Charge.

2. The top concern of the completer's project implemented was curriculum, assessment and support programs followed by school leadership: SBM, SIP, CI and Partnership, Instructional Leadership and Strategic Human Resource Development.

3. Out of 165 completers, 103 or 62% earned ratings of 85 & above and 62 or 38% earned 84 & below ratings.

4. When grouped according to age, completers who obtained 85 and above rating is highest among 31-40 years old group with 67% while those who obtained 84 and below rating, the percentage is highest for the age group 41-50 with 41% closely seconded by group 30 and below with 40%. When grouped according to sex, the percentage completers who got 85 & above ratings is higher in females (69%) than males (56%) while for 84 and below, it is higher in males (44%) than females (31%). When grouped according to educational attainment, percentage of completers who obtained 85 and above rating is the highest for the group of doctoral graduates (86%) whereas percentages of completers with 84 and below rating, the trend is opposite with 43% for baccalaureate degree holders. When grouped according to position title, percentage of completers who obtained 85 and above rating is highest among principal 2 (100%), whereas, percentages of completers who obtained 84 and below rating is the highest for principal 1 (42%) closely followed by teachers in charge (41%).

5. Inadequacy of time in project implementation, Lacking funds for the project, conflict of schedule for school activities, transfer to another school/district and uncooperative beneficiaries and program implementers, personal and family health issues, personal and work-related problems were the identified and ranked problems encountered by the completers in the application project implementation.

6. A seminar-workshop on the formulation of application project can be proposed as a result of the study.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The completers of the foundation course of School Heads Development Program are mostly middle-aged females who are currently pursuing their master's degree and are holding Principal 1 position.

2. Most of the implemented application projects of the completers of SHDP Foundation Course address school concerns related to curriculum, assessment, and support programs.

3. Majority of the completers passed the SHDP foundation course.

4. The school heads who are middle-aged females with higher educational attainment and high position performed better in the evaluation of application project for the foundation course.

5. The inadequacy of time to implement the application project was the leading problem encountered by the completers of the SHDP foundation course.

6. A seminar-workshop on the formulation of application project is hereby proposed as a result of the study.

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V. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations were presented:

1. School heads may be encouraged to continuously seek opportunities to update and upgrade their personal and professional profiles by pursuing advanced education.

2. The school heads may provide preferential attention to other specific school concerns which need immediate solution and intervention aside from the curriculum and assessment and support programs.

3. To ensure completion of the SHDP-FC, the SDO may assign coaches and mentors to facilitate objective, timely and regular monitoring, feedback, coaching and evaluation activities.

4. To enhance the SHDP-FC completers competence and performance, the SDO may provide capability building programs and projects by giving them opportunities to attend trainings, seminars, and conferences to further update them on the new leadership trends.

5. The NEAP and SDO may revisit the SHDP-FC implementation status in Sorsogon for them to provide technical assistance to completers by assigning mentors and coaches, extending timeline for project implementation, and developing new scheme for assessment and evaluation. The SDO may also source out and allocate funds to support school heads for their programs and projects.

6. The SDO may consider the review and study of the proposed seminar workshop on the formulation of school heads application projects for possible adoption and implementation.

7. Future researchers may be encouraged to conduct a similar study on profile and performance of the completers of foundation course of School Heads Development Program (SHDP) in other divisions and regions for validation.

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