



SCHOOL STRESS MANAGEMENT AND TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN THE IN-PERSON CLASSES

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Abstract

Stress arises during the implementation of New Normal and in-person classes. Schools have become the most vulnerable to safety and security. Health concerns of school personnel, students, parents, and other stakeholders are at stake; thus, temporary closure of schools was enforced to contain the spread of the virus and reduce infections career. This study utilized a Quantitative Research Design, specifically, the use of Descriptive-Correlation to determine the significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District for School Year 2022-2023.

Based on the result, Kulaman District II have a commendable implementation of stress management, specifically in the areas of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources.

Result also revealed that teachers had the least research-based teaching expertise. In terms of their grasp and application of knowledge, however, they exhibit an exceptional or great performance. Therefore, it may be extrapolated that teachers in the Kulaman District are committed to professional development that influences their performance. In addition, they follow Creating Safe and Secure Classrooms, which makes learning relevant for every student they have. Finally, it way concluded that the implementation of the stress management had significant contribution on the performance of Elementary School teachers in Kulaman District II.

1.INTRODUCTION

Stress arises during the implementation of New Normal and In-Person classes. Schools have become the most vulnerable to safety and security. Health concerns of school personnel, students, parents, and other stakeholders are at stake; thus, temporary closure of schools was enforced to contain the spread of the virus and reduce infections (UNESCO, 2020). This stigma caused stressed among teachers which affect their school performance even in the face to-face modality.

In Western countries, like Denver, and Italy, teachers in the middle schools still face stress, even vaccines are already made. By this, teachers opt to cut their classes short than expected, which causes serious disruption to more educational opportunities. Teaching and learning which mainly happens inside the classroom becomes the most susceptible to disturbance, so education leaders decided to cope with and adopt the New Normal education (Crawford, et al., 2020).

Similarly, in recent years, Philippines steadily increasing costs and consequences of teacher stress had received growing concern. To reduce the negative effects stress had on teachers, more attention needs were placed on this growing epidemic (Bachkirova, 2015). One out of three teachers report teaching as being very or extremely stressful, causing the teaching profession to had the highest annual turnover rate.

Indeed, teachers was more likely to used functional than dysfunctional coping strategies when they attributed the causes of their constraints to external factors, like parents' low motivation or the school's low level of organization. However, when they internalized the constraints, e.g. when they complained about their own level of organization or the low level of digital competence, they preferred dysfunctional over functional coping strategies.

Teacher stress was caused by environmental factors as well as individual characteristics. Major environmental factors include poor working conditions, scarcity of resources, heavy workloads, and student behavior. Individual characteristics can include gender, age, personality, and the ability to cope (Guglielmi & Tatrow, 2018). It may also be that teachers who perceived greater stress from responsibility for students' achievement exerted more effort during lesson planning and distance teaching and thus used more functional than dysfunctional coping strategies (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Hence, the researcher intended to conduct this study to determine the impact of the school stress management to the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District, Senator Ninoy Aquino, Sultan Kudarat for the School Year 2022-2023.

This portion shows the Conceptual Framework of this study that deals with the relationship of the independent variable. The independent variable of this study was the extent of the school stress management, which includes Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources. This concept was anchored on the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (2022), incorporated by Royal Charter.

On the other hand, dependent variables was comprised of the level of teachers' performance, which includes the Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classrooms, Application of a Successful Strategy, Integration of ICT in Teaching, and Setting of Professional Development as per DepEd Order No. 004 series of 2022, titled, Implementation of the Results-Based Performance Management System-Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers.

Generally, this study determined the impact of the school stress management to the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District, Senator Ninoy Aquino, Sultan Kudarat for the School Year 2022-2023.

This study could help readers determine the impact of the school stress management to the level of performance of Elementary School teachers. The outcome of the study would be beneficial to the following DepEd Personnel:

The said study was limited to the extent of the school stress management and teachers' performance in the in-person classes in Kulaman District II, Division of Sultan Kudarat during the School Year 2022-2023. The respondents of this study were all the school heads and selected teachers in the said district.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized a Quantitative Research Design, specifically, the use of Descriptive-Correlation to determine the significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District for School Year 2022-2023.

The respondents of this study were two groups of respondents to evaluate the extent of school stress management and teachers' performance in DepEd Kulaman District, Sen. Ninoy Aquino, Sultan Kudarat:

First, the selected stakeholders of the said District to assess and evaluate the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources.

Second, all the school heads of Kulaman District were take part in this study to determine the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in Kulaman District, in terms of Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classrooms, Application of a Successful Strategy, Integration of ICT in Teaching, and Setting of Professional Development.

This study employed a Purposive Sampling Technique to purposely select the knowledgeable Stakeholders to evaluate the extent of the school stress management in Kulaman District for the School Year 2022-2023.

On the other hand, Total Enumeration Sampling Technique was used to select all the schools of Kulaman District to evaluate the teachers' performance.

The study was conducted in Kulaman District II, Sultan Kudarat Division. The researcher chose this place for the reason that the respondents from this place will be easily contacted.

The adopted survey questionnaire was the main instrument used in this study to gather the reliable data to answer all the problems stated in Chapter I.

First, an adopted survey questionnaire adopted from Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (2022), incorporated by Royal Charter, to evaluate the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources. It also follows by a rating scale which is shown below:

Second, adopted survey questionnaire was from Dincong (2021) which was also patterned from DepEd Order No. 004 series of 2022, titled, Implementation of the Results-Based Performance Management System-Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers to evaluate the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District, in terms of Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classrooms, Application of a Successful Strategy, Integration of ICT in Teaching, and Setting of Professional Development. The relevant scale is also observed from the aforementioned author/researcher:

This study was primarily descriptive in nature. Thus, the statistical measures were used in the interpretation of the data.

First, Mean and Standard Deviation were used to assess and evaluate the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District, in terms of Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classrooms, Application of a Successful Strategy, Integration of ICT in Teaching, and Setting of Professional Development.

Moreover, Pearson Moment Correlation were used to determine the significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in Kulaman District for School Year 2022-2023.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources.

The corresponding tables below show the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources.

Table 1 shows the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management. As observed, only indicator 3 “When necessary, Teachers stop additional work being taken on by their team” had the lowest mean of 3.90 which described as “Highly Evident”. While indicators 2 “Teachers monitor the team’s workload on an ongoing basis”, 4 “Teachers review processes to see if work can be improved”, and 5 “Teachers encourage other teams to review how they organize their work” which was equally marked as “Highly Evident”. Generally, the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Proactive Work Management got the section mean of 4.278 which has the description of “Highly Evident”.

The above result reveals that Kulaman district had a good implementation of stress management in terms of Proactive Work Management, however, there was instances that teachers cannot stop themselves from receiving additional works due to their limited number in their school. However, it also implies that there was a good teamwork among teachers in organizing and doing their school assignments.

Table 2 exhibits the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Problem Solving. As seen above, only indicator 5 “Teachers develop action plans” had the lowest mean of 4.10 which the interpretation of “Satisfactorily Evident”. While indicator 2 “Teachers follow up problems on behalf of their team” obtained the highest mean of 4.40 which can be described as “Highly Evident”. Generally, the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Problem Solving obtained the section mean of 4.236 which had been interpreted as “Highly Evident”.

The result implies that schools in Kulaman district practiced a good stress management, especially when it comes to problem solving. However, result also shows that teachers rarely develop action plans as their mechanisms to solve future problems. Yet, collaboration and good relationships was observed as these teachers help one another in solving issues and concerns in their school. Hence, this district’s stress management practices were highly evident.

Table 3 details the extent of the school stress management, in terms of participation/empowerment. As detailed above, indicator 1 “School Heads give employees the right level of job responsibility” got the highest mean of 4.50 as “Highly Evident”. This followed by indicators 2 “Heads correctly judge when to consult the team and when to make a decision”, 3 “School heads keep the team informed of what was happening in the organization”, and 5 “School Heads give the right level of direction to their team members” with the mean of 4.40 and interpretation of “Highly Evident”. Generally, it has the section mean of 4.421 which has the interpretation of “Highly Evident”

The above table indicates that Kulaman district had good practices of stress management in the area of participation/empowerment. The relationship between the school heads and teachers was evident and this help them participate in all duties they had and empower themselves. The good treatment of the school heads towards their teachers contributed meaningfully in the Table 4 displays the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Emphatic Engagement. As displayed above, all the indicators were interpreted as “Highly Evident”. However, indicator 5 “Teachers treat all team members with equal importance” obtained the perfect mean of 5.00 interpreted as “highly evident”, while indicator 1 “Teachers encourage individuals’ input in discussions” the least mean of 4.30 but still interpreted as “Highly Evident”.

The aforementioned result indicates that Kulaman District adhered with the good practices of stress management, especially in terms of Emphatic Engagement. Teachers treat each other equally despite their positions or designation which absolutely brings peace to the team. They also know how to listen when someone was in need of help, whether work’s issues or personal issues. Evidently, teachers in this district know how to emphasize to others situation or feeling, and this makes the implementation of their stress management successful.

Table 5 displays the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Managing Conflict. As shown above, indicators 3 “School heads deal objectively with employee conflicts”, and 5 “Teachers try and resolve issues rather than act to keep the peace” obtained the perfect mean of 5.00 interpreted as “Highly Evident”. Generally, the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Managing Conflict obtained the section mean of 4.420 interpreted as “Highly Evident”.

The result implies that the extent of the school stress management, in terms of Managing Conflict is highly evident which means that school heads are very objective in dealing the arising conflicts in school, without biases. It also shows that teachers have their own creative mechanisms on how they resolve problems, especially issues and cases related to their job.

Table 6 shows the extent of the school stress management, in terms of use of organization resources. As shown above, indicators 4, “School Heads show equal opportunities for others in availing school resources”, and 5 “Teachers share resources with their colleagues in the department” obtained the perfect mean of 5.00 interpreted as “Highly Evident”. Generally, the extent of the school stress management, in terms of use of organization resources obtained the section mean of 4.480 interpreted as “Highly Evident”.

The result entails that the extent of the school stress management, in terms of use of organization resources is highly evident. This further entails that school heads in Kulaman District II give equal opportunities to all their teachers when it comes the giving or sharing of resources, especially resources that they can use in teaching. It also indicates that teachers also share resources to their colleagues. This good relationship among school heads and teachers marked the above-mentioned this District is a good implementer of stress management.

Table 7 displays the summary results of the extent of the school stress management in Kulaman District II. As indicated above, all the indicators obtained the mean of 4.20 to 4.40 which interpreted as “Highly Evident”. However, among the 6 identified domains under the extent of stress management, “use of organization resources” obtained the highest mean of 4.480 with the interpretation of “Highly Evident”. Generally, the extent of the school stress management in Kulaman District II, Division of Sultan Kudarat got the grand mean of 4.348 interpreted as “Highly Evident”.

The result implies that Kulaman District II has a commendable implementation of stress management, specifically in the areas of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources.

The aforementioned result complement with the idea of Lambert (2019), stress management will be vital for individual teachers experiencing stress or burnout (in this instance, the specific stressors the individual teacher has been experiencing); groups of teachers (such as teachers in training, or special education teachers); and whole schools (for example, schools serving vulnerable populations or with high levels of student violence, teachers working in problematic school climates, or schools undergoing intensive bureaucratic processes). This management will provide mechanism to teachers who have major stressors affecting works, alongside corresponding stress approaches which address each of these stressors, and which, if implemented, result in improved teaching effectiveness and quality.

Level of Teachers’ Performance

The table below, displays the level of teachers’ performance in terms of Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classroom, Application of a Successful Strategy, and Setting of Professional Development. The supplied information was collected from the OPRCF, which was acquired from the school administrators' offices with their permission.

Table 8 shows the level of teachers' performance in terms of Application of Knowledge of Content, Use of Research-Based Knowledge, Establishing Safe and Secure Classroom, Application of a Successful Strategy, and Setting of Professional Development. As observed, only indicator 2 "Use of Research-Based Knowledge" got the lowest mean of 3.80 which can be described as "very satisfactory". All of the indicators relating to teachers' performance based on the IPCRF, such as Application of Knowledge of Content, Establishing Safe and Secure Classroom, Application of a Successful Strategy, and Setting of Professional Development are rated as "Outstanding". Generally, the level of teachers' performance obtained the grand mean of 4.24 which interpreted as "Outstanding".

The finding reveals that teachers have the least research-based teaching expertise. In terms of their grasp and application of knowledge, however, they exhibit an exceptional or great performance. Therefore, it may be extrapolated that teachers in the Kulaman District are committed to professional development that influences their performance. In addition, they follow Creating Safe and Secure Classrooms, which makes learning relevant for every student they have.

The above result is supported by the findings Roeser et al., (2013), that individual teacher stressors are largely related to the individual teachers' ability to handle the demands of the job effectively, the most important strategies in this category relate to each individual teacher's skills in coping with day-to-day stress. These skills are well developed in some fortunate individuals, but can be taught to others and even to those with relatively high anxiety.

Relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District

The table below shows the significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District.

Table 9 above shows the significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District. As observed above, all the p-values (.036, .010, .012, .025, .016, .013 and .021) are less than 0.05 level of significance which statistically implies that there is a significant relationship between the independent (x) variable and dependent (y) variable. Therefore, in this study, it denotes that there was a significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District.

It implies further that the implementation of the stress management has significant contribution on the performance of elementary school teachers in Kulaman District. Therefore, the null hypothesis that tells "there is no significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District", was being rejected.

The said result is congruent with findings of Ullrich, et al (2012), that managing Individual Teacher Stressors, Teacher stressors affect the personal experience of teaching on an individual level. Some stressors are due to personal circumstances, which would typically be stressful for any teacher, such as being new to the school, while others relate to characteristics of the job, such as classroom demands. Other stressors in this category are more psychological, and affect different teachers in different ways, depending on their individual personality characteristics. These include low self-efficacy (Berryhill et al., 2019).

It has been supported by Lambert et al., (2019), which he stressed that teachers' low self- confidence and lack of belief that they have the ability to control a situation, or that they can bring about their intended outcome, affects their productivity. It also includes

teachers' low self-acceptance which reflects the extent to which teachers hold negative attitudes about themselves, particularly when things go wrong in the classroom.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS

Based on the result, Kulaman District II had a commendable implementation of stress management, specifically in the areas of Proactive Work Management, Problem Solving, Participative/Empowering, Emphatic Engagement, Managing Conflict, and Use of Organization Resources. Result also reveals that teachers had the least research-based teaching expertise. In terms of their grasp and application of knowledge, however, they exhibit an exceptional or great performance. Therefore, it may be extrapolated that teachers in the Kulaman District are committed to professional development that influences their performance. In addition, they follow Creating Safe and Secure Classrooms, which makes learning relevant for every student they have.

Finally, the implementation of the stress management had significant contribution on the performance of elementary school teachers in Kulaman District. Therefore, the null hypothesis that tells "there is no significant relationship between the extent of the school stress management, and the level of performance of Elementary School teachers in DepEd Kulaman District", was being rejected.

5. CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Kulaman District II has a commendable implementation of stress management which creates significant impact on the productivity of the teachers.
2. The teachers' performance in Kulaman were outstanding. However, they have least research-based knowledge due to limited access and involvement in research activities and training's.
3. The commendable implementation of stress management in Kulaman District brought meaningful effects to the work performances of the elementary school teachers.

In the light of the findings and conclusion of the research study, the following are recommended:

1. The Department of Education (DEPED) may strengthen the implementation of stress management among elementary schools especially to the school prompting issues related to mental health.
2. DepEd may craft a program or intervention to enhance the knowledge of teachers in research which can be used in improving their school performance.
3. It is also recommended that school administrator will capacitate their teachers, especially on how to manage stressors at work.
4. Future researchers may also work on research studies to further assess the implementation of stress management, and to discover some mechanisms to mediate teachers' stress.

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