



# THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE OF SCHOOL HEADS ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**ABSTRACT.** The most important details in this research study are the activities implemented by school heads in their community of practice on teachers' professional development and classroom management. These activities included providing concepts on how to instill positive discipline via the online session, allowing teachers to attend in-person training, learning best practices for classroom management, educating parents on how to use positive discipline at home while students are engaged in a distance learning method, and acquiring KSAs on learners' discipline. Internet connectivity, limited participation in online/limited face-to-face LAC, and some teachers' refusal to participate in activities related to classroom management during the pandemic were the gaps experienced by school head respondents.

**KEYWORDS:** COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE, TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The emerging trends in school leadership along with school governance are emulated by recognizing the vital role of the school and communities in the implementation of the distance learning delivery modality through the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan. While on the aspect of resource management, school leaders the emerging trends are displayed through revitalizing the pillars of support through enhanced community partnership and building wider connections to people despite the limitations and restrictions. Leaders identified various challenges in dealing with the emerging trends along curriculum

implementation during the pandemic such as difficulties in instructional delivery and quality learning engagement. In addition, teachers have spent so much time facilitating the production of modules and other learning materials, and no personal engagement between teachers and learners was some of the challenges met along MDL implementation.

These involve the implementation of the Alternative Working Arrangements Outcomes encompass knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in

society. Quality education, however, lies in different elements, which include the knowledge of the teacher on current trends, pedagogy, and methodology of the teaching profession. Consequently, continuous professional development for teachers will enable them to upgrade their expertise, knowledge, skills, behavior, attitude, and qualifications and move along their preferred career path. The Continuous Professional Development Framework for Teachers and School Directors for 2019-2023 in Cambodia reiterated the direct benefits to teachers of continuous professional development.

Among these benefits include improved subject area knowledge, teaching methodologies, and understanding of learning theories, increase opportunities for career advancement, opportunities for a career transition to specialist teaching, educational leadership, and teacher education, and improved status within their profession and community. On the same note, the Center for Public Education contends that professional development training experience should change the teacher's practice to increase students' learning. To attain this, professional development should expose teachers to various pedagogical strategies and research base behind them and support teachers as they implement the research base strategy in their classroom, recognizing that implementation is the most difficult learning strategy for teachers. In the Philippine education setting, the professional development of teachers is one of the priorities of the Department of Education.

Consequently, teachers' professional development will aid them in revising the traditional beliefs and assumptions about education, community, teaching, and learning to suit better the needs of present learners. The community of practice in teachers' professional development should be primarily promoted by the school heads. Through this, both teachers and school heads could collectively work to provide quality education for the learners. These foregoing beliefs are what prompted the researcher to investigate the community of practice of school heads on the professional development of teachers.

#### **SUMMARY**

The interaction and collaboration among individuals in an organization are key elements in sustaining its existence. These key elements become the conduit for effective communication in an organization. When the COVID-19 pandemic engulfed the world, these key elements had been limited to physical engagement. Remote ways of engagement become an option aided by technology.

Such a scenario has been noticed in the education sector, particularly in how the school heads discharge their functions in the promotion of teachers' professional development. Aware of the dilemma that these school heads are in, the Department of Education provided them Learning Delivery Modality (LDM) Course which become an avenue for these school managers to come up with a community of Practice during the time of the pandemic.

This foregoing situation propelled the researcher to conduct a study on the community of practice of school heads on teachers' professional development. Specifically, this sought answers to the following sub-problems:

1. What are the different activities implemented by the school heads in their community of practice on teachers' professional development along:
  - a. Classroom Management
  - b. Learners' Discipline
  - c. Teaching Learning Process?
2. What is the impact of the different activities implemented by the school heads in their community of Practice on teachers' professional development along:
  - a. Classroom Management
  - b. Learners' Discipline
  - c. Teaching Learning Process?
3. What are the gaps encountered by the school heads in their community of practice on teachers' professional development along:
  - a. Classroom Management
  - b. Learners' Discipline
  - c. Teaching Learning Process?
4. What are the interventions employed to create a functional community of practice of school heads on teachers' professional development?
5. What framework may be proposed to institutionalize a community of practice of

school heads on teachers' professional development?

Fifty-three school heads from the Casiguran District, Division of Sorsogon, participated in this survey. These respondents had experience managing their respective schools during pandemics for the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 academic years. The schools they supervised decided to utilize remote learning throughout these academic years. The primary tool used to collect data from the respondents was a questionnaire checklist in a descriptive study design. In handling the data, descriptive statistical methods were applied like ranking and frequency count,

#### Findings

The following are the salient findings:

1. Concerning managing the learning environment, holding online training with a frequency of 53 ranked first among the common activities implemented by school heads in their community of practice. This was followed by holding in-person in-service training at the schools, which had a frequency of 46 and came in second. 37 respondents agreed and rated third that key teachers and district coordinators should be trained to be LAC leaders.

To provide some concepts on how to instill positive discipline among students via the online session, with 49 as its frequency and ranked first, was one of the common activities carried out by the school heads in their community of practice on teachers' professional development along with learners' discipline. This was followed by

holding school-based in-service training to give them opportunities to share best practices on the domain of learners' discipline, with 46 as its o. Additionally, the LAC's conduct with disciplining students as an issue scored 36 and placed third.

The activities that were put in place to support the learning process included having teachers participate in online seminars on how to effectively deliver learning remotely, which ranked first on the list with a frequency of 53. This was followed by allowing teachers to attend in-person training at their schools that included lessons on how to effectively implement distance modular learning. The use of ICT in the delivery of teaching and the direct exchange of advice on multitasking, job expansion, and job enrichment with the availability of alternate work arrangements during LAC sessions ranked 3.5 with 30 as their frequency.

2. Fifty-three school head respondents noted how teachers intensify their partnership with parents as in charge of learning spaces and learning facilitators. This was about the impact of the various activities implemented by the school heads in their community of practice on the development of teachers along with classroom management. The teachers then learned best practices for classroom management, with 43 being the frequency, and also found mentors from their LAC leaders.

The teachers' initiative to educate parents on how to use positive discipline at home while students are engaged in a distance learning method and their acquisition of

KSAs on learners' discipline, such as being preventive, supportive, and corrective, had a greater impact on the learners' discipline domain. These acquired the frequencies 43 and 40, respectively.

While teaching and learning were taking place, impacts were seen on instructors' capacity to establish routines for delivering lessons remotely and their incorporation of ICT at every point during instruction and evaluation. These had frequencies of 53 and 49, respectively. Additionally, these teachers can set up study groups in their LAC. This was third in frequency with a value of 30.

3. Poor internet connectivity, with a frequency of 48, ranked first among the gaps experienced by school heads in their community of practice on teachers' professional development and classroom management, followed by teachers' limited participation in online/limited face-to-face LAC, with a frequency of 46, which ranked second. This was followed by some teachers' refusal to participate in activities related to classroom management during the pandemic, which had a frequency of 32.

The poor internet connectivity, which is necessary for holding online sessions on learners' discipline, and the presence of some teachers who were passive in employing extra effort to implement strategies on learners' discipline were the gaps experienced by the school head respondents about learners' discipline. These had achieved frequencies of 50 and 43, respectively. The poor internet connectivity, which is necessary for holding online sessions on learners' discipline, and the presence of some teachers who were

passive in employing extra effort to implement strategies on learners' discipline were the gaps experienced by the school head respondents with learners' discipline. These had achieved frequencies of 50 and 43, respectively.

Fifty-one school head respondents identified low internet access as a barrier to training teachers in remote teaching-learning engagement, and 47 of these respondents observed the lack of KSAs among school heads on how to deploy a variety of learning modalities in the event of a pandemic

4. The participation of the school heads in the learning delivery course, which was made available to the 53 samples, and the establishment of school PTAs are two of the interventions used to establish a functional community of practice of school heads on teachers' professional development. The 52 respondents agreed that there was an organized school heads association, placing it third on the list. The establishment of a child safety policy, the execution of an instructional supervision program, and the management of LAC were further interventions.

5. To ensure that teachers' professional development is accomplished, a suggested framework for institutionalizing a Community of Practice of school leaders is offered.

## Conclusions

Based on the foregoing findings, the following are the formulated conclusions:

1. The common practices carried out by school leaders in their community of practice on teachers' professional development along with classroom management, learners' discipline, and teaching-learning process include the conduct of LAC and technical assistance that is internet-based.

2. The common impact of the provided activities by the school heads in their community of practice that contributed to teachers' professional development along with classroom management, learners' discipline, and teaching-learning process are intensified school and home partnerships, self-directed teachers, and collaborative engagement of stakeholders.

3. The major gaps that school heads encounter in their community of practice on teachers' professional development along with classroom management, learners' discipline, and teaching-learning process are poor internet connectivity, the passivity of some school stakeholders, and difficulty coping among school stakeholders with the emerging learning delivery modalities.

4. The Learning Delivery Modality (LDM) Course, organizing functional school associations, conducting LACs, bolstering instructional supervision, and maintaining partnerships are some of the interventions used to create a functional community of practice of school heads on teachers' professional development.

5. A framework to institutionalize a Community of Practice of school heads on teachers' professional development is proposed.

## Recommendations

Based on the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. School heads be comprehensively exposed to the nature and importance of the community of practice through training and workshops.
2. Community of Practice be encouraged to transcend to the sub-levels of the school community such as to the teachers' group and other school stakeholders.
3. The conduct of LAC be regularly held and assessed as being the most functional community of practice in the school setting.
4. A road map towards a functional community of practice be formulated in

every school or district to ensure holistic learning and engagement of every individual belonging to each group.

5. The proposed framework for Community of practice be critically assessed for its improvement.
6. Future researchers be encouraged to conduct a study on the following topics:
  - a. Effectiveness of LAC as a Community of Practice
  - b. Viability of PTA as a Community of Practice
  - c. Best Practices of School-Based Community of Practice in the Bicol Region

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