# School Environment and School Heads' Managerial Skills: Looking into their Relationships to School's Performance

**Javen J. Gamala** (iD)
Department of Education, Philippines

**Eliseo P. Marpa** (iD)
Philippine Normal University, Philippines

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# School Environment and School Heads' Managerial Skills: Looking into their Relationships to School's Performance

**Javen J. Gamala, Eliseo P. Marpa**

| Article Info | Abstract |
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| | This study examined the degree of the influence of school environment and school heads managerial skills on school's performances. Using a correlational method of research, a total of 115 school heads, 1044 teachers, 115 pupils, and 115 parents of public elementary schools in the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental, Philippines was chosen as study participants. An expert-validated and standardized questionnaire was used for data collection. Results show that school environment was moderately favorable while the school heads' managerial skills and schools' performances were very high. Results further revealed that school heads' managerial skills and school environment relates to school performance, however, the relationship is not significant. Although results hold that school heads exhibited managerial skills in a favorable school environment, but this does not mean that it has influence on schools performance as reflected in this study. In this regard, the study suggests examining other factors that might influence school performance. |
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## Introduction

Education is a key factor in determining a country's quality; it is intended to develop quality people who are capable of competing in global competences, being responsible, and anticipating the future. The school is an educational institution that was founded to develop a more educated human resource, and the quality of a nation is supposed to improve as a result of the existence of schools (Hartati, Pepriyeni, & Suryana, 2018). Thus, school performance has always been the subject of argument among stakeholders. Lamas (2015) for instance contends that school performance is an issue that deeply concerns students, parents, teachers and authorities in almost all parts of the globe. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) is always alarmed with the scenarios of basic education the country has right now. Many reforms have been made to help improve the quality of education, but as observed, the scenarios seems to be almost the same.

Along with this, researchers have expressed that there are many factors attributable to the success of school not only in the Philippines but in almost all parts of the world (Lekhetho, 2021; Mattar, 2012; Ramadhani, 2019; Zhang & Usaho, 2018). Likewise. Lamas (2015) declared that school performance can be influenced by different factors. However, factors influencing school's performance has not yet been clarified, but the researcher believed that school environment and school heads managerial skills are potential factors to influence school performance.

As stated by Shamsuddina et. al. (2012) school as a learning institution should create conducive learning environment, where students could acquire both academic and social skills which are important to produce students with potentials parallel to the government's mission in developing human resource as a prerequisite to the development of knowledge based economy. Furthermore, it is said that a good leader carries out what is best for his or her school. The managerial skills bestowed among leaders such as conceptual skills, human skills, technical skills, political skills and decision making skills are important factors contributory to the success of every school. Effective leader influences a variety of school outcomes, including student achievement, through their recruitment and motivation of quality teachers, their ability to identify and articulate school vision and goals, their effective allocation of resources, and their development of organizational structures to support instruction and learning" (Horng, et al, 2009). These rationale therefore triggered the research to conduct and investigation on the influence of schools environment and school heads managerial skills on the performance of public elementary schools in the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental, Philippines.

**Statement of the Problem**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the school environment and school heads managerial skills relationships to school performance. Specifically, this research determined (1) public elementary school's environment in terms of student support, affiliation, professional interest, staff freedom, participatory decision-making, innovation, resource adequacy, and work pressure; (2) school heads managerial skills in terms of technical skills, leadership skills, controlling skills, planning skills, and decision-making skills; and (3) public elementary schools' performances in terms completion rate, dropout rate, failure rate, gross enrollment rate, national achievement rate, promotion rate, repetition rate, and survival rate.

# Literature Review

This literature review delved into how school heads managerial skills and school environment are related to school performance. Specifically this review examined the concepts and literature on school heads' management skills, school environment, and school performance. With this purpose, the researcher was able to derived information and ideas on how school performance was influenced by school heads managerial skills and school environment. Along with this purpose, the researcher limits his review on the managerial skills as exhibited by school heads and leaders and this does not include the management skills of leaders in other business industries. Likewise, school environment and school performance was limited only to the school environment and school performance in the basic education. Lastly, the topics of concern for the review were discussed through a local and international perspective, highlighting the influence of school heads managerial skills and school environment on school performances.

**School Environment**

The school is the institutional environment that sets the parameters of a students' learning experience. As schools are faced with more public accountability for student academic performance, school level characteristics are being

studied to discover methods of improving achievement for all students. The school environment has broad influence on students' learning and growth, including a significant aspect of their social, emotional and ethical development. When students find their school environment supportive and caring, they are less likely to become involved in substance abuse, violence and other problem behavior.

School environment is the set of relationships that occur among members of a school community that are determined by structural, personal, and functional factors of the educational institution, which provide distinctiveness to schools (Fonllem, Sing, Verdugo, Teran & Barahon, 2020). The school environment is an important factor when evaluating student, teachers, and other stakeholders' well-being. Thus, a student outcome and academic success is greatly influenced by the type of school students have attended (Korir & Kipkemboi, 2014) and the environment the school has to offer. On the other hand, Hoy, Tarter, and Kotthamp (1991) as cited by Korir and Kipkemboi (2014) identified school factors such as school structure, school composition and school climate which encompasses school environment as influential on school performance. However, Barry (2005) contends that depending on the environment, school can either open or close the doors that lead to school performance and in the academic performance of the students in general.

The research indicated that supportive schools foster these positive outcomes by promoting students sense of connectedness, belongingness or community (PISA, 2015; Charbonneau, 2018; Osterman, 2000; Korpershoek, Canrinus, Fokkens-Bruinsma & de Boer, 2020). These terms are used interchangeably here to refer to students' sense of being in a close, respectful relationship with peers and adult at school. Therefore, building in a school community is a means of fostering academic success. Students who experience their school as a caring community become more motivated, ambiguous and engage in their learning. In particular, students' active connection with teachers and their perceptions that teachers care about them are what stimulate their effort and engagement (Eric, 2005).

This research review's is to help the reader understand different aspects posed by the research on the influence of school environment to school's performance more specifically on the performance of the students. This is significant because school's environment as shown by research reviewed played significant roles on students, teachers and other stakeholders' performance which is a conglomerate of school's performance in general. For instance, Korir and Kipkemboi opined that the school environment is an important factor when evaluating student, teachers, and other stakeholders' well-being. Thus, a student outcome and academic success is greatly influenced by the type of school students have attended and the environment the school has to offer.

**Managerial Skills**

According to Mukherjee (2013) the need for effective management is all pervasive. Be it any industry or any form of organizational body, effective management of people, assets and resources is of paramount importance. Investments in terms of time and monetary resources are of little use if the same is not managed and administered effectively. Thus, managerial skills are high priority issues for many people concerned with education these days. The way school heads manage their school considering the management skills they possess is tantamount to how

their schools performed in the educational arena. It is not surprising, then, that so many authors have provided insights about such skills for school heads (Mestry & Grobler, 2004; Monyatsi, 2005). The skills include the abilities to create a healthy school culture for continual improvement in quality education; teamwork with others; communicate goals, policies, and procedure to staff; modify practice and school structures to accommodate new policy expectations; provide curriculum leadership opportunities; ensure good principal-staff relationship and guide specific initiatives to improve student achievement (Carr, 2005; Elmore, 2005).

Likewise, Ajaegbo (2005) expressed that the importance of school leaders' possession of managerial skills for national transformation is obvious. Management is an integral part of any organization. It involves skillful organization and utilization of resources (human and material) for the achievement of goals. In educational organizations, the onus of managing schools for realization of educational objectives rest on the school head, principal or head teacher. In order to achieve optimum results, the leaders should possess management skills. Andang et al., (2014) also emphasize that school heads are expected to have a strong managerial skills in managing the various resources in the schools in order to achieve the mission of every school. Management of school heads are defined as a set of technical skills in facilitating and providing opportunities for teachers to improve their professionalism through various activities carried out either in or out of school.

Furthermore, Daft and Karl (1984) as cited by Haiss (2013) provides a brief but substantial discussion on management skills. They are categorized as the conceptual, the human, and the technical skills. The application of these skills changes as managers move up in the ladder of the organization. Although the degree of each skill varies at different levels of the organization, all managers must possess these skills to perform their jobs effectively. These skills are also true among school head, school principals, and school administrators. However, in this research, the researcher opted to considered management skills as technical skills, leadership skills, controlling skills, planning skills, and decision making skills.

Locke (2010) considered technical skills as the ability to use knowledge, methods, and techniques of a specific discipline. Teachers and school heads in school are examples of people with technical skills as they are recognized as experts in their discipline and are presumed to have the ability to supervise other. School head has usually developed some expertise in a discipline or field of study. School heads are teachers themselves, to successfully run an academic unit, the teachers and the school heads must know how to teach the subject, how to organize the group, how to acquire resources, and how to evaluate performance. This also encompasses human skill, which involves the ability to understand, create motivation, and work with employees.

The purpose of this review on the managerial skills of the school heads, school leaders, and school administrations is to equip readers understanding of the different facets considered by the research on the influence of school heads managerial skills to school's performance especially in managing the affairs of the school considering human resources and other tangible and intangible resources. This review is considered significant because school heads managerial skills as shown by researches reviewed is influential on schools' performance. The way school heads manage their school considering the management skills they possess is tantamount to how their schools

performed in the educational arena. Ajaegbo for instance expressed that the importance of school leaders' possession of managerial skills for national transformation is obvious.

**School Performance**

According to Lamas (2015) School performance is an issue that deeply concerns students, parents, teachers and authorities. The purpose of the school performance is to achieve an educational goal, learning. In this regard there are several components of the complex unit called performance. They are learning processes promoted by the school that involve the transformation of a given state, into a new state, and they are achieved with the integrity in a different unit with cognitive and structural elements. Performance varies according to circumstances, organic and environmental conditions that determine skills and experiences.

School performance on the other hand are accounted to by different performance indicators. Oakes as cited by Dunantlaan (2004) states that performance indicators help to describe and analyze key aspects of schooling. They help to evaluate and monitor the quality of education. Dropping out from school occurs after children have previously achieved access to school for instance is one indicator of school performance. Along this line, in the journal of Tyler and Lofstrom (2009), a student's decision to drop out of school is affected by a number of complex factors and is often the culmination of a long process of disengagement from school. Dropouts may appear small in number but they are dominant among the poor which thereupon turns the wheels of intergenerational transmission of poverty against them.

Another performance indicator worthy to ention is failure rate. The reasons for school failure are almost as complex as are the reasons educators are unable to turn around under performing schools in vast numbers. These reasons are multifaceted and interrelated, compounding and exacerbating the problem of school failure (Leithwood, 1999 in Laguda, 2011). Poor school performance not only results in the child having a low self-esteem, but also causes significant stress to the parents (Karande and Kulkarni, 2005). Likewise, an early school leaver also known as school dropout is learner enrolled who leaves education during the school year and did not enroll on the following year. On the other hand, cohort survival rate is a measure of the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of education services in the country, and is defined as the percentage of enrollees at the beginning grade or year in a given school year who reached the final grade or year of the elementary or secondary level (Philippine Education for All 2015 Review Report).

Likewise, the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016 identifies education as an important pillar for human development (NEDA, 2011). The 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report even identified the Philippines to be among the countries with decreased net enrollment rate from 1999 to 2006, and a considerable magnitude of out-of-school children (more than half a million). As part of mechanism of the Department of Education, School Improvement Plan is being required in every school in which key performance indicators were identified, analyzed and were given different intervention programs.

In literature review, the purpose is to help the reader understand different aspects of school performance and how

it is influenced by different factors stemming from completion rate to survival rate. This review is considered significant because the different indicators such as completion rate, dropout rate, failure rate, enrollment rate, National Achievement rate promotion rate, repetition, and survival rate are important determinants of school's performance.

## Method

### Research Design

This study employed descriptive-correlational method of research. According to Latin and Berg (2004), descriptive research is typified by observations or descriptions of the status of a condition or situation. Investigators using this method do not manipulate variables or make things happen. On the other hand, it is also correlational because relationships among the variables in this study were likewise determined. Salkind (2003) states that the most liked type of research to answer questions about the relationship among variables or event is correlational research. It provides some indications as to how two or more things are related to one another or, in effect, what they share or have in common or how well a specific outcome might be predicted by one or more pieces of information.

### Sample Size, Sample and Sampling Technique

In this study, sampling by schools was done by the researcher. In this regard the total number of public elementary schools in the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental were determined and considered as the population of the study. However, to determine public elementary schools as actual respondents of the study, Slovins formula was used to determine the sample size. Thus, 115 public elementary schools in the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental were the actual participating schools in this study. In this regard, school heads and teachers of the participating schools were also considered as actual participants of the study. On the other hand, pupils and parents as respondents of the study were determined by considering the Supreme Pupil Government (SPG) presidents and Parents – Teachers Association (PTA) presidents of the respondent schools.

### Research Instruments

The research instrument used in this study consisted of three main parts namely: Part I determined public elementary school heads profile. This includes sex, age, civil status, administrative experience, and educational attainment. Part II on the other hand deals with the school environment scale. This is a 56-item questionnaire consisting of eight sub-areas namely: student support, affiliation, professional interest, staff freedom, participatory decision-making, innovation, resource adequacy, and work pressure. Part III of the research instrument was a scale on the managerial skills of public elementary school heads. This is a 50-item questionnaire consisting of five skill areas namely: technical skills, leadership skills, controlling skills, planning skills, and decision making skills. Each of the skill areas in this regard consisted of 10 items in five sets with five numerical options for the participants to choose from. Secondary data on school performance such as gross enrollment rate, promotion rate, failure rate, repetition rate, dropout rate, completion rate, survival rate, and national achievement rate on the other

hand were obtained by the researcher to the respective respondent schools of the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental.

*Validity and Reliability of the Instruments*

According to Thorndike and Hagen as cited by Figueroa (2007), validity is the suitability of the test for its purposes. It must yield the kind of result it needs. A test is valid if it yields scores that help accomplish the purpose for which it was intended. The developed research instruments were presented to the three jurors considered experts in the field of education, research, and educational management. They went over the research instrument item-by-item and judged the suitability and appropriateness of the questions. Suggestions for improvement were taken into consideration and were given due consideration by the researchers. The mean rating obtained from the three jurors was 4.65. This obtained mean showed that the research instruments were very good and valid to a very high degree.

In the conduct of the reliability, Cronbach Alpha was used. The Cronbach Alpha is used whenever the researcher has items that are not scored simply as right or wrong (Glien and Glien, 2003). In this research, the computed coefficient of correlation on school environment was 0.93 while 0.95 for the questionnaire on the school heads managerial skills. According to Ornstein, a coefficient of 0.80 or higher indicates high reliability. This means that the research instruments adapted and modified by the researcher were reliable to a very high degree.

**Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis**

Before the administration of the test, researchers asked permission from the school's division superintendent in the Division of Negros Occidental where the public elementary schools of the 6th Congressional District of Negros Occidental belongs. Then, he asked permission to the district supervisors of the different districts where he conducted this study. Upon the approval, copies of questionnaires were administered to the target participants. The researcher personally conducted the questionnaires to the participants so that queries which arose were answered immediately. On the other hand, to answer the problems posed in this study, descriptive statistics such as the mean and standard deviations were used. However, to answer problems on the relationship of school environment and school heads managerial skills on school performance, Pearson *r* was used.

# Results

**School Environment of Public Elementary Schools**

Table 1 reflects the school environment of the public elementary schools. As shown, the school environment of public elementary school is moderately favorable as perceived by the school heads *(M = 3.24)*. However, when sub-areas were considered, the same findings were also observed except in affiliation *(M = 3.55)* and professional interest *(M = 3.49)* where the school's environment is favorable. On the other hand, as perceived by the teachers, the school environment of public schools was also moderately favorable *(M = 3.31)* as a whole and in terms of the sub-areas except on students' support *(M = 3.46)*, affiliation *(M = 3.88)*, and participatory decision making

*(M = 3.46)* where school environment is favorable. Considering pupils' perceptions, it was revealed that the school environment is moderately favorable *(M = 3.20)* when taken as a whole and when sub-areas are considered individually except on affiliation *(M = 3.81)* and participatory decision making *(M = 3.41)* where school environment is already favorable. Lastly as perceived by the parents, the level of school environment of public schools as a whole is moderately conducive *(M = 3.20)* and in terms of the sub-areas except affiliation *(M = 3.81)* which is favorable.

Table 1. School Environment of Public Elementary Schools

| Sub-areas of School Environment | School Heads | | Teachers | | Pupils | | Parents | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | Interpretation | Mean | Interpretation | Mean | Interpretation | Mean | Interpretation |
| Student support | 3.22 | Moderately Favorable | 3.46 | Favorable | 3.37 | Moderately Favorable | 3.37 | Moderately Favorable |
| Affiliation | 3.55 | Favorable | 3.88 | Favorable | 3.81 | Favorable | 3.81 | Favorable |
| Professional interest | 3.49 | Favorable | 2.90 | Moderately Favorable | 3.13 | Moderately Favorable | 3.14 | Moderately Favorable |
| Staff freedom | 3.03 | Moderately Favorable | 3.12 | Moderately Favorable | 2.82 | Moderately Favorable | 2.77 | Moderately Favorable |
| Participatory decision making | 3.39 | Moderately Favorable | 3.46 | Favorable | 3.41 | Favorable | 3.37 | Moderately Favorable |
| Innovation | 3.30 | Moderately Favorable | 3.23 | Moderately Favorable | 3.09 | Moderately Favorable | 3.25 | Moderately Favorable |
| Resource adequacy | 2.93 | Moderately Favorable | 3.07 | Moderately Favorable | 3.02 | Moderately Favorable | 2.91 | Moderately Favorable |
| Work pressure | 3.01 | Moderately Favorable | 3.35 | Moderately Favorable | 2.96 | Moderately Favorable | 2.99 | Moderately Favorable |
| As a whole | 3.24 | Moderately Favorable | 3.31 | Moderately Favorable | 3.20 | Moderately Favorable | 3.20 | Moderately Favorable |

It can be gleaned from these results that the school environment of public schools is not conducive enough for students to learn and other stakeholder to grow professionally. This may mean also that the school climate was not enough for almost everybody to stay harmonious and ponder the essence of school and its environment. According to Bali and Alverez (2003) school climate is closely linked to the interpersonal relations between students and teachers. As mentioned by Crosnoe, et al. (2004), school climate is the general atmosphere of school. Trust between students, teachers, school heads, parents, and even other members of the community increases if the school encourages teamwork.

In addition, research shows that students who trust their teachers are more motivated and as a result perform better in school (Eamon, 2005; Rimm-Kaufman, Baroody, Larsen, Curby, & Abry, 2014; Johnson, 2017; Koca, 2016). School policies and programs often dictate the school climate. To add, if a school is able to accomplish a feeling of safety, students can have success despite their family or neighborhood backgrounds (Crosnoe et al., 2004).

According to Muleyi (2008), teachers do influence students' academic performance. School variables that affect students' academic performance include the kind of treatment which teachers accord the students. In Kenya, Odhiambo (2005) expressed that there is a growing demand from the government and the public for teacher accountability. Schools are commonly evaluated using students' achievement data (Heck, 2009). Teachers cannot be dissociated from the schools they teach and academic results of schools. It would therefore be logical to use standardized students' assessment results as the basis for judging the performance of teachers.

On the other hand, direct school-level measures such as the building and physical environment, and the school social and psychological environments have been used often (Crosnoe et al., 2004). This is because, these are important variables when school environment is the point of discussion. It is always understood that these variables influence school environment.

Previous findings have also shown that variables such as physical, academic, and social dimensions influence school environments (Stadler-Altmann, 2015; Higgins, Hall, Wall, & Woolner, 2005; OECD, 2009). Likewise, healthy schools support student learning, development, and well-being by providing safety, support, academic challenge, healthy foods, time and space to be active, and opportunities for social and emotional development. In healthy schools, both students and educators feel respected and supported. Healthy schools require a positive school climate that supports the social and emotional development of students and adults. Such a climate can reduce inequities and enable students to thrive (The Pennsylvania State University, 2018).

**Managerial Skills of School Heads**

As shown in Table 2, the level of the managerial skills of school heads when skill areas were taken as a whole is very high *(M = 4.36)* as perceived by the school heads themselves while high *(M = 4.14)* as perceived by the teachers. However, when skill areas were considered individually, the level of the managerial skills of school heads as perceived by them was very high as reflected by the obtained means ranging from 4.31 to 4.46. On the other hand, it is high as perceived by the teachers as indicated by the obtained means ranging from 4.11 to 4.17. It can be gleaned from the results that school heads have already established their managerial skills. They already have technical skills, leadership skills, controlling skills, planning skills, and decision-making skills.

Table 2. School Heads Managerial Skills

| Managerial Skills | School Head | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | Interpretation | Mean | Interpretation |
| Technical Skills | 4.31 | Very High | 4.13 | High |
| Leadership Skills | 4.46 | Very High | 4.17 | High |
| Controlling Skills | 4.32 | Very High | 4.16 | High |
| Planning Skills | 4.36 | Very High | 4.13 | High |
| Decision Making Skills | 4.34 | Very High | 4.11 | High |
| As a Whole | 4.36 | Very High | 4.14 | High |

Considering their technical skills this means that school heads possess knowledge and capabilities to perform specialized tasks related to school administration. They are already equipped with the knowledge and capabilities of performing their tasks as a school leader. This is confirmed by Nwogu and Ebunu (2019) stating that principals in the public secondary schools in Delta State applied technical and conceptual skills to high extent in the performance of their administrative functions. They suggested that school principals should learn how, when and where to apply the appropriate leadership styles in varying situations that arise in dynamic school environment. Likewise, they explained that principals should assist teachers properly in terms of extracting schemes of work from the curriculum and in providing or improvising appropriate instructional materials for different topics.

School heads likewise have exhibited commendable leadership skills. This means that they show among their workers how to effectively perform their responsibilities and regularly supervising the completion of their tasks. They also set a positive example for staff to follow by being excited about the work, being motivated to learn new things and helping out as needed in both individual and team activities. Bolanle (2013) on the leadership skills possessed by Principals of public secondary schools in south western Nigeria revealed that secondary school principals in south western Nigeria possessed leadership and administrative skills. On the other hand, Memisoglu (2015) expressed that primary and secondary school teachers defined school principals' skills as the quality and responsibility taking dimensions identified are better. Considering the items that takes part in quality dimension, it is thought that principals target to inform teachers and students about school and students' success, struggle for life quality and provide learning climate based on trust.

Further, the importance of school leaders' possession of managerial skills for national transformation is obvious. Management is an integral part of any organization. It involves skillful organization and utilization of resources (human and material) for the achievement of goals. In the context of educational organizations, the responsibility of managing schools for realization of educational objectives rest on the school head, principal or head teacher. In order to achieve optimum results, the leaders should be skilled in management. In this regard, school heads' should often involve school personnel in decision making process with constant communication to increase their commitment and dedication to school goals and objectives.

According to Akinfolarin and Rufai (2017), there must be a good communication mechanism among teachers', students' and school administrators' within and outside the school for goals achievement at all levels of education. The presence of good information and communication system in school management will help to carry teachers' and students' along with school aims and objectives which would motivate them for improved teaching and learning process. Teachers' and students' can be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated through the provision of incentives which could be tangible or intangible. School leaders should strive to identify the categories of incentives that would yield the best result based on individual differences.

**School Performance**

Table 3 indicates that the level of school performance in terms of completion rate *(M = 79.10)*, national achievement rate *(M = 72.94)* and survival rate *(M = 78.71)* is high. However, in terms of gross enrolment rate

*(M = 99.32)* and promotion rate *(M = 97.55)* is very high. On the other hand, the level of school performance in terms of dropout rate *(M = 2.12)*, failure rate *(M = 3.03)*, and repetition rate *(M = 3.55)* is very low. These results reflect that elementary schools have a very satisfactory school performance considering the results of the different performance indicators such as completion rate, dropout rate, failure rate, gross enrollment rate, national achievement rate, promotion rate, repetition rate, and survival rate.

Table 3. School Performance in Terms of the Different Performance Indicators

| Performance Indicators | Mean | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| Completion Rate | 79.10 | High |
| Dropout Rate | 2.12 | Very Low |
| Failure Rate | 3.03 | Very Low |
| Gross Enrolment Rate | 99.32 | Very High |
| National Achievement Rate | 72.94 | High |
| Promotion Rate | 97.55 | Very High |
| Repetition Rate | 3.55 | Very Low |
| Survival Rate | 78.71 | High |

Results reflected that dropout rate is very low which means that majority of the pupils are in school. This performance indicator is a good reflection that despite poverty and other factors, yet parents are decisive to enroll their children for a better education. However, it cannot be denied that in some parts of the country and even abroad, dropout rate is a common problem. As observed by majority, poverty is one reason why pupils leave school. In some rural areas in the Philippines, pupils leave school because they help their parents earn a living. In this regard, the Filipino Child 2 Policy Brief No. 4, of 2010 pointed out that dropouts may appear small in number but they are dominant among the poor which thereupon turns the wheels of inter-generational transmission of poverty against them.

In addition, according to the study conducted by UNICEF, the primary reason for dropout is lack of personal interest. Unfortunately, this particular reason is quite complex and may be due to several reasons. It may be due to demand-side issues such as poor information on the value of education (Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities: Philippines, Policy Brief, 2010). However, the reasons for school failure rate are almost as complex as are the reasons we are unable to turn around under performing schools in vast numbers. These reasons are multifaceted and interrelated, compounding and exacerbating the problem of school failure (Leithwood, 1999). Poor school performance not only results in the child having a low self-esteem, but also causes significant stress to the parents (Karande & Kulkani, 2005).

Likewise, an early school leaver also known as school dropout is learner enrolled who leaves education during the school year and did not enroll on the following year. Previous literature heavily discussed that school dropouts face significant economic and personal risks (Psacharopoulos, 2007). It has been argued that particularly migrant students, boys, vocational students and pupils from disadvantageous backgrounds are at-risk for school dropout (Cabus & White, 2012). In this regard, ensuring that students stay in school until they complete their education is

a major concern in basic education (National Education and Testing Research Center cited in Nava, 2009). Cohort Survival Rates (CSR) for the past 10 years has fluctuated between 60 % and 80 % in both elementary and secondary levels (Department of Education, 2008, cited in Nava, 2009). These statistics mean that about between 20 to 40 % of Grade 1 pupils do not reach Grade 6; of the 60 to 75 % who enter secondary school, about one-third of them do not finish high school. If the numbers are added up, they indicate about half of Grade 1 pupils.

**Correlation among School Environment, Managerial Skills and School Performance**

Using cross correlation, Table 4 shows that there is no significant correlation between school environment in terms of the sub-areas and school performance in terms of the identified performance indicators. This is reflected by the obtained r-values and probability values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Since the obtained probability values are greater than the 0.05 level of significance, in this regard, hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between school environment and school performance is therefore accepted. However, significant correlations were observed between staff freedom and dropout rate *(r = -0.25, p = 0.01)*, innovation and survival rate *(r = -0.22, p = 0.02)*, and resource adequacy and national achievement rate *(r = 0.20, p = 0.03)*.

Table 4. Correlation between School Environment and School Performance

| School Environment | | School Performance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Completion Rate | Dropout Rate | Failure Rate | Gross Enrollment Rate | National Achievement Rate | Promotion Rate | Repetition Rate | Survival Rate |
| Student Support | R-value | -0.04 | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.08 | -0.06 | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| | P-value | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.74 | 0.38 | 0.50 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.99 |
| Affiliation | R-value | 0.06 | -0.11 | -0.12 | -0.01 | -0.04 | 0.08 | 0.03 | 0.04 |
| | P-value | 0.55 | 0.25 | 0.19 | 0.93 | 0.64 | 0.38 | 0.72 | 0.67 |
| Professional interest | R-value | -0.06 | -0.10 | -0.06 | -0.02 | 0.06 | 0.06 | -0.04 | 0.05 |
| | P-value | 0.56 | 0.31 | 0.51 | 0.84 | 0.56 | 0.54 | 0.88 | 0.61 |
| Staff freedom | R-value | -0.13 | -0.25 | -0.13 | -0.03 | 0.14 | 0.05 | -0.07 | 0.13 |
| | P-value | 0.18 | 0.01** | 0.17 | 0.74 | 0.14 | 0.62 | 0.46 | 0.17 |
| Participatory Decision Making | R-value | -0.03 | -0.14 | -0.08 | -0.05 | -0.09 | -0.07 | -0.07 | 0.04 |
| | P-value | 0.79 | 0.15 | 0.37 | 0.58 | 0.36 | 0.45 | 0.43 | 0.67 |
| Innovation | R-value | -0.17 | -0.15 | -0.12 | -0.10 | -0.04 | 0.01 | -0.15 | -0.22 |
| | P-value | 0.07 | 0.11 | 0.20 | 0.29 | 0.69 | 0.99 | 0.11 | 0.02** |
| Resource Adequacy | R-value | -0.11 | -0.07 | -0.08 | 0.05 | 0.20 | 0.01 | -0.15 | -0.22 |
| | P-value | 0.25 | 0.49 | 0.41 | 0.59 | 0.03* | 0.99 | 0.11 | 0.02* |
| Work Pressure | R-value | -0.08 | -0.09 | -0.04 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.11 | -0.01 | -0.09 |
| | P-value | 0.43 | 0.36 | 0.69 | 0.92 | 0.97 | 0.22 | 0.94 | 0.35 |

*\*\*Significant at 0.01       \*Significant at 0.05*

Results presented reflects that there are sub-areas of school environment which is related to school performance. Staff freedom for instance is related to dropout rate. However, the relationship is negative. The negative relationship indicates that the more teacher's freedom is curtailed the lesser would be the dropout rate. Fisher et. al. (2008) contends that teachers are free of set rules, guidelines, and of supervision to ensure rule compliance but

this seems to be negative to the responses of the respondents because the dropout rate tends to increase the more teachers exhibits their freedom to set rules, guidelines and of supervision.

Likewise, negative correlation was also observed between school environment in terms innovation and school performance in terms of survival rate. This means that the more schools favored planned change and do experimentation, the proportion of enrollees in school decreases. As stated by Maligalig (2008) survival rate refers to the proportion of enrollees at the beginning grade who reach the final grade at the end of the required number of years of study. It is used to assess the internal efficiency and "wastage" in education while innovation as reflected by Fisher et al., (2008) means that the school is in favour of planned change and experimentation, and fosters classroom openness and individualization.

Lastly, it was observed that there is a significant relationship between resource adequacy and national achievement rate. This result projects that availability of resources in school influences the national achievement rate of the school. The result of the achievement test is always associated with the quality of the teaching learning process which is thereby affected by the quality of learning resources the teacher uses. As described by Fisher, et al, (2008) resource adequacy refers to the support personnel, facilities, finance, equipment and resources are suitable and adequate. National achievement rate on the other hand, refers to the degree of learning outcomes in five learning areas such as; Filipino, English, Mathematics, Science and HeKaSi (Maligalig, 2008).

Table 5 shows that using cross correlation between school heads' managerial skills and schools' performance, there is no significant correlation between school heads managerial skills in terms of technical skills, leadership skills, controlling skills, planning skills and decision-making skills and school's performance in terms of completion rate, dropout rate, failure rate, gross enrollment rate, national achievement rate, promotion rate, retention rate, and survival rate. This is reflected by r-values ranging from 0.01 to 0.17 at p-values ranging from 0.07 to 0.99. Since these obtained probability values are greater than the 0.05 level of significance, in this regard, hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between schools heads managerial skills and school performance is therefore accepted.

Table 5. Correlation between School Heads Managerial Skills and School Performance

| Managerial Skills | | School Performance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Completion Rate | Dropout Rate | Failure Rate | Gross Enrollment Rate | National Achievement Rate | Promotion Rate | Repetition Rate | Survival Rate |
| Technical skills | R-value | -0.06 | -0.01 | -0.04 | 0.05 | -0.12 | -0.02 | 0.11 | -0.10 |
| | P-value | 0.54 | 0.93 | 0.71 | 0.57 | 0.22 | 0.86 | 0.27 | 0.31 |
| Leadership Skills | R-value | -0.08 | -0.11 | -0.12 | -0.01 | -0.04 | 0.08 | 0.03 | 0.04 |
| | P-value | 0.42 | 0.25 | 0.19 | 0.93 | 0.64 | 0.38 | 0.72 | 0.67 |
| Controlling Skills | R-value | -0.11 | 0.03 | 0.09 | 0.13 | 0.13 | -0.07 | 0.17 | -0.05 |
| | P-value | 0.25 | 0.72 | 0.32 | 0.17 | 0.17 | 0.47 | 0.07 | 0.57 |
| Planning Skills | R-value | -0.03 | -0.02 | -0.07 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.14 | 0.01 | 0.04 |
| | P-value | 0.76 | 0.83 | 0.45 | 0.28 | 0.26 | 0.15 | 0.95 | 0.71 |
| Decision-making Skills | R-value | -0.01 | -0.02 | -0.02 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.06 | 0.05 | 0.02 |
| | P-value | 0.99 | 0.83 | 0.88 | 0.41 | 0.32 | 0.54 | 0.60 | 0.87 |

Results presented in this regard, disclosed that the way schools are manage is not related to their school performance. School performance may be are not only influence by the managerial skills of their school administrator but also influence by some other factors. However, there are researches which found out that the way schools are manage influence school performance (Johnson, 2014; Muiruri, 2019; Nzoka & Orodho, 2014). In this regard, other factors that might influence school performance aside from school heads managerial skills should be looked into.

Along this line, Kombo (2005) observes that the leadership style of the head teacher creates a kind of learning environment. A cordial relationship between the head teacher and learners creates an environment conducive to learning as discussions are encouraged and learners listened to. The head teacher works together with students on how to succeed in life and academically. In such a school, every member is useful in decision making process. Most of such schools have disciplined students and positive academic record. The head teacher has a formal relationship with several people or groups of people both inside and outside the school system. He/she has dealings not only with the teachers and students, but also with parents, members of the community, which the school serves and educational officers. Therefore, the image of the school outside is seen through the administrative capabilities of the head teacher. On the other hand, World Bank (2008) posits that much research has demonstrated that retention and the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed, more than the abundance of available resources, the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the quality of the leadership provided by the head teacher. Concerted effort to improve school leadership is one of the most promising points of intervention to raise retention, the quality and efficiency of secondary education across Sub-Saharan Africa

Further, it is pertinent to note that there are two areas of human resource management in the school system; the staff human resource management and the students' human resource management. For effective staff human resource management, school administrators' must develop good competencies in staffing, orientation, communication, training, supervision, conflict management, motivation, discipline and ensuring professional growth of academic and non-academic staff, while for effective students' human resource management, school administrators should acquire competencies in increasing students' enrolment, orientation, students' discipline, welfare services, counselling services and provision of incentives to students'. Also, there must be a favourable teaching and learning environment with adequate instructional and learning materials which should be properly managed for positive academic outcome.

## Conclusion

Public elementary school's environment was moderately conducive considering certain indicators such as staff freedom, innovation, resource adequacy, and work pressures while conducive in terms of affiliation. In terms of managerial skills, school heads possess managerial skills as perceived by them and their teachers. Although their perceptions are not exactly the same, however, they both believe that school heads exhibit managerial skills in managing their respective school. Likewise, public elementary school heads exhibited excellent management skills as perceived by them. However, their management skills differ from skill area to skill area as perceived by

their respective teachers. Furthermore, public elementary schools has performed well in terms of gross enrolment rate, promotion rate, dropout rate, failure rate, and repetition rate and has performed better in terms completion rate and national achievement rate.

The study also concludes that school environment is not related to school performance in terms of the identified performance indicators. However, school environment is related to school performance in terms of the dropout rate. Likewise, school heads managerial skills were not related to the school performance of public elementary schools. This means that other factors aside from how schools are managed by the school managers influenced school performance.

## Recommendations

Along with the finding and conclusions, this study hereby recommends stakeholders to work hand in hand in improving school environment especially in areas where elementary schools are weak. On the other hand, since the study showed high level of school heads managerial skills, school heads in this regard are encouraged to continuously exhibit their best managerial skills because no matter what there is no perfection in this work and there is always room for improvement. Likewise, training and seminars should also be provided to school heads so that updated and new trends of managing the 21st century will not be difficult for them. On the other hand, to boost school's performance, it is recommended that school heads, teachers, parents, pupils and other members of the community should work together for better and excellent schools. Lastly, it is recommended that another study should be conducted utilizing other variables which is believed to influence school performance.

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## Author Information

**Javen J. Gamala**

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9464-2818

Department of Education

District of Cuayan Cluster III, Negros Occidental

Philippines

Contact e-mail: *Javeen.gamal001@deped.gov.ph*

**Eliseo P. Marpa**

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9582-4333

Philippine Normal University Visayas

Cadiz City, Negros Occidental

Philippines