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Research Article

Principals' Competence in Performance Management of Private Secondary School Teachers in the Division of Nueva Ecija

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ABSTRACT

Teacher quality is the primary factor influencing student achievement, emphasizing the essential role of effective performance management in improving teaching quality. Given the critical duty of principals in fostering teacher performance, this study examines their competencies within private secondary schools in Nueva Ecija. Objectives. This research aims to determine the level of principals' competence in performance management, focusing on the areas of planning, monitoring, and reviewing performance among teachers. Additionally, it seeks to identify differences in perceptions among principals, department heads, and teachers regarding these competencies. Methodology: A descriptive research design was employed, utilizing surveys distributed among thirty-six (36) principals, thirty-three (33) department heads, and two hundred one (201) teachers across selected private secondary schools in the Division of Nueva Ecija. Data collection was primarily achieved through structured questionnaires and unstructured interviews to validate responses. Results: Results indicated a high level of competency among principals in managing teacher performance across all three areas assessed. Notably, statistical analysis revealed a significant difference in perceptions regarding the monitoring of teacher performance, suggesting that while principals are generally perceived as highly competent, there are areas that require further attention and improvement. Recommendations: Principals who do not hold advanced degrees pursue further education to enhance their qualifications. Ongoing professional development opportunities, such as training and seminars focused on performance management, should be provided. Further research should be conducted to explore the implications of performance management on teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

Keywords: *Competence, Performance Management, Principals*

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Background

Teachers play a strategic role in education and serve as the foundation for improving the quality of services and educational outcomes. Good educational outcomes are a residue of having highly qualified and experienced teachers, and the quality of a good teacher is measured through their performance. Educators who demonstrate high performance are recognized as professionals characterized by their strong pedagogical knowledge and competencies (Danielson, 2020; Hattie, 2020). Studies have shown that effective teacher performance positively correlates with student academic achievement, suggesting the importance of nurturing high standards of teaching efficacy within schools (Robinson & Everett, 2017).

Furthermore, effective performance is critical for ensuring that educational organizations fulfill their vision, mission, and objectives. Research indicates that performance must be measured to distinguish between good and poor outcomes; this necessity underscores the role of performance management in fostering continuous improvement (Wang et al., 2020). By systematically assessing performance, educators and administrators can identify areas for development and create strategies to enhance educational quality.

The concept of performance management has evolved into a strategic, integrated process that encompasses goal-setting, performance appraisal, and professional development, all designed to align individual objectives with broader institutional goals (Aguinis, 2019; Dessler et al., 2021). This framework transcends simplistic evaluation and emphasizes the collaborative nature of performance management, focusing on how educators work, how they are supported, and how their efforts contribute effectively to the institution's overall mission.

Effective performance management serves multiple purposes. Primarily, it communicates the strategic goals of the organization and outlines specific expectations regarding behavior and results needed to achieve these goals. This clarity assists educators in understanding the criteria for effective performance (Cameron & Green, 2019). Additionally, a robust performance management system fosters

relationship-building between staff and administration. Involving teachers in performance planning and review processes promotes open dialogue, enhancing trust and collaboration within the educational environment (Meyer & Schmidt, 2021).

The significance of effective performance management in educational settings cannot be overstated, particularly regarding the role of principals in private secondary schools. Despite acknowledging that teacher quality is pivotal for student achievement, research reveals a noticeable gap in understanding the specific competencies that school leaders must possess for effective performance management (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2018). Specifically, there is insufficient empirical investigation into the aspects of planning, monitoring, and reviewing teacher performance from the perspective of principals in the Philippine context, particularly within the Division of Nueva Ecija.

While various studies have highlighted the importance of school leadership and its direct influence on instructional quality (Wang et al., 2020), the lack of comprehensive insights into how principals in private schools manage teacher performance presents a crucial area for exploration. Existing literature primarily focuses on public schools, leaving a gap in understanding the unique challenges and competencies required of administrators in private educational institutions (Fullan, 2021; Robinson et al., 2021).

The aforementioned discussions and research gap motivated the researcher to examine the competencies of principals in managing performance among secondary teachers within private institutions in Nueva Ecija. This study aims to analyse how these principals engage in performance management through planning, monitoring, and reviewing, this research builds upon existing frameworks of educational leadership by providing empirical data specific to the private school sector in the Philippines. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader field of educational management by highlighting actionable competencies that can enhance teacher effectiveness and subsequently improve student outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The overall objective of performance management is to develop and improve the performance of individuals and teams and, therefore, organizations. In the context of this study, teacher performance management is considered as a management process designed to link organizational goals with individual teacher interests to ensure that between teacher and individual goals are the same. In this instance, performance management is oriented on how principals manage the work of the teacher to achieve the targets and results expected by the educational institution.

Here, performance management is characterized by a collaborative approach where the principal and the teacher take joint responsibility for the effective implementation of the planning, monitoring, and reviewing process.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework for assessing the level of principals' competence in performance management of teachers. This also illustrates the principals' undertakings on the three phases of performance management namely: planning, monitoring and reviewing the performance of teachers.

Planning is the first phase of the performance management process that involves a joint discussion between the principal and teachers, with their respective department heads, whereby roles, objectives and performance standards are agreed on. Here, the principal sets performance expectations and goals for teachers to channel their efforts toward achieving the school's vision, mission, goals and objectives.

Further, planning involves the discussion of key performance objectives, developing and agreeing on performance targets and setting key performance indicators as measures of performance. After which, a performance agreement is drawn and signed by the principal and the teachers. Performance agreement

defines clearly the performance expectations in terms of results, skill, knowledge and expertise required to attain the results. It also details how principals will provide the support and guidance the teachers need. The principals' activities include setting the objectives for performance, motivating teachers, providing discussions on important topics, and planning for classroom observation.

Monitoring is the second phase in the performance management process that encompasses the principals scrutinizing and examining teachers' completed work or in progress, measuring the results, and evaluating the process. In this phase, principals' tasks involve setting schedule of pre-classroom observations, holding formal classroom observations and collecting other data on teachers' performance. The areas of teaching observation include professional knowledge of teachers, instructional planning, instructional delivery, and assessment of learning, classroom management and learners' academic progress.

In the school context, monitoring process involves a variety of methods so that appropriate evidence on teachers' performance may be gathered to ensure fair, accurate and objective evaluations/judgements are made by the principals.

Reviewing is the final phase in the performance management process where the principals formally review, and evaluate the teachers' strengths and achievements, discuss areas of improvement and how these will be met, and identify the professional development needs of teachers. In this stage, the teachers' performance are guided and developed with the principals encouraging and directing their efforts through their tireless support, constructive feedback, and appreciation. Based on the findings of the study, a performance management training for principals would be proposed.

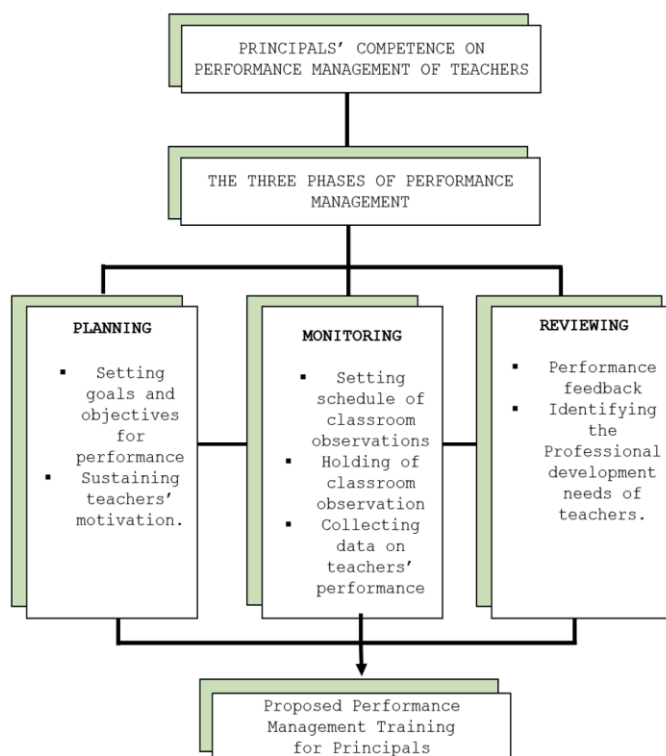


Figure 1. Conceptual Paradigm

Research Questions

This study attempted to determine and describe the level of principals' competence in managing the performance of teachers in the private secondary schools in the Division of Nueva Ecija during the school year 2015-2016.

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How may the level of principals' competence in managing performance of teachers be described by the teachers, department heads and principals themselves in terms of:
 - 1.1 planning;
 - 1.2 monitoring; and
 - 1.3 reviewing?
2. Is there a significant difference in the perception of teachers, department heads, and principals on the principals' competence in performance management of teachers?
3. What performance management trainings for principals may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Null Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the perception of the teachers, school heads and principals on the level of principals' competence in performance management of teachers.

Methods

The study made use of the descriptive method to describe a population that has been chosen because of some specific characteristics, attitudes and behaviour. This method aims to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens. It may be used to develop theories, justify current clinical practices or identify problem with them, aid in making professional judgment, or determine what other practitioners in similar situations are doing (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

The participating schools in this study were randomly selected from among the fifty-three (53) private secondary schools in the Division of Nueva Ecija. The said schools are currently members of the Nueva Ecija Private Secondary

School Administrators Association (NEPRIS-SAA).

The respondents were composed of the principals, department heads and teachers of the private secondary schools in the Division of Nueva Ecija. Specifically, the respondents were private secondary school principals, department heads, and teachers with three or more years of experience as principals, school heads, and teachers correspondingly. They were chosen to capture a broader base of classroom experiences and perspectives, as teachers are pivotal in assessing management effectiveness. Moreover, each group plays a critical role in the educational ecosystem, thus their opinions will contribute to a well-rounded understanding of the competence levels in management.

The main instrument used in this study was the questionnaire which was compiled from various readings and researches, and constructed by the researcher herself. Two sets of questionnaires were prepared for the three groups of respondents namely: principals, department heads and teachers. To ensure the survey instrument accurately reflects the do-

mains of principals' competence in performance management, content validity testing involved expert reviews. Upon the suggestion and recommendation of the experts, the researcher revised and improved the questionnaire. After which, a dry run was administered to the department heads and teachers of General de Jesus College in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. The corrections, suggestions and comments provided by the department heads and teachers including the researcher's adviser and statistician were thoroughly integrated in the final draft of the questionnaire.

The unstructured interviews were also employed in this study to validate and substantiate the data gathered from the respondents. Representative samples were asked by the researcher as soon as the accomplished questionnaires were retrieved.

Result and Discussion

1. Level of Principals' Competence in Managing Performance of Teachers.

This section presents the level of principals' competence in managing the teachers' performance in terms of:

1.1 Planning

Table 1. The summary of the responses on the level of principals' competence in planning for the performance of teachers

ITEMS	Principals		Department Heads		Teachers		Total Average		Interpretation
	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	
1.Motivating Teachers	3.47	Always	3.45	Always	3.36	Always	3.43	Always	Highly Competent
2.Discussing Important Topics	3.58	Always	3.55	Always	3.47	Always	3.53	Always	Highly Competent
3.Setting of Objectives	3.55	Always	3.39	Always	3.40	Always	3.45	Always	Highly Competent
4.Classroom Observations	3.44	Always	3.48	Always	3.34	Always	3.42	Always	Highly Competent
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.51	Always	3.47	Always	3.39	Always	3.46	Always	Highly Competent

Legend:

4	3.25 - 4.00	Always	Highly competent
3	2.50 - 3.24	Often	Very competent
2	1.76 - 2.49	Sometimes	Satisfactorily competent
1	1.00-1.75	Never	Incompetent

The findings indicate that principals are perceived as highly competent in planning for teacher performance management, with average weighted means of 3.51 for principals, 3.47 for department heads, and 3.39 for teachers, all described as "always" competent. During the planning stage, these principals actively engage in discussions about vital topics and collaboratively set clear objectives for teachers, which is crucial for effective performance management.

Planning is a key part in performance management of teachers as it provides principals to determine the support needed by teachers to meet expectations, including goals and outcomes of both the teacher and the school and the education system at large. Research emphasizes the effectiveness of collaborative goal-setting processes between school leaders and teachers. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2018) highlight that when principals involve teachers in discussions about objectives, it fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among educators, ultimately leading to improved instructional practices and student outcomes.

Additionally, setting clear objectives is a fundamental aspect of performance

management that ensures teachers understand what is expected of them. Research by Hattie (2018) shows that having well-defined goals significantly influences both teacher performance and student learning, as it aligns teaching practices with desired learning outcomes. This is supported by Leithwood et al. (2020), stating that when principals set specific objectives during planning meetings, it helps guide the professional development of teachers. This focus allows for targeted training opportunities that cater to the unique needs of educators, thereby enhancing their skills and increasing student performance.

1.2 Monitoring

This area presents the level of principals' competence in monitoring performance of teachers in terms of setting schedule for pre-classroom observation, holding of formal classroom observations basing on the following criteria (professional knowledge of teachers, instructional planning of teachers, teachers' instructional delivery, assessment of learning, teachers' classroom management skills, and monitoring learners' academic progress) and collecting other data on teachers' performance.

Table 2. Summary Table on the Level of Principals' Competence in Monitoring Teachers' Performance

ITEMS	Principals		Department Heads		Teachers		Total Average		Interpretation
	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	
1. Setting Schedule Pre-classroom observation conference	3.48	Always	3.38	Always	3.42	Always	3.43	Always	Highly Competent
2. Holding Formal classroom observations	3.57	Always	3.52	Always	3.49	Always	3.53	Always	Highly Competent
3. Professional Knowledge	3.57	Always	3.52	Always	3.49	Always	3.53	Always	Highly Competent
4. Instructional Planning	3.48	Always	3.32	Always	3.47	Always	3.43	Always	Highly Competent
5. Instructional Delivery	3.44	Always	3.36	Always	3.43	Always	3.41	Always	Highly Competent
6. Assessment of Students' Learning	3.44	Always	3.35	Always	3.41	Always	3.40	Always	Highly Competent

ITEMS	Principals		Department Heads		Teachers		Total Average		Interpretation
	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	
7. Classroom Management Skills	3.62	Always	3.45	Always	3.52	Always	3.53	Always	Highly Competent
8. Student Academic Progress	3.53	Always	3.38	Always	3.45	Always	3.45	Always	Highly Competent
9. Collecting other data on teachers' performance	3.31	Always	3.34	Always	3.38	Always	3.34	Always	Highly Competent
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.49	Always	3.40	Always	3.45	Always	3.45	Always	Highly Competent

Legend:

4	3.25 - 4.00	Always	Highly competent
3	2.50 - 3.24	Often	Very competent
2	1.76 - 2.49	Sometimes	Satisfactorily competent
1	1.00-1.75	Never	Incompetent

The table shows that the average weighted means gathered from the data are 3.49 for the principals, 3.40 for the department heads and 3.45 for the teachers. The total average is 3.44. This tells that the principals are viewed by all the respondents “always” highly competent in performance monitoring.

The findings regarding principals' competence in performance management highlight that both principals and teachers rated classroom management skills highly competent, with an average mean of 3.62 by principals and 3.52 by teachers. This reflects a consensus on the importance of effective monitoring and management strategies within the educational environment.

Research by Pianta, Downer, and Hamre (2016) confirms that principals who are actively engaged in monitoring classroom management foster a culture of positive student engagement. Their work emphasizes that effective classroom management, overseen by competent school leaders, correlates significantly with student academic achievement and emotional well-being.

Moreover, the feedback from monitoring plays a crucial for professional growth. A study by Wang, et al. (2021) underscores that constructive feedback provided by principals during classroom observations significantly helps teachers refine their classroom management techniques. The ongoing dialogue between principals and teachers regarding performance management leads to enhanced teaching efficacy.

The finding implies that principals acknowledge that monitoring serves important purposes. This may be attributed to the fact that in the absence of effective monitoring, it would be difficult for principals to know whether the intended results are being achieved as planned, what corrective action may be needed to ensure delivery of the intended results, and whether initiatives are making positive contributions towards development.

The finding is also a reflection of the principals effectively leading the development, alignment, and execution of the plans for monitoring the performance of teachers to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum.

1.3 Reviewing

Table 3. Level of Principals' Competence in Reviewing Teachers' Performance

ITEMS	Principals		Department Heads		Teachers		Total Average		Interpretation
	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	
1. providing timely informal and formal (oral and written) feedback on the teachers' strengths and weaknesses.	3.61	Always	3.45	Always	3.36	Always	3.47	Always	Highly Competent
2. showing appreciation and recognition to teachers on areas well performed.	3.64	Always	3.61	Always	3.42	Always	3.56	Always	Highly Competent
3. assisting teachers in understanding their potentials and teaching styles.	3.69	Always	3.52	Always	3.47	Always	3.56	Always	Highly Competent
4. identifying professional development needs of teachers and helping them work out a professional and personal development plan.	3.49	Always	3.55	Always	3.44	Always	3.49	Always	Highly Competent
5. assisting under-performing teachers in understanding their responsibilities, deficiencies and the unfavourable outcomes of their teachings.	3.64	Always	3.61	Always	3.49	Always	3.58	Always	Highly Competent
6. showing understanding of the teachers' feelings, problems and expectations.	3.44	Always	3.42	Always	3.49	Always	3.45	Always	Highly Competent
7. assessing teachers' areas for improvement and working out a proposal for improvement.	3.56	Always	3.45	Always	3.50	Always	3.50	Always	Highly Competent
8. identifying issues/problems which impacted adversely or positively on their performance.	3.42	Always	3.48	Always	3.49	Always	3.46	Always	Highly Competent
9. encouraging teachers to participate in in-service trainings, seminars/ workshops on latest trends and innovations in teaching.	3.47	Always	3.27	Always	3.48	Always	3.41	Always	Highly Competent
10. motivating them to join professional organizations in line with their field/specialization.	3.08	Always	3.27	Always	3.29	Always	3.21	Always	Very Competent
11. conducting educational researches in the school to analyze problems in teaching-learning process.	2.94	Always	3.18	Always	3.22	Always	3.11	Always	Very Competent
12. coaching, mentoring and counselling.	3.44	Always	3.18	Always	3.33	Always	3.32	Always	Highly Competent
13. encouraging teachers to pursue graduate studies.	3.14	Always	3.27	Always	3.28	Always	3.23	Always	Very Competent
14. giving teachers opportunity to visit and learn from neighbouring schools or educational organizations	2.89	Always	2.85	Always	3.13	Always	2.96	Always	Very Competent
15. utilizing performance data to:									

15.1 make recommendation for faculty development / training needs	3.25	Always	3.30	Always	3.27	Always	3.27	Always	Highly Competent
15.2 make decision on teachers' promotion	3.08	Always	3.24	Always	3.21	Always	3.18	Always	Very Competent
15.3 make recommendation on teachers' deployment and separation/ retention	2.97	Always	3.15	Always	3.19	Always	3.10	Always	Very Competent
15.4 make decision on teachers' merit and salary increase	3.08	Always	3.15	Always	3.12	Always	3.12	Always	Very Competent
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.32	Always	3.33	Always	3.34	Always	3.33	Always	Highly Competent

Table 3 reveals the level of principals' competence in reviewing the performance of teachers.

It may be of interest to note that in the process of reviewing performance of teachers, it is necessary that principals provide teachers with opportunities to know how they are performing.

From the data, it can be observed that the item "assisting teachers in understanding their potentials and teaching styles" yielded the highest weighted mean of 3.69 from the principals. Both the items "assisting teachers in understanding their potentials and teaching styles" and "showing appreciation and recognition to teachers on areas well performed" produced the highest weighted mean of 3.61 from the department heads. While the item "assessing teachers' areas for improvement and working out a proposal for improvement" got the highest weighted mean of 3.50 from the teachers. All the items received verbal description "always", interpreted as highly competent.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean score is on the item "giving teachers opportunity to visit and learn from neighboring schools or educational organizations". In particular the item gathered 2.89 from the principals, 2.85 from the department heads, and 3.33 from the teachers, with verbal description "often", interpreted as highly competent.

As reflected on the findings, both the principals and the department heads assessed the principals as highly competent in helping teachers understand their potentials and teaching styles. This is an indication that they both internalize the need of teachers for coaching, mentoring and guidance from the

principals so they can optimize their potentials and teaching styles.

Accordingly, Barret et al., (2007) noted that teaching style is an essential set of teacher's strategies, methods and attitudes with a significant impact on student's learning process and results.

Likewise, McGowan (2007) conducted a post-secondary study that examined the relationship between teaching styles and student achievement. The study concluded that there was a positive correlation between the teachers' teaching styles and their students' achievement.

Further, the department heads affirmed that the principals were also highly competent in showing appreciation and recognition on areas well performed. It is a known fact that a principal who provides consistent support, understanding and encouragement creates a secure bond of trust with teachers, which gives them the confidence to actualize their full potentials.

Whitaker (2009) asserted that principals must ensure that the needs of all the teachers, whether physiological, safety, social, esteem or self-actualization, are well taken care of if the teachers are to perform their roles successfully.

Similarly, teachers rated the principals as highly competent on assessing teachers' areas for improvement and working out a proposal for improvement.

As noted earlier, one of the objectives of observation is identifying teachers' strength and recognizing areas that need improvement. Evidently, teachers display positive reception

towards performance management and feedback which they receive from their principals. This is a good indicator that teachers are willing to move forward in their profession. However, it seems that it is not enough for them to know their strengths and weaknesses. These findings also reveal that they still need support and guidance of the principals so they can better improve their teaching skills.

Meanwhile, all of the respondents perceived the principals as very competent in giving teachers opportunities to visit and learn from neighbouring schools or educational organizations. This is to provide teachers an avenue for bench-marking on the best teaching practices of fellow teachers from other schools.

To sum up, the average weighted means obtained from the data are 3.32 from the principals, 3.33 from the department heads, and 3.34 from the teachers. The total average is

3.33. This tells that principals are seen highly competent by the respondents in reviewing performance of teachers.

These findings are evidence of the principals' effectiveness in providing performance review with teachers as both of them can assess the extent to which teachers have met the set goals and objectives. Moreover, the review of teachers' performance can help them determine the success of their overall performance identify the need for additional support, training or development and ways of meeting such needs.

As highlighted by Dinham (2013), all teachers are required to undergo performance reviews so principals could provide them with constructive feedback on their classroom performance. According Donaldson (2012), constructive feedback develops teachers' performance, increases job satisfaction and improves teaching practice.

Summary Table on the Level of Principals' Competence in Performance Management of Teachers

Table 4. Summary Table on the Level of Principals' Competence in Performance Management of Teachers

AREAS	Principals		Department Heads		Teachers		Total Average		Interpretation
	W M	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	WM	VD	
1. Planning	3.51	Always	3.47	Always	3.39	Always	3.46	Always	Highly Competent
2. Monitoring	3.49	Always	3.40	Always	3.45	Always	3.45	Always	Highly Competent
3. Reviewing	3.32	Always	3.33	Always	3.34	Always	3.33	Always	Highly Competent
GRAND WEIGHTED MEAN	3.44	Always	3.40	Always	3.39	Always	3.41	Always	Highly Competent

Legend:

4	3.25 - 4.00	Always	Highly competent
3	2.50 - 3.24	Often	Very competent
2	1.76 - 2.49	Sometimes	Satisfactorily competent
1	1.00-1.75	Never	Incompetent

Table 4 displays the summary of the level of principals' competence in the performance management of teachers. It can be gleaned from the table that the obtained grand weighted means are 3.44 for the principals, 3.40 for the department heads and 3.39 for the teachers respectively. The total average is 3.41.

The findings clearly indicate that the principals are perceived by all of the respondents as "always" highly competent in performance management of teachers.

Interestingly, the respondents display common perceptions on the principals' competence in managing the performance of teachers. This

finding further shows that all the constructive feedback on their classroom performance. According Donaldson (2012), constructive feedback develops teachers' performance, increases job satisfaction and improves teaching practice.

In the study conducted by Harris (2014), he cited the important role of teacher performance management in the organizational structure of schools as it provides mechanisms which aims at building a working knowledge of the effectiveness of teaching and learning practices.

Similarly, Evans (2011), Liew (2012) and Van de Grift (2013) highlighted that performance management should be a mainstay in

educational institutions because it is a means by which principals can determine teaching quality and learning outcome.

Difference in the Perception of the Teachers, Department Heads, and Principals on the Principals' Competence on Performance Management of Teachers

This section contains the discussion on the difference in the perception of the teachers, department heads and the principals on the principals' competence in teacher performance management. Table 5 displays the summary results of three groups of respondents as regards principals' performance management of teachers.

Table 5. Summary Results of Analyses of Variance between and among the Three Groups of

Areas	Computed F Value	Critical Value @ $\alpha = .05$	Probability Value	Decision
Planning	1.67	2.90	0.20	Do not reject H ₀
Monitoring	3.68	3.47	0.04	Reject H ₀
Reviewing	.04	3.18	0.96	Do not reject H ₀

Respondents regarding the Principals' Performance Management of Teachers

The summary of the analyses of variance done to test the significant difference between and among the perceptions of the three groups of respondents is shown in Table 25. It can be gleaned from the table that among the areas of performance management, it is only in monitoring where the computed F value (3.68) is higher than the critical value (3.47) resulting to a probability value of 0.04. This is lower than the $\alpha = .05$, thus the evidence is not enough to entirely reject the hypothesis of no difference. There is significant difference between and among the perceptions of the respondents only in the area of monitoring.

The data further disclose that all the respondents: principals, department heads and teachers exhibit common perception on the level of principals' competence in managing performance of teachers in terms of planning.

In school setting, planning is a two-way process between and among the principals, department heads and teachers. According to Oosterlynck (2011) and Atamturk (2011), planning is important as it gives teachers sense

of purpose and direction (performance goals), outlines the kinds of tasks they will perform, and explains how their activities are related to the overall goals of the school.

In the planning stage, the principals, together with department heads, ask teachers to reflect on their teaching practice, and set measurable goals related to their performance and development. As Timperley (2011) claimed, planning and setting of goals is central to the development of a self-regulated learning capacity and assists teachers to identify what they need to do to improve their practice.

On the contrary, the data reveal that there is a significant difference on the perceptions of the respondents as regards monitoring teachers' performance.

Monitoring, first and foremost, is the key responsibilities of the principals. It is, therefore, expected that principals give themselves the highest rating of 3.49 in monitoring teachers' performance. This is followed by 3.40 for the department heads and 3.45 for the teachers.

For performance monitoring to be effective, it is imperative that principals coordinate teachers' work or activities on a day-to-day basis. It is anticipated that they continuously provide teachers with coaching, counselling, mentoring and meeting to determine any progress or problems which they may encounter (Steckel, 2009).

The differences on the respondents' perceptions may be explained by the reason that principals' work is hectic and taxing. They attend numerous meetings, seminars and trainings, take a walk at the school building daily, not to mention unscheduled coming of parents or visitors, and in some instances, unexpected problems occurrence requiring immediate action.

It is understandable that these inevitable circumstances may sometimes create conflicts in principals' schedules. There may be times perhaps when the principals overlook to monitor teachers' performance. For these reasons, department heads and teachers may feel unattended to; particularly when they need the principals' help and support the most.

During such times, it is significant to maintain an open line of communication between and among the principals, teachers and department heads to keep an update on any requirement and supportive action needed by the teachers. Given the situation, there is a felt need for principals to ensure that there is an active and collaborative effort to support teachers' needs and address whatever problems they may encounter in the performance of their tasks.

As the findings likewise revealed, all the respondents again display common perception on the level of principals' competence in reviewing performance of teachers. This is strong evidence that principals are effective and efficient in building teachers' capacity to accurately self-assess their performance during their review meetings. This is the time when principals encourage ongoing active engagement of teachers in seeking their input, providing critical feedback and reflecting the impact of their performance in the achievement of the school's vision and goals.

Performance Management Training to Sustain Principals' Competence

The overall findings of the study on "Principals' Competence in Performance Management of Teachers in the Private Secondary Schools in the Division of Nueva Ecija" disclosed that principals are highly competent in the performance of their functions as school leaders who successfully and effectively managed performance of teachers operating in their schools.

However, the researcher believes that school leaders should not rely on their present achievements, but continue to aim higher in their quest for excellence so that the education system in the Philippines may be at par with the rest of the world.

According to Gladwell (2008), it takes professionals roughly 10,000 hours of trainings before they feel expert at their job. Today, as the requirements for school leaders constantly evolve, even highly competent principals need a continuum of regular training in search of effective way to continually improve the performance of teachers.

Similarly, Ikubun (2011) asserted that principals with specialized trainings are empowered and motivated for better performance management.

The researcher has come up with performance management training for principals. Primarily, the training aims to sustain principals' competence in the three areas of performance management: planning, monitoring and reviewing in order to encourage collaboration between and among the principals, department heads and teachers to promote self-growth, effective leadership and management and improvement of the overall performance. The objectives, activities, expected outcomes and performance indicators are likewise included. It is expected that schools will provide financial support to principals' training which is scheduled during the summer In-Service Training for teachers.

General Objectives of the Training

At the end of the training, principals will be able to:

1. Draw up and provide support to the successful implementation of the termly

- and annual school performance management plans;
2. Translate the school annual plans into performance goals that are aligned with school vision, mission and goals;
 3. conduct comprehensive performance planning, monitoring and reviewing with their teachers;
 4. make recommendations that are in line with teachers' expectations, school vision, mission, goals, requirements and best practice; and
 5. implement, monitor and review performance recommendations made to teachers.

Conclusions

The study investigates principals' competence in managing teacher performance in private secondary schools in Nueva Ecija, focusing on three key areas: planning, monitoring, and reviewing. The findings reveal that principals are highly competent in planning performance management. They adeptly engage in discussions, set objectives, and motivate teachers, ensuring clarity in expectations. There was a notable difference in perceptions among principals, department heads, and teachers specifically regarding the monitoring of teacher performance. This suggests a need for principals to enhance their monitoring practices and communication with teachers. Likewise, principals demonstrated strong capabilities in reviewing teacher performance, providing constructive feedback and identifying professional development needs. The study indicates that these practices contribute positively to teacher growth and effectiveness.

Recommendations

To improve principals' competence in performance management, it is recommended to establish continuous training programs focusing on leadership skills and instructional strategies tailored for principals, along with creating mentorship initiatives that pair experienced principals with newcomers for knowledge sharing. There should be policy initiatives that allocate resources for developing monitoring tools to assist principals in assessing and supporting teachers effectively.

Additionally, forming collaborative networks among schools to share best practices, implementing feedback mechanisms for teachers to comment on the support they receive, and conducting longitudinal studies to track the development of principals' competencies over time would be beneficial. Future research could also explore how different leadership styles impact teacher performance and satisfaction, analyze the direct effects of performance management practices on teacher outcomes, and conduct comparative studies across regions to identify benchmarks and insights for enhancing educational leadership practices.

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