



The Futures of Leadership: Assessing the State of Governance in Talalora District amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The world was never the same again when COVID-19 came. For managers, business owners, and employees alike, it was like something they have not seen before. For school leaders, it was a challenging and overwhelming task to run the school amid the lockdowns and community quarantines. This study aimed to assess the state of governance in Talalora District, one of the 34 districts in the Division of Samar, through a descriptive-quantitative research design, the state of school operations, fiscal management, implementation of DepEd programs, projects, and activities, and human resource development. This study reveals the aspects such as late submission of reports, difficulty in communicating with teachers and school personnel because of intermittent internet connection, and a decrease in productivity were noted for teachers as they were overworked in accomplishing their tasks. The MOOE allocation per quarter is not enough to cover all school expenses as there are additional purchases such as COVID-19 kits, vitamins, and other measures to help stop the spread of the virus that should be included. The implementation of DepEd programs, projects, and activities was intensified and heightened because of the pandemic. The school community showed full participation, but teachers had experienced difficulty in implementing these because of some hindering factors such as limited resources and facilities. Furthermore, human resource development is not fully maximized as there are respondents who attended the same average number of trainings before the pandemic as they are now. While most training is centered on Learning and Development, training has now become scarce because of COVID-19.

Keywords *school management, administration, new normal*

INTRODUCTION

It is said that many educators and parents have long recognized that education is a type of investment that strengthens people's potential to be more productive, earn more, and have a greater quality of life, alongside its beneficial results. Therefore, when news of a virus was affecting everyone everywhere in the world, and when mobility was eventually restricted due to this, things seemed to have stopped for people in the education sector (Macasaet, 2002).

The COVID-19 epidemic, a phenomenon that started in China in 2019 and has nearly infected every country on the planet in early 2020, is one of the most recent major public health problems in the world. SARS-CoV-2, formerly known as 2019-nCoV, is a new coronavirus that triggers this deadly illness (Guo et al., 2020). This virus has affected thousands all over the world, with it being the cause of the greatest number of deaths. Cases of people who contract it is still rising over the world now. The education sector, being one of the most affected by this health crisis, suffered profound effects and impacts.

UNESCO (2020) reports that for over two months since the rise of COVID-19 cases, most countries across the world have momentarily imposed restrictions in academic institutions to limit the spread of COVID-19 and decrease infections. The same report noted that the shutdown had impacted more than 1.2 billion pupils worldwide, including more than 28 million in the Philippines. The immediate response that the government took was to implement community lockdowns and quarantines. This caused students, teachers, and workers all over the world to study and work from

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home. Because of the looming threat of the virus, different mechanisms were introduced.

Educational institutions have chosen to implement the new normal in education. The Department of Education (DepEd) has adopted the Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) for School Year 2020-2021, with classes beginning on October 5, 2020, rather than June 2020 (DepEd, 2020). Meanwhile, the Commission on Higher Education accorded academic freedom and eased to HEIs in the higher education sector, encouraging them to incorporate accessible distance learning, e-learning, and other alternative modes of delivery to students (CHED, 2020).

The world was never the same again when COVID-19 came. For managers, business owners, and employees alike, it was like something they have not seen before. Tria (2020) noted that this problem provided a unique but overwhelming fact that in the new normal, every education leader's decision-making process immensely depends on several factors. The lockdowns, the restrictions, the sudden shift to other learning modalities, and the struggle to sustain office operations were difficult to hurdle, knowing that every move could harm someone or that every move was a risk no one was willing to take, especially since it involved not only their health and well-being but also their family members. Fotheringham et al. (2021) agree, noting that to comply with government rules across the world, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated considerable adjustments in school policy.

At Talalora District, one of the thirty-four (34) districts in the Department of Education-Samar Division, the challenges brought about by COVID-19 were extraordinary. These made the district question if it was really prepared for the post-COVID scenarios not only in curriculum instruction but also in school operations and governance. Drastic changes were made in curriculum instruction with the introduction of several learning modalities, while school operations and governance also demanded robust transformation. The old order of things was no longer feasible; hence a new order must be created. It required everyone to adapt to the changing times.

The aim of this paper was to measure the impact of COVID-19 school operations in one of the districts under the Division of Samar, Talalora District. Specifically, it aimed to identify the issues and concerns related to school operations during the pandemic and to assess the state of school operations and management during COVID-19.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, also known as Republic Act (RA) 9155, establishes an integrative framework for empowerment by improving principal and leadership goals, as well as school-based administration in the context of transparency and accountability. Basic education's goal is to provide school-aged children and teenagers with the skills, information, and values they need to become compassionate, independent, prosperous, and nationalistic citizens (Macasaet, 2002). It is the Department of Education's goal to empower schools so they can manage themselves and embody leadership at the school level. However, this goal was halted by COVID-19, a virus that has affected everyone.

COVID-19's propagation in early 2020 has generated fear all throughout the world. Schleicher (2020) notes that the public health emergency has resulted in severe despair and loss of life. It has even worsened poverty, marginalization, and injustices in many parts of the world, not only because COVID-19 seemingly affected those in poverty-stricken communities more than the wealthy but also because certain measures are taken by governments to control the virus's spread primarily through restricting movement and mobilization by the eventual implementation of community quarantine, lockdowns, and curfews in many regions of the world (Simbulan, 2020).

Furthermore, while there is a plethora of studies on educational leadership and change management, there aren't many studies that integrate educational leadership with crisis management at the school level (Gainey, 2009; Mutch, 2015; Smith & Riley, 2012). Fotheringham

et al. (2021) said that the pressures and experiences lived by the school leaders as the policy-making body of the school made their tasks difficult and stressful. It was a challenge to implement, interpret, and translate school guidance and management during these times. School leaders faced challenges to adapt with the constantly changing government policies. They had to consider limitations such as the welfare of their students and staff as well as the community. There was a need for an imperative, substantial, and clear direction for the school to continue its operations.

According to Beauchamp et al. (2021), variables such as diverse national institutions, mandates, support, and guidance led school leaders' responses to the COVID-19 outbreak and their leadership to subsequent changes. The domain of school leadership and administration is a growing academic field. Normative school leadership methods coexist with rational or scientific management approaches in relation to educational administration. Hyvärinen and Vos (2015) posit that to keep communities unified and to encourage them to act successfully during the unpredictability of a crisis, a few key things are required. Creative thinking, problem-solving, improvisation when necessary, and, most importantly, communicative abilities enable fruitful partnerships by strengthening different interactions between crucial groups and people among them.

Miller (2018) describes how school leadership is achieved through a complicated process involving policy formation, interpretation, execution, cooperation, motivation, and people and resource management. Superintendents and campus-level administrators must also balance their obligations to employees, parents, the community, and other education stakeholders alongside their students' scholastic, social, emotional, and physical needs. Direen (2017) argues that in times of crisis, these aspects of school leadership are stressed and analyzed. This is primarily because Netolicky (2020) emphasizes that school leaders must make careful and thorough decisions about how to serve his/her communities in the best way possible. Trust must be fostered, and the principals must act at hand according to the nature of the crisis. They must step forward as the frontrunner of the school. They must act as the trustworthy, credible voice of the community they are part of.

Beauchamp et al. (2021) further said that during the COVID-19 crisis, leaders had to respond to constant adjustments or changes both inside and outside of schools, thus making their work complicated. Fotheringham et al. (2021) identify communication as a key factor in overcoming the challenges brought about by the pandemic as the impact of closing schools only magnified the difficulty in communication and the timely delivery of succinct, meaningful, and practical guidance during uncertain times where risk assessments can change rapidly. The same study mentioned also revealed that clear communication and collaboration between school stakeholders are needed to effectively create school policies. The findings in this study imply that paying attention to and maintaining clear communication, cooperation, and change processes can help school leaders make informed decisions as well as better and more productive policy-making processes. Schools should be encouraged to build and invest in communication systems that pave the way for a network of stakeholders to create opportunities for collaboration. For school leaders in these trying times, the pressure is constant, and the options are almost always limited (Harris & Jones, 2020). This means that they must cope with having more things to do but having less of what they need. Up until now, every move the Department of Education makes is based on COVID-19 responses, processes, and protocols from the national government. Expectations that come from school leaders ask more of them.

This is the same reason why school leadership will never return to its normalcy anytime soon or at all. Harris and Jones (2020) point out that the training and preparation programs before will require reassessment as to their adaptability and application to remain of importance for those aspiring and practicing school heads. They also suggested that new mechanisms must be adapted

to fully capacitate these leaders in terms of skills, practices, and actions that are suited to the ongoing COVID-19 situation as it now takes more than the usual problem-solving to run an effective school in a disruptive time. Azorin, Harris, and Jones (2020) encourage education leaders to adapt distributed leadership as it has now become the default response. They must learn to connect, share, learn, and network their way through the challenges they face. Distributed leadership is a prerequisite to survive during and post-COVID-19.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study intends to generate insights and measure the impact of COVID-19 on governance, one of the key performance indicators alongside access and quality in the Department of Education. This study will employ a descriptive-quantitative research design which aims to collect quantifiable data from the population sample for statistical analysis (Zook & Pearce, 2018). For this study, the data that will be collected for statistical analyses are their experiences in handling governance, particularly school operations, fiscal management, implementation of DepEd programs and projects, and human resource development.

This study was conducted in Talalora District, one of the thirty-four (34) districts in the Division of Samar. This District was chosen because of its intensified implementation of the programs, activities, and projects of the Department of Education. There are 121 teaching and non-teaching personnel in this District. No other studies in the past were conducted in this locale, hence the reason why the researcher has chosen to conduct this study in the said District.

An online survey questionnaire was used to gather necessary information from the identified respondents. This instrument posed questions about the experiences and the degree of impact the COVID-19 pandemic made in terms of school operations, fiscal management, human resource development, and the implementation of DepEd programs, activities, and projects. The first part of the questionnaire is the demographic profile of respondents, followed by questions on school operations, fiscal management, implementation of DepEd PAPs, and human resource development. This instrument is classified into three: one for school administrators, one for department heads, and one for DepEd PAPs coordinators/teachers.

Since the instrument is a self-made questionnaire, it has undergone thorough validation by a statistician to ensure that results are verified and reliable. The content of the questionnaire was validated by three subject matter experts to check the appropriateness of the questions to the local situation. When the instrument was approved, a pilot test was administered among the respondents. This was to check whether the instrument met its purpose. Pilot testing was done to ensure valid and reliable results (Collins, 2001).

The cluster sampling method, a probability type of sampling in quantitative research, was used in this study. Acharya et al. (2013) refer to this as a two-step process where the entire population is divided into clusters or groups. With this sampling method, the clusters are chosen randomly. Such sampling technique was used because the target respondents are school heads, department heads, and District coordinators of the different programs and projects of the Department of Education. Using Slovin's formula and with a 0.05 margin of error, the respondents of this study were eight (8) school heads, ten (10) department heads, and district coordinators of the different programs, activities, and projects of the Department of Education, and sixteen (16) teachers from the twelve (12) schools in the District. The participants are well-informed and proficient about the phenomenon being studied, being frontrunners of the District and being focal persons for the DepEd programs and projects.

The researcher sought consent from the respondents through writing. They were informed that certain measures were taken to protect their anonymity and that they have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process. The confidentiality of their answers was upheld in

ensuring that their answers would not be traced to them and that no one would be harmed in the conduct of this research. There was no conflict of interest in this study.

The researcher first sought permission from the District In-charge for approval of the conduct of this study. When the approval of the District In-charge was secured, as well as the approval of the questionnaire by the subject matter experts, the validated research instruments were used to gather data. The survey questionnaires were made online through Google Forms and were distributed through Facebook Messenger for easy access. During the conduct of the pilot test, nine (9) respondents answered the said instrument. There were three respondents from each group. In the actual administration of the questionnaire to the thirty-four (34) respondents, the researcher made sure to thoroughly explain the parts of the instrument so that the respondents could better answer it to the best of their knowledge. After collecting all data, the researcher tallied and tabulated the survey with the help of a statistician.

Since the first part of the questionnaire pertains to the respondent's profile, the answers that were gathered relative to it were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The number of respondents who answered a specific question was recorded. Descriptive strategies such as the developing of tables of mean and standard deviation for items in the survey questionnaire were also done to interpret and assess the state of governance in Talalora District.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The thirty-four respondents from Talalora District were composed of school heads, three department heads from one of the high schools, seven District coordinators, and sixteen teachers. Seventy-five (75%) of the respondents from the first group (n=8) came from non-central schools, and twenty-five (25%) came from secondary schools. For the second group (n=10), 27.3% of the respondents came from non-central, 27.3% from central schools, 27.3% from secondary schools and 9.1% came from an integrated school. Meanwhile, for the third group (n=16), 57.1% came from secondary schools, 28.53% came from non-central schools, and 28.53% came from central schools. 62% of the school heads believe their school was affected by COVID-19, while 37.5% believe otherwise. For the second group, 81.8% believe their school was affected by the virus, while 9.1% believe that it wasn't. 92.9% believe their school was affected by COVID-19, while 7.1% believe otherwise.

The data gathered by the researcher, which had been presented, analyzed, and interpreted, revealed the state of governance in school operations, fiscal management, implementation of DepEd programs, projects, and activities, and human resource development and the impact of COVID-19 on governance. Tables 1A-1C show the state of governance in terms of school operations.

Table 1A. State of Governance in School Operations for School Heads

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
Teachers and school personnel had to work from home	2.53	0.402216083	Disagree
Teachers and school personnel had to work onsite.	1.87	0.402216083	Disagree
Employee productivity increased.	1.87	0.402216083	Disagree
Employee productivity decreased.	2.20	0.402216083	Disagree
Communication between teachers and school personnel was difficult.	2.20	0.402216083	Disagree
Communication between teachers and personnel was easy.	1.47	0.402216083	Strongly Disagree

They have a high work performance and accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently.	1.80	0.402216083	Disagree
They achieve a high standard of work accomplishment.	1.80	0.402216083	Disagree
They feel demotivated to work on their task.	1.53	0.402216083	Strongly Disagree
They seldom submit their reports.	1.27	0.402216083	Strongly Disagree
They were unresponsive and out of reach.	1.27	0.402216083	Strongly Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

One school head responded that late submission of reports was noted at this time. Some school heads were able to submit their reports because they were the ones who collected them. The most used mode of communication during the lockdown and community quarantine was through Facebook Messenger/Facebook groups. A mean of 1.87 was recorded pertaining to whether the productivity of employees decreased or increased. Based on the responses, employee productivity neither decreased nor increased. Communication between the teachers and personnel was also neither difficult nor easy. Although it shows that teachers and personnel do not feel demotivated to work on their tasks, they neither show a high work performance nor a high standard of work accomplishment.

Table 1B. State of Governance in School Operations for Department Heads and District Coordinators

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
Teachers and school personnel had to work from home	3.2	0.529881506	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Teachers and school personnel had to work onsite.	2.07	0.529881506	Disagree
Employee productivity increased.	2.13	0.529881506	Disagree
Employee productivity decreased.	1.87	0.529881506	Disagree
Communication between teachers and school personnel was difficult.	2.40	0.529881506	Disagree
Communication between teachers and school personnel was easy.	1.93	0.529881506	Disagree
They have a high work performance and accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently.	2.00	0.529881506	Disagree
They achieve a high standard of work accomplishment.	1.87	0.529881506	Disagree
They feel demotivated to work on their tasks.	2.13	0.529881506	Disagree
They seldom submit their reports.	1.53	0.529881506	Strongly Disagree
They were unresponsive and out of reach.	1.47	0.529881506	Strongly Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

One respondent noted that teachers were overworked to accomplish the tasks, which ranged

from printing, packing, distributing, retrieving, checking, making of Learner's Activity Sheet, and more. The problem with communication also became worse during this time as it depended on the area where the teachers were located. It wasn't difficult for those employees living in the town proper. It was a hassle for those teachers who lived in barangays as there would be little to no internet connectivity. Meanwhile, the most used mode of communication among them was Facebook Messenger/Facebook groups. A mean of 2.13 was also noted whether employee productivity increased. The respondents said they disagreed. Employee productivity neither increased nor decreased. However, they do not agree that teachers and school personnel feel demotivated to work on their tasks.

Table 1C. State of Governance in School Operations for Teachers

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
Teachers and school personnel had to work from home.	4.87	0.590907536	Strongly Agree
Teachers and school personnel had to work onsite.	3.40	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Employee productivity increased.	3.40	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Employee productivity decreased.	3.73	0.590907536	Agree
Communication between teachers and school personnel was difficult.	4.13	0.590907536	Agree
Communication between teachers and school personnel was easy.	2.93	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
They have a high work performance and accomplish tasks quickly and efficiently.	3.27	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
They achieve a high standard of work accomplishment.	3.47	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
They feel demotivated to work on their tasks.	3.27	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
They seldom submit their reports.	2.87	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree
They were unresponsive and out of reach.	2.93	0.590907536	Neither Agree nor Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

A respondent noted that in the time of lockdowns and community quarantine, internet connectivity mattered to them most. The most used mode of communication was also Facebook Messenger or Facebook groups. The teachers believe that their employee productivity decreased when they had to work from home. Communication between them and school personnel was found to be difficult, as a mean of 4.13 was noted in this response. There should have been an intervention from the Department of Education on this gap, as it could be an underlying reason why they felt demotivated. Tables 2A-2C show the state of governance in terms of fiscal management.

Table 2A. State of Governance in Fiscal Management for School Heads

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
MOOE allocation per quarter was enough to cover school expenses.	2.53	0.424638034	Disagree

MOOE allocation per quarter was not enough to cover school expenses.	1.87	0.424638034	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on school supplies.	1.87	0.424638034	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on repairs and maintenance.	2.20	0.424638034	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on training expenses.	2.20	0.424638034	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on printing and publication.	1.47	0.424638034	Strongly Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on general services.	1.80	0.424638034	Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

It is revealed here that for the part of the school heads, the MOOE allocation for a specific quarter wasn't focused on just one expenditure, as they have mostly shown their disagreements on the above-mentioned statements. Respondents said that MOOE guidelines were needs-based during the implementation of the Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan. School heads prioritized the production of modules and Learner's Activity Sheets, the purchase of health kits, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). When the MOOE doesn't suffice, they seek partnerships from stakeholders, non-government agencies (NGOs), and private entities. Furthermore, these school heads said that all funds intended for their respective school for the Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 were downloaded and liquidated on time.

Table 2B. State of Governance in Fiscal Management for Department Heads and District Coordinators

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
MOOE allocation per quarter was enough to cover school expenses.	2.07	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was not enough to cover school expenses.	2.47	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on school supplies.	2.40	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on repairs and maintenance.	1.93	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on training expenses.	1.67	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on printing and publication.	2.47	0.302721343	Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on general services.	2.20	0.302721343	Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

A mean of 2.07 was noted for the first indicative statement, revealing that this group of respondents believed that the allocation was not enough for all school expenses. These respondents said that their MOOE was mostly spent on purchasing printing supplies and COVID-19 essentials.

One respondent said that they had to hire additional utility aides in their school to help them with the production and distribution of modules. The wage of utility aides is charged against the School MOOE.

Table 2C. State of Governance in Fiscal Management for Teachers

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
MOOE allocation per quarter was enough to cover school expenses.	3.20	0.730006885	Neither Agree nor Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was not enough to cover school expenses.	3.20	0.730006885	Neither Agree nor Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on school supplies.	3.53	0.730006885	Neither Agree nor Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on repairs and maintenance.	2.67	0.730006885	Neither Agree nor Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on training expenses.	2.73	0.730006885	Neither Agree nor Disagree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on printing and publication.	4.80	0.730006885	Strongly Agree
MOOE allocation per quarter was concentrated on general services.	3.80	0.730006885	Agree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

Respondents remarked that MOOE allocations were also focused on the purchase of health kits and vitamins for teachers and other personnel. The allocation was divided depending on the prioritization of the needs of the school, such as implementing COVID-19 mitigation measures, school supplies, and sometimes, incidental expenses needed by the teachers in their monitoring of learners. A mean of 3.80 was noted on the last indicative statement, showing that teachers agree that their respective school MOOE allocation was concentrated on general services, as evidenced by the hiring of additional utility aides who will help in the maintenance of the operation of the school amidst the pandemic.

Tables 3A-3C show the state of governance in terms of the implementation of DepEd programs, projects, and activities. It should also be noted that the notable PPAs implemented before the pandemic are Gender and Development (GAD) programs, Wash in Schools, Brigada Eskwela, Oplan Balik Eskwela, School Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adjustment (SMEA), School-Based Management (SBM), Oplan Kalusugan sa DepEd (OKD), School-based Feeding Program (SBFP), National Drug Education Program (NDEP), and Gulayan sa Paaralan (GPP). During the time of the pandemic, the following additional programs were implemented and intensified: Adopt-a-School Program (ASP), School MOOE Fund Liquidation Day, and Library Hubs.

Table 3A. State of Governance in the Implementation of DepEd PPAs for School Heads

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
COVID-19 pushed us to implement more programs.	2.53	0.183585685	Disagree
Implementation of DepEd PAs was difficult because of the pandemic.	1.87	0.183585685	Disagree
Some DepEd PAs were no longer a priority because of the pandemic.	1.87	0.183585685	Disagree
Implementation of DepEd PAs is now heightened and intensified.	2.20	0.183585685	Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

According to one respondent, it would be efficient to have more programs in the future that would cater to the needs of the learners, but there should be separate personnel who would take over the tasks of a coordinator as teachers already have numerous tasks at hand. Teachers and school personnel exhibited full participation in the implementation of these PPAs. Furthermore, new sets of computers, tables, and a school building were also given to the schools, proof of the respondents' disagreement with the statement that some DepEd PPAs were no longer a priority and that the implementation was difficult because of it.

Table 3B. State of Governance in the Implementation of DepEd PPAs for Department Heads and District Coordinators

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
COVID-19 pushed us to implement more programs.	2.87	0.269155056	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Implementation of DepEd PAs was difficult because of the pandemic.	2.53	0.269155056	Disagree
Some DepEd PAs were no longer a priority because of the pandemic.	2.27	0.269155056	Disagree
Implementation of DepEd PAs is now heightened and intensified.	2.60	0.269155056	Neither Agree nor Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

These respondents also remarked on the full implementation of DepEd PPAs in their schools. However, the problems they have encountered in the implementation of these are the following: school coordinators have little to no internet connectivity or network signal, and the resources and facilities are limited. This is why they neither agree nor disagree if the implementation of the DepEd PPAs was heightened and intensified, as shown by the mean of 2.60.

Table 3C. State of Governance in the Implementation of DepEd PPAs for Teachers

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
COVID-19 pushed us to implement more programs.	4.33	0.520967760	Agree
Implementation of DepEd PAs was difficult because of the pandemic.	4.00	0.520967760	Agree
Some DepEd PAs were no longer a priority because of the pandemic.	3.47	0.520967760	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Implementation of DepEd PAs is now heightened and intensified.	4.07	0.520967760	Agree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

Full participation was also shown by the teachers and school personnel in the implementation of DepEd PPAs. This is evidenced by the new buildings and infrastructures, new chairs, new tablet PCs/laptops, and hand washing facilities in their school. However, it should be noted that teachers, specifically, felt that the implementation of these PPAs has been difficult because of the pandemic. While it is true that the implementation is now heightened and intensified, there should be room for discussions as regards its implementation, as the teachers in the field have

such perceptions.

Tables 4A-4C show the state of governance in terms of human resource development. It should be noted that for the school heads, an average of 1-3 training per year was noted before the pandemic. The same number was also recorded from 2020-present. These trainings were focused on Learning and Development (L & D). Two respondents remarked that training should be conducted onsite.

Table 4A. State of Governance in Human Resource Development for School Heads

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
Most trainings are now conducted online.	1.73	0.274604092	Disagree
Face-to-face trainings are still preferred.	2.47	0.274604092	Disagree
Trainings have now become scarce because of the pandemic.	2.00	0.274604092	Disagree
More trainings are now conducted frequently since the pandemic.	1.73	0.274604092	Disagree
There are no registrations collected in training because of COVID-19.	1.87	0.274604092	Disagree
Registrations are now collected in training because of COVID-19.	1.87	0.274604092	Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

The Department Heads and District Coordinators would attend an average of 1-3 trainings every year before the pandemic. Now, the same number was recorded, as they have attended training from 2020 onwards. These trainings are Learning and Development-centered, as they are on strategies used for the different learning modalities. These respondents said that free registrations and accommodations are provided during training in the time of the pandemic. However, they disagree that most trainings are now conducted frequently since the pandemic, having recorded a mean of 1.87 for this indicative statement.

Table 4B. State of Governance in Human Resource Development for Department Heads and District Coordinators

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
Most trainings are now conducted online.	2.67	0.626234231	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Face-to-face trainings are still preferred.	2.73	0.626234231	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Trainings have now become scarce because of the pandemic.	2.60	0.626234231	Neither Agree nor Disagree
More trainings are now conducted frequently since the pandemic.	1.87	0.626234231	Disagree
There are no registrations collected in training because of COVID-19.	2.60	0.626234231	Neither Agree nor Disagree
Registrations are now collected in training because of COVID-19.	1.13	0.626234231	Strongly Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

An average of 1-3 trainings every year before the pandemic was also noted for teachers. From 2020 to the present, they still attend the same number of trainings as the nature of these are

Learning and Development. It is noteworthy that face-to-face trainings are still preferred by teachers, having a mean of 4.73. However, they believe that training has now become scarce because of the pandemic, a finding that this study suggests should be addressed by the concerned authorities as human resource development is paramount in transforming an organization.

Table 4C. State of Governance in Human Resource Development for Teachers

Indicative Statement	Mean	SD	Description
Most trainings are now conducted online.	4.33	0.812935543	Agree
Face-to-face trainings are still preferred.	4.73	0.812935543	Strongly Agree
Trainings have now become scarce because of the pandemic.	3.93	0.812935543	Agree
More trainings are now conducted frequently since the pandemic.	3.53	0.812935543	Neither Agree nor Disagree
There are no registrations collected in training because of COVID-19.	3.67	0.812935543	Agree
Registrations are now collected in training because of COVID-19.	2.27	0.812935543	Disagree

Legend: 5.00-4.56 Strongly Agree; 4.55-3.56 Agree; 3.55-2.56 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 2.55-1.56 Disagree; 1.55-1.00 Strongly Disagree

CONCLUSIONS

The following are the issues and implications drawn by the researcher based on the consolidated findings of the study: (1) That aspects such as late submission of reports, difficulty in communicating with teachers and school personnel because of intermittent internet connection, a decrease in productivity was noted for teachers as they were overworked in accomplishing their tasks. These are the aspects that were greatly affected because of COVID-19. (2) That the MOOE allocation per quarter is not enough to cover all school expenses. The respondents do not feel that it is enough as there are additional purchases such as COVID-19 kits, vitamins, and other measures to help stop the spread of the virus that should be included. The MOOE was not concentrated on just one type of expenditure, as repairs and maintenance and general services and other aspects were also given focus. (3) That the implementation of DepEd programs, projects, and activities was intensified and heightened because of the pandemic. The school community showed full participation, but it should be noted that teachers have had trouble in implementing these because of some hindering factors such as limited resources and facilities. The implementation would even be more successful if the causes of those difficulties were addressed. (4) That human resource development is not fully maximized as there are respondents who attended the same average number of trainings before the pandemic as the ones that are being conducted now. While most trainings are centered on Learning and Development, teachers feel that training has now become scarce because of COVID-19.

On the other hand, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered: (1) That the Department of Education offers various programs to prepare school administrators and teachers for the difficulties as regards governance that may arise soon. (2) That school administrators, and middle managers, such as Department Heads and District Coordinators, should develop a contingency plan to address the challenges that they will face. (3) That alternative ways of crafting policy recommendations in the implementation of the Programs, Projects, and Activities of the Department of Education be considered, especially since there are schools that are financially and geographically challenged. And (4) that future researchers should conduct a phenomenological study using a methodology similar to this study but with other variables

explored.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

This study is descriptive-quantitative in nature, so it did not have any hypothesis or theoretical framework to prove. The aim of this paper was to generate insights and describe the experience of the respondents to address the issues in the field regarding the aspects of Governance, one of the key performance indicators in the Department of Education. The insights generated were drawn from the survey, which was Likert-scale in nature. The researcher proposes that further research should employ a causal-comparative research design through the use of Analysis of Variance or even a phenomenological design to fully accommodate all the issues and concerns that hinder teachers in the implementation of these DepEd programs, projects, and activities. Further research is needed as these programs continue to be promoted by the Department of Education, especially now that in-person classes have resumed two years after the pandemic hit the Philippines.

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from your research. Further research should suggest the number of gaps in our knowledge that follow from our findings or extend a further test of the research.

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