



Professional Learning Community and School Basic Education Development Plan on Schools' Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the level of practices on professional learning community and the level of the implementation of the schools' basic education development plan on the schools' performance at Baliwag North District, for school year 2022 - 2023. With correlational research design and 271 teachers and 32 school leaders as respondents of the study, results showed that the level of practices of professional learning community as assessed by the school heads and teachers was "established." The Basic Education Development Plan in terms of access, equity, quality, resilience, and well-being, and enabling mechanisms – governance was assessed by the school leaders and teachers as "full implementation." Majority of the school respondents obtained 100% and above school performance. Highly significant relationship was found between the level of practices of the professional learning community and school performance. In the same manner, highly significant relationship was found between the level of implementation of the School Basic Education Development Plan and school performance. Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn: The level of practices of the professional learning community is positively correlated to school performance. In the same manner, the level of implementation of the School Basic Education Development Plan is directly correlated to school performance.

Keywords: Professional Learning Community, School Basic Education Plan, Schools' Performance

Introduction

Professional learning community was always intended for the school-improvement plan and strategy designed to reduce professional isolation, foster greater faculty collaboration, and spread the expertise and insights of individual teachers throughout the school. The Department of Education recognized that the quality of learning is greatly influenced by the quality of teaching. Therefore, professional learning community was utilized and endorsed as an infrastructure that can effectively support all members to bring about new ideas and accept responsibility for improving the organization. It was how the members put the collective inquiry into best practices and action-oriented plans. It had essential factors that were characterized by collaboration, shared leadership, and ongoing learning.

Shirley Hord, an expert on school leadership, came up with perhaps the most efficient description of the strategy: "The three words explain the concept: Professionals coming together in a group—a community—to learn." PLC is a group of learners formed based on a shared vision with the aim of helping each other to achieve the desired objectives (Sai & Saedah, 2015, Antinluoma et al., 2018).

Every day, there are educators who are pounded down by an incessant avalanche of change, but everyone can consistently rise and break through, becoming more skilled, knowledgeable, and empowered as they go. As such, professional learning communities tend to serve to two general purposes: (1) improving the skills and knowledge of educators through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue, and (2) improving the educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment of students through stronger leadership and teaching. Therefore, these conditions allow the teachers and the principals to help each other to work together in order to achieve the desired goals (Sai & Saedah, 2015, Antinluoma et al., 2018).

The factors that enhanced and promoted the sustainability of a professional learning community from a wide perspective included the initiation and implementation of continuous improvement (Baldrige Model for Excellence) which helps address issues of trust, collegiality, and communication within the community. (Hunter, 2020)

The theory of generative interactions was also utilized to guide this research. The pursuit of a significant, shared organizational goal, frequent mixing of diverse members over long periods, allowing different groups to have equal standing and status in contributing to success, and providing collaborative interdependence, interpersonal well-being, and self-efficacy are all conditions for generative interactions (Bernstein et al., 2020). As one of the recognized leaders in the community, professional learning communities helped the school to continually question, reevaluate, refine, and improve teaching strategies and knowledge. It was a systematic process in which teachers work together to analyze and improve classroom practices and strategies. Teachers worked in teams and engaged in an ongoing cycle of questions that promoted deep team learning.

Moreover, the Department of Education (DepEd) stated that a support mechanism shall be established for teachers and school leaders, including supervisors, to have access to relevant on-demand technical and administrative advice and guidance. This came in the form of a functional helpdesk, coaching, professional learning community through the learning action cell, resource materials, and other forms of support that can be made available in real or virtual platforms/set-ups. Monitoring of course implementation and identification of areas of improvement and best practices was conducted.

The institutionalization of teacher professional learning communities (PLCs) in schools has been significantly considered as a contributing factor towards individual teachers' professional development (Goldman & Popp, 2016). In line with the implementation of Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued the enclosed policy on The Learning Action Cell (LAC) as a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning. Through this policy, the DepEd fully supported the continuing professional development of its teaching personnel based on the principle of lifelong learning and DepEd's commitment to the development of teachers potential aimed towards their success in the profession. This was done through the school-based LAC, which primarily functioned as a professional learning community for teachers that helped them improve practice and learner achievement.

As schools worked toward developing learning communities, the Department of Education embarked on the development of Basic Education Development Plan (BEDP), a package of education's long-term plan that responded to basic education challenges for educators brought about by the pandemic. It ensured inclusive and equitable quality education and promoted lifelong learning opportunities for all. One of its goals was to help Filipinos realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to building a cohesive nation.

With a learner-oriented framework, the Department of Education (DepEd) stated that the BEDP 2030 will be implemented from 2020 to 2030, fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030. It has two major phases: Phase 1 from 2022 to 2026 and Phase 2 from 2026 to 2030. The BEDP anchors on the Sulong Edukalidad Framework, the Philippine Development Plan and Ambisyon 2040, and the commitments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030, and provides a strategic roadmap for the Department to follow to improve the delivery and quality of basic education and the experience of learners in the basic education learning environment.

In addition, DepEd stated that the Phase 1 included the response to the immediate impacts of COVID-19 on the teaching and learning process. Specifically, Phase 1 primarily covered the following major areas: (i) post-COVID-19 recovery and transition: DepEd focused on reducing the negative impacts of the sudden shift from face-to-face to pure distance learning and bridging the learning gaps caused by the COVID-19 lockdown, while deepening the innovations and learning gains compelled by COVID-19; (ii) addressing the remaining access gaps, in particular for groups in situations of disadvantage; (iii) focus on quality with three focus areas: (a) strengthen programs on reading, numeracy, socio-emotional learning, 21st century skills, and reskilling teachers; (b) sharpen skillsets of teachers in contextualization to address the concerns of diverse learners; and (c) strengthen instructional leadership and supervision to improve teaching quality; and (iv) system-wide capacity development.

On the other hand, Phase 2 focused on sustaining the gains and evaluating the implemented programs. The following were the priorities for Phase 2: (i) continuation of programs and projects on access, quality, equity, and learner's rights and resilience; (ii) operationalization of the innovations initiated under the Education Futures Programme; (iii) program and impact evaluation; (iv) development of new programs to address emerging education issues and opportunities; and (v) end of plan assessment.

Acquired from the above-mentioned articles and justifications, the researcher was challenged to measure the perceptions of the school heads and teachers on the level of practices of professional learning community and on the level of implementation of basic education development plan.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the level of practices on professional learning community and the level of the implementation of the schools' basic education development plan on the schools' performance at Baliwag North District, for school year 2022 - 2023. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the level of practices on professional learning community be described in terms of:

- 1.1. planning process;
- 1.2. teachers' professional development needs;
- 1.3. materials and resources;
- 1.4. time;
- 1.5. school-based peer learning activities;
- 1.6. organization of learning groups;
- 1.7. monitoring and assessment;
- 1.8. documentation and report; and
- 1.9. shared principles?

2. How may the level of the implementation of the schools' basic education development plan be described in terms of:
 - 2.1. access;
 - 2.2. equity;
 - 2.3. quality;
 - 2.4. resilience and well-being; and
 - 2.5. enabling mechanisms - governance?
3. How may the schools' performance be described in terms of:
 - 3.1. enrollment rate;
 - 3.2. participation rate;
 - 3.3. retention rate;
 - 3.4. survival rate;
 - 3.5. transition rate;
 - 3.6. completion rate;
 - 3.7. graduation rate;
 - 3.8. drop-out rate; and
 - 3.9. teacher-pupil ratio?
4. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of the school heads and teachers on the level of practices on professional learning community?
5. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of the school heads and teachers on the level of implementation on basic education development plan?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the level of practices of the professional learning community and schools' performance?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the schools' basic education development plan and schools' performance?
8. What plan of action may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Conceptual Framework

The teachers and school heads in a learning community worked in teams and they have learned by sharing professional practices. Lev Vygotsky's social learning theory took an emphasis on the importance of social interaction for the development of learning and cognition. This was rooted on social development theory and zone of proximal development which highlighted the importance of communication and social interaction in learning. According to Vygotsky's theory, human cognitive function came from the social interaction of everyone in a cultural context. Vygotsky also believed that learning occurs when they work on uncharted tasks, but those tasks were within reach of their abilities, or they were in their zone of proximal development.

Moreover, in Albert Bandura's book entitled Social Learning Theory, he suggested that most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action. Social learning can be used effectively in the workplace to observe and model productive behaviors.

Aside from the implementation of a professional learning community, the Department of Education also developed the Basic Education Development Plan which enabled the learners of basic education to continue learning and for teachers to be able to deliver instruction efficiently amidst the pandemic. Piaget and Vygotsky's theory were supported by Bruner's cognitive theory which stated that learning is an active process in which learners build new ideas or concepts based on their current and past knowledge. He also added that learners can choose and change information, construct hypotheses, and make decisions, depending on their knowledge and experience (cognitive) to gain new knowledge and information.

Constructivism views the formation of knowledge as an active subject which created cognitive structures in their interactions with the environment. Cognitive interaction will occur as far as reality is structured through the cognitive structure created by the subject itself. The cognitive structure must always be altered and adapted according to the demands of the environment and the changing organism. The process of adjustment occurs continuously through the process of reconstruction (Amineh and Davatgari, 2015).

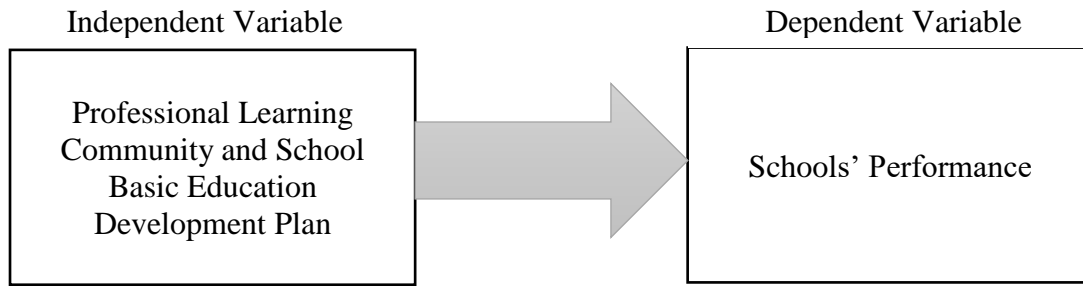


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

To gain an in-depth understanding of the topic, Figure 1 of the study showed the independent variables which consist of (1) the professional learning community which was measured according to DepEd's Evaluation Tool of Schools' PLC Practices; and (2) the school's basic education development plan which was described using DepEd's BEDP Results Framework.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the method and approaches promoted in this study. It discussed the research design, data gathering techniques, sampling procedures, and data analysis scheme utilized in this research.

Research Design

In this study, the researcher applied a quantitative descriptive design as the main research approach. The researcher disseminated a survey to measure the (a) perceptions of teachers and school heads about level of practices of professional learning community; (b) level of the implementation of the school's basic education development plan, and (c) schools' performance indicators.

Data Gathering Techniques

The researcher utilized the Department of Education's Evaluation Tool of Schools' PLC Practices as the research instrument and modified to assess the perceptions of the teachers, master teachers, and school heads on the level of practices on professional learning community. In addition, the DepEd's Basic Education Development Plan Results Framework was also modified and used by the researcher to gauge the schools' delivery and quality of basic education and the experience of learners in the learning environment. The researcher asked permission of Rowena T. Quiambao CESO VI, the *Assistant Schools Division Superintendent of Bulacan*. Then, the researcher also sought permission from Dr. Jennifer E. Quinto, PhD, the *Public Schools District Supervisor of Baliwag North District in Poblacion, Baliwag, Bulacan* to conduct the said study. Upon permission, coordination with the principal of the school respondents took place.

In administering the survey instrument, respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. In addition, a prior consent was utilized by the researcher to assure that this will be used solely in the study. Meanwhile, an informed consent form was also collected from the respondents before the conduct of the study. The said form was necessary for the respondents to understand the goal of the research, the risks, and the benefits of taking part in the said study. During the process, the respondents was given an opportunity to ask questions and clarifications. It was also pointed out that taking part in the study was voluntary and the respondents can stop or withdraw at any time. The content of the said form was written and understood in a plain language to avoid confusion from the respondents. In line with this, the researcher guaranteed that the form has no misleading or deceptive statements and it had undergone a critiquing from a panel of experts. The signature of the respondents that was affixed on the consent form was reviewed by the researcher.

The data gathered was stored in a secure location and only the researcher had the access for the security and confidentiality of the respondents. The paper records was disposed through burning to observe the destruction of the data gathered and to ensure no possibility for reconstruction of information of the respondents. The researcher made certain that after the statistical treatment and interpretation for which the data gathered and used, it will no longer be retained and will be disposed until June 2023.

Sampling Procedures

The researcher chose all the public elementary teachers, master teachers, and school heads in Baliwag North District. It was shown from the table that a total of 271 teachers, 20 master teachers, and 12 school heads were the respondents of this study.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

Schools in Baliwag North District	Teachers	School Leaders	
		Master Teachers	School Heads
1. Baliwag North Central School	42	5	1
2. Catulinan Elementary School	11	1	1
3. Dr. Guillermo Dela Merced Memorial School	25	1	1
4. Dr. Nicolas V. Rustia Memorial School	15	1	1
4. Engr. Vicente R. Cruz Memorial School	31	2	1
5. Hinukay Elementary School	11	0	1
6. Jacinto Ponce Elementary School	30	3	1
7. Josefa V. Ycasiano Memorial School	18	1	1
8. Paitan Elementary School	8	0	1
9. Sabang Elementary School	40	2	1
10. Subic Elementary School	11	1	1
12. Tilapayong Elementary School	29	3	1
Total	271	20	12

Data Analysis Scheme

After conducting the survey, the researcher gathered the data, consolidated, tabulated, and was analyzed using statistical tools. The researcher used descriptive data statistics to interpret the collected measures of the samples in a form of weighted mean, standard deviation, and percentages. After gathering all the necessary data for the study, it was statistically analyzed and presented into a tabular form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter showed the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data collected and the results of the statistical treatment employed in the study with the purpose of determining the level of practices on professional learning community and the level of the implementation of the schools' basic education development plan on the schools' performance at Baliwag North District.

The Level of Practices on Professional Learning Community

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) were collaborative structures within schools that foster continuous professional development among educators. The level of practices within a PLC can vary depending on the specific context and goals of the school. The level of practices on professional learning community in terms of planning process, teachers' professional development needs, materials and resources, time, school-based peer learning activities, organization of learning groups, monitoring and assessment,

documentation and report, and shared principles are presented in Tables 2 to 10.

Planning Process

The planning process in a PLC involved establishing shared goals and objectives, identifying areas of focus, and determining strategies to achieve them. It is crucial to involve all stakeholders, including administrators and teachers, in the planning process.

Regular meetings should be scheduled to review progress, assess needs, and adjust plans accordingly.

Table 2. The Level of Practices on Professional Learning Community in terms of Planning Process

Item Statement <i>The school...</i>	School Leaders		Teachers	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
1. plans reflect teachers' instructional needs (content, pedagogy, and assessment) and based on IPCRF.	3.84	E	3.62	E
2. results of school monitoring and evaluation are being incorporated in the next planning cycle	3.72	E	3.64	E
3. plans are integrated in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) including the budget	3.91	E	3.69	E
4. plans are completed at the start of the year and are revisited at least once in a quarter	3.69	E	3.59	E
5. involves all teachers in the process of planning and learning activities	3.88	E	3.63	E
Overall Mean	3.81	E	3.63	E

Legend:

3.25 – 4.00

Established (E)

2.50 – 3.24

Developing (D)

1.75 – 2.49	Beginning (B)
1.00 – 1.74	Not Practicing (NP)

The item statement 3 from the school leaders and teachers obtained the highest mean of 3.91 and 3.69 both have a verbal description of “Established”. On the other hand, the item statement 4 from the school leaders and teachers received the lowest mean of 3.69 and 3.59 with the same verbal description “Established”. The overall mean is 3.81 from the school leaders higher than 3.63 from the teachers. All items received a verbal description of “Established”.

The results imply that that the school engages in proactive planning and periodic review of their educational plans.

In relation to this, according to the study of Cheng (2021), the concept of knowledge management can be defined as a tool that leverages information and knowledge as valuable resources for achieving objectives and overseeing management processes such as strategizing, executing, monitoring, and assessing strategic plans. The implementation of knowledge management strategies has the potential to improve academic outcomes in educational institutions.

Teachers’ Professional Development Needs

Identifying and addressing teachers' professional development needs is a fundamental aspect of PLCs. This involves conducting needs assessments, collecting data, and using that information to design targeted professional development activities. Collaborative discussions and reflection should occur to ensure that the identified needs align with student learning objectives and instructional strategies.

Table 3. The Level of Practices on Professional Learning Community in terms of Teachers’ Professional Development Needs

Item Statement <i>The teachers’...</i>	School Leaders		Teachers	
	Mean	VD	Mean	VD
1. needs are identified using an instrument based on IPCRF and PPST.	3.81	E	3.63	E
2. professional development needs are completed at the start of the year	3.52	E	3.47	E
3. professional development needs are revisited at least once in a quarter	3.54	E	3.49	E
4. professional needs are identified consistently	3.72	E	3.53	E
5. professional needs helps in improving the teaching and learning process	3.78	E	3.59	E
Overall Mean	3.68	E	3.54	E

Legend:

3.25 – 4.00	Established (E)
2.50 – 3.24	Developing (D)
1.75 – 2.49	Beginning (B)
1.00 – 1.74	Not Practicing (NP)

The item statement 1 from the school leaders and teachers obtained the highest mean of 3.81 and 3.63 both have a verbal description of “Established”. In the same way, the item statement 2 from the school leaders and teachers received the lowest mean of 3.52 and 3.47 with the same verbal description “Established”. The overall mean is 3.68 from the school leaders higher than 3.54 from the teachers. All items received a verbal description of “Established”.

These results imply that identifying teachers' needs using instruments such as the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) and Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) demonstrates a commitment to addressing teachers’ needs and improving teacher competence.

This conforms with the findings that the significance of performing needs assessments to precisely identify the professional development requirements of teachers was underscored in the study conducted by Johnson et al. (2018). The study revealed that collaboration needs assessments which involved the participation of teachers, administrators, and educational researchers with provided valuable insights into areas that required improvement.

Findings

The study determined the level of practices on professional learning community and the level of the implementation of the schools’ basic education development plan on the schools’ performance at Baliwag North District, for school year 2022 - 2023.

Findings revealed that the level of practices on professional learning community in terms of planning process, teachers’ professional development needs, materials and resources, time, school-based peer learning activities, organization of learning groups, monitoring and assessment, documentation and report, and shared principles as assessed by the school heads and teachers was “established.”

The Basic Education Development Plan in terms of access, equity, quality, resilience and well-being, and enabling mechanisms – governance was assessed by the school leaders and teachers as “full implementation.”

In enrollment rate, majority of the school respondents (10 out of 12) registered a 100% and above ratings. In the same manner, majority of the school respondents obtained 100% and above participation rate. Only five schools (3, 4, 6, 8 and 9) registered by a below 100% participation rate.

However, only four schools registered a retention rate of 100% and above, the remaining schools registered a retention rate that ranged from 93% to 99%. For survival rate, fifty percent of the school respondents or 6 out of 12 school yielded survival rate from 100% and above. The lowest survival rate of 66.29% was recorded for school number 7. For transition rate, majority of the school respondents (7 out of 12) registered below 100% rating. For completion rate, majority of the school respondents (7 out of 12) registered 100% and above ratings. For graduation rate, almost all schools (11 out of 12) recorded a 100% rating. For drop-out rate, almost all school registered a 0% rating and below. Only school number 7 garnered a drop-out rate of 2%. For teacher-pupil ratio, majority of the school respondents (7 out of 12) exceeds the ideal ratio of 1:25 to 1:31.

Highly significance difference was found between the assessments of the school heads and the teachers as regards practices on professional learning community in terms of planning process and school-based peer learning activities. Meanwhile, significant difference was found between the assessments of the school heads and the teachers as regards practices on professional learning community in terms of monitoring and assessment and shared principles.

Highly significance difference was found between the assessments of the school heads and the teachers as regards the implementation of Basic Education Development Plan in terms of quality and resilience and well-being.

Highly significant relationship was found between the level of practices of the professional learning community in terms of planning process, teachers' professional

development needs, materials and resources, time, school-based peer learning activities, organization of learning groups, monitoring and assessment, documentation and report, and shared principles and school performance in terms of enrollment rate, participation rate, retention rate, survival rate, transition rate, completion rate, and graduation rate.

Highly significant relationship was found between the level of practices of the School Basic Education Development Plan in terms of access, equity, quality, resilience and well-being and enabling mechanisms – governance, and school performance in terms of enrollment rate, participation rate, retention rate, survival rate, transition rate, completion rate, and graduation rate.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: The level of practices of the professional learning community is positively correlated to school performance.

In the same manner, the level of practices of the School Basic Education Development Plan is directly correlated to school performance.

Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

1. The school may implement the program of activities offered by the researcher.
2. The school head must craft innovative programs to further address the issues on school through the implementation of plan of activity.
3. DepEd must conduct proper monitoring and evaluation to check the success of the programs.
4. For future researchers, further research along this line could be conducted. The same study may be conducted considering the teachers and pupils performance as dependent variables to validate the results of the study.
3. For future researchers, further research along this line could be conducted. The same study may be conducted considering the reason why the performance indicators like survival rate and drop-out rate became the weakest in the results of the study.

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