

FEMINISM AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: TRAVAILS OF WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN THE LANDSCAPE OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this research was to describe the experiences gained by women administrators in dealing with management in schools from Monkayo East and West District, Monkayo, Division of Davao de Oro. Employing phenomenological approach among 10 participants, in-depth interview was conducted which answered the four fundamental questions. Essential themes were generated out from their responses to the research questions. The findings uncovered the participants' lived experiences, and from it four (4) themes emerged: were being looked down, experienced varied situations, women leaders are more understanding and flexible, and being motherly in dealing with people. The participants also shared the challenges they encountered in dealing parental involvement, from which emerged six (6) themes: managing teachers, problem with learners, overcoming being emotional, problem with resources, keeping one's composure, and dealing on various responsibilities. Further, for the coping mechanisms they revealed eight (8) essential themes: call on God for strength, ask help from experts, conduct consultations, constant communication with stakeholders, and develop shared leadership, Co-Teachers, ideas from teachers, and technical assistance. Lastly, for the insights they cited five (5) themes which emerged: be strong as a woman administrator, be serious with leadership responsibilities, do not underestimate women's capacity to lead, continue seeking professional growth, and women leaders being valued and supported.

Keywords: School Leadership, Women Administrators, Experiences, Challenges, Coping Mechanisms, Insights, Phenomenological approach, Monkayo, Davao de Oro.

1. INTRODUCTION

The discourse surrounding women in leadership has surged in recent years, with organizations increasingly acknowledging the invaluable strengths and diverse viewpoints that women contribute to leadership positions. Women leaders frequently exhibit remarkable emotional intelligence, encompassing traits such as self-awareness, empathy, and adept relationship cultivation. However, despite these strengths, women leaders often encounter a myriad of challenges unique to their gender, ranging from implicit biases and stereotypes to systemic barriers and limited opportunities for advancement.

Moreover, women's numbers in the workforce have increased in Turkey, particularly in education, but not in school administration as in other nations (Nawaz et al., 2021). Further, though female candidates for teaching are assessed according to the same selection and assignment standards as male candidates, there aren't many female administrators in the Philippine school system. Women's advancement as administrators is specifically hampered by cultural, organizational, and personal factors (Durmaz, 2019). These elements include opinions regarding the efficacy

of female leadership, the glass ceiling, work-family conflict, resource scarcity, authoritarian power structures, and gender stereotypes (Crosby-Hillier, 2020).

In the Monkayo East and West District, female school administrators grapple with a variety of workplace challenges. From personal experience, I can affirm that working women face numerous obstacles while juggling professional responsibilities with home duties. As women often bear the primary responsibility for childcare and household chores as time progresses, it becomes increasingly challenging for us to ascend to higher positions and sustain our current roles. These challenges include societal expectations regarding gender roles, limited access to resources and opportunities, as well as ingrained biases and stereotypes that hinder women's professional advancement and retention.

However, the researcher has not come across a similar study in the local setting that investigated the depth and realm of the experiences of female School Heads in educational management. This study explored the lived experiences, challenges they faced, and strategies they used to show effective tools for women school leaders and managers, gain real competencies and apply in practice. This study would contribute to the formulation of plans/policies needed for management, supervision, and instruction for strengthening women management of the school; hence the study was conducted.

1.1 Research Questions

The study explored the experiences of women administrators in dealing with concerns in managing schools as well as the challenges they experienced and the ways they utilized to cope with the difficulties. It was guided by the following questions.

1. What are the experiences of the women administrators in dealing with management in schools?
2. What are the challenges the participants experienced in dealing with management in schools?
3. How do women administrators cope with the challenges in dealing with management in schools?
4. What are the insights the participants gained from their experiences in dealing with management in schools?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section offers readings and subjects associated with the current idea being studied in the hopes of providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of the issues and difficulties faced by female administrators when addressing issues related to school administration. To help us grasp and see clearly what is being stressed in this qualitative study, the results of other research that is similar to this one were presented. These were extracted from a variety of publications, including books, journals, websites, and manuals.

Experiences of Women Administrators. Women administrators in the public school appear more as transformational leaders than women administrators in the Department of Education. They recruitment they vision and inspiration, a community workspace with collaboration and innovation, and our professionals with empowerment and growth.

Challenges of Women Administrators. Kim & Cook (2012) and Harris (2013) stated that studies have uncovers challenges that women executive leaders must surmount, as they make their way up the career escalator, and thus using them to reveal why at the top women are more underrepresented than men in executive higher education leadership positions. Bonawitz and Andel (2009) identified a number of barriers that keep women from moving into executive leadership roles from a lack of mentorship to help direct them toward their career, to discrimination on identity lines, to the male privilege. For instance, women executives approached in the research discovered they might be bound not just by a lack of an elephant work but also by role conflict and women are also pre-disposed to act on traditional stereotypes through the patriarchal lens (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Pirouznia, 2009; Shah, 2010). This section describes the barriers including gender bias, culture; socio economic status and lack of mentorship to overcome some of the barriers going forward on moving women to greater executive leadership role.

Gender Barriers. Globally, there are millions of women who are not moving up to the higher positions because of gender-based discrimination. While women have made strides towards gender equality, they may still be

hindered by what some see as male-centric university practices and structures. O'Connor (2015) argued that changing women's place in universities is all about changing a gendered culture to turn the bias against women around. Furthermore, Northouse (2013) greatly elaborates on the pressure women may face as they follow a managerial track with their family and social norms and stereotypes placed on the characteristics of both male and female leaders. As argued by Harris et al., (2013), the collective conceptions of personality traits that differentiate men and women, gender typecasting, become barriers to women progressing their careers because the consensual beliefs reflect collective, yet differing views of male and female character traits (Aiston & Jung, 2015).

Women in the Current Workforce. women lag despite economic liberalization women continue to face substantial obstacles and disadvantages in the workplace relative to males, even with their tremendous rise in the labor force. This is particularly noteworthy for leadership. Women continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles in practically all industries, while entering the workforce at a quicker pace than men (Tariq et al., 2017). While women made up 50.8% of the U.S. population in 2010, according to the national census, only 3.0% of Fortune 500 company CEOs that year were female (Howden et al., 2011, Suh, 2015). In 2017, the number of female CEOs of Fortune 500 firms hit a record high of thirty-two, making this a startling statistic (McGregor, 2017). Similar trends in our labor market have now seen women account for 47 per cent of all workers in the United States, with women holding 52 per cent of management and professional jobs (Van Oosten et al., 2017). Those are alarming figures, particularly since the surge of diversity trainings has in large part been spurred by attempts in the workforce to just address sex discrimination. Yet in the finance industry, with which they were originally concerned, the share of white women in management declined from 39% in 2003 to 35% in 2014 (Kalev et al., 2016).

Barriers to Leadership Roles. We know that women are well represented at work, so why are they not moving into leadership positions??? Although there are fewer incidences of overt bias, compound biases in colleagues, bosses, and company leadership can limit or hurt the advancement of women (Carnes et al., 2015). Bismark et al 2015 identify these as interpersonal, internalized and structural barriers to women's professional success. Women struggle on reflection, in society, at work. Such as the ones related to social issues, notably, inclusion in specific social contexts, inside or outside the office, which when not present women may be excluded (Tariq et al., 2017). Sometimes even when women have all of the skills and requirements for the role, stereotypes may still create barriers in their way. These stereotypes create stereotype threat—a vicious cycle where women are seen (and see themselves) as less competent in leadership, so women do not enter leadership roles or, if they do, they underperform (Carnes et al.

Added Value of Women in Leadership. There is ample research that acknowledges the benefits of having women in leadership roles. However, in the context of healthcare leadership, women do not just bring emotional intelligence, empathy, and intuition to the table, but so much more—their strength and perseverance. There is quite a lot of research suggesting that firms do better when women are in positions of power, perhaps because of their superior soft skills (for which read abilities such as empathy, emotional intelligence, intuition, determination, and juggling). Nonetheless, women in the top 1% of corporate leadership make up a mere 15.7% of the highest corporate leadership positions in the US (Czabanowska et al, 2017). Moreover, skills and strategies women to be successful leaders, in this way specific identified done for woman in order to become successful leader. Men and women interviewed by Bismark et al. (2015) Leadership roles clearly went to the best skills available and while there is less representation of women in leadership positions, women with strong skills were no less likely to assume those roles. And yet, opportunities, guidance and support structures for women to learn, grow and develop these essential skills to be better poised to lead are often not available.

Coping Mechanisms of Women Administrators. Coping mechanisms for women administrators dealing with gender bias are illuminated by the research of Davis and Rodriguez (2020). The authors emphasize the importance of building resilience and self-advocacy skills. They suggest that fostering a supportive network and engaging in mentorship programs can empower women to navigate and challenge gender biases effectively. The study by Garcia and Chang (2021) delves into the challenges of achieving work-life balance for women administrators. Insights reveal coping strategies such as prioritization, effective time management, and the establishment of clear boundaries between professional and personal life. The research underscores the significance of organizational policies that support a healthy work-life balance.

Insights of Women Administrators. Smith and Johnson (2019) provide a foundational understanding of gender bias experienced by women administrators. The study highlights pervasive stereotypes and the need for

addressing systemic biases in educational leadership. Moreover, Davis and Rodriguez (2020) contribute by exploring intersectionality in the experiences of women administrators. The study underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing the unique challenges faced by women at the intersection of race, ethnicity, and gender.

Gender Disparities in Educational Leadership. Historically, women have faced challenges in breaking through the glass ceiling in educational leadership positions. Smith and Johnson (2019) delve into the historical context, revealing how entrenched gender norms and biases have hindered women administrators from ascending to top leadership roles. This historical perspective provides a foundation for understanding the roots of gender disparities. Davis and Rodriguez (2020) contribute valuable insights by examining the intersectionality of gender disparities. The study explores how race, ethnicity, and other intersecting factors compound the challenges faced by women administrators. Intersectionality reveals the complexity of the issue, emphasizing the need for nuanced solutions that consider multiple dimensions of identity.

Workplace Discrimination and Bias. Understanding workplace discrimination necessitates a historical lens. Authors like Smith and Johnson (2019) underscore the enduring nature of gender biases, which have deep historical roots. The discrimination faced by women administrators can be traced back to traditional gender roles that have shaped societal expectations, perpetuating imbalances in professional environments. This historical perspective sets the stage for comprehending the persistent challenges women administrators face in the contemporary landscape. Davis and Rodriguez (2020) contribute valuable insights by emphasizing the importance of intersectionality in understanding workplace discrimination. The intersection of gender with other identity markers, such as race and ethnicity, results in layered discrimination. Women administrators, particularly those belonging to minority groups, may experience compounded challenges. This intersectional approach highlights the need for targeted interventions that address the complexity of discrimination.

Support Structures for Women in Educational Leadership. At its core, support for women in educational leadership involves the provision of resources, guidance, and networks to help navigate the unique challenges they encounter. Jones and Smith (2019) emphasize that these structures extend beyond mere mentorship, encompassing a broader range of institutional, interpersonal, and community-based support mechanisms. By understanding the nuanced nature of support, educational institutions can tailor interventions to address the specific needs of women administrators.

Impact of Feminist Leadership Approaches. To begin, understanding the essence of feminist leadership is paramount. As posited by Johnson and Anderson (2019), it transcends the conventional paradigm, emphasizing not just gender inclusivity but a broader commitment to dismantling oppressive structures. Feminist leaders, as argued by these scholars, champion collaborative, empowering environments that challenge established hierarchies. The impact of feminist leadership on organizational culture is profound. Rodriguez and Smith (2020) assert that feminist leaders contribute to fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity. This transition challenges traditional hierarchies, promoting a more collaborative and egalitarian work environment. The impact extends beyond gender dynamics, fostering a workplace culture that values diverse perspectives and experiences.

Career Trajectories and Aspirations. The educational leadership landscape has witnessed shifts over the years, with women administrators navigating a complex terrain. Smith and Davis (2019) highlight the historical challenges women faced in accessing leadership roles. Despite progress, gendered expectations and stereotypes persist, shaping the trajectories of women administrators.

Policy Implications and Advocacy. Feminism has been instrumental in influencing policy development within educational organizations. Smith and Rodriguez (2019) highlight the transformative impact of feminist principles in challenging gender biases embedded in existing policies. Feminist perspectives contribute to reshaping policies that promote inclusivity, fairness, and the dismantling of systemic barriers faced by women administrators. Advocacy efforts are crucial in translating feminist ideals into tangible policy changes. Johnson et al. (2020) emphasizes the need for sustained advocacy to address gender disparities in educational leadership. Through strategic campaigns, lobbying, and collaboration with stakeholders, feminist leaders contribute to the formulation and implementation of policies that foster a more equitable leadership landscape. The study uncovers specific policy implications that emanate from the experiences of women administrators. Davis and Martinez (2022) emphasize the need for policies that recognize and address the unique challenges faced by women, including maternity leave, flexible

work arrangements, and mechanisms to combat gender-based discrimination. These policy recommendations aim to create a supportive environment that enables women administrators to thrive in their roles.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In the pursuit to explore the experiences of women administrators in dealing with school management, this study used a qualitative phenomenological research design. Essentially, it facilitated a deeper understanding of a certain phenomenon being lived through as described by the participants (Creswell, 2014; Giorgi, 2012).

The phenomenology claims that to understand human experiences, it requires immersive saturation of individual's thoughts and insights through employing interviews. Since these were the actual lives of the participants who have all experienced the phenomenon of dealing with school management, it facilitates a culmination of interpretation of their experiences (Creswell, 2009). For instance, it involved the actual establishment of meanings from the views of their lenses, and it provided the researcher an avenue to picture out the situation of the participants from the phenomenon they lived based on their actual shared experiences (Giorgi, 2012).

3.2 Research Locale

The study was conducted at Monkayo particularly at Monkayo National High School, Union National High School, Pasion National High School, Olaycon Integrated School, Muñoz Elementary School, Banlag Elementary School, Babag Elementary School, Ulip Elementary School, New Kapatagan Elementary School, Totoy Elementary School, and Paco Elementary School, in Monkayo East and West District, Monkayo, Davao de Oro.

3.3 Research Participants

There were ten participants in this study, enough to saturate information gathered from the studied group. Purposive sampling method was used to select participants for this qualitative study. The purposive sampling was used in this study was characterized by the incorporation of inclusion criteria to be met by the participants.

In determining the research participants of this qualitative-phenomenological study, there were 10 participants for the In-Depth Interview (IDI).

Furthermore, the inclusion criteria for the selection of participants were the following: (a) the participants must be a public-school Head Teacher or School Principal in the School Year 2022-2023, (b) with a position/designation from Teacher I-III, Head Teacher I-V to Principal I-IV, and (c) from various elementary schools in Monkayo East and West District, (d) and must have at least one year experience in managing schools.

3.4 Instruments of the Study

The primary data gathering tool for a qualitative investigation was the researcher herself. The interview was conducted by the researcher, who also took notes and recorded it. The panel members verified an interview guide that was also utilized by the researcher. This was the set of questions that were posed to the interview subjects. In order to establish the tone for the conversation, the researcher questioned the participants about their experiences, obstacles they faced, strategies they came up with, and lessons learned about managing in schools. By asking open-ended questions, the researcher exercised extraordinary caution.

3.5 Procedure

Qualitative researcher was involved in a series of undertakings in the process of data collection. The researcher made rigorous steps in the data collection procedure and engaged in a series of activities in the process of collecting data before arriving after the research study.

First, the researcher ensured that the study adhered to proper research protocols, thus submitted the research, and underwent review and was checked by the thesis adviser and the panel.

Second, the researcher asked the permission and consent of the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division Office of Davao de Oro, Public School District Supervisor, and School Administrators, to conduct the study. The researcher prepared the materials and tools needed for the data gathering such as the interview guide, audio recorder, and field notes.

Third, participants were identified with the use of the purposive sampling method. Some of the participants were recruited and contacted through the help of gatekeepers. The gatekeepers therefore asked to read and sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement form. The researcher ensured that the selected participants met the criteria and had experienced in dealing with school management. The research objectives and the entire methodology were explained to the selected participants. Also, the participants were sent with informed consent forms through e-mails and were asked to provide their e-signatures if they agree to the condition stipulated that their participation were voluntary and without coercion, in which they were willing to impart their knowledge as needed in the study.

The individual in-depth interview was held through a virtual meeting at a specified time agreed upon by the participants after having read and signed the consent letters. The guide questions for the interview were validated before the conduct of this study. To meet the needs of this study, the researcher established a series of scheduled meetings with the participants following dates that were most convenient for them. Their role and rights were thoroughly explained before the interview and compensation was provided. All the proceedings were recorded to ensure validity and reliability significant in the conduct of the study.

Also, the researcher asked permission from the participants to have the interview recorded. Throughout the interview, their responses were noted down while at the same time being assisted by an audio recorder to compensate for any mishearing and were used as an aid for transcription and coding later.

Fifth, the recorded interviews were stored in a flash drive, secured with a password, to be ready for transcription. The drive was stored in a secure and locked storage place that would be accessible to only the authorized person of the study, who was the researcher. It was also uploaded to Google Drive, which would not be viewable to the public, for additional security and backup. All the responses were transcribed verbatim to ensure a greater degree of accuracy during the data analysis. After the study was conducted, all the data were only be stored and kept for three years after which all would be destroyed and disposed to prevent unauthorized people from using and accessing the files.

Lastly, a thematic analysis was done. The responses of the participants were analyzed thoroughly based on the core ideas. The researcher was assisted by an analyst to ensure the correct analysis of the data.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The measures that were undertaken in ensuring ethical considerations in this study were based on the principles of the Belmont Report in 1979. The researcher adhered to the fundamental principles of ethical consideration where respect for persons, beneficence, and justice were identified (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

The researcher ensured that all the principles were addressed to protect the rights of participants and made sure that the information gathered from the participants were kept private as well as the names of the informants.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the findings to the research questions that explored the experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and the insights used by the women school administrators in dealing with problems in school management. The primary focus of the investigation was to explore and understand the accounts of women school administrators in dealing with problems in school management at Monkayo East and West District, Monkayo, Division of Davao de Oro. The research participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. There were 10 participants in this study which were enough to saturate information gathered from the studied group who were women school administrators.

4.1 What are the experiences of the women administrators in dealing with management in schools?

This section presents the results to the first major research question; ‘What are the experiences of the women administrators in dealing with management in schools?’ Three specific research questions were used to gather data and information for this major research question. The questions were intended to gather information on the understanding of the research participants regarding the experiences of women school administrators in dealing with problems in school management.

4.1.1 Experiences in Dealing with Management in Schools

The themes in this section were coming from the specific research question 1.1 ‘1.1 What are your experiences in dealing with management in schools?’ The responses generated were being looked down and experienced varied situations.

Being Looked Down. The experiences shared by these administrators indicate a need for a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach to organizational dynamics, shedding light on the intricate interplay between gender bias and professional advancement within educational institutions. These findings underscore the imperative for systemic changes to dismantle ingrained prejudices and foster an environment that values the contributions of women in educational leadership. Informant 2 pointed out:

It seems there is also a connotation for us, especially when it comes to us being women. When we follow the footsteps of the previous administrators who were male, they tend to compare decision-making. For them, if you are a woman, we are sometimes perceived as weak. Empathy prevails in us, compared to men. Because men, it seems like they are just cool and okay with everything. For us, especially in terms of the curriculum, it seems like we are very focused. When we impose something on them, it is like they listen, but it shocks them. They might say it is either too much or too lenient compared to what they were used to before. Then we get compared.

Experienced Varied Situations. The nuanced exploration of these diverse situations underscores the complex nature of women's experiences within educational leadership, shedding light on the multifaceted challenges they navigate. These findings emphasize the importance of recognizing and addressing the intricacies of gender dynamics within the school management context to create a more equitable and supportive environment for women administrators. Informant 4 pointed out:

We tend to encounter various situations on a daily basis. Some of them are positive, while others are negative, coming from all directions, so to speak. Sometimes it can be discouraging and difficult, but if we perceive things as difficult, they will undoubtedly become difficult. As administrators, when we assume the position, we are already aware that there will be numerous challenges. It will not be an easy job. Perhaps, sometimes, it is a misconception for others who think we are just sitting there doing nothing. Even on weekends, and sometimes late at night, we still have issues to ponder, right? It is like that is what we consume all the time. However, as I mentioned, if we perceive it as a problem, it will always remain a problem. Personally, I tend to view it as a challenge. It is like saying, 'You are a challenge, and I will conquer you.' That is how it is. It does not have to be about self-gratification; what matters is that we are able to fulfill our responsibilities.

4.1.2 Advantages of being Woman Administrator

This section presents the results to the specific research question 1.2 ‘What are the advantages of being a woman administrator in dealing with management in schools?’ The theme was: women leaders are more understanding and flexible.

Women Leaders are more Understanding and Flexible. The results revealed that women administrators are frequently recognized for their empathetic approach and adaptability, fostering a more collaborative and supportive organizational climate. The study underscores the importance of acknowledging and leveraging these strengths to promote inclusive leadership practices within educational organizations. Informant 2 stated;

It seems like she is also at an advantage. The advantage she has as a school leader, being a woman, is that it is easy to talk to her because you can easily understand their situations since you share the same gender. And when our male counterpart arrives, he just goes with the flow in understanding what women say. He might immediately say,

'Oh, that is how it is for them, ma'am, I lost because I am just one person.' It seems like she also has an advantage. She also has the advantage of being a woman because it seems like we will not act indifferent, and we can also feel what they feel. It is as if we put ourselves in their shoes, in their feet, we can feel their agony or understand their happiness or pain because we are both women.

4.1.3 Benefiting Part as Woman Administrator in Managing Schools

This section presents the results to the specific research question 1.3 'What do you think is the most benefiting part as a woman administrator in dealing with management in schools? Why?' The theme which served as result was: being motherly in dealing with people.

Being Motherly in Dealing with People. This finding suggests that the maternal approach adopted by women administrators contributes positively to interpersonal relationships, fostering a sense of care and understanding among the school community. The study highlights the potential advantages of embracing diverse leadership styles and challenges traditional norms associated with administrative roles in education.

Informant 7 expressed;

For me, being a mother figure in our family. Because when we are a mother figure, it seems like we really have our heart for our colleagues and, of course, the whole development of the school.

This was supported by informant 9 who uttered;

The most benefiting part as a woman administrator in management in school is that having a role as an administrator is like being a mother to your co-teachers and to your students. And it is a benefiting part because being a woman there is really, it is already innate that you will take care of what is your task and what is your role.

4.2 What are the challenges the participants experienced in dealing with management in schools?

This section presents the results to the second major research question 'What are the challenges the participants experienced in dealing with management in schools?' Three specific research questions were used to collect data for this question highlighting the challenges that the participants experienced in dealing with management in schools.

4.2.1 Challenges Encountered in Dealing with Management in Schools

The themes derived from the responses of the research informants to the specific research question 2.1 'What are the challenges you have encountered in dealing with management in schools?' are presented in this section. The themes were: managing teachers, problem with learners, and overcoming being emotional.

Managing Teachers. Participants consistently highlight a complex dynamic wherein women administrators navigate varied situations, including instances of resistance, gender bias, and differing expectations when overseeing teaching staff. The findings underscore the need for women administrators to employ nuanced approaches in managing teachers, balancing assertiveness with empathy, and addressing the multifaceted challenges that arise within the school environment. Informant 5 had this to say;

Human management. It is because teachers have diverse personalities. They have diverse cultures, and they have diverse background about everything in life. So, we cannot skate on the argument that there is really dynamics within the group. It might be that teacher to teacher, or teacher to parent, or teacher to student, or teacher to administrator.

Problem with Learners. As the result showed, the theme emerges as a significant challenge, including gender-based biases affecting interactions with students, instances of resistance or behavioral challenges, and navigating the unique needs of a diverse student body. The findings underscore the intricate nature of the relationships women administrators cultivate with learners, requiring a delicate balance between discipline, empathy, and addressing their diverse needs.

Informant 8 cited;

Another is learners' discipline. Since I am a woman, maybe I am not that effective in dealing with rude learners, so I need to make myself look brave for them, and it is so tiring to play this kind of role. I personally have a lot of things in mind to make our school a better place for our learners, but because of the limitation when it comes to resources, it hinders me to realize those things.

Overcoming being Emotional. As the result showed, women administrators frequently encounter stereotypes that associate them with heightened emotions, potentially undermining their authority. The findings emphasize the need for women administrators to navigate a delicate balance between expressing emotions appropriately and projecting assertive leadership. Informant 4 cited;

But the great challenge is that, how will you be overcoming that, despite the fact that you are emotional, emotionally triggered, and all those things. So, I guess that is one of the biggest challenges. That is how it is. What I am thinking is that if I have a problem, I can handle my own problem. It is a matter of how I approach it. What if my problem involves people? I might approach it wrongly, right? I might say something, and just with your nuance, with your raised eyebrows, he gets irritated. Sometimes, we scold inappropriately, out of place. And then later, you realize it is not good, it is not professional in how I dealt with it.

4.2.2 Most Difficult Part in Dealing with Management in Schools

This section presents the results to the specific question 2.2 'What do you think is the most difficult part in dealing with management in schools?' After subjecting the responses to content analysis, the themes drawn were: problem with resources and keeping one's composure.

Problem with Resources. This theme highlights the acute challenges associated with women administrators who often grapple with limited resources, including funding constraints and inadequate facilities, which significantly impact their ability to provide a conducive learning environment. The findings underscore the complexity of resource management, requiring women administrators to navigate budgetary constraints while striving to meet the diverse needs of students and staff. Hence. Informant 2 narrated;

The most difficult are resources and priorities. Because of our numerous concerns, we are confused about what to prioritize. Resources are indeed the highlight of all challenges because we cannot operate without sufficient funds.

Keeping One's Composure. The findings underscore the importance of emotional resilience in leadership roles, as women administrators must balance the demands of their positions with the need to remain composed in the face of various challenges. The study advocates for recognizing and supporting the emotional well-being of women administrators to foster a more sustainable and effective educational leadership environment. Hence. Informant 4 narrated;

This is one of the principles that I really need to believe in. That one thing that makes a school productive is the fact that you can encourage the teachers to be productive. And the only way—I think one of the ways that you can do that is if you have that ability to encourage them to do those things. That is how it is. So, if you cannot put it into words or you cannot express properly what you wanted to happen, then problems will arise, right? Like, as I have said, it is a challenge when a parent complains, but it is a bigger challenge for you as a woman administrator to be able to remain calm, collected, professional, objective while you are dealing with this particular person or in this particular scenario.

4.2.3 Disadvantages of Women Administrator in Dealing with Management in Schools

This section presents the results to the specific question 2.3 'What are the disadvantages of being a woman administrator in dealing with management in schools?' After subjecting the responses to content analysis, the theme drawn was: dealing on various responsibilities.

Dealing on Various Responsibilities. Participants consistently express women administrators often contend with multiple and diverse responsibilities, ranging from academic leadership to organizational management, which can lead to increased stress and workload. The findings underscore the need for a more equitable distribution of responsibilities and supportive structures to alleviate the burden placed on women administrators, allowing them to thrive in their leadership roles. Informant 9 noted;

A disadvantage is that I cannot go where I want to go because it limits my ability since I do not know how to drive, so it is very disadvantageous. I cannot deal with hard tasks, for example, if you can be the one to handle construction work because there is no budget, so it is not possible for me. That is the disadvantage if you are a woman administrator and if you are a woman administrator, you are more of a family-oriented individual. So, first and foremost, you prioritize the family, but it's still advantageous, but it is a disadvantage if you are a woman because you still have a husband to take care of, you still have children to take care of, so that.

4.3 How do women administrators cope with the challenges in dealing with management in schools?

This section presents the results on the viewpoints of the research participants of their coping mechanisms with the challenges as women administrators in managing schools. This was the gist of the third major research question, 'How do women administrators cope with the challenges in dealing with management in schools?' Five specific research questions were utilized to gather data and information.

4.3.1 Preparations in Dealing with Management in Schools

In this section, the themes created were from the responses to specific research question 3.1, 'What are your preparations in dealing with management in schools?' The following were the themes: call on God for strength and ask help from experts.

Call on God for Strength. The findings suggest that women administrators, facing the challenges inherent in their roles, often turn to faith and call on God for strength. The study implies the significance of recognizing and understanding diverse strategies, including spiritual resilience, as essential components in the preparation and support of women administrators within the educational landscape.

Informant 6 narrated;

My preparation, ma'am, is primarily prayer. But I do try to make it a habit every day to read legal bases that I can use in daily management because sometimes, I will not deny that sometimes I really do not know the DepEd Orders, guidelines, and the like. So, one of my preparations is to avoid being totally unaware. I habitually read, ask for assistance, technical assistance from higher-ups.

Ask Help from Experts. The findings indicate that women administrators proactively reach out to specialists and mentors for guidance and support, recognizing the value of external expertise. This qualitative insight underscores the adaptive and collaborative nature of women in educational leadership, highlighting a strategic approach to professional development. The study suggests the importance of cultivating mentorship networks and leveraging external knowledge to enhance the preparedness of women administrators in navigating the complexities of school management.

Informant 8 also unveiled;

I am fortunate enough that I was mentored by our school head before he was transferred to another school. Moreover, my preparation for taking the National Qualifying Examination for School Heads helped me a lot in understanding my role in school. Furthermore, being hands-on in all undertakings in school improves my competencies in managing the school.

4.3.2 Strategies Used in Dealing with Management in Schools

Presented in this section are the themes drawn from the responses to the specific question 3.2, 'What strategies did you use in dealing with management in schools?' The themes created were: conduct consultations and constant communication with stakeholders.

Conduct Consultations. This qualitative insight underscores the collaborative and inclusive nature of leadership approaches, highlighting the importance of seeking input from the broader school community. The study implies that conducting consultations serves as a valuable strategy for women administrators to make informed decisions and foster a sense of shared responsibility within the educational setting. Informant 2 had this to say;

For me, I use just humanitarian consideration, I involve them in every decision, make them a part of it. It is like being transparent about our decisions. That is my style because if there are lapses later on, they cannot say, "Oh, it was your decision, ma'am, we did not have a say, you just informed us afterward." My style with them is more like soliciting, as if when we make decisions, it's all of us. It's like everyone is involved.

Constant Communication with Stakeholders. This qualitative insight underscores the relational aspect of effective leadership, highlighting the role of constant communication in building trust and fostering collaboration within the educational community. The study implies that maintaining open lines of communication serves as a strategic approach for women administrators to navigate the complexities of school management successfully.

Informant 5 had this to say;

So coping up challenges, there are ways or there were ways that I able to cope up the challenges. Number one is continuous communication or constant communication with the stakeholders and the teachers.

4.3.3 Solutions Employed to the Challenges Encountered

Presented in this section are the themes drawn from the responses to the specific question 3.3, 'What are the solutions you have employed on the challenges you encountered dealing with management in schools?' the theme generated was develop shared leadership.

Develop Shared Leadership. The study implies that promoting shared leadership serves as a strategic solution for women administrators to effectively navigate and mitigate the challenges they encounter in the educational landscape. This qualitative insight underscores the transformative potential of shared leadership, highlighting its role in distributing the workload and fostering a sense of collective ownership within the educational institution.

Informant 7 cited;

For me, the biggest challenge is those teachers who do not want to grow, they just want to stay where they are. So, for me, I develop shared leadership when needed so that they can also feel the burden of improving the school, not just mine, but all of us, because it is for their learning as well.

4.3.4 People Helping Cope with Challenges

Presented in this section are the themes drawn from the responses to the specific question 3.4, 'Who helped you in coping with challenges in dealing with management in schools?' The theme generated was: Co-Teachers.

Co-Teachers. The findings suggest that women administrators often find support and assistance from their fellow educators, forming collaborative partnerships with co-teachers to navigate the complexities of their roles. The study implies that the collaborative relationships with co-teachers serve as a valuable resource for women administrators in overcoming challenges within the educational landscape.

Informant 10 explained;

The teachers are of great help in coping with the challenges in school. They are school head's pillars in dealing with the challenges. Seeking for superiors and other school managers' advice also plays part of the solution.

Connecting with parents also helps. Sometimes interacting with learners will give me some ideas and inspire me to lead effectively. A very supportive family is also a great factor in facing the challenges.

4.3.5 Assistance Sought for the Challenges Encountered

Presented in this section were the themes drawn from the responses to the specific question 3.5, 'What assistance did you seek to help you with the challenges in dealing with management in schools?' the themes generated were ideas from teachers and technical assistance.

Ideas from Teachers. The theme indicates that women administrators actively seek input and suggestions from the teaching staff, recognizing the valuable insights and perspectives that educators bring to the table. This qualitative insight underscores the collaborative and inclusive nature of decision-making, acknowledging the importance of leveraging the expertise of teachers in addressing challenges within the educational setting.

Informant 3 narrated;

The best thing is their brilliant ideas. We may have what is right for us, but when it comes to them, there are a lot of comments. So, take it early if they have suggestions, take their idea, weigh where it fits. So that after those things, whatever happens, there's no blame, no blaming each other. It's 100% support.

Technical Assistance. It was unveiled that women administrators actively reach out for technical expertise, recognizing the significance of specialized knowledge to address complex issues within educational management. The study implies that seeking technical assistance serves as a proactive and effective strategy for women administrators to enhance their problem-solving capabilities and improve overall educational outcomes.

Informant 6 narrated;

Technical assistance, especially now, I would specifically tell the Education Supervisor, "Sir, I need TA, especially for senior high school or secondary because I still do not understand but they are part in my work. I personally told him, "Sir, I need loading for the teachers, including the applicants; I do not know, I cannot keep up.

4.4 What are the insights the participants gained from their experiences in dealing with management in schools?

This section presents the results on the viewpoints of the research participants of their insights with the challenges of being women administrators in dealing with concerns in managing schools. This was the gist of the fourth major research question, 'What are the insights the participants gained from their experiences in dealing with management in schools?' Five specific research questions were utilized to gather data and information.

4.4.1 Thoughts for other Women Administrators

In this section, the themes created were from the responses to specific research question 4.1, 'What can you share to other women administrators in dealing with problems in management in schools?' The generated theme was: be strong as a woman administrator.

Be Strong as a Woman Administrator. This theme suggests that women administrators, when sharing their thoughts, stress the importance of resilience, assertiveness, and unwavering determination in navigating the multifaceted challenges within educational leadership. The study implies that fostering inner strength is not only a personal attribute but a shared ethos among women administrators, contributing to their collective success and impact within the educational landscape.

Informant 9 stated;

So, my advice is just to be strong. Be strong because as a woman administrator, you are like a mother that you need to really see what will be benefiting, even if you are exhausted, even if you do not receive the understanding you deserve. But you really need to continue because you are a mother. So, those challenges you face, for me, just

treat them as something simple, and you will be thankful for those challenges because they will make you stronger at the end of the day

4.4.2 Advice to other Women Administrators

The theme created in this section was from the responses to the specific research question 4.2, 'What advice will you give to other women administrators who experienced management challenges in schools?' The theme generated was: be serious with leadership responsibilities.

Be Serious with Leadership Responsibilities. The theme unveils qualitative insights pertaining to advice given to other women administrators, emphasizing the need to be serious with leadership responsibilities. The findings suggest that women administrators advocate for a dedicated and earnest approach to their roles, underscoring the importance of taking leadership responsibilities seriously. The study implies that cultivating a sense of seriousness in leadership roles is crucial for women administrators to effectively navigate challenges and contribute to positive educational outcomes.

Informant 2 narrated her view about taking challenges lightly, she said;

Concerning management, I really handle it on my own because I do not know how this works. At least, I really only have myself because it seems like there have not been many changes. Let us just be honest in our work. For example, if there are reports that need to be implemented, if there are conflicts, just explain it correctly. Do not take it personally because we are really based on policies and guidelines, and that is what we need to follow.

4.4.3 Recommendations for DepEd

The results in this section were taken from the responses to the specific research question 4.3, 'What recommendation will you give to the DepEd authorities regarding the women administrator management in schools?' The theme drawn from the responses: don't underestimate women's capacity to lead.

Don't Underestimate Women's Capacity to Lead. Participants unveiled a qualitative finding within the recommendations for the Department of Education (DepEd), emphasizing the imperative not to underestimate women's capacity to lead. The findings suggest that the study offers a poignant recommendation for the DepEd to recognize and appreciate the full potential of women administrators in leadership roles. The study implies that acknowledging and leveraging women's leadership capacities is crucial for fostering a diverse and effective educational leadership landscape.

Informant 3 mentioned;

To the higher officials of the DepEd authorities, we do not underestimate the power of women to lead because they have the capacity. There is good leadership; let's give women a chance to manage. Who knows, they might be even better than men.

4.4.4 Suggestions for Women Administrators to Improve Management in Schools.

The themes in this section were from the responses to specific question 4.4, 'What suggestions can you give to help women administrators improve management in schools?' The theme was: continue seeking professional growth.

Continue Seeking Professional Growth. The result showed qualitative findings within suggestions for women administrators to enhance management in schools, emphasizing the importance of continued professional growth. The findings suggest that women administrators, when offering recommendations, advocate for a commitment to ongoing learning and development. The study implies that fostering a culture of continuous professional growth is essential for women administrators to adapt to the changing educational landscape and contribute meaningfully to school management. This was what informant 9 said;

Continue attending seminars and trainings, and also continue being open to oneself in terms of suggestions and advice, most importantly, from those who are more experienced because being an administrator does not mean

you are older, you are better. For school administration and management, it must be accompanied by experience, the richness of experience, and diverse experiences. So, my suggestion is to keep asking.

4.4.5 Hopes and Aspirations as a Woman Administrator

The theme in this section was from the responses to specific question 4.5, ‘What are your hopes and aspirations as a woman administrator in dealing with problems in management in schools?’ The theme was: women leaders being valued and supported.

Women Leaders being Valued and Supported. The theme means that participants consistently unveils suggestions for women administrators to enhance management in schools, emphasizing the importance of continued professional growth. The findings suggest that women administrators, when offering recommendations, advocate for a commitment to ongoing learning and development. This qualitative insight underscores the dynamic nature of educational leadership and the necessity for women administrators to stay abreast of evolving trends, policies, and methodologies.

Informant 2 stated;

I hope that the time will come when we feel that we are valued and supported as women. And that the issues, discrimination to promote diversity, will be addressed. However, currently, the equal opportunities are slowly progressing, not like before when you were held back because you are a woman. Another thing is they should implement effective strategies and initiatives to improve the overall well-being of children because that seems to be lacking nowadays. They should truly see what the school needs so that all children can have a conducive learning environment where all our needs are met and provided for. I hope for our hopes and aspirations to gradually come true, and to empower and develop teachers and staff.

5. Conclusions

The findings from the study shed light on key implications for future research in dealing with problems in school management among women school administrators. The multifaceted nature of experiences, advantages, challenges, and coping strategies unveiled through this study offers profound insights into the complex landscape of women administrators in educational leadership. The identified implications underscore the pressing need for targeted interventions to address gender bias, promote inclusivity, and foster a more equitable workplace culture. Prioritizing professional development programs, integrating mentorship initiatives, and creating diverse and supportive work environments are essential steps toward cultivating effective and compassionate educational leadership.

Recognizing and harnessing the unique advantages of being a woman administrator calls for a broader shift in leadership development programs, emphasizing empathy, adaptability, and collaborative practices. The study suggests that integrating identified advantages into broader leadership training can contribute to a more responsive and effective organizational culture.

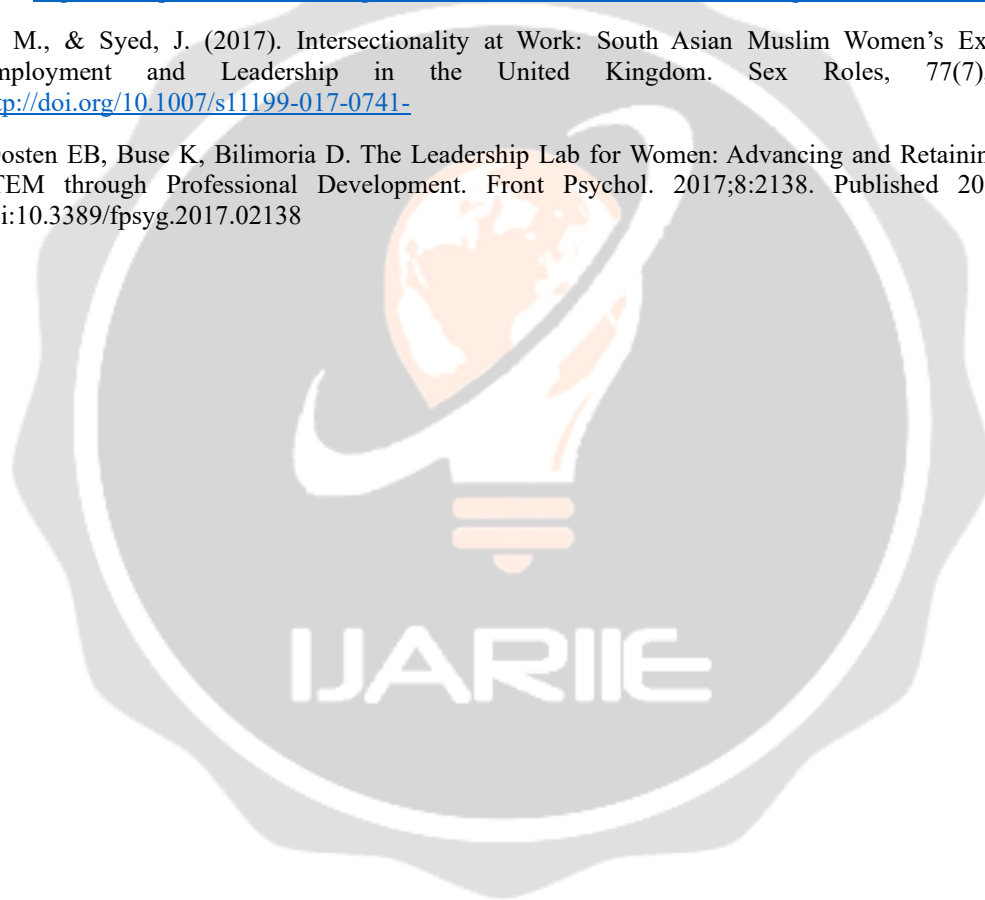
Moreover, acknowledging the positive connotations associated with a motherly approach highlights the potential benefits of nurturing leadership qualities. Integrating empathy, active listening, and a caring attitude into leadership training can contribute to building stronger relationships within the school community, ultimately enhancing overall school management practices.

The findings related to challenges, resource allocation, emotional intelligence, and workload distribution underscore the need for comprehensive leadership training programs. By addressing these challenges, advocating for increased funding, promoting emotional intelligence, and ensuring equitable workload distribution, educational institutions can create a more supportive framework for women administrators, allowing them to navigate their roles effectively and contribute meaningfully to the educational landscape. In moving forward, these implications offer a roadmap for educational institutions and policymakers to foster an inclusive, supportive, and empowering environment for women administrators in the field of educational management.



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