

# The Resiliency of Selected Secondary School Principals in Northern Samar

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## ABSTRACT

The significant relationship of the school leader's resiliency with school and student performance generally support the research hypotheses of this study. Specific findings prove that resiliency concepts are manifested by the principals and school heads in Northern Samar. This development on resiliency literature is important as this study described the influence of leadership resiliency on the performance of school as well students. Findings further suggest that school heads who feel confident in their ability to lead a school will make repeated efforts towards the success of school and student as well. Leaders with high self-efficacy may motivate themselves and use positive thinking to reframe experiences so they are better equipped to handle organizational challenges. Similarly, school heads who give much effort to accomplish a given tasks and persist in the face of obstacles and failures will most likely lead the school and students to academic success. Lastly, as findings of this study have shown, the principal's personal beliefs regarding their ability to affect student achievement and his/her determination to pursue this ability even at difficult times may be responsible for the variance in school effectiveness and the overall performance of the students. For this reason, school leaders must possess a strong resiliency that will allow them to lead teachers, staff and students to academic gains. School leaders who believe in their personal efficacy and possess strong determination will nurture teachers and students capable of unlimited academic advances. Big things are accomplished by talented people who believe they will accomplish them.

**Keywords:** *Resiliency, Self efficiency, performance, and achievements.*

## 1. Introduction

School leaders across the Philippines are faced with numerous challenges affecting not only student academic achievement but the school's progress as

well. Documenting the progress of these schools and its students' performance in national assessments has been the subject of discussion in most educational conferences. Besides, studies exploring principal's profile and student achievement are not new occurrences in educational literature. Early studies noted that strong leaders will be a necessary and critical element in producing and maintaining high performing schools. The notion that direct connection exists between the academic achievement of children and the effectiveness of principals is not a new supposition (Anderson, 2008). However, the pervasiveness of previous researches regarding this connection has intensified substantially (Lusano, 2009) that further studies are needed to update on the issue. Educational researches assert that school leadership plays a vital role in improving student achievement by proposing that leadership is second to classroom instruction in relation to the factors that influence student achievement (Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Leithwood & Seashore; 2004). The national imperative to improve failing schools has channeled a public move to strengthen educational leaders (Madrigal, 2003). Growing research on the impact of school leaders on schools coupled with widely debated accountability systems and complex leadership demands have prompted a new leadership agenda (Borongon, 2009; Porton & Alejandrino, 2006). The requisites of the Department of Education's School Based Management (SBM (2008) which transfers which transfers significant decision-making authority from national and district offices to individual schools triggered an urgent need for corrective action in schools (Ikemoto & Soliven, 2008). SBM provides principals greater control over the educative process by giving them the responsibility to decide on important issue such as budget, hiring personnel, and the curriculum. This is embodied in Republic Act No. 9155 which provides empowerment to school heads by strengthening their

roles within the context of transparency and accountability.

School districts across the nation are now looking to school leaders to transform ineffective schools into performing schools (Ariol & Sembrano, 2009; Hilton & Burgos, 2001). Additionally, problematic for rural areas is securing effective and capable leaders to construct and embody the change necessary to achieve success (Ariol & Sembrano, 2009). It is from these foregoing issues that the researcher decides to investigate the capability of the principals to lead the schools in the Department of Education Division of Northern Samar. It is believed that school leaders' personal belief about their ability to lead will make much difference on how they run the school. This personal belief is what Bandura (1997) called self-efficacy. Self-efficacy in leadership refers to having confidence in one's ability to effect change or make a difference (Smith & Piele, 2006). Principals in the rural areas such as in Northern Samar are faced with problems that require strong resiliency to overcome (Borongon, 2009). Their efficacy and resiliency in leading a school in rural areas are of significant importance that it is worthy of investigation.

This research offered insight into the principal's personal beliefs in leading the school as well as his/her resiliency in dealing with challenges along the way. The construct of leadership self-efficacy focuses on leader's view of their capabilities to accomplish and organize plans of action to attain selected types of performances (Bandura, 1986). While high levels of resiliency proved to be useful to a leader in times of insurmountable situations. Studies abroad along these constructs showed predictive utility for efficacy and resiliency with various leadership outputs.

Achieving the dramatic gains to close the achievement gap in high-poverty areas or low achieving schools will depend heavily on the ability of the leaders (Porton & Alejandro, 2006). Complicating the issue of ensuring able leaders is the trend towards assigning new principals to the schools in the lowest performing areas (Pascasio, 2003). As new leaders' transition to the demanding role of school principals, they are finding that educational

contexts have transformed and the competencies necessary for success are complex (Porton & Alejandro, 2006).

## 2. Objectives of the Study

This study on resiliency of secondary school principals in Northern Samar aimed to attain the following specific objectives:

1. Determine the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - A. Age
  - B. Sex
  - C. Educational Attainment
  - D. Number of years in the position
2. Determine the resiliency level of the principals in Northern Samar as rated by themselves, the teachers and the PTA officials.
3. Determine the achievement level of the students in terms of the school's Mean Percentage Score (MPS).
4. Determine the performance level of the schools in terms of recognition and awards received.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### Level of Resiliency

Table 2 shows the resiliency level of the principals/school heads. It shows that 46 out 57 principal respondents were found to possess very high resiliency while 20 or 29.85 percent had high resiliency. Only one (1) or 1.49 percent had average resiliency. When asked about their superior's resiliency, the teachers claimed that 85 or 70.25 percent of their boss had very high resiliency while 32 or 26.45 percent said the school head had high resiliency. On the other hand, 49 or 47.12 percent of PTA officials assessed the school heads to have a very high resiliency, 48 or 46.15 percent of them claimed the principals to have high resiliency while 7 or 6.73 percent averred that the principals had average resiliency. It was noticeable that the three stakeholders rated with similarity the resiliency of the principals. It could be established that the school leader's judgement about their resiliency was valid and relatable.

**Table 2 Resiliency of the Principals/School Heads**

RESILIENCY LEVEL	SELF		TEACHER		PTA		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very High Self-efficacy	46	68.66	85	70.25	49	47.12	180	61.64
High Self-efficacy	20	29.85	32	26.45	48	46.15	100	34.25
Average Self-efficacy	01	01.49	04	03.31	07	06.73	012	04.11
Total	67	100.0	121.0	100.0	104.0	100.0	292.0	100.0

**Performance in the National Achievement Test**

Table 3 presents the mean percentage score (MPS) of schools involved in this study. It shows that 35 or 52.2 percent of the schools had students with average mastery level in the NAT while 32 or 47.8 percent had students that were moving towards mastery level in the achievement test.

**Table 2 Mean Percentage Score**

MASTERY LEVEL	F	%
Moving Towards Mastery (66% - 85%)	32	47.8
Average Mastery (35% - 65%)	35	52.2
Total	67	100

**Awards/Recognitions Received by the Schools**

Table 4 presents the number of awards/recognitions received by the schools involved in this study. It shows that majority of the schools did not receive any award/recognition for the last three years. Only seven (7) or 10.5 percent of the schools were recipients of Three (3) or more awards/recognitions.

**Table 3 Awards and/or Recognitions Received by the Schools**

AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS	F	%
5	01	01.5
4	05	07.5
3	01	01.5
2	16	23.9
1	19	28.4
0	25	37.3
Total	67	100

**Resiliency and Its Corresponding Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities**

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlations was utilized to test the zero-order in resiliency. Result of analysis in Table 6 shows that a high positive correlation existed between respondents' resiliency. The computed R-value was 0.709 and a significance value less than the 0.05 alpha level. This result means that a school principal with high level of self-efficacy tend to have a high level of resiliency also, or the other way around. This finding confirmed the theory of Bandura that persons with high personal beliefs in doing something will also develop positive behavior towards the task.

The table also presents the mean, standard deviation, and reliability coefficients of the resiliency. As shown in the table, the means and standard deviation

indicated the varying responses on the two instruments suggesting reliability. The skewness and kurtosis values for the responses were within acceptable range indicating normality of the data.

**4. Conclusions**

The significant relationship of the school leader's resiliency with school and student performance generally support the research hypotheses of this study. Specific findings prove that resiliency concepts are manifested by the principals and school heads in Northern Samar. This development on resiliency literature is important as this study described the influence of leadership resiliency on the performance of school as well students.

Findings further suggest that school heads who feel confident in their ability to lead a school will make repeated efforts towards the success of school and

student as well. Leaders with high self-efficacy may motivate themselves and use positive thinking to reframe experiences so they are better equipped to handle organizational challenges. Similarly, school heads who give much effort to accomplish a given task and persist in the face of obstacles and failures will most likely lead the school and students to academic success.

Lastly, as findings of this study have shown, the principal's personal beliefs regarding their ability to affect student achievement and his/her determination to pursue this ability even at difficult times may be responsible for the variance in school effectiveness and the overall performance of the students. For this reason, school leaders must possess a strong resiliency that will allow them to lead teachers, staff and students to academic gains. School leaders who believe in their personal efficacy and possess strong determination will nurture teachers and students capable of unlimited academic advances. Big things are accomplished by talented people who believe they will accomplish them.

## 5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are forwarded.

Principals or school heads must be provided with opportunities to experience success, feel that they are supported, and be knowledgeable of the latest instructional strategies and tools that they can share with the teachers. This opportunity will allow those who already feel efficacious to validate that belief. Those who need guidance to strengthen their self-efficacy will be able to use the opportunities to do just that. Similar opportunities should be given to school leaders with low resiliency level. These school leaders should attend inspirational talks to boost their esteem and develop resilient behavior. The Department of Education should offer resilience-building activities and teach resilient strategies. They should address emotion competencies such as self-assessment, self-regulation, motivation, and social skills in a systematic way to enhance the self-efficacy of the school leaders, which in the end would strengthen resiliency.

Future research can be conducted by considering gender differences on resiliency of faculty members in higher education. It would be an interesting study to explore resiliency among university administrators

and how these two leadership variables vary between men and women.

Another research may be conducted along these two constructs by considering other variables such as emotional and cognitive intelligence of the principals or teachers. It would enrich the literature of resiliency if cognitive and effective ability of respondents share common variance with these two variables.

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