

# Empowering Secondary School Teachers Through Administrative Tasks

**Magdalena M. Ocbian and Maricel Ayala-Dichoso**  
Sorsogon State College, Sorsogon City, Philippines  
SSC\_magz@yahoo.com

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**Abstract** - *One prevalent problem confronting small schools is the unavailability of non-teaching staff that can serve the school in its financial and reportorial matters. This study looked into the need of small schools to establish their own school organizational staff that would aid the school head to be efficient in the financial and reportorial matters. This scenario is evident in Buhatan National High School (BNHS) where the school head delegated administrative functions to teachers. This case study described the present school organizational staffing, existing and preferred cultural organization (OCAI), the level of effectiveness of the present school staffing (using SEAI by Durrant and Holden) rated by the three groups of respondents --- the administrator and faculty, PTA officers and SSG officers of BNHS and the significant difference in the rating of the three groups of respondents using ANOVA. It was found that the school is observing an organizational staffing where teachers take academic and administrative roles as initiated by its school head. Clan is their existing and preferred organizational culture. It also revealed that the school's level of effectiveness is highly effective. And, the responses of the three groups of respondents were statistically different.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher empowerment, organizational culture, effectiveness, staffing, administrative tasks*

## INTRODUCTION

One prevalent problem confronting small schools is the unavailability of non-teaching staff that can serve the school in its financial and reportorial matters. Reports to be submitted, big or small school, is equal in quality and quantity as required by the respective division offices.

The advantage of big schools lies in the fact that they have a non-teaching staff to attend to these required reports. So, efficiency and accuracy with school reports are mostly achieved by them.

In a small school setting, the school is a one-man staff. The school head bears most responsibilities of the school while teachers are opted to work with instruction alone. With this, the school head is confronted with multifaceted and overwhelming work considering the deadlines to beat. School heads may also miss the submission of required reports on time and may become inefficient in performing other functions.

With this existing situation of small schools, the delegation of reportorial, financial or managerial functions of the school head to teachers can immediately address the said problem. At the same

time, this can empower teachers to deal with daily school tasks and allow them to feel the shared responsibilities they have for the school.

The Buhatan National High School, although a small school, has an established and organized school staff. This is organized through the initiative of its school head. Different school concerns are attended by corresponding teachers, therefore organized flow of work and its purposes are achieved.

The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 [1] states Rule VI, Section 6.2 of Republic Act 9155. It specifies that the school heads have authority, accountability and responsibility to recommend the staffing complement of the school based on its needs and encourage and enhance staff development.

According to Terry [2], the principal is the building leader who structures the climate to empower both teachers and students at the site. Empowerment translates in to teacher leadership and exemplifies a paradigm shift with the decisions made by those working most closely with students rather than those at the top of the pyramid. It is natural that the principal should be the leader in implementing and supporting empowerment and teacher leadership.

Furthermore, Gardner [3] said that administrators must be active in providing experiences for all teachers to grow as leaders. He further explained that with the very limited school fund available for professional development of teachers, administrators must be creative and open to numerous options for individual and school growth. This growth is enhanced by empowered teachers, who are committed to the overall success of the school's mission, have increased productivity in and out of the classroom, and an increase in the teachers' disposition.

Bush [4] stated that teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only necessary requirements for school leadership. Classroom teachers are most qualified to become school leaders because of their basic knowledge of the needs inside the classroom that must be responded by the school. The opportunity to be empowered given by the principal to the classroom teacher through designation as a school staff is a good stepping stone to make them become effective school administrator as well in the future. Bush [4] further said that specific preparation makes a difference.

Taking into consideration the difficulties of small schools in carrying out administrative and managerial functions, this study would like to look into the organizational culture and effectiveness of the present staffing of Buhatan National High School. It would also like to introduce similar and/or appropriate staffing to other small schools to help school heads unburden themselves with managerial tasks while at the same time paving the way towards empowering the teachers for increased production and efficient realization of the school's vision and mission.

Teacher empowerment is defined as investing teachers with the right to participate in the determination of school goals and policies and to exercise professional judgment about what and how to teach (Bolin, 1989 as quoted by Gardner[3]). It familiarizes the classroom teachers with the function and the technical works of the school as institution as well as exposes classroom teachers to a wider perspective of the purpose of the school's existence.

Through these opportunities, school educational leadership roles are accepted by the teachers[3]. Teachers learn new skills that increase student learning; students have increased productivity in and out of the classroom and teachers have increased disposition. While classroom teachers develop into

being a part of the school staff, individual and school morale can be increased.

Quoting Sweetland and Hay, Bogler [5] stated that previous research supports the assumptions regarding teacher empowerment: first, teacher empowerment is most effective when it is oriented to increase teacher professionalism; second, empowerment has at least two dimensions – organizational and classroom; third, empowering teachers has its greatest impact on student achievement when the emphasis is on the core technology of teaching and learning in schools; fourth to be effective, teacher empowerment needs to be authentic.

Leithwood and Riehl [6] said that to enhance performance in their schools, leaders should provide opportunities for staff to participate in decision-making about issues that affect them. When they are involved in the decision-making, school heads give them a sense of importance and make them feel as if they have more input in the direction of the organization [7]. It encourages them to be more knowledgeable, experienced and be able to use them well for the good of the organization.

Further, Joseph [7] discussed that decision-making responsibilities are delegated by top managers to middle and lower-level managers within the organization, allowing top management to focus more on major decisions in a decentralized organizational structure. Decentralization is an advantage for small organizations to continue efficient operations.

Participating in decision-making is therefore a manner of empowering teachers in the schools. This manner is also affected by the dominating organizational culture a certain school has. According to Spinelli [8] an organization's culture is determined by shared values and shared norms, the values, people, structure and systems, and appropriate attitudes and behaviors that support those norms. A strong culture agrees on what is valued and demonstrates passion and commitment to those values. Values and norms are manifested in an organization's management style, customer focus, communication, employment practices, decision-making and corporate identity.

According to Cameron [9], the clan culture is typified as a friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves. It is like an extended family with best friends at work. Leaders are thought of as mentors, coaches, and even as parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty, tradition, and collaboration. Commitment is high. The organization

emphasizes the long-term benefits of individual development with high cohesion and morale being important. Success is defined in terms of internal climate and concern for people. The organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus.

On the other hand, the next least dominant culture is hierarchy. Cameron [9] said that the *hierarchy culture*, is characterized as a formalized and structured place to work. Procedures and well-defined processes govern what people do. Effective leaders are good coordinators, organizers, and efficiency experts. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important. The long-term concerns of the organization are stability, predictability, and efficiency. Formal rules and policies hold the organization together.

A *market culture* is a results-oriented workplace. Leaders are hard-driving producers, directors, and competitors. They are aggressive and demanding. The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on winning. The long-term concern is on competitive actions and achieving stretch goals and targets. Success is defined in terms of market share and penetration. Outpacing the competition, escalating share price, and market leadership dominate the success criteria.

In the study of Pancho [10], he determined the existing and preferred organizational culture and school effectiveness as bases for organizational change towards an effective school. He used Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) by Cameron [9] and School Effectiveness Assessment Instrument (SEAI) by Durrant and Holden [11] to identify the organizational culture and school effectiveness of the school-respondent.

The cited study bears relevance to the present research since the two studies dealt with organizational culture and school effectiveness. Also the instruments used were similar. While the former study proposed an organizational change to the school-respondents, the present study only assessed the school-respondent as to its culture and effectiveness.

Peñaflor [12] also conducted an evaluation of the level of instructional leadership and administrative management competence of schools. It determined their level of performance in the twelve (12) leadership and management functions based on Republic Act 9155 specifying duties, responsibilities

and accountability of school heads. One of its findings stated that school heads have difficulties performing their instructional leadership and administrative management on staffing and staff management but they have least difficulty on goals and planning.

It can be noted that this former study identified one of the difficulties school heads met in managing school and that is on staffing and staff management, which this present study is revealing and recommending. Findings and recommendations of this present study may contribute to the solution of the identified difficulties of school heads. Both study referred to RA 9155 as their legal basis.

Also, Arcillo [13] conducted a descriptive-case study which determined best practices in enhancing school culture in terms of leadership, faculty relations, accomplishments, parent and community relations and school programs and activities. It used focused-group discussion to validate their observations and findings. The study concluded that the best practices in enhancing school cultures embraced in leading and managing change, motivating and nurturing people, and designing and aligning systems, processes and resources would yield growth towards a cultural-responsive learning environment.

From this, the former and the recent studies all dealt with school/organizational culture. Both findings and recommendation proposed for a working place that would be a cultural-responsive learning environment. They were descriptive and case studies and used focused group discussions to validate observations and findings during the conduct of their studies.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This case study described the present school staffing of Buhatan National High School. Specifically, it aimed to describe the present organizational staffing of Buhatan National High School, identify existing and preferred cultural organization of Buhatan National High School, determine the level of effectiveness of the present school staffing of BNHS as rated by the principal, teachers, PTA officers and SSG officers, and find out if there is a significant difference in the rating of the three groups of respondents.

#### **METHODS**

This study is a descriptive-quantitative study since it (1) explains the present school culture of Buhatan

National High School and (2) describes how the teachers are being empowered for administrative and managerial tasks through local designations. It also describes the present school staffing of Buhatan National High School using observations, interviews and focused group discussion. This is also quantitative because it used statistical data to come up with answers to the researchers' problems.

The respondents of this study are the BNHS school principal, 11 faculty members, 11 Supreme Student Government officers, and 11 PTA officers with a total of 34 respondents. The researchers opted to have a total enumeration of the respondents since BNHS is a small school.

To describe the present staffing of BNHS, the researchers did observations and interview to the administrator, faculty and staff of BNHS. The existing and preferred organization culture, Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) by Cameron (2004) is used. To identify the effectiveness of the present staffing, School Effectiveness Assessment Instrument (SEAI) by Durrant and Holden (2006) is adapted. To find out if there is a significant difference in the rating of the three groups of respondents, ANOVA was used. Focused group discussion and interview were conducted among the four groups of respondents to validate and clarify the data gathered. The following scales were used to interpret the type of Cultural Organization and Level of Effectiveness: 3.50 - 4.00: Most dominant/ Highly Effective (HE);

2.50 - 3.49: Next most dominant/ Effective (E); 1.50 - 2.49: Next least dominant/ Less Effective (LE); 1.00 - 1.49: Least Dominant/ Ineffective (IE)

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 presents the two kinds of roles which are the academic and administrative. On academic roles, they are classified as class adviser, as subject teacher, and as adviser to clubs/organizations.

The Buhatan National High School's organizational staffing is comprised of two divisions namely: the academic staff and administrative staff headed by the school principal. Nirav [14] discussed that the academic staff is responsible for curriculum transactions while the administrative staff helps the academic staff in the conduct of various activities by procuring and providing various materials and other resources and facilities needed for smooth conduct of different activities.

The academic staff is composed of class advisers, club/organizational advisers and subject teachers. On the other hand, the administrative staff is composed of school registrar; school EMIS coordinator; physical facilities coordinator in tandem with the school inspection officer and supply officer and likewise monitoring the school librarian and school ICT coordinator; financial staff with the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), bookkeeper and disbursement officer under it; and the watchman cum aide.

Table 1. Present Organizational Staffing of Buhatan National High School

TEACHER-STAFF	ACADEMIC ROLES				ADMIN. ROLES	TOTAL
	AS CLASS ADVISER	SUBJECT TEACHER	AS ADVISER TO CLUBS/ ORGS			
Teacher #1	0	5	2		2	9
Teacher #2	1	6	1		0	8
Teacher #3	1	7	2		1	11
Teacher #4	1	6	0		0	7
Teacher #5	0	4	0		2	6
Teacher #6	0	8	0		1	9
Teacher #7	1	7	1		1	10
Teacher #8*	0	4	0		0	4
Teacher #9	0	4	2		2	8
Teacher #10	1	8	1		2	12
Teacher #11	1	7	1		1	10

- Locally Funded Teacher

The enumerated roles to be occupied to manage the school smoothly are more than the number of actual teachers employed in the said school. The actual number of employees is 13, that is: one school principal, 11 faculty members and one watchman cum aide. With this, a teacher takes one or more roles in the staffing both academic and administrative.

It is noted that almost all teachers perform both academic and administrative roles aside from their regular academic loads except the locally-funded teacher.

Teacher #1 has no class advisory, teaching five classes in Filipino and TLE, holding two clubs/organizations in Campus Journalism (Filipino) and Theater Arts, and taking two administrative roles as School Physical Facilities Coordinator and Supply Officer. Teacher #2 has a class advisory, teaching six classes in MAPEH, holding one club/organization in Sports and with no administrative role. Teacher #3 has one advisory class, teaching seven classes in English and TLE, holding two clubs and organization in SSG and STEP, and as School Librarian under administrative. Teacher #4 has a class advisory, teaching six classes in AralingPanlipunan, with no club/organization and administrative role.

Teacher #5 has no class advisory, teaching four classes in Biology and Physics, not an adviser to any club/organization in YES-O but taking two administrative roles as Bookkeeper and School Registrar. Teacher #6 has no class advisory, teaching eight classes in Mathematics and TLE, not an adviser to a club/organization and taking one administrative role as BAC member. Teacher #7 has an advisory class, teaching seven classes in Edukasyon sa Pagpapalakatao and Filipino, acting as School Guidance Coordinator, and taking one administrative role. Teacher #8 has no class advisory, teaching eight classes in Mathematics, not holding any club/organization and no administrative role. Teacher #9 has no class adviser, teaching four classes in English, holding two clubs and organization in Campus Journalism and Theater Arts, and with two administrative roles as BAC member and School EMIS Coordinator. Teacher #10 has an advisory class, teaching eight classes in Chemistry and TLE-ICT, holding one club/organization in YES-O and taking two administrative roles. Teacher #11 has one advisory class, teaching seven classes in Filipino and

TLE, holding one club/organization in STEP and taking one administrative role.

From what has been revealed, it clearly showed that the different roles in BNHS staffing is distributed to every teacher. According to Gardner [3] administrators must be active in providing experiences for all teachers to grow as leaders. This staffing is decentralized because the school principal recognizes the potentials of every teacher and fits them to the role he/she can serve best. At the same time, the set up is a most practical exposure and significant training teachers can get to prepare them become school administrators in the future.

Likewise, with the provided opportunities, teachers accommodate leadership roles. From here, teachers learn new skills in classroom management to increase student learning. When teachers improve together as a staff, individual and school morale is increased.

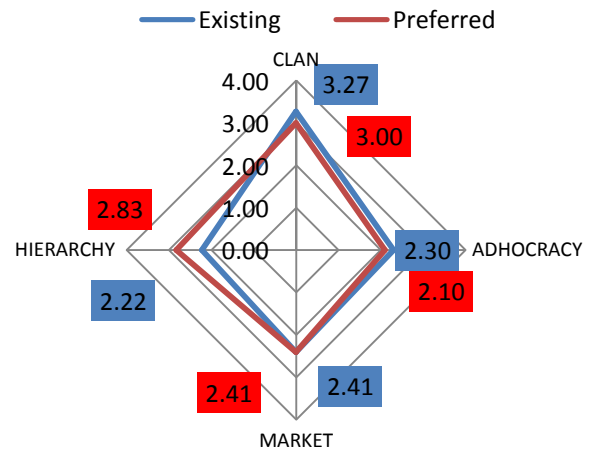


Fig. 1. Existing and Preferred Cultural Organization of Buhatan National High School

From the previously presented data, the research sought a measure to answer the situation where teachers unselfishly submit themselves to such a work setting. From this point the existing cultural organization was looked into.

The competing values is the *adhocracy culture*. It is characterized as a dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative workplace. People stick their necks out and take risks. Effective leadership is visionary, innovative, and risk-oriented. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to experimentation and innovation. The emphasis is on

being at the leading edge of new knowledge, products, and/or services. Readiness for change and meeting new challenges are important. The organization's long term emphasis is on rapid growth and acquiring new resources. Success means producing unique and original products and services.

Figure 1 revealed the existing and preferred organizational culture of Buhatan National High School. It showed that the school's existing culture is clan with the highest average weighted mean of 3.27 from among the four organizational cultures, and was interpreted as *next most dominant*. This was followed by market with average weighted mean of 2.41 and interpreted as *next least dominant*. Then, adhocracy with average weighted mean of 2.30 and interpreted as *next most dominant*. And, hierarchy culture has the least average weighted mean of 2.22 and interpreted as *next least dominant*.

As to the preferred culture of this organization, it revealed that the clan is the organizational culture they desire with the highest average weighted mean of 3.00 and was interpreted as *next most dominant*. Followed by hierarchy with 2.83 average weighted mean interpreted as *next most dominant*; market with 2.41 average weighted mean or *next most dominant* and lastly, the adhocracy culture, 2.10 and interpreted as *next least dominant*.

The existing clan culture of the said organization is evident in the way the respondents deal with each other. They perceive that the organization is a family-like society and they have a strong attachment and sense of ownership to it. They have high working relationship and each one is very responsible and dedicated to the work entrusted to them. From this attitude, every activity of the school is successful and has an organized outcome.

Further, the organization can also be observed to be really open with each member. Their lunch break is spent through eating lunch together when they can discuss personal and work-related matters. If one has a problem, the group can talk them out and he/she can discern to their advices and be enlightened. Likewise, this opportunity is an advantage for the group to discuss work-related matters as well because the teacher can share his/her predicament towards work. From this point, other teachers willingly share their views and act on them immediately when there is a need to do so. The collegial and healthy discussions

over different matters in the school are professionally done at this period.

The average weighted mean of 2.22 for hierarchy culture is not at all interpreted as the least dominant, rather next least dominant. Though clan is the dominant culture at present, yet the organization practices hierarchy culture with the observation of the organizational structure described in problem 1. The formal structure is its basis how the different roles of the organization are carried out for efficient results. However, there is a need that this culture be improved to a higher level so as to balance the different identified organizational culture.

The preferred organizational culture for Buhatan National High School is clan. The teachers are comfortable working in an atmosphere similar to a family. With this set up, they can freely express themselves to one another, can convey their ideas willingly whenever they think it is for the good of the organization and can readily help each one when the need arises.

The next least dominant preferred culture is adhocracy. It revealed that the members of BNHS do not want to risk for a change. This is so because they are already comfortable working with each other and consider each other one as a close member of a family. Because of this strong personal and professional relationship that binds them, they would rather stick to their present set-up than risk for change.

Table 2 shows the level of effectiveness of the present school staffing of Buhatan National High School as rated by the administrator and teachers, SSG and PTA. The highest rating of 3.77 or highly effective was given by the administrator and teachers while 3.47 and 3.44 were given by SSG and PTA, respectively. Both respondents perceived that the present staffing of BNHS was effective. Expectedly, the administrator and teachers rate their performance higher than the external stakeholders. Nevertheless, an average mean rating of 3.56 still denotes that the school has a highly effective staffing.

The respondents revealed that characteristics of effective schools are evident in this school where the organization belongs. High results were noted on learning environment and concentration on teaching and learning with mean of both 3.77 interpreted as *highly effective*.

Table 2. Level of Effectiveness of the Present School Staffing of BNHSas Rated by Administrator & Teachers, SSG and PTA

INDICATORS	ADMIN. & TEACHERS		SSG		PTA		TOTAL	
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
1. Professional Leadership	3.70	HE	3.10	E	3.40	E	3.40	E
2. Shared Vision and Goals	3.90	HE	3.30	E	2.90	E	3.37	E
3. A Learning Environment	3.90	HE	3.70	HE	3.70	HE	3.77	HE
4. Concentration on Teaching and Learning	3.80	HE	3.80	HE	3.70	HE	3.77	HE
5. Purposeful Teaching	3.90	HE	3.50	HE	3.20	E	3.53	E
6. High Expectation	3.30	E	3.30	E	3.30	E	3.30	E
7. Positive Reinforcement	3.80	HE	3.20	E	3.60	HE	3.53	HE
8. Monitoring Progress	3.80	HE	3.80	HE	3.50	HE	3.70	HE
9. Students Rights and Responsibilities	3.80	HE	3.50	HE	3.40	E	3.57	HE
10. Home/School Partnership	3.80	HE	3.50	HE	3.70	HE	3.67	E
11. A Learning Organization	3.80	HE	3.50	HE	3.40	E	3.57	HE
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>3.47</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>HE</b>

WM: Weighted Mean; VI: Verbal Interpretation

The learning environment of the school is very conducive. Its rural and physical setting significantly contributes to its learning atmosphere. Because it is reasonably far from the hurdles of the city, the place is quiet, orderly and natural. Only few vehicles and limited people pass so there is no problem with noise and other destruction. The students are focused whenever discussions are going on. The school, although small, is equipped with computers and internet and is a wi-fi zone. There are clean classrooms with comfort rooms and with access to water. Teachers maintain learning centers in their respective classroom. There are comfortable chairs to sit on. These are achieved because of the effort of the administration, faculty and staff altogether to provide a learning environment beneficial to students.

Also, concentration on teaching and learning gained high result because the respondents themselves can apparently note this setting in the school. The teachers are good in time management that they maximize their time in instructional and in administrative work. No one can see a teacher idle for a time. Whenever they are free from teaching, they spend their time working with their assigned administrative work. Because of this, the school did not have any missed or late reports required by the DepEd or any other offices. Also the school implements a project on Intensified Instructional Program where one of the activities is to replace an absent teacher by a free teacher from his/her classes. In an interview, a teacher said that replacing an absent teacher in her classes is an opportunity to teach

students and therefore gives more chance for students to learn.

In addition, teachers and administrator religiously conducted the School-Based Learning Program (SBLP) of DepEd Division Office to enhance the teaching skills of teachers. Using the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards – Teacher’s Strength and Need Assessment (NCBTS-TSNA), they assessed their strengths and weaknesses and made an action program to target their weaknesses which are their target skills for enhancement during the said SBLP session.

Another, when decisions have to be made, the administrator gathered teachers together and came up with a most appropriate decision. This is apparent during the several meetings done in the school with the administrator and teachers. This is likewise true with other stakeholders of the school such as the parents. They seasonally gather to meet so to be able to talk about school issues that concern them. From here, administrator, teachers, parents and students can feel the shared responsibilities they have for the school.

Leithwood and Riehl [6] stated about building a collaborative process. They said that to enhance performance in their schools, leaders provide opportunities for staff to participate in decision-making about issues that affect them. By building collaborative processes administrators enhance the performance of their school and its teachers.

High efficiency of school staffing is also noted along monitoring of pupil progress and school

performance (3.77); home and school partnership (3.67); students' rights and responsibilities (3.57). This denotes that the teachers' acceptance and performance of administrative tasks have greatly added to these positive results. Engaging them in both academic and administrative roles has empowered them to become responsible teachers who know their roles as partners of parents in pupils' learning and welfare. Through this practice they have raised disciplined students who are imbued with positive values and self-esteem [15].

On the other hand, the lowest registered result has a mean of 3.30 on high expectation. The interpreted result of 'effective' is not at all negative. It can still be considered as a factor contributory to the high efficiency of the staff.

The willingness of BNHS teachers to assume administrative roles is reflective of their existing and preferred cultural organization, which is clan. This culture has empowered them to be highly effective in performing their academic and administrative tasks.

Table 3. Significant Difference in the Rating of the Three Groups of Respondents

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
4.413	2	31	.021

Table 3 presented the results of the test of difference among the perceptions of the three groups of respondents on the school's level of effectiveness. ANOVA test was used at 0.05 level of significance. Its p-value based on statistical test is .021. This value is less than the stated level of significance which suggests that the perceptions of the three groups of respondents were statistically different.

The three groups of respondents differ in their perspective of the school's effectiveness because they take different roles in the school. Each of them is focused to work on their respective duties and responsibilities that contribute to the school's overall effectiveness as expected by its stakeholders.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based from the results, the Buhatan National High School has existing organizational staff where the school head assigned some of the administrative tasks to the teachers. Their existing and preferred organizational culture is clan. It also revealed from the

school's level of efficiency to be highly effective. And, the responses of the three groups of respondents were statistically different

Organizational staff is essential to be established to small schools to help them in their reportorial and financial concerns. With it, the school can be effective in delivering quality education to their students and in the community as well. Organizational culture is also one thing that they should look into to be able to understand the direction of their organization towards the achievement of the school's mission, vision and goals.

Small schools may likewise establish their organizational structure that could serve their schools administratively and academically. They may look into their organizational culture and level of effectiveness to suit the organizational staffing for their school. Schools heads may assess teachers' strengths and weaknesses to appropriately fit teachers to different organizational staff positions. With the established organizational staffing, small schools can be effective with their administrative and academic work.

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