

Performance and Effectiveness of Catholic Schools in Tagum

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Abstract

Schools and education authorities became increasingly aware of the need to be effective due to the pressures for accountability brought by national and local government levels and school stakeholders in relation to the demands of the new educational system. This study determined the performance of the schools and effectiveness of the administrators with the human resource development in the selected Catholic schools in Tagum, Davao del Norte. Findings of the study served as inputs for the improved administrative manual and school improvement plan. The study utilized mixed methods among the 250 participants. The instrument focused on the indicators based on the Fund for Assistance to Private Education. Vision and mission, curriculum and instruction, faculty development, student development, physical plant and facilities, financial and business administration, and school and community involvement were considered advanced and were sustained for a longer period of time. The administrators' level of implementation in the human resource management and development functions was considered adequate. The implementation in terms of benefits, remuneration and evaluation were also evident. Employment policy, work regulations, discipline, leave of absence, and grievance and complaints were substantially observed. There is a significant relationship between the performance of schools and administrators' effective implementation of human resource management and development functions. There was shared understanding on roles, responsibilities, and expectations by the stakeholders.

Key Words: Performance of Schools, Human Resource Management, Development Functions, Catholic schools, Tagum City

I. Introduction

Schools and education authorities have become increasingly aware of the need to be effective. This is partly due to the pressures for accountability brought about by national and local government levels and school stakeholders in relation to the demands of the new educational system. At the same time a realization of the importance of the issue has grown as school heads and staffs have sought to increase effectiveness in the school setting as a part of the development of professionalism (Smith, 2010).

The success of every school depends on the way it is managed. The need for the efficient management of schools has placed much more emphasis on the nature and quality of the work of the head as the leader of a team of professional educators, and as the manager of the supply and effective use of resources whether they are-- human, financial or material (Williams, 2010).

Based on the foregoing, the Head, therefore needs to gain clear understanding of all the forces and factors which contribute towards the performance of the school. It is in this context that management acumen of school leaders is considered of paramount importance in creating a collaborative group of dynamic people in the workplace as well as to ensure the effectiveness of an educational institution (Bach cited in Celis, 2013).

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Effective management of a school depends largely on the efforts of a number of individuals and groups that are closely interlinked. In the case of the private educational institutions, particularly the diocesan schools in Davao del Norte, from the Department of Education to the Board of Trustees, to the school administrators and to other stakeholders, all play a part in the daily operation of the school.

and Although the school head is the pivotal link in this network and, ultimately, plays the most crucial role in ensuring school effectiveness, other stakeholders are expected to contribute to the growth and development of the school. And since this role is complex and demanding, involving management of financial, human and material resources in a dynamic situation and affected by many internal and external forces, the school manager should be able to employ leadership styles and use a management process reflected in the set of standards and guidelines that will convert hired individuals into strategic partners to ensure a collated and constructive enterprise productivity and development of a uniform organizational culture (Celis, 2013).

With these, the Researcher, a school administrator and human resource management practitioner, was prompted to conduct this study to determine the level of governance and effectiveness of selected diocesan schools in Davao del Norte as there are varying degrees of what is demonstrated in the locale.

Apparently, this will serve as empirical evidence so that new set of standards or rules may be employed for the school performance and effectiveness through various mechanisms as well as for the attainment of organizational goals and employee productivity.

This study determined the performance of the schools and effectiveness of the administrators with the human resource development in the Catholic Schools in Tagum City, Davao del Norte under the Diocese of Tagum for the School Year 2012– 2013. Findings of the study served as inputs for the improved administrative manual and school improvement plan.

1. What is the level of performance of the school with reference to:
 - 1.1. Vision and Mission;
 - 1.2. Curriculum and Instruction;
 - 1.3. Faculty Development;
 - 1.4. Student Development;
 - 1.5. Physical Plant & Facilities;
 - 1.6. Community Involvement; and,
 - 1.7. Financial/Business Administration ?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of the administrators in implementing the following:
 - 1.1. Employment Policy;
 - 1.2. Discipline;
 - 1.3. Work Regulations;

- 1.4. Leave of Absence;
 - 1.5. Benefits;
 - 1.6. Remuneration;
 - 1.7. Evaluation; and
 - 1.8. Grievances and Complaints?
2. Is there a significant relationship between school performance and effectiveness of school administrators?
 3. What are the concerns of the stakeholders with reference to:
 - 3.1. Vision and Mission;
 - 3.2. Curriculum and Instruction;
 - 3.3. Faculty Development;
 - 3.4. Student Development;
 - 3.5. Physical Plant & Facilities;
 - 3.6. Community Involvement; and
 - 3.7. Financial/Business Administration?
 4. What are the challenges encountered by the personnel and administrators in implementing the following:
 - 4.1. Employment Policy;
 - 4.2. Discipline;
 - 4.3. Work Regulations;
 - 4.4. Leave of Absence;
 - 4.5. Benefits;
 - 4.6. Remuneration;
 - 4.7. Evaluation; and
 - 4.8. Grievances and Complaints?
 5. What inputs for improved administrative manual and school improvement plan can be offered based on the findings of the study?
 - b) This study is anchored on the theories of James MacGregor Burns, Frederick Fiedler and Cynefin. These are the transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1918), contingency theory (Fiedler, 1960), and complexity theory. These theories, that this study is anchored on, are framework or foundation of the concepts being discussed and introduced in this paper.

c) Many researches have been made to define leaders' roles in organizations. In this regard, transformational leadership has been frequently studied in the leadership fields (Bass, Heck & Hallinger, cited in Balyer 2012).

According to Northouse (2001), in the simplest terms, transformational leadership is the ability to get people to want to change, improve, and be led. It involves assessing associates' motives, satisfying their needs, and valuing them. Besides, some researches claim that transformational leadership is the leader's ability to increase organizational members' commitment, capacity, and engagement in meeting goals (Chew & Chan, 2008).

The other theory is the contingency theory of Frederick Fiedler. The contingency theory is a theory of leadership that assumes the degree of success of any leader which is contingent on the situational demands as to whether the leader should have a task or employee focus and the amount of influence and control the leader has over the situation. This emphasizes the regard with which the leader and the group members hold one another determines, in part, the ability of the leader to influence the group and the conditions under which he or she can do so. A leader who is accepted by the group members is in a more favorable situation than one who is not (Fiedler cited in Billones, 2012).

The third one is the complexity theory. It is a theory of change, evolution and adaptation, often in the interests of survival, and often through a combination of cooperation and competition (Morrison cited in Billones, 2012). It breaks with straightforward cause-and-effect models.

Complexity theory has been used in the fields of strategic management and organizational studies. Application areas include understanding how organizations or firms adapt to their environments and how they cope with conditions of uncertainty. The theory treats organizations as collections of strategies and structures. The structure is complex; in that they are dynamic networks of interactions, and their relationships are not aggregations of the individual static entities. They are adaptive; in that the individual and collective behaviors mutate and self-organize corresponding to the change-initiating collection of events.

II. Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational design to determine the level of performance and effectiveness of each variable under study and its existing relationship. The study was conducted at the Catholic schools in Tagum City, Davao del Norte under the Diocese of Tagum with 191 total number of respondents for the quantitative research design and 90 for the qualitative research design. The paper used standardized research instruments designed by the Philippine Accrediting Associations of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) to evaluate school performance and Modified ESC/EVS and PAASCU Institutional Self – Survey Form for the interview guide questions.

This study employed adapted research instruments which were based on the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE) indicators of school effectiveness (School Self – evaluation proforma, school improvement plan), Philippine Accrediting Associations of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) Evaluation Instrument for Accrediting Integrated Schools, 1st Edition, 2006, and ESC/EVS and PAASCU Institutional Self – Survey Form. There were 3 instruments which were mainly utilized to measure the variables under study.

The first instrument focused on the list of indicators on the level of performance of Catholic Schools based on the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE) - (School Self – evaluation proforma, school improvement plan). It consisted of 7 indicators which include-- vision and mission, curriculum and instruction, faculty development, student development, physical plant and facilities, financial and business administration and school and community involvement. Each indicator provided information concerning the school's performance. A five point - Likert scale was used.

Range of Means	Description	Interpretation
4.21 – 5.00	Exemplary	Indicator is comprehensively and skillfully observed and is highly acclaimed
3.41 – 4.20	Advanced	Indicator is substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time
2.61 – 3.40	Adequate	Indicator is adequately observed and common school practice
1.81 – 2.60	Basic	Indicator is basically observed but still requires assistance and/or improvement
1.00 – 1.80	Not Demonstrated	Indicator is not observed in the school

The second instrument dealt with the effective implementation of the school's employment policy, discipline, work regulations, leave of absence, benefits, remuneration, evaluation; and grievances and complaints. The instrument provided a list of indicators based on the Philippine Accrediting Associations of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) Evaluation Instrument for Accrediting Integrated Schools, 1st Edition, 2006. It utilized a five point – Likert scale.

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1.00 – 1.80	Not Demonstrated	Indicator is not observed in the school

The third instrument was interview guide questionnaires used in the collection of the qualitative data based on the ESC/EVS and PAASCU Institutional Self – Survey Form to determine the concerns of the stakeholders with references to the indicators of school performance. Also, the survey form gathered the challenges encountered by the personnel and administrators in implementing human resource related functions.

III Results and Discussions

Performance of the Catholic Schools

Table- 1 shows the level of performance of the schools with the indicators - vision and mission, curriculum and instruction, faculty development, student development, physical plant and facilities, financial and business administration, and school and community involvement.

Table 1 The Level of Performance of the Schools, N = 191		
Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Vision and Mission	3.52	Advanced
Curriculum & Instruction	3.57	Advanced
Faculty Development	3.67	Advanced
Student Development	3.96	Advanced
Physical Plant & Facilities	3.80	Advanced
Financial & Business Admin.	3.61	Advanced
School & Comm. Involvement	3.80	Advanced
Grand Mean	3.704	Advanced

4.21 – 5.00 Exemplary; 3.41 – 4.20 Advanced; 2.61 – 3.40 Adequate; 1.81 – 2.60 Basic; 1.00 – 1.80 Not Demonstrated

The indicators have mean scores of 3.52, 3.57, 3.67, 3.96, 3.80, 3.61 and 3.80 respectively, which are considered advanced - means that they were substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time.

However, the vision and mission under Table- 5 is considered to be the lowest indicator. This area was below par observed in the diocesan schools because some stakeholders especially the parents and other external stakeholders are not familiar with the school's vision, mission, goals and objectives. Specifically, as resulted in item number one (1) under this indicator, diocesan schools have this basic observation on maintaining a shared vision, mission and goals for student development and learning through school community consultation.

According to Wiley and Sons (2005), one of the Board's and Administrator's responsibilities is to define and communicate organization's vision and mission to not-to-profit entities but to its key stakeholders, which are the employees, students and parents, the community and the larger general public. A clearly articulated and communicated vision and mission explain the essence of the organization and serve as guide to its work.

Student development under Table- 4 is the most observed activity in the schools.

The relationships that characterize effectiveness of school are evident to students and the development programs extended to them. Student development indicator obtained the highest mean since the Diocesan schools are in their full effort to provide students with support around the social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual dimensions of life. These are evident in the higher ratings in some items under this indicator which underscore the enforcement of school rules that are clear, fair and well – understood and

promote the belief that the best discipline is derived from within rather than external control. Diocesan schools established, observed and practiced strong pastoral care support system that emphasized teacher – student relationship, and ensuring that students play an active role in school life by providing leadership opportunities, meaningful positions of responsibility and encouragement and support to participate in school decision making.

Student development indicator was substantially observed in Catholic schools since the board and school administrators governed each school with guarantee that it will improve student progress and achievement outcomes. This can be done by providing strategic leadership to schools (Sewell, 2010).

Overall, a grand mean of 3.704 shows that all indicators are substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time.

The foregoing indicators were substantially observed and practiced by the Catholic schools based on the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), school self – evaluation proforma, school improvement plan. This implies that school performance and processes primarily focus on the satisfactory delivery of institutional services to both internal and external stakeholders. The board of trustees along with school administrators has been exerting their efforts to give direction and to guide all school activities and programs that cover all aspects of school performance, a financial budget that is aligned with the strategic plans, process for professional growth and development of the principal, faculty and staff and an effective process for working with parents and school communities.

Administrator's Effectiveness in the Implementation of Human Resource Management and Development Functions

Table- 2 shows the level of effectiveness of the administrators' implementation in human resource management and development functions with reference to employment policy, discipline, work regulations, leave of absence, benefits, remuneration, evaluation, and grievances and complaints.

Table 2 Level of Administrator's Effectiveness in the Implementation of Human Resource Management and Development Functions, N = 191		
Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
Employment Policy	4.10	Advanced
Discipline	3.51	Advanced
Work Regulations	3.43	Advanced
Leave of Absence	3.95	Advanced
Benefits	2.91	Adequate
Remuneration	2.95	Adequate
Evaluation	2.91	Adequate
Grievances and Complaints	3.48	Advanced
Grand Mean	3.23	Adequate

4.21 – 5.00 Exemplary; 3.41 – 4.20 Advanced; 2.61 – 3.40 Adequate; 1.81 – 2.60 Basic; 1.00 – 1.80 Not Demonstrated

The benefits, remuneration and evaluation have mean score of 2.91, 2.95 and 2.91, respectively. These indicators are commonly observed and are commonly practiced in the school. In other words, they are the least observed indicators.

The abovementioned indicators were moderately observed and implemented by the schools but were acknowledged by the employees in mediocrity. One of the factors that might have influenced is the teacher's dissatisfaction on the benefits and appraisal that they are receiving. Based on the survey, it was highlighted that provision on salaries and benefits do not satisfactorily assure a living compatible with the teaching profession. In addition, the schedule of salaries offered by most diocesan Catholic schools was deemed inappropriate to the socio – economic conditions of the employees. Also, there was no established free health maintenance organization for tenured employees facilitated by a private health care entity.

Muller (2009) argued that benefits and compensation as well as schedule of salaries are approaches that are systematic to ensure that employees are provided with monetary value in exchange of the work performed. In the case of diocesan Catholic schools in Tagum, the purposes for which compensation serves did not achieve job satisfaction while benefits were inadequately given to employees as additional compensation for wages and salaries.

The other factor that is believed to be contributory to the less effectiveness of the school administrators is the implementation of assessment and evaluation of teachers. The findings of this study provide an insight into how school principal might improve teacher evaluation to foster better conditions for both teacher and student learning.

Teacher evaluation in Catholic schools is poorly implemented as evident in the low ratings on the following items: the use of a comprehensive merit system for the objective evaluation of employee performance, the employment of evaluation tools regarding the achievement of organizational objectives, and taking evaluation, tenure and professional growth into consideration for promotion.

It should be borne in mind that the measurement of an employee's performance allows for rational administrative decisions at the individual employee level. It also provides for the generation of raw data for the evaluation of the effectiveness of system components and processes such as recruiting policies, training programs, selection rules, promotional strategies, and reward allocations.

Employment policy, work regulations, discipline, leave of absence, and grievance and complaints have mean score of 4.10, 3.51, 3.43, 3.95 and 3.48, respectively. These indicators had been substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time.

These indicators were substantially evident in the diocesan Catholic schools since school administrators and personnel alike did their part in ensuring a sound employer – employee relations by complying and conforming to the school policies despite the absence of an established performance and management appraisal system from which equitable and fair benefits and remuneration are supposed to be derived.

However, both administrators and employees tried their best to arrive at an agreement that somehow sustained adequate working conditions. These include satisfactory implementation of policies regarding employment condition of probationary and tenured, leaves of absences as mandated by law and procedures relating to labor management relations. Diocesan schools also observed the normal hours of work mandated by the

Labor Code of the Philippines. Moreover, school heads allowed personnel to participate in decision making on matters that affected them and created working conditions of teaching and non – teaching personnel that contributed to their satisfactory performance.

As discussed by Joshi (cited in Kayani, 2008), to improve the quality of human input and to bring about the desired productive behavior in the work force, school leaders should improve the following personal and organizational characteristics of any corporate personality including work attitudes and aptitude, knowledge and skill and opportunities.

Over all, the performance of the Human Resource Management and Development has a grand mean of 3.23, which is considered adequate and is commonly observed and practiced in the school.

This is to say that most of the areas covered for effective implementation of human resource development were adequately practiced by the Catholic schools.

This implies that the management acumen and leadership skills of the principals positively contributed to the satisfactory implementation of the above – mentioned indicators.

Odina (2013) affirmed the findings of this study by citing that school administrators as human resource managers should develop policies and communicate them to all employees. It provides all the forms and documents required for policy implementation. They are also responsible for reviewing, adding, deleting or revising policies to ensure that they remain current with legislation or organizational needs.

Relationship between the Level of School Performance and Effectiveness of School Administrators

Table- 3 shows the relationship between the level of school performance and the administrators' effectiveness on the implementation of the human resource management and development functions. It has p-value of .000, which rejects the null hypothesis. An r-value of .502 shows moderate relationship. Thus, increasing the level of school performance moderately increases the effective implementation of the human resource management and development functions.

Table 3 Relationship between the Level of School Performance and Effectiveness of School Administrators, N = 191				
Variable	R	p – value	Decision	Interpretation
Level of School Performance and Effectiveness of School Adminstrators	.502	.000	Reject H ₀	Significant

Significant at $p < .05$

Effective implementation of human resource development regulates the ownership and control of organizations (Berle and Mean, cited in Konzalamnn et.al, 2007). It sets the legal terms and conditions for the allocation of property rights among stakeholders, structuring their relationships and influencing their incentives, and hence, willingness to work together. Cooperation between the school leaders and the human resource is important because of its role in making effective diffusion of responsibility for production and service quality, process improvement and innovation. It also serves to secure the commitment of stakeholders

to the objectives of the organization, and to make available the full benefits of their skills, knowledge and experience. Ideally, this is a central purpose of human resource management and its role in enhancing organizational performance. The performance of the school takes therefore impacts the effectiveness of human resource management practices (Konzelmann et.al, 2007). The statement of Konzelmann could be a supporting data on the results of this study which also suggests that there is association between the school performance and how administrators implement the human resource management and development of the Catholic schools.

Hence, an effective and efficient administrator sets standards of excellence and accountability for its own performance, through an effective implementation of the human resource management and development functions. This means making the best possible use of its members' capabilities and the time they devote in fulfilling their role and responsibilities.

Table 4 Concerns of Stakeholders on School Performance and Challenges Encountered by the School Administrators in the Catholic Schools, N = 90	
Perceptions Expressed by Stakeholders of the Catholic Schools Summary Results from Interview and Focus Group Discussion	
Concerns on the Performance of Catholic Schools	Challenges Encountered by School Administrators in the Implementation of Human Resource Management and Development Services
• Some stakeholders are not familiar with the school VMGO • Staff members are not regularly sent to off-campus trainings and seminars • Buildings and classroom need improvement • Most schools do not employ an automated system for financial and fiscal management	• Poor appraisal system since there is no provision for merit system that inspires and drives employees to seek and pursue professional advancement • Some schools do not go about the process of personnel evaluation • Insufficiency on employees' information for incentives and promotion because there is no provision for that, based on educational attainment, trainings and seminars. Schools do not clearly reflect appointments, job description and other functions of the employees • Difficulty in providing free health care programs for the employees • Employees dissatisfaction since schools do not have schedules of pay, no salary scheme and benefits and add ons for job satisfaction and motivation

Concerns of Stakeholders on the Performance of Catholic Schools

Based on the statement of the problem item number four (4), the concerns of the stakeholders among the Catholic schools centered on the managerial skills or the principal's leadership styles at organization management which included vision and mission, curriculum and instruction, faculty development, student development, physical plant and facilities, school/community involvement, and financial/business administration.

Based on the interviews and discussions conducted with the internal and external stakeholders of the Catholic schools in Tagum, Davao del Norte, concerns were raised mainly on the following:

Vision and Mission. As stated in Table- 8, some stakeholders are not familiar with the school's vision, mission and goals. This was affirmed by some external stakeholders who were categorized as alumni and parents.

Faculty Development. Another concern raised by the stakeholders is the training needs of the faculty and staff which were believed to have been unsatisfactorily provided and thus resulted in a low turn - out of employee productivity and clientele satisfaction. These may be implications on schools having inadequate provisions for the personal, economic and professional development of the faculty and staff members due to lack of resources.

Physical Plant and Facilities. According to Das, Kalra, Leathes and Wakeham (2011) where the quality of school's physical condition is improved, learning outcomes are also improved. However, some Diocesan schools raised concerns on the performance of the school in terms of the kind of facilities that they are having.

Challenges Encountered by School Administrators in the Implementation of Human Resource Management and Development Functions

School administrators encountered challenges in relation to the implementation of the human resource management and development functions with reference to employment policy, discipline, work regulations, leave of absence, benefits, remuneration, evaluation; and grievances and complaints. The preceding scenario challenges the strategic leadership of school administrators to influence positive results despite the scarce and unavailable resources. According to Bratton (2005), contingency management theory has to do with a set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of a corporation even if it is placed in a disadvantaged situation.

Remuneration and Benefits. Challenges encountered by school administrators in relation to remuneration and benefits were highlighted in most diocesan schools since the offering of salaries and benefits did not suffice a living compatible with the teaching profession. This was observed not just by the teachers but as well the parents of some diocesan schools.

Evaluation. It is asserted that human resource needs to be measured in order to determine performance effectiveness and efficiency. In this context, most schools failed to exercise such assessment practice since there were no comprehensive merit systems and standardized evaluation tools for the objective evaluation of employee for bases for promotion.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the overall level of performance of the schools showed that all indicators were substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time. Vision and mission, curriculum and instruction, faculty development, student development, physical plant and facilities, financial and business administration, and school and community involvement were considered advanced, which meant that they were substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time.

Specifically, the highest mean was noted as internal and external stakeholders collaboratively work for the improvement of student services and the development of student achievement.

The overall rating on administrators' level of implementation in the human resource management and development functions was considered adequate which was commonly observed and practiced in the school.

The administrators' level of implementation in terms of benefits, remuneration and evaluation were also evident yet acknowledged by the employees in mediocrity. Those indicators were least observed in the school since most employees had issues and concerns in the implementation of the following benefits --

Employment policy, work regulations, discipline, leave of absence, and grievance and complaints were substantially observed and sustained for a longer period of time in the school.

Furthermore, a Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the level of performance of schools and administrators' level of effective implementation of human resource management and development functions. There was a moderate correlation between the two variables. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that if the level of performance increased, there would be a moderate increase of level in the implementation in human resource management and development functions.

Moreover, a Thematic Content Analysis was conducted to collectively determine the concerns of the stakeholders on the performance of the Catholic schools and the challenges encountered by the administrators on the implementation of the human resource management and development functions. Catholic schools provided both the teachers and school staff human services focusing on employment policy, discipline, work regulations, leave of absence, and grievances and complaints, but found to be mediocre in the rendering of the services such as benefits, remuneration and performance evaluation. Likewise, it was observed that there were shared understandings about appropriate roles, responsibilities and expectations by a number of stakeholders but some processes had to be in place to resolve misunderstandings, conflicts, or other human relations issues.

It is concluded that the level of performance of schools and administrators' level of effective implementation in human resource management and development functions are directly interrelated since the individual success and collective progress of the said academic institutions as governed by school administrators were dependent on the utilization of human resources. It is surmised that the needs and aspirations of the members of school community would make sensible impact on the achievement of the objectives and organizational goals. The challenges encountered by the school administrators in the diocesan schools centered on the strategic managerial skills of the school principal and the administrators' implementation of human resource management and development functions in relation to the successful realization of institutional objectives empowerment of human resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended that the administration and the board of trustees of the select Catholic schools in Tagum should consider the inputs on the improvements of the Administrative Manual especially in the areas of human resource management and development services such as remuneration, evaluation and benefits as well as the proposed improvement plan particularly in the areas of school performance such as philosophy and vision-mission, physical facilities and faculty development.

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