

A Comparative Study of Teachers' Perception of Curriculum Change Across School Heads' Decision-Making Styles in Marilog District, Davao City Division

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to determine the significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. This study used the descriptive-comparative research design. The respondents of this study were 90 public school teachers from Marilog District of Davao City Division. The researcher used the Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), $n = 50 + 8(m)$, where m represents the total number of independent variables included in the study in selecting the respondents. The gathered data were analyzed and interpreted by using the statistical tools frequency and percentage, mean, One-way ANOVA, Eta-squared. The results revealed that most used decision-making styles of school leaders demonstrated was rational decision-making style. Moreover, On the level of teacher's perception on curriculum change in terms of general behavior towards the new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school was oftentimes evident.. Further, it was found that there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. Lastly, on the effect size of the school head's decision-making styles on the perception of teachers in curriculum change, the results indicated a moderate effect size. Thus, it is recommended that School heads should continue to use rational and collaborative decision-making styles, as these have shown a positive impact on teacher perceptions and curriculum change.

KEY WORDS

1. Decision-making styles 2. curriculum change 3. teachers

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1. Introduction

The curriculum is a pivotal component in the efficacy of education. Teachers bear substantial responsibility in the execution of the curriculum. The ability of teachers to create the necessary learning-teaching environment enhances the effectiveness of these curriculums significantly. In the Philippines, education has seen significant changes over the past few decades. These

educational changes are a reality for teachers all across the world, as schools are constantly under pressure to innovate. In this regard, the teachers' perceptions of the curriculum changes are considered to be of importance.

Bentayao et al. (2024) asserted that educators are pivotal to curriculum transformation in the Davao City division. The MATATAG

curriculum requires ongoing professional development, complicating its implementation, and leaders must promote continuous learning while instructing educators in innovative methodologies. The implementation pace of the MATATAG curriculum is contingent upon schools' responsiveness to policy changes, leading to certain institutions advancing rapidly while others fall behind, hence creating educational inequities. This underscores the necessity for fair support and resources to guarantee uniform implementation across all educational institutions.

The success or failure of each educational change is contingent upon the respective responsibilities that lie with teachers, whether they are to implement them as desired or to disregard them. It is said that in terms of curriculum, teachers have the capacity to either "make or break" innovations. The studies mentioned previously highlighted the importance of supportive leaders during these periods of change, as well as the diverse perspectives of educators regarding curriculum changes. Yet, there is an absence of research in Davao City that concentrates on the perceptions of teachers toward curriculum change, particularly in light of their school head's decision-making style. Thus, it was pertinent for the researcher to conduct this study in order to further investigate the aforementioned variables and provide a variety of perspectives to the agencies responsible for educational policies.

The study pursued answers to the ensuing objectives: a.) to determine the school heads' decision making styles in Marilog District, Davao City Division in terms of rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, and spontaneous. b.) to determine the level of teachers' perception on curriculum change in Marilog District, Davao City Division in terms of general behavior towards new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by

the school c.) to determine if there is a significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision-making styles, and d.) to determine the effect size of school heads' decision making styles in teachers' perception on curriculum change.

At .05 level of significance, the following hypotheses were tested: a.) There is no significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles, b.) There is no significant effect of school heads' decision making styles (rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, spontaneous) on teachers' perception on curriculum change, as indicated by eta squared.

This study explored school heads' decision-making styles and teachers' perceptions of curriculum change, offering valuable insights for education stakeholders. For teachers, it highlighted the influence of leadership styles on their work environment and emphasized their role in fostering a collaborative school culture. School heads gained awareness of how their leadership affects curriculum acceptance, encouraging more adaptive and supportive approaches. The Department of Education can use these findings to craft targeted policies and training programs that enhance leadership effectiveness during curriculum reforms. Lastly, the study lays a foundation for future research on the relationship between leadership, teacher autonomy, and curriculum development across educational contexts.

1.1. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework of the Study —Figure 1 showed the conceptual framework showing the variables of the study. This presented the interaction between the independent variable and dependent variable. The figure displayed that school heads' decision-making styles in terms of rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, and spontaneous were the independent variable of the study. On the other hand, the dependent variable of the

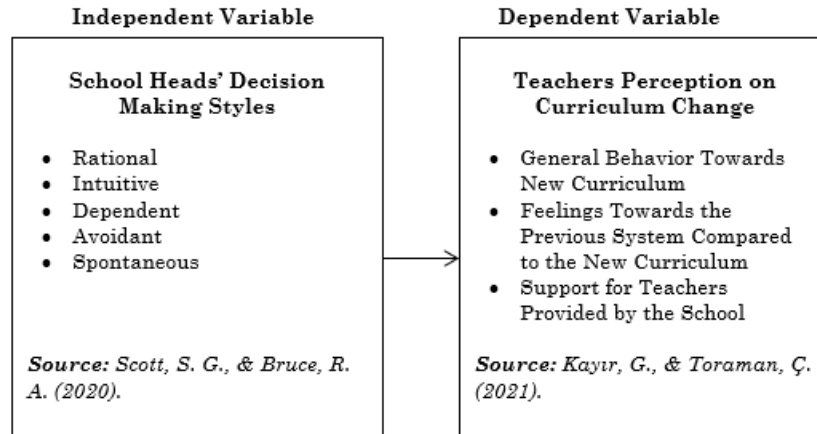


Fig. 1. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

study was the teachers' perception on curriculum change. Ultimately, the aim of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision-making styles.

2. Methodology

The following section outlines the procedures used by the researcher to perform this research study. It includes the population and sampling, instrumentation, data source, and data analysis.

2.1. Research Design—This study employed a descriptive comparative research design to examine how teachers' perceptions of curriculum change varied depending on their school head's decision-making style—rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, or spontaneous. The approach allowed the researcher to observe naturally occurring differences between groups without manipulating variables. By comparing groups, the study revealed patterns and distinctions in perception that can inform leadership strategies. This method emphasized understanding “what” differences exist rather than explaining “why” they occur. It also provided insights for improving educational practices and policies by identifying which decision-making styles may lead to more favorable teacher perceptions. Overall, this design was suitable for exploring the relationship between leadership and curriculum implementation in real-world settings.

2.2. Ethical Consideration—The study adhered to RMC's ethical standards, ensuring participants' rights, dignity, and safety were upheld throughout the research process. Informed consent was secured, with participants fully aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without repercussions. Special attention was paid to the vulnerability of teachers, particularly the influence of power dynamics with school heads, which was mitigated through anonymity and confidentiality. The study minimized risks and emphasized the potential benefits, such as improved leadership practices and better curriculum implementation. There were no conflicts of interest, and all participants were treated fairly regardless of rank or school. Transparency was maintained through clear communication, ethical safeguards, and proper handling of personal data.

2.3. Research Respondents—Respondents were public school teachers from Marilog Dis-

district, Davao City Division, selected through universal sampling to ensure the inclusion of the entire relevant population. The study used a calculated sample size of 90 teachers based on five decision-making style variables, ensuring adequate representation. This method minimized sampling bias and improved the reliability and validity of the findings. Inclusion criteria required teachers to be from the district, while others were excluded to maintain relevance. Universal sampling allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how different leadership styles affected teacher perceptions. The approach enabled direct insights into the impact of decision-making on curriculum change in a real educational context. This comprehensive sampling strategy strengthened the study's ability to generalize findings across the entire

district population.

2.4. Research Instrument—The study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire based on Kayır Toraman (2021) to measure teachers' perceptions of curriculum change. It included 15 items across three categories: behavior towards the new curriculum, comparison with the previous system, and school-provided support. Responses were interpreted using a 5-point Likert scale with clear descriptors. The questionnaire was validated by experts and pilot-tested with 30 teachers, ensuring clarity and relevance. It achieved a reliability index of .86, confirming its consistency and accuracy in measuring perceptions. This robust tool provided valuable data for analyzing the relationship between leadership style and curriculum change perception.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure—The researcher first secured official permissions from institutional and local education authorities before contacting participating schools. The survey tool underwent expert validation and was pilot-tested to confirm reliability. Once finalized, questionnaires were distributed face-

to-face to encourage honest and complete responses in a supportive environment. Participants were given ample time to respond, and the researcher collected the completed forms securely. Careful handling and confidentiality ensured the data's validity and integrity. This structured procedure facilitated reliable and ethical data collection for analysis.

2.6. Data Analysis—Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS to ensure accurate and institution-compliant data interpretation. Frequency and percentage identified school heads' decision-making styles, while the mean measured teachers' perception levels across three sub-domains. One-way ANOVA tested

for significant differences in perceptions among the five decision-making styles. Eta-squared was used to measure effect size, showing how much variance in perception could be attributed to leadership style. These tools provided a clear, quantitative understanding of the influence of decision-making on curriculum perception.

3. Results and Discussion

This section delineated the findings and discussion of the study. The presentation proceeded with a comprehensive discussion of school heads' decision making styles (rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, spontaneous). Then to determine the level of teachers' perception on curriculum change in terms of general behavior towards new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school. The next part

addressed the significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. The concluding section discussed the effect size of school heads' decision making styles in teachers' perception on curriculum change in Marilog District, Davao City Division.

3.1. School Heads' Decision Making Styles In Marilog District, Davao City Division—Table 1 displayed the data on the school heads' decision-making styles in Marilog District, Davao City Division. The frequency and percentage scores for each indicator were displayed in both tabular and textual representations. The results revealed that most school leaders demonstrated a rational decision-making style, with 29 respondents representing 32.22% of the total responses. The second was dependent decision-making style, with 21 respon-

dents, constituting 23.33%. This was followed closely by the spontaneous decision-making style, with 20 respondents or 22.22%. The intuitive decision-making style was exhibited by 13 respondents, accounting for 14.44%, while the avoidant decision-making style showed the lowest prevalence, with 7 respondents or 7.78%. These results suggest that school heads in public secondary schools in Marilog District, Davao City Division predominantly employ a rational approach in decision making, with varied degrees of reliance on other styles.

Table 1. School Heads' Decision Making Styles in Marilog District, Davao City Division

No.	Decision Making Style	N	Frequency	Percentage
1	Rational	90	29	32.22%
2	Intuitive		13	14.44%
3	Dependent		21	23.33%
4	Avoidant		7	7.78%
5	Spontaneous		20	22.22%
Overall		90	90	100%

3.2. Level of Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change in Marilog District, Davao City Division—Table 2 showed the summary on the level of teachers' perception on curriculum change in Marilog District, Davao City Division which was measured by three indicators namely: general behavior towards new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school. The mean ratings of these indicators are as follows: General Behavior Towards New Curriculum (3.40), which was described as high. Feelings Towards the Previ-

ous System Compared to the New Curriculum (3.46) was equivalent to high, while Support for Teachers Provided by the School (3.43) was described as high. The three indicators/domains on the level of teachers' perception on curriculum change generate an overall mean rating of (3.43), described as high. This means that the teachers' perception on curriculum change in terms of general behavior towards new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school was oftentimes evident.

Table 2.Summary on the Level of Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change in Marilog District, Davao City Division

No.	Item	Mean	Descriptive Level
1	General Behavior Towards New Curriculum	3.40	High
2	Feelings Towards the Previous System Compared to the New Curriculum	3.46	High
3	Support for Teachers Provided by the School	3.43	High
Overall Mean		3.43	High

Legend: 1.00–1.79: Very Low, 1.80–2.59: Low, 2.60–3.39: Moderate, 3.40–4.19: High, 4.20–5.00: Very High

3.3. *Significant Difference in Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change when Exposed to School Heads' Decision Making Styles*—The findings in Table 3 revealed a significant difference in the level of stress coping skills of teachers Table 6 flaunted the data on the significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of curriculum change when exposed to different school heads' decision-making styles (F=37.978, $p<.005$). This suggests that the decision-making style of school heads plays a pivotal role in shaping how teachers perceive curriculum changes. The between-groups sum of squares (0.835) and within-groups sum of squares (11.750) further highlight notable variability influenced by the decision-making styles of school heads, compared to the relatively minor variation within groups. With a p-value of .000, the result provides strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis, confirming that decision-making styles significantly affect teachers' perspectives on curriculum change.

Table 3.Significant Difference in Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change when Exposed to School Heads' Decision Making Styles

Teacher's Perspective on Curriculum Change	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision
Between Groups	0.835	4	0.209	37.978	.000*	Reject Ho
Within Groups	11.750	85	0.138			
Total	12.585	89				

[*] Significant at $p < .05$

3.4. *Effect Size of School Heads' Decision Making Styles in Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change*—Table 4 exemplified the effect size of the school head's decision-making styles namely: rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, and spontaneous towards teacher's perception on curriculum change. The effect size 0.066 calculated from the data indicates that approximately 6.6% of the variance in teachers' per-

ceptions of curriculum change can be attributed to school heads' decision-making styles. While the total sum of squares is 12.585, the between-groups sum of squares is 0.835, highlighting a notable but moderate contribution of decision-

making styles to teachers' perceptions. This effect, while not overwhelmingly large, demonstrates that decision-making plays a meaningful role in shaping teachers' attitudes toward curriculum changes.

Table 4. Effect Size of School Heads' Decision Making Styles in Teachers' Perception on Curriculum Change

Sum of Squares Between Groups	Total Sum of Squares	Eta Squared	Remarks
0.835	12.585	0.066	Moderate Effect

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Findings—This study aimed to determine the school heads' decision making styles (rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, spontaneous). Further, it subsequently provided the analysis of the level of teachers' perception on curriculum change in terms of general behavior towards new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school. The next part addressed the significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. Lastly, the section discussed the effect size of school heads' decision making styles in teachers' perception on curriculum change in Marilog District, Davao City Division. The following are the significant findings:

4.2. Conclusions—On the mental self-government styles of teachers in Davao City Division, the findings revealed that On the school heads' decision-making styles in Marilog District, Davao City Division. The results revealed a predominance of rational decision-making among school heads, followed by dependent, spontaneous, and intuitive styles, with avoidant being the least common. This aligns with Fiedler's Contingency Theory, indicat-

ing that school leaders adjusted effectively to the structured demands of curriculum changes. From Weick's Sense-making Theory perspective, the prevalence of rational and intuitive approaches helped provide teachers with consistent guidance. Fullan's Change Theory also supports these outcomes, as rational and collaborative decision-making fosters school capacity and sustained change. Overall, these decision-making patterns reflect leadership practices that promote effective curriculum implementation.

On the level of teacher's perception on curriculum change in terms of general behavior towards the new curriculum, feelings towards the previous system compared to the new curriculum, and support for teachers provided by the school was found high, which means that it was oftentimes evident. This suggests a school climate that encourages clarity, support, and adaptability—principles central to Fullan's Change Theory. Teachers' positive perceptions align with Weick's Sense-making Theory, as they continuously processed the change through their interactions with school leaders. The presence of support systems and shared understanding indicates that the curriculum reform was well-received and meaningfully applied in everyday

teaching.

On the significant difference in teachers' perception on curriculum change when exposed to school heads' decision making styles. The findings show that leadership approaches significantly influenced how teachers perceived and responded to curriculum reforms. This supports Weick's theory that individuals interpret change through cues from authority figures. Fiedler's Contingency Theory further explains these differences, emphasizing that effective leadership depends on matching style to specific situational demands. These results highlight the critical role leadership style plays in shaping the success of curriculum change.

On the effect size of the school head's decision-making styles namely: rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, and spontaneous towards teacher's perception on curriculum change. While the influence was moderate, it was still significant, demonstrating a measurable impact of decision-making style on teachers' experiences. This supports Fiedler's assertion that leadership effectiveness is context-based. It also resonates with Fullan's emphasis

on leadership fostering engagement and lasting reform. From Weick's perspective, decision-making styles act as cues that shape teachers' evolving understanding of the curriculum. Together, these theories affirm that well-aligned leadership enhances how educators adapt to educational change.

4.3. Recommendations—Based on the study's findings, teachers are encouraged to engage actively in curriculum reform through ongoing professional development and collaboration. School heads should adopt rational and collaborative decision-making styles that promote teacher involvement and clear communication. The Department of Education is advised to support leadership training and policies that emphasize strategic, context-based decision-making. Student engagement should be prioritized by incorporating their feedback and promoting learner-centered approaches aligned with curriculum changes. Future researchers should examine how leadership styles interact with school culture and performance, including conducting longitudinal studies across diverse contexts.

5. References

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