

**COMPASSION IN THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS:
SATISFACTION AND FATIGUE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE MATATAG
CURRICULUM ERA**

by:

ELOISA T. SAN JUAN, EdD

Head Teacher III, Bonifacio Camacho National High School

Educational leadership amidst this volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and diverse (VUCAD) world requires much responsibility for curriculum implementation and running schools as institutions. In many parts of the country last year, the upgraded version of the K to 12 curriculum, known as the MATATAG Curriculum, was already implemented. School administrators, therefore, face new challenges and responsibilities since they strive to make education more inclusive, relevant, and aligned with the demands of 21st-century learning. These challenges can create various emotional experiences for administrators, especially compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue.

The MATATAG curriculum, implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd), aims to develop skills and give quality education to Filipino learners by emphasizing key areas such as literacy, numeracy, and holistic development (DepEd, 2024). The curriculum also focuses on making education more responsive to their needs for them to become lifelong learners focusing on inclusiveness and equipping them with relevant skills in the VUCAD world. Implementing the MATATAG curriculum for school administrators will require them to oversee major changes in teaching, learning, and professional development among the teaching staff and support personnel. They must also oversee how this curriculum is implemented in school life while managing the emotional and logistical challenges such as large-scale educational reform.

Compassion satisfaction refers to the feeling invigorated by administrators when they care for their teaching and non-teaching staff. In contrast, compassion fatigue refers to an emotional and physical burden gained from caring that results in a decreased ability to empathize with suffering in the future (Stamm, 2024). Compassion satisfaction in school administrators often arises from their capacity to facilitate positive changes that will improve the well-being of students and staff. Implementing the MATATAG curriculum allows school administrators to create a supportive, innovative learning environment where teaching and non-teaching staff can excel. For example, they feel pleased when teachers adopt new modes of teaching, collaborate in lesson planning and developing instructional materials, and watch the students achieve excellence in a curriculum intended to enhance literacy and numeracy skills (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). They might also enjoy compassion satisfaction when they provide non-teaching staff, such as clerks in school, janitors, and security, with the resources and emotional support necessary to keep the school running. This way, school administrators can create an environment of mutual respect and teamwork while ensuring all staff feel valued, supported, and motivated during this transition (Richard Marcel & Kamalanabhan, 2024). There can be an overwhelming sense of professional accomplishment and personal pride in school administration through being a leader in the teaching and non-teaching staff when they are given credit for the success of curriculum implementation. Likewise, a holistic approach to the MATATAG curriculum and inclusivity that corresponds with the vision, mission, and core values may give administrators increased intrinsic motivation. The satisfaction gained from creating a positive and supportive school culture enhances job satisfaction and the well-being of school administrators, reducing the negative impacts of stress and burnout (Richard Marcel & Kamalanabhan, 2024).

While compassion satisfaction can be a rewarding experience, the demands of implementing the MATATAG curriculum can also lead to compassion fatigue for school administrators. Compassion fatigue can occur when they face persistent challenges without adequate support or resources (Stamm, 2024). The MATATAG curriculum has

massive administrative tasks such as training teachers, altering school infrastructure, and modifying curricula, besides the responses to the needs of students and staff. All these tasks overload the school administrators with stress levels and emotional exhaustion (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). For instance, compassion fatigue may occur when a teacher needs guidance to adapt to a new pedagogical approach. Emotional and logistical support is also needed by the non-teaching personnel adjusting to new operations processes (San Juan, 2024). School administrators can also feel emotional exhaustion in fulfilling the expectations of the DepEd in keeping up with such an exhaustive overhaul of the curriculum. It can lead to burnout, apathy, and reduced effectiveness in their role over time, which may negatively impact the school community (Stamm, 2024).

As the demands of implementing the MATATAG curriculum increase, school administrators must find ways to balance compassion satisfaction with the risk of compassion fatigue. One strategy that school administrators may use is fostering a harmonious and supportive work environment. It improves the resilience of the whole school community when they create spaces for teachers and non-teaching staff to share their experiences, challenges, and successes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2021). Another is continuous professional development programs focused on emotional resilience, stress management, and adaptive leadership that can help school administrators manage the emotional demands of their roles (San Juan, 2024). They could give better care for the staff if armed with tools that deal with stress. It could lower the chances of compassion fatigue. School administrators can also do certain things to ensure needs are being prioritized. Self-care and mindfulness, with mentorship and realistic expectations, help them maintain compassion satisfaction while minimizing burnout (Stamm, 2020). These strategies are some ways that will equip them with the complex demands of the organization living in the VUCAD world. These will also help them recognize, prevent, or overcome the signs and symptoms of apathy, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress in the work environment. And by creating such boundaries and ensuring they have time

to recharge, administrators can effectively maintain their work-life balance while accomplishing tasks with compassion.

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