Educators' Appreciative Capacities, Distributed Leadership Practices and Organizational Learning Capabilities: Path to Educational Reforms

Evelyn P. Navia, Ed. D.

Abstract— Reform is not new to education. It is introduced as ways to fix problems. Quite recently, the Philippine public-school system has gone through a dramatic revamp when Republic Act No. 10533, also known as 'The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013', was conclusively implemented in 2016. Referred to as the K-12 Basic Education Program it will take 13 years for a student to complete.

While the K-12 reform is a good start, the improvements in student performance are highly dependent on the teachers and teacher leaders we cultivate on the process. Thus, the important contribution of teachers to school improvement should be recognized. School leadership has been affirmed to be an important factor contributing to school effectiveness and school improvement. But in today's educational structure school leadership necessitates reinventing.

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent that evidence of the constructs of appreciative inquiry, distributed leadership, and organizational learning might be present in school districts in the Division of Laguna. These relationships were explored using path analysis. Typically, reforms have been introduced as ways to fix problems. If the proposed model holds, educational leaders might consider approaching reform, in a way that embraces the strengths of all educators involved to design the implementation. Thus, this study was conceived.

The study aimed to explore the extent that evidence of the constructs of appreciative inquiry, distributed leadership and organizational learning might be present in school districts, Division of Laguna. If evidence of the constructs is present what is the relationship of each them based on the perspectives of educators. Also, the context for this study was to find out whether educators' preparedness to implement educational changes/reforms was existing despite the unfamiliarity of the research construct. This study was exploratory-descriptive in nature using path analysis strategy. The study participants include school heads and educators who are designated as department heads in the school districts in the Division of Laguna.

The study yielded the following findings:

The educators-respondents perceived the appreciative inquiry dimensions as very important. As regards the educator–respondent's level of cognition, they perceived themselves as very knowledgeable, but there were some indicators which they admitted as knowledgeable. The educator – respondents also evaluated themselves as very competent in three of the five appreciative inquiry capabilities- affirmative capability, potential capability, and collaborative capability; and competent in two others – reframing capability and emergent capability. In the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions, the educator–respondents strongly agreed on the 8 principles embodied in the practice. The educator- respondents further perceived that the 5 dimensions of distributed leadership (support activity, supervision activity, team leadership, participative decision- making and organizational commitment) were most often undertaken. Likewise, the educator – respondents claimed that organizational learning capabilities were most often observed among leaders. The 5 distributed leadership dimensions had high correlation and marked relationship with self – report appreciative inquiry capacities and appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions. There was a moderate correlation but substantial relationship between the self – report appreciative inquiry capabilities, the perspectives on the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions and the perspectives on organizational learning capabilities.The 5 distributed leadership dimensions had high correlation and marked relationship with the perspectives on organizational learning capabilities.Based on the findings of the study an action plan was drafted for possible implementation in the Division of Laguna.

As a whole, study respondents reported that appreciative inquiry, distributed leadership and organizational learning constructs exist in the school districts and were related. Distribute leadership and organizational learning partially mediated appreciative inquiry to educational change relationship. Distributed leadership and organizational learning are necessary components to implement successful change. Both are needed to support and sustain change.

Index Terms— Distributed Leadership Practices, Educational Reforms, Educators' Appreciative Capacities, Organizational Learning Capabilities

———————————— ◆ ————————————

1 INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is driven by accelerating globalization and a faster technological development rate which brought along unprecedented challenges to all social institutions. Education as one of the basic social institutions is expected to suffice it-self according to the expectations of the citizens. Therefore, schools as agents of education are tasked to examine their practices, programs, and policies to ascertain their relevance in doing the primary purpose of their existence.

This change brought about by access to technology means students have more information available to them than they could have dreamed of even a couple of decades ago. They can teach themselves almost anything they want to know using the resources available to them. As educators they are tasked with helping these capable, intelligent children prepare for challenges they cannot fully foresee. That requires a whole new kind of leadership schools have not required in the past. Accordingly, preparing students for the future requires forward thinking 21st century leaders.

The 21st century has brought greater administrative accountability for increasing teacher and student performance in public education. The 21st century school leaders, according

to Sharp, et al (2016) enthusiastically face the challenging task of preparing young minds for the future and they think strategically about the goals and systems that will support the task. There are different traits, skills, mindsets, and habits that define 21st century leaders, such as: curiosity, persistence, resilience, flexibility, responsibility and hard work. These are important traits and are keys to leaders' success. Likewise, as leaders they need to possess a will to work on personal growth and improving oneself constantly through creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation and teamwork.

Meanwhile, Whitby (2018) believed that 21st century school leaders should also be willing to take risk when needed and to cultivate a global perspective approaching everything with a view of sustainability and well- being. Leading and managing change in schools is much less overwhelming when educators possess key skills, such as: teamwork, high emotional quotient and focus.

In a similar viewpoint, effective leaders according to Buchanan (2014) work with those around them, making a habit of seeking constructive feedback and reflecting on how things can be improved. They recognize the importance of collaboration to build 'collective geniuses. Also, as a leader, one should build healthy habits that create framework to help them perform their best. Building leadership capacity in school should never be limited to principal and heads, but should include intelligent and committed team who share similar vision with the school and the rest of the members.

Given the above hints on the 21st century educational leadership, the researcher is curious whether the educator – leaders in the developing countries like the Philippines are in tune with the preceding characterization. Moreover, it is a shared conviction among researchers and scholars that the most effective approach to sustainable change involved the use of distributed leadership for the collective work of constant inquiry, capacity building and shared decision – making. Thus, the present researcher ventured to study the topic on appreciative inquiry capacities, distributed leadership practices, and organizational learning capabilities to find out whether these constructs exist within the participating schools in the Division of Laguna. If there are evidences that these constructs are in existence there is possibility to pursue meaningful educational change/reform attuned to the 21st century educational mandate.

2   OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to explore the evidence of the constructs of appreciative inquiry, distributed leadership, and organizational learning whether these were presently practiced among schools in the Division of Laguna. Furthermore, if evidence of the constructs is present, what is the existing relationship of the constructs which may be utilized to make significant educational change/reforms among schools? Specifically, the study was guided by the following problems:

1.   What is the educator -respondents' perspectives on appreciative inquiry capacities based on:

    a.   reframing capacity
    b.   affirmative capacity?
    c.   collaborative capacity?
    d.   potential capacity?
    e.   emergent capacity?

2.   How does the educator - respondents evaluate themselves in terms of these appreciative inquiry capacities?

3.   What is the educator- respondents' perspectives on the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions?

4.   What is the educator – respondents' perspectives on their distributed leadership practices based on the following:

    a.   leadership support activities?
    b.   leadership supervision activities?
    c.   team leadership
    d.   participative decision – making? and
    e.   organizational commitment?

5.   What is the educator -respondents' perspectives on their organizational learning capabilities'?

6.   Is there a relationship between the educator- respondents' self- report on appreciative inquiry capabilities, perspectives on the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions and the distributed leadership practices?

7.   Is there a relationship between educator- respondents' appreciative inquiry capacities, perspectives on appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions and their perspectives on organizational learning capabilities? Is there a relationship between appreciative inquiry capacities and their organizational learning capabilities?

8.   Is there a relationship between educator- respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership practices and organizational learning capabilities?

3   METHODOLOGY

Conducting inventory on appreciative inquiry capacities and principles, distributed leadership, and organizational learning capabilities in an educational system can provide insight into the applicability of using AI as a process for implementation educational changes/reforms. The study explored the relationships of the AI, distributed leadership, and organizational learning which exist in school organizations across districts in the Division of Laguna even if the staff has not been trained in AI. The context for this study is to find out whether educators' preparedness to implement educational changes/reforms are existing despite the unfamiliarity of the research construct. This study is exploratory- descriptive in nature using path analysis strategy.

The study respondents include school heads and educators (principals, assistant principals, head teacher- incharge, teacher in charge and master teachers) in the school districts in the Division of Laguna. The table next page shows the breakdown of the respondents of the study.

The data gathered through the use of the said data gathering instruments were processed using the following statistical tools: For descriptive statistics frequency count, mean scores and standard deviation were used and for inferential statistics Spearman Rho was used to measure relation-

ship between and among variables of the three constructs. Spearman's Rho is a non-parametric test used to measure the strength of association between two variables, where the value r=1 means perfect positive correlation and the value r= -1 means a perfect negative correlation (Stangroom, 2019).

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

More than two decades ago, David L. Cooperrider, the co – creator and creative founding leader of Appreciative Inquiry introduced a positive revolution in the leadership of change; it is helping institutions all over the world discover the power of the strength-based approaches to multi-stakeholder innovation and collaborative design. [1] work is especially unique because of its ability to enable positive change, innovation, and sustainable design in systems of large and complex scale.

Appreciative inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life' when it is most effective and capable in an economical, ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. It mobilizes inquiry through crafting an "unconditional positive question" often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of [1].

As an additional knowledge, [2] said that appreciative inquiry is helping people become aware of how good things are, on the genius in themselves and others, on the knowledge and abilities they already have, on examples of the future in the present. This idea is enriched further by the International Peace Building Advisory Team (IPAT, 2015) saying that appreciative inquiry sees organizations more as 'organisms' and focuses on its life-giving forces. It believes in the power of imagination to produce change, and the role of positive emotional energy and not just rational 'logic'. AI practitioners see organizations as 'social constructs' that are produced and reproduced not so much through rules and procedures but through conversations. Accordingly, there are three (3) things that can form the basis of using AI as a change strategy, namely: 1.) Organizations have an inner dialogue made up of the things people say to each other in small confidential groups that are undiscussible in official forums of organizational business; 2.) This inner dialogue is a powerful stabilizing force in social systems that accounts for the failure to follow through on rationally arrived at decisions. It is here where people's real thoughts and feelings about what is discussed in official forums are revealed and communicated; and 3.) This inner dialogue is mainly carried through the stories people tell themselves and each other to justify their interpretation of events and decisions.

Integrating the thoughts of [2] on the application of the principles of change theory which says - "if you change the stories you change the inner dialogue". Nothing the "rational mind" decides it wants will actually happen if the "inner dia-

logue" is resistant to it. The author further opined that when people talk in the hallways and over coffee it is often stories of past events that they use to justify the interpretations and judgments of current events. These stories get passed on and embellished with time and their historical veracity is irrelevant to the impact they have on how people make sense of organizational events. From this point of view, AI can change an organization if it changes the stories that circulate in the organization's inner dialogue.

In addition to the foregoing conception on appreciative inquiry, [3] further claimed that it is an approach for positive change. Appreciative inquiry is an approach for longer term change, particularly in situations where the future state is unclear. It is used to tap into the sources for positive change and development that are present in people, teams and collectives such as 'organizations. It is therefore not the AI practitioner or inquirer who determines where the change should lead – change will come from within through a process of collective conversation and mobilization. At the same time, it 'develops' a capacity for self-renewal. "Appreciative process theorizes that one can create change by paying attention to what one wants more, rather than paying attention to problems" [3].

According to [4] AIs essence is one of interactive inquiry, hence the need to develop the skill of asking powerful questions that resonate deeply, mobilizes energy and catalyzes fresh thinking of those engaged in the conversation. It recognizes that inquiry and change are not truly separate moments, but are simultaneous [4] Appreciative inquiry meets a need for connection among people in organizations, communities, groups, teams etc. …the most critical part of appreciative process required for it to work is a change in the consciousness of the change agent [3].

Appreciative Inquiry is essentially a conversation-based change-strategy that involves all key stakeholders in an inclusive manner. As a 'style' of change management, AI also requires an 'appreciative leadership' style – which is something that not all holders of senior positions feel comfortable with." [5]

An additional conceptualization of appreciative inquiry as forwarded by [6] suggested that it is a participatory form of inquiry that puts a different focus on how information is collected, analyzed and used. It can be used to help design, plan, monitor, and evaluate any kind of development intervention from a small project through the work of an entire international organization. A key principle of appreciative inquiry is that the act of asking a question influences the direction of change. This is because the question (and the way in which it is asked) prompts those contributing information to anticipate a future state. Consequently, appreciative inquiry deliberately focuses attention on what is working well and how things could be made even better, instead of focusing on

what is going wrong or needs to be fixed. It is often seen as an alternative to traditional forms of inquiry, which tend to focus on problems, challenges and difficulties. Appreciative Inquiry is designed to bring out the best in people and organizations, building on the successful and positive experiences of different stakeholders.

Corollary to the preceding meanings and definitions of Appreciative Inquiry, Whitney and [7]S argued further that Appreciative Inquiry is the study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best. This approach to personal change and organizational change is based on the assumption that questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams are themselves transformational. Appreciative inquiry suggests that human organizing and change, at its best, is a relational process of inquiry, grounded on affirmation and appreciation.

Distributed leadership as a concept is extensively used and applied not only in educational research, but also in other discipline such as business and health education. It is not surprising that there exist varied ways of defining the term. The preceding statement is supported by [8] who argued that part of the appeal and at the same time the weakness of distributed leadership resides in its chameleon like quality; that is, it means different things to different people. Distributed leadership has become a convenient way of labeling all forms of shared leadership activity. It is frequently used as a short hand way of describing many types of shared or collaborative leadership practice. There are many other proximate terms. Links have been made to concepts such as empowerment, democracy and autonomy even though their relationship is not always adequately explained or explored.

[9] on the other hand suggests that the replacing of established concepts under the umbrella term of distributed leadership has fuelled the suspicion that it is little more than ''an exercise in re-labelling''. For research purposes, the contemporary definition of 'distributed leadership' includes both theoretical and the normative interpretations. The work of [10] has provided the most developed theoretical model of distributed leadership. This work has drawn upon distributed cognition and activity theory to develop a theory of distributed leadership practice. [10] suggest that distributed leadership is best understood as ''practice distributed over leaders, followers and their situation and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals''. This implies a social distribution of leadership where the leadership function is ''stretched over the work of a number of individuals and the task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders''. This theoretical framing implies that the social context and the inter-relationships therein, is an integral part of the leadership activity.

Some writers in the 90s have positioned distributed leadership in opposition to hierarchical or 'focused leader-

ship'. In the field of organizational dynamics, the term has also been used as a synonym for a 'bossless team' or a 'self-managed team'. But in some of the reviewed literature, distributed leadership has also been construed as the antithesis of highly structured leadership practice.

In strengthening further, one's understanding of distributed leadership, it is well appropriate to look at it in a normative or applied sense. Distributed leadership in this perspective is concerned with the active distribution of leadership authority and agency. The basic notion is outlined by [11], saying: ''an alternative perspective that is slowly gaining more adherents is to define leadership as a shared process of enhancing the individual and collective capacity of people to accomplish their work effectively. Instead of a heroic leader who can perform all essential leadership functions, the functions are distributed among different members of the team or organization''.

4 DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the Summary of Educator- Respondents' Perspective on Appreciative Inquiry Capacities

Educator – Respondents Perspectives	Level of Importance		Level of Cognition	
	Overall Mean	Analysis	Overall Mean	Analysis
1. Reframing Capacity	4.49	Very Important	4.23	Very Knowledgeable
2. Affirmative Capacity	4.51	Very Important	4.31	Very Knowledgeable
3. Collaborative Capacity	4.63	Very Important	4.47	Very Knowledgeable
4. Potential Capacity	4.51	Very Important	4.35	Very Knowledgeable
5. Emergent Capacity	4.28	Very Important	4.14	Very Knowledgeable

Legend:

Range	Verbal Interpretation	
	Level of Importance	Level of Cognition
4.20-5.00	Very Important	Very Knowledgeable
3.40-4.19	Important	Knowledgeable
2.60-3.39	Quite Important	Quite knowledgeable
1.80-2.59	Less Important	Less knowledgeable
1.00-1.79	Not Important	Not Knowledgeable

On the level of cognition, the registered over-all mean is 4.23 with verbal interpretation of very knowledgeable. This finding suggests that leader- respondents are very knowledgeable on the reframing process. However, deeper observation on the data under cognition further illustrate that 'able to identify and redefine problems into possibilities' (4.12), 'able to effectively describe what one hopes to achieve' (4.10), and 'able to see potential in the midst of chaos and uncertainty' (4.16), all earned verbal interpretation of knowledgeable.

All other means in the remaining 5 indicators registered means which are verbally interpreted as very knowledgeable. These data suggest that in terms of cognition there are some aspects of reframing that educator- respondents are

not confident in admitting they are very knowledgeable. They may have some knowledge about how to address the issues but maybe not enough to own they are very knowledgeable. The preceding finding confirms the observation of [12] who identified some gaps in the educator's preparedness in coping with the demands of the new millennium. Thus, educators in order to keep themselves abreast with the the demands of the 21st century must embrace novel ideas, frameworks and the like to properly equip themselves for the demanding work environment.

This finding confirms that leaders can see the world with an appreciative eye, see what is good, constructive, life giving and the like. The educator – respondents are aware that affirmative capacities are very important in maintaining sound educational climate in the workplace. Affirming the actions despite the presence of diversity is an index of healthy relationship in the school's environment. This idea is reiterated in the words of [13] and re- affirmed by [14] that educators at all times should be positive by appreciating everything there is in their environment. That there is always goodness in everything around us.

As regard the educator – respondents' level of cognition, the data illustrates that educators are very knowledgeable about their affirmative capacities which is shown by the mean of 4.31. However, 'attention to what is working   here' - earned a mean of 4.17 has a verbal interpretation of knowledgeable. This is similar with 'ask people to describe peak experiences from the past' earned a mean of 4.07 and has a verbal interpretation of knowledgeable also. '

The above findings show that educator-respondents are not so meticulous about their immediate work environment. According to Serrat (2009) people sometimes experience lapses due to many issues in the organization. However, as a learning organization all individuals involved in it should be smart to be sensitive to any kind of issues (big or small) which may affect the smooth operation of that organization. In other words, as part of the system everyone from the top to the lowest position should develop an affirmative attitude that is to appreciate not only the good things, but even the worst has its positive contribution.

Table 1 also summarizes the appreciative inquiry capacities of the educator- respondents in potential capacities based on importance and cognition. It can be gleaned from Table 3 that the educator - respondents have a unified perspective on the level of importance and cognition on the 8 indicators of potential capacities.

While the mean on importance is 4.51 and cognition earned a slightly lower mean of 4.35 still both means are interpreted as very important and very knowledgeable respectively. As regard the eight indicators, while the mean varies between importance and cognition, still all the means are consistently viewed as very important and the educator -respondents

claimed they are very knowledgeable.

Table 1 further summarizes the appreciative inquiry capacities of the educator – respondents in collaborative capacities based on importance and cognition. Initial observation of the data suggest that the educators are in agreement that the 8 indicators under collaborative capacity are all very important and they are also very knowledgeable based on the mean generated by each indicator.

These findings are affirmed in the study of Cockell, McArthur-Blair, & Schiller (2013) and supported by Ludema, Whitney, Mohr, & Griffen(2015) who believed that as human beings we never hesitate in appreciating the goodness in us and others, as well, such that we always hope for the best for our teams, organizations and community, too.

The over-all mean -of 4.63 on the level of importance and 4.47 on the level of cognition both have verbal interpretation of very important and very knowledgeable respectively. This finding means that the educator- respondents believe that collaborative capacity is very important in their task as leaders and educators so that they should also be very knowledgeable in it.

In the expressed viewpoint by Opero (2016) his work simply support the preceding findings which suggest that educators are social being who always engage and involve in a conversation and has the ability to promote an environment where people are willing to share their thinking, listen to other's point of view and put the collective ideas into action. This is the classroom environment of the 21st century   where everybody needs to be included in every task planned for the group.

Corollary to the preceding ideas were the confirming words made by [5] who opined that there is strength when everyone is involved and work is easier done when everybody is participating. Ownership can be achieved when everyone collaborates in every task.

Table 6 highlights the summary of the educator –respondents' perspective on appreciative inquiry capacities - the emergent capacity - based on importance and cognition. Based on the generated over-all mean of 4.28, with verbal interpretation of very important, the finding suggests that the educators considered the emergent capacity and its indicators very important.

However, as regard the knowledge about emergent capacity, as reflected on the over-all mean of 4.14 its interpretation is within the range of knowledgeable.

Further, five of the 8 indicators earned a much lower means, namely: 'thrive in ambiguity more than certainty'(3.82), 'trust my intuition in times of uncertainty' (4.06), ' as ideas and innovations emerge, encourage people to design on a fly' (4.10), with groups, I encourage what if conversation to see where they lead' (4.17), and   'encourage risk taking in myself and others as a means to enhance innovation and learn-

ing opportunities' (4.17) all means have interpretation of knowledgeable. On the other hand, only 'encourage people from different background and point of view to work together' (4.32), 'noticed something that is different from what is expected, I probe further' (4.22) and 'look for and encourage others to look for patterns or instances of differences as learning opportunities'(4.30) were rated with higher means which is interpreted as very knowledgeable.

This finding suggests that the educator- respondents are not very knowledgeable about emergent capacity that a leader must develop and possess when practicing appreciative inquiry processes. It also illustrates that the respondents are not totally prepared to remain open and allow possibilities to emerge. This finding confirms that educator – respondents while they believed that appreciative inquiry capacities are all very important, yet they manifest some reservation as shown by their level of cognition.

This finding is supported by the study of Buchanan (2014) and collaborated by the results of the study of [12] who identified the existing gap between what you believe is important and the level of knowledge you have develop on that capacity despite its importance.

Over-all, it can be observed that the respondents reported a high level of importance on appreciative inquiry capacities, but slightly lower level of cognition. This observation coincides with the results from previous studies in other parts of the world which also generated similar gaps on what the respondents believed and their level of cognition.

Table 2 shows the On Self – Evaluation Made by the Respondent-Participants on their Appreciative Inquiry Capabilities

Dimensions	Mean	SD	VI
Affirmative Capabilities	4.25	0.52	Very Competent
Collaborative Capabilities	4.37	0.56	Very Competent
Emergent Capabilities	4.16	0.58	Competent
Potential Capabilities	4.31	0.58	Very Competent
Reframing Capabilities	4.14	0.55	Competent

Overall Mean= 4.25
Verbal Interpretation: Very Competent

Legend:

Range	Verbal Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very Competent
3.40-4.19	Competent
2.60-3.39	Nearly Competent
1.80-2.59	Less Competent
1.00-1.79	Incompetent

Table 2 highlights the self – report evaluation of edu-

cator - respondents on their appreciative inquiry capabilities. Initial observation of the data suggests that educators claimed that they are very competent in undertaking appreciative inquiry capabilities as shown by the over-all mean of 4.25 verbally interpreted as very competent.

It can be observed further that two dimensions in the appreciative inquiry capabilities, namely: emergent (4.16) and reframing capabilities (4.14) registered a bit lower means which is interpreted as competent. These findings coincide with the earlier observation on educators' perspectives as regard the importance they accord and level of cognition they forwarded on these dimensions. As reported earlier there are indicators in said three dimensions (reframing, affirmative, and emergent capabilities) that leaders claimed they are knowledgeable, but not very knowledgeable.

This report is akin to the study of Buchanan (2014) which also identified some appreciative inquiry capabilities where the respondents are not totally familiar with and at some point, the respondents reported high level of appreciative inquiry capabilities. Thus, the author proposed a model of Appreciative Inquiry to increase the educators' preparedness in addressing educational change. This data suggest that competence is achieved through intensive knowledge development. With this, there is a vivid need to provide deeper orientation and training on appreciative inquiry process.

Table 3 shows the On the Educator – Respondents' Perspectives on the Appreciative Inquiry Principles/Assumptions

	Principles/Assumptions	Mean	SD	VI
1.	In every society, organization or groups, something works.	4.55	0.53	Strongly Agree
2.	What we focus on becomes our reality.	4.52	0.55	Strongly Agree
3.	Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities.	4.36	0.63	Strongly Agree
4.	The act of asking question of an organization or group influences the group in some ways.	4.39	0.58	Strongly Agree
5.	People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).	4.29	0.69	Strongly Agree
6.	If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what the best about the past.	4.37	0.66	Strongly Agree

7.	It is important to value differences.	4.46	0.56	Strongly Agree
8.	The language we use creates our reality.	4.53	0.58	Strongly Agree

Overall Mean= 4.46
Verbal Interpretation: Strongly Agree

Legend:

Range	Verbal Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Strongly Agree
3.40-4.19	Agree
2.60-3.39	Moderately Agree
1.80-2.59	Disagree
1.00-1.79	Strongly Disagree

This finding is supported by the study of Sharp, Dewar, Barrie, and Meyer (2017) which illustrate the respondents' level of agreement on the 8 Appreciative Inquiry Principles. In an earlier study conducted by Buchanan (2014) similar finding was generated as regard the AI principles/assumptions.

Table 4 shows the Distributed Leadership Practices

Educator – Respondents' Perspectives on	Overall Mean	Analysis
1. Leadership Support Activities	4.62	Most Often
2. Leadership Supervision Activities	4.50	Most Often
3. Team Leadership	4.46	Most Often
4. Participative Decision-Making	4.50	Most Often
5. Organizational Commitment	4.63	Most Often

Legend:

Range	Verbal Interpretation
4.20- 5.00	Most Often
3.40- 4.19	Often
2.60-3.39	Less Often
1.80-2.59	Sometime
1.00-1.79	Not at all

Table 4 summarizes the educator-respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership practices under sub-dimension support activity. Initial observation of the data illustrates that sub – dimension – support activity generated an over-all mean of 4.62 with verbal interpretation of most often. This finding collaborates with the thoughts forwarded by Purvanova, Bono, and Dzieweczynski (2006) who argue that when leaders are supportive of their employees, such behavior lead the employees to be more engaged, more devoted, and less self-concerned employees, as well as in workers who perform beyond the level of expectations. Further, the authors claimed that supportive activities of the leader intellectually stimulate followers, thus promote rationality and problem – solving skills.

Hulpia et al (2012) ideas affirm the preceding pronouncement stating that the supportive leadership function is manifested when the leader is responsible for fostering and setting a collective school vision and clear goals, motivating and helping teachers, and stimulating teachers' professional learning. The authors emphasized further that the first dimension of distributed leadership is composed of four components: quality of support, quality of supervision, distribution of support, and distribution of supervision.

Table 4 also showcases the summary of the educator - respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership sub – dimension – supervision activity. Preliminary observation of the data showed the over-all mean of 4.50 verbally interpreted as most often. Considering the 4 indicators under this activity, it also manifest consistency with means which are all verbally interpreted as most often. This finding suggests that leaders are performing their supervisory function with efficiency.

In a related perspective, Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe's (2008) opinion suggest that there are five leadership behaviors that had significant impact on students: establishing goals and expectations; strategic resourcing; planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum; promoting and participating in teacher learning and development; and maintaining a supportive environment for learning. Overall, the study supported that the more principals focus their relationships, their work, and their learning on the practices of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes.

It further illustrates the summary of educator – respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership practices sub – dimension team leadership. Preliminary appreciation of the data points out that the leaders are dynamic in practicing team leadership as supported by the mean of 4.46 with verbal interpretation of most often. Integrating the means of the 6 indicators under this sub – dimension, it can also be said that all the means have verbal interpretation of most often. This finding indicates that leaders are seriously performing their roles as expected of them. This finding is very well captured in the words of Thorpe et al. (2011) who contend that distributed leadership refers to 'a variety of configurations which emerge from the exercise of influence that produces interdependent and conjoint action'. Fitzsimons et al. (2011) stated further that team leadership represents relational activities and processes of a team constituted and shaped by the interactions among team members and the team context. As argued by von Krogh et al. (2012) leadership roles, responsibilities, activities and functions are considered emergent properties and distributed in various ways throughout the team.

Moreover, table 4 showcases the summary of the educator-respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership's practices sub – dimension - participative-decision making. Based on the data, the over-all mean registered in this sub – dimension is 4.50 with verbal interpretation of most often. Probing the 4 indicators, it likewise earned means which have

verbal interpretation of most often. This finding suggests that leaders are engaged in participative decision making which means that there exists consultation with other members/stakeholders prior to finalizing decisions. That is, decisions are not made by leaders alone. Instead, series of consultations with people affected with such decision are being considered.

This is supported by the contention of Akdemir and Ayik (2017) who argued that the structure of organizations has become so much complex that it is impossible for only one person to deal with all the problems and make a decision by himself. The preceding idea is complemented in an earlier conclusion made by Scott-Ladd, Travaglione, & Marshall (2006) and Tschannen-Moran (2001) who said that the problems facing schools are too great for any one person to solve alone. So that as schools struggle to reinvent themselves to respond to a growing demand for flexibility, concern for quality, and the requirement of a high degree of commitment by teachers to their work, necessitate participative decision making (Somech, 2010).

Table 4 further summarizes the educator- respondents' perspectives on distributed leadership's practices in organizational commitment. Preliminary observation of the data suggest that educators believed that distributed leadership promote organizational commitment. The over-all mean of 4.63 verbally interpreted as most often is a proof that there exist distributed leadership practices that promote commitment in the workplace. On the 6 indicators under this sub – dimension, it can also be gleaned that all means are verbally interpreted as most often.

Several studies were reviewed such as Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2006) and Ross and Gray (2006) which support the preceding finding. In the works of these authors they reported that teachers' organizational commitment develops through some features of organizational environments, such as school

leadership. Authors have shown that supportive school principals have positive effect on teachers' organizational commitment. When principals give teachers feedback, encourage and inform them, and set goals for them, teachers show much more commitment to their schools.

Table 4 shows the Organizational Learning Capabilities of Educator- Respondents

	Indicators	Mean	SD	VI
1.	People here receive support and encouragement when presenting new ideas.	4.51	0.55	Most often
2.	Initiative often receives a favourable response here so people feel encouraged to generate new ideas.	4.48	0.56	Most often
3.	People are encouraged to take risks in this organization.	4.23	0.69	Most often
4.	People here often venture into unknown territory.	4.07	0.79	Often
5.	It is part of the work of all staff to collect, bring back, and report information about what is going on outside the company.	4.28	0.74	Most often
6.	There are systems and procedures for receiving, collating and sharing information from outside the company.	4.25	0.67	Most often
7.	People are encouraged to interact with the environment: competitors, customers, technological institutes, universities, suppliers, and the like.	4.32	0.64	Most often
8.	Employees are encouraged to communicate.	4.54	0.56	Most often
9.	There is a free and open communication within my work group.	4.49	0.65	Most often
10.	Managers facilitate communication	4.50	0.64	Most often
11.	Cross-functional teamwork is a common practice here.	4.37	0.64	Most often
12.	Managers in this organization frequently involve employees in important decisions	4.44	0.65	Most often
13.	Managers in this organization creatively involve employees in important decisions.	4.43	0.67	Most often
14.	People feel involved in main organization decisions.	4.40	0.63	Most often

Overall Mean= 4.38
Verbal Interpretation: Most often

Legend:

Range	Verbal Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Most often
3.40-4.19	Often
2.60-3.39	Less often
1.80-2.59	Sometimes
1.00-1.79	Not at all

There is a need to establish the organizational learning capabilities of educator- respondents to know how far they have developed in relation to the demands of the 21st century milieu. Table 14 summarizes the organizational learning capabilities of educator- respondents.

Preliminary appreciation of the data suggests that educator – respondents convey a very positive outlook as regard their organizational learning capabilities. The over- all mean of 4.36 with verbal interpretation of most often is a landmark admission that organizational learning capabilities are observable among educator respondents in the Division of Laguna.

In probing the 14 indicators of organizational learning capabilities, it can be gleaned that 13 of the 14 indicators were assessed thereby earning means which are verbally interpreted as most often. These findings attest to the fact that educator- respondents are in admission that they are familiar with the mode of operation in the organization. However, in Indicator no 4 - People here often venture into unknown territory- registered a lower mean of 4.07 with verbal interpretation of often. This finding is an indication of weakness of the organization. But generally, organizational learning capabilities of educator – respondents as described in this table manifest strength and dynamism.

The preceding findings on organizational learning capabilities of educators in the Division of Laguna is affirmed by Bertram – Elliot (2015) who believed that organizational learning inject new ideas into the organization, increases the capacity for employees to spot new opportunities, understand new ideas and strengthen their creativity, enhance the innovative capacity of an organization.

In the same vein, innovative organization exert great effort in the creation of an environment that will allow freedom and flexibility (Tippimanett et al., 2013).

Accordingly, leadership may be able to facilitate an organizational structure that promote organizational learning since leaders can inspire their followers to develop creatively, stimulate their minds and show concern for individuals.

Integrating the ideas of Hall and Hord (2006) the authors advocate that organizational learning is possible when all members of the staff share the leadership role, although the formal leader remains the point person. Ultimate responsibility must not be abandoned, and the positional leader (principal, superintendent, etc.) assumes and maintains this responsibility—but operationally in a less visible and more democratic way.

Bass & Riggio (2006) suggest that formal leader must be transformational, inclusive, value based, and focused on purposes that go beyond those that can be imagined the necessity for organizations and to adopt a learning culture in which learning is continuous if they expect to meet the demands of rapid change (McGuigan, 2012). As an addendum, Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2004) opined that successful school and district leader must focus on setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization. Toward that purpose, the formal leader must have a clear, uncompromising personal vision of where he/she wants the school or school district to go and how to get there. The vision must be focused on improving learning for each student. Everyone must understand that competence and commitment to student learning are non-negotiable.

Table 5 shows the Relationship of Educator – Respondents' Perspectives on Distributed Leadership Practices, Self- Report Appreciative Inquiry Capabilities and Perspectives on Appreciative Inquiry Principles/Assumptions

Distributed Leadership Practices	Self-Report Evaluation			
	r-value	p-value	Verbal Interpretation	r-val
Support Activity	0.907	0.000	Significant	0.81
Supervision Activity	0.893	0.000	Significant	0.79
Team Leadership	0.869	0.000	Significant	0.78
Participative Decision-Making	0.858	0.000	Significant	0.77
Organizational Commitment	0.840	0.000	Significant	0.75

Legend

Scale	Interpretation
± 1.00	perfect correlation
$\pm 0.91 - \pm 0.99$	very high correlation
$\pm 0.71 - \pm 0.90$	high correlation
$\pm 0.41 - \pm 0.70$	moderate correlation
$\pm 0.21 - \pm 0.40$	slight correlation
$\pm 0.01 - \pm 0.20$	very low correlation
± 0.00	no correlation

Table 5 highlights the relationship between the five dimensions of distributed leadership practices, the self – report appreciative inquiry capabilities and the perspectives on the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions. As manifested on the table, it is consistently indicated that the r- values generated between distributed leadership dimensions and the self – report appreciative inquiry capabilities have high correlation and the two variables have marked relationship.

In the case of the educator – respondents' perspectives on appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions, it likewise shows high correlation and the variables have also marked relationship. The hypothesis that there is no relationship between the educator- respondents' appreciative inquiry capacities and their distributed leadership practices is rejected.

This finding is substantiated by the study conducted by Kelley (2011) which involved the members of the leadership team in one large school. The leadership team was made up of the principal, assistant principals and teacher leaders and sought to reveal their positive experiences at the school. The study utilized an appreciative inquiry theoretical perspective to seek the positive core of the school culture and reasons for their successes. This study provided evidence on the effects of the power of positive relationships on the successes in

schools.

Table 6 shows the Relationship of Educator- Respondents' Appreciative Inquiry Capacities, their Perspectives on Appreciative Inquiry Principles /Assumption and their Perspectives on Organizational Learning Capabilities

Appreciative Inquiry Capacities	r-value	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Self-Report Evaluation	0.498	0.000	Significant
Assumptions	0.500	0.000	Significant

Legend

Scale	Interpretation
±1.00	perfect correlation
$\pm0.91 - \pm0.99$	very high correlation
$\pm0.71 - \pm0.90$	high correlation
$\pm0.41 - \pm0.70$	moderate correlation
$\pm0.21 - \pm0.40$	slight correlation
$\pm0.01 - \pm0.20$	very low correlation
±0.00	no correlation

Table 6 summarizes the relationship between the self – report appreciative inquiry capabilities, the perspectives on the appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions and the perspectives on organizational learning capabilities. As manifested on the table, it is indicated that the r- value of 0.498 was generated between the self – report appreciative inquiry capabilities and perspectives on organizational learning capabilities. This means that the two variables have moderate correlation and have substantial relationship.

In the case of the educator – respondents' perspectives on appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions and perspectives on organizational learning capabilities, the r – value of 0.500 indicates moderate correlation between two variables and have also substantial relationship. The hypothesis that there is no relationship between the educator- respondents' appreciative inquiry capacities and their organizational learning capabilities is rejected.

Goksoy's (2016) study find similarity with the current inquiry since according to participants' views, administrators have high organizational learning capabilities; however, the levels are not very high. Based on the perception of participants, there is a positive, medium-level, and significant relationship between the AI capabilities and the organizational learning capabilities. Therefore, it can be argued that there is a relationship between AI and organizational learning capabilities, but this relationship is not very distinctive.

Table 7 shows the Relationship of the Educator –

Respondents' Distributed Leadership Practices and the Organizational Learning Capabilities

Table 17. Relationship of the Educator – Respondents' Distributed Leadership Practices and the Organizational Learning Capabilities

Distributed Leadership	r-value	p-value	Verbal Interpretation
Support Activity	0.584	0.000	Significant
Supervision Activities	0.602	0.000	Significant
Team Leadership	0.637	0.000	Significant
Participative Decision-Making	0.531	0.000	Significant
Organizational Commitment	0.623	0.000	Significant

Legend

Scale	Interpretation
±1.00	perfect correlation
$\pm0.91 - \pm0.99$	very high correlation
$\pm0.71 - \pm0.90$	high correlation
$\pm0.41 - \pm0.70$	moderate correlation
$\pm0.21 - \pm0.40$	slight correlation
$\pm0.01 - \pm0.20$	very low correlation
±0.00	no correlation

Table 7 summarizes the relationship between the educator- respondents' distributed leadership practices and the perspectives on organizational learning capabilities. As illustrated on the table, the earned r- values manifest moderate correlation but substantial relationship. The hypothesis that there is no relationship between educator- respondents' distributed leadership practices and their organizational learning capabilities is rejected.

This finding is akin to the result of Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, (2005) whose study proved that distributed leadership practices moderates the organizational learning capabilities. This means that when educational leaders distribute responsibilities and tasks to members, productivity is enhanced since these members may innovate in undertaking the tasks assigned to them and teamwork can be achieved. This is very meaningful when done with consistency since educational change can be made possible.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

The educator- respondents in the Division of Laguna perceived appreciative inquiry capacities as very important and in terms of cognition, they were very knowledgeable on it. They claimed that they had appreciative inquiry capabilities

and evaluated themselves as very competent in assuming it. Likewise, the educator- respondents strongly agreed with the 8 appreciative inquiry principles/assumptions.

The educator – respondents perceived the 5 distributed leadership dimensions and organizational learning capabilities as most often undertaken by educational leaders in the Division of Laguna.

Distributed leadership, appreciative inquiry capabilities and organizational learning capabilities had moderate to high correlation with substantial to marked relationships.

As a whole, study respondents reported that appreciative inquiry, distributed leadership and organizational learning constructs exist in the school districts and were related. Distribute leadership and organizational learning partially mediated appreciative inquiry to educational change relationship. Distributed leadership and organizational learning are necessary components to implement successful change. Both are needed to support and sustain change.

5 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions made, the following recommendations were forwarded.

1. Educators (teachers and administrators) need to collaborate with one another in addressing a common responsibility, initiate meaningful and sustained effort to improve student outcome based on commitment and serious intention.

2. Educators (teachers and administrators) should adopt shared understanding, a shared development and a shared commitment to implement a necessary change.

3. Educational leaders should embrace distributed leadership practices with sincerity and use them in navigating the implementation of needed and desired change in the educational system.

4. Collaboration among teachers should be initiated and enhanced particularly in defining classroom possibilities which is anchored on the strength that exist in the system. Educators should come together and collaborate around their strengths and innovate pedagogy and create curriculum to meet the needs of all students particularly these 'New Normal' days or time of health emergency.

5. Teachers should be encouraged to be creative in preparing their own plan at the classroom level which are meaningful, doable, and powerful than the plan being mandated for implementation. Most specially with the use of the different learning delivery modalities like: Distance Learning (online learning delivery and modular delivery) and Blended Learning (combination of modular, online, TV -Radio Broadcasting).

6. In creating change, all perspectives should be collectively valued and utilize these as part of building the future. One instance is teaching in a remote learning environment instead of a usual face to face encounter.

7. Educational leaders should empower their teachers to cre-

ate the vision of what leaning in their classroom can look like and create ownership in the change process to be implemented, as such changing teachers' practices maybe achieved.

8. Educational leaders should consider it an opportunity to bring forward the strengths which exist in education and among educators working in education; thus, encourage them to create learning opportunities for all students.

9. Future studies may consider omitting items not beneficial to the analyses and replace them with more specific role to indicate patterns or trends. Appreciative inquiry can also be analyzed according to role assumed by the respondents in the educational setting.

10. As an initial effort to try out the relevance of the framework, educational leaders may use the action plan prepared as an output of this study (see attached action plan in the appendices).

REFERENCES

[1] Cooperrider, D. & Whitney, D. (2013) Appreciative Inquiry. A Positive Revolution in Change, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

[2] Bushe, G. and Kassam, A. (2005). When is appreciative inquiry transformational? A meta-case analysis. Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 41 (2). 161-181. Retrieved.

[3] Bushe, Richard and Korrapati, Raghul (2005). Appreciative inquiry as a model for positive change in an undergraduate information technology degree program. Allied Academic International Conference Proceedings of the Academy of Information and Management Sciences, Volume 8, No. 2.

[4] Ludema, J.D. Whitney, D., Mohr, B.J. & Griffen, T.J. (2015) The Appreciative Inquiry Summit. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler.

[5] Lewis, R., Romi, S., Katz, Y.J. & Roache, J. (2012) Excluding Students from Classroom: teacher techniques that promote student responsibility, Teaching and Teacher Education, 28(6), 870-878.

[6] INTRAC for Civil Society Newsletter (2017)

[7] Whitney, D. & Trosten-Bloom, A. (2003) The Power of Appreciative Inquiry. San Francisco: Berrett- Koehler.

[8] Harris, A. (2007), "Distributed leadership: conceptual confusion and empirical reticence", International Journal of Leadership in Education, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 1-11.

[9] Storey, A. (2004). The problem of distributed leadership in schools. School Leadership and Management, 24(3), 249-265.

[10] Spillane, J., Halverson, R. and Diamond, J. (2001), "Making sense of distributed leadership: Exploring the multiple usages of the concept in the field", Institute for Policy Research working article.

[11] Yukl, G. (2002). Leadership in organizations (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: entice Hall.

[12] DeMarco, Anthony L. (2018). The relationship between distributive leadership, school culture and teacher self – efficacy at the middle school level. Seton Hall University Dissertations and Theses (ETDs).

[13] Brooks, Robert (2015). An Appreciative Inquiry into the development of teacher well – being through organizational change: Theory development and implication for practice. University of Beauchamp.

[14] Clouder, D. Lynn and King, Virginia (2016). What works? A critique of appreciative inquiry as a research methodology. CURVE Institutional Repository for Conventry Universisty, UK.