



EXPLORING THE MODERATING ROLE OF COLLEGIAL SUPPORT ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOLASTIC ENVIRONMENT AND TEACHER CREATIVITY IN PANABO NORTH DISTRICT, PANABO CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the moderating effect of collegial support on the relationship between the scholastic environment and teacher creativity in Panabo North District, Panabo City, using a non-experimental quantitative design with a descriptive-correlation approach. The study involved 217 public elementary school teachers selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using modified and enhanced adapted survey questionnaires, which were pilot-tested for reliability and internal consistency. Findings indicate that the scholastic environment is generally rated as moderately extensive, with innovative teaching practices being the most prominent. In contrast, engagement in learning activities is the least evident, suggesting that teachers may benefit from more active learning strategies. Teacher creativity is also rated as moderately extensive, with creative problem-solving as the most evident and encouraging student expression as the least. Collegial support is moderately extensive, with open communication and idea-sharing being the most prominent, while participation in group discussions is the least evident. The analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between the scholastic environment and teacher creativity, with collegial support acting as a significant moderator. Specifically, the interaction effect of scholastic environment and collegial support enhances teacher creativity, confirming the importance of supportive peer relationships in fostering innovative teaching practices.

KEYWORDS: *Scholastic Environment, Teacher Creativity, Collegial Support, Moderation Analysis, Educational Practices*

INTRODUCTION

Low level of teacher creativity in designing innovative and engaging classroom instruction becomes a serious concern when teachers repeatedly use routine, textbook-based, and teacher-centered strategies. This condition may limit learners' interest, active participation, problem-solving skills, and ability to connect lessons with real-life situations. In many classrooms, creative teaching is affected by the quality of the scholastic environment, including school facilities, instructional materials, leadership support, workload, and freedom to try new strategies. However, even when the school environment is challenging, collegial support may help teachers share ideas, improve practices, and gain confidence in preparing creative lessons. Thus, the present study aims to examine the moderating effect of collegial support on the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity in Panabo North District, Panabo City Division.

In the United States, low teacher creativity becomes a concern when teachers are expected to make learning innovative but are limited by school demands, fixed routines, and lack of time for instructional exploration. Henriksen et al. (2021) emphasized that teachers need creative confidence, flexible thinking, and supportive conditions to design meaningful technology-supported and engaging classroom experiences. However, when teachers have few opportunities to explore new methods, technology may be used only for simple delivery rather than for creative learning. Patston et al. (2021) further explained that creativity in education requires schools to value originality, problem solving, and learner-centered exploration. Thus, limited support for creative teaching may cause classroom instruction to remain traditional, repetitive, and less responsive to learners' needs.

In Saudi Arabia, low teacher creativity may be observed when classroom instruction remains highly structured and dependent on fixed learning procedures. Al-Dababneh et al. (2019) explained that teachers may face difficulty in developing creativity when school practices do not provide enough opportunities for open-ended tasks, flexible thinking, and learner expression. This condition may lead to lessons that focus more on correct answers than on exploration and imagination. Al-Thani et al. (2021) also stressed that creativity in education depends on learning environments that support innovation, active participation, and problem solving. Therefore, when teachers lack confidence, resources, and school-based support, their ability to design creative and engaging instruction may be weakened.

Across Asia, low teacher creativity remains an issue when classroom practices are strongly influenced by examination pressure, large class sizes, and traditional views of teacher authority. Cramond et al. (2021) noted that creativity in education requires space for questioning, independent thinking, and varied learner responses. When these opportunities are limited, teachers may avoid creative tasks and continue using safe and familiar methods. Samiee et al. (2019) also emphasized that creative teaching is affected by the learning



environment, including the support, encouragement, and freedom given to teachers. Hence, weak school support and limited professional interaction may reduce teachers' willingness to design innovative and engaging classroom instruction.

In the Philippines, low teacher creativity becomes visible when teachers depend heavily on prescribed materials, lecture-based delivery, and compliance-driven classroom tasks. Mugot and Sumbalan (2019) pointed out that teachers may experience difficulty in applying creative instruction when they face limited resources, heavy workload, and lack of instructional support. These conditions may cause lessons to become less interactive, less contextualized, and less engaging for learners. Raymundo (2020) further emphasized that Filipino classrooms need more creative practices that promote learner participation, flexible thinking, and meaningful application of lessons. Thus, the issue suggests the need to examine how the school environment and collegial support may influence teacher creativity.

In Panabo North District, Panabo City Division, the low level of teacher creativity may become a concern when teachers have limited time, resources, support, and opportunities to design innovative lessons beyond routine classroom procedures. This situation may affect learners' participation because lessons that lack creativity, collaboration, and meaningful application can become less engaging and less responsive to their needs. The methodological and empirical gap of this study lies in the limited quantitative investigation of how collegial support moderates the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity, since a favorable school environment may not automatically result in creative teaching without professional sharing and encouragement among teachers. Thus, this study is urgent because its findings may guide school leaders and teachers in strengthening the scholastic environment and collegial practices that promote more creative, meaningful, and engaging classroom instruction.

This study is anchored on Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1986), which explains that personal factors, environmental influences, and behavior interact in shaping individuals' actions, making it relevant in understanding how scholastic environment and collegial support influence teacher creativity. It is also supported by Transformational Leadership Theory by Burns (1978), which emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring collaboration, shared goals, and innovation within the school environment. In this study, school heads help create a scholastic environment where collegial support is encouraged, allowing teachers to become more motivated and creative in their instructional practices. Moreover, Amabile's Creativity Theory (1983) supports the study by explaining that creativity is influenced by expertise, creative thinking skills, and motivation, which can be strengthened through a supportive scholastic environment and collegial encouragement.

The primary objective of this study was to examine the moderating role of collegial support in the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity among elementary school teachers in Panabo North District, Panabo City Division. Therefore, the study sought to determine the extent of scholastic environment in terms of engagement in learning activities, positive classroom atmosphere, innovative teaching practices, and student autonomy and responsibility; determine the extent of teacher creativity in terms of innovative lesson planning, adaptability and flexibility, creative problem-solving, and encouraging student expression; determine the extent of collegial support among elementary school teachers; evaluate the significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity; and examine whether collegial support significantly moderates the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity.

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity.

H02: Collegial support does not significantly moderate the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology outlined the procedures used to conduct the study, including the research design, ethical safeguards, respondents, sampling technique, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and statistical treatment. The study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design with moderation analysis to determine the extent of scholastic environment, teacher creativity, and collegial support among public elementary school teachers in Panabo North District, Panabo City Division. This approach was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to measure the study variables through numerical data and statistical procedures without manipulating the actual school setting. It also supported the use of correlation and hierarchical regression analysis to determine whether scholastic environment was significantly related to teacher creativity and whether collegial support significantly moderated their relationship.

Ethical safeguards were emphasized through adherence to approved research procedures and institutional requirements. The study established social value by addressing the need to strengthen scholastic environment, collegial support, and teacher creativity in public elementary schools in Panabo North District. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, the nature of their participation, and the voluntary basis of answering the questionnaire. Measures to protect the respondents included informed consent, the right to withdraw without penalty, the right to skip questions they were uncomfortable answering, respectful communication, and assurance that their responses would not affect their employment, performance rating, or relationship with school authorities. Privacy and



confidentiality were observed by anonymizing responses, securing physical and digital files, limiting access to authorized persons, presenting data in summarized form, and following the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

The respondents of the study were public elementary school teachers from Panabo North District, Panabo City Division. The computed sample size was 217 teachers from a total population of 489 public elementary school teachers using Yamane's Formula with an acceptable margin of error. The respondents were selected through simple random sampling, giving every qualified member of the population an equal chance of being included in the study. The inclusion criteria covered teachers who were currently teaching in public elementary schools under Panabo North District, had actual teaching responsibilities, had experience with the school environment, and were involved in professional interaction with fellow teachers. Their responses provided the basis for examining the scholastic environment, teacher creativity, collegial support, and the moderating role of collegial support in the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity.

The researcher used a validated survey questionnaire composed of three major parts suited to the context of the study. The first part measured scholastic environment in terms of engagement in learning activities, positive classroom atmosphere, innovative teaching practices, and student autonomy and responsibility. The second part measured teacher creativity in terms of innovative lesson planning, adaptability and flexibility, creative problem-solving, and encouraging student expression. The third part measured collegial support among public elementary school teachers. All parts of the instrument used a 5-point Likert scale, and the interpretation of responses was based on the following descriptive levels: very extensive, extensive, moderately extensive, less extensive, and not extensive.

The data gathering procedure began with the validation of the research questionnaire and the acquisition of the necessary ethical clearance, institutional endorsement, and permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Panabo City. After securing approval, the researcher sought permission from the concerned school administrators and coordinated the schedule for the distribution of questionnaires. A pilot test was conducted among a small group of teachers with similar characteristics to the target respondents to determine the clarity, suitability, and reliability of the instrument. After the pilot testing and revision of the questionnaire, the final survey forms were distributed to the selected respondents through online and face-to-face modes to accommodate their availability and preferences. The completed questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, and prepared for data encoding and statistical analysis.

After collecting the completed survey questionnaires, the researcher counted, sorted, checked, and encoded the retrieved responses in Microsoft Excel according to the domains of scholastic environment, teacher creativity, and collegial support. Weighted mean was used to determine the extent of scholastic environment, teacher creativity, and collegial support, while standard deviation was used to determine the consistency or variation of the responses. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. Hierarchical Regression Analysis was used to determine whether collegial support significantly moderated the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. These statistical tools allowed the researcher to interpret the data accurately and determine how the study variables were related and how collegial support influenced the strength of their relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Scholastic Environment. The results showed that the scholastic environment in Panabo North District, Panabo City was moderately extensive overall ($M = 3.25$), meaning the scholastic environment was sometimes evident in school practice. Among the domains, innovative teaching practices obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.41$), interpreted as extensive, while engagement in learning activities had the lowest mean ($M = 3.12$), interpreted as moderately extensive. This pattern suggests that teachers were stronger in using new tools, real-world examples, and updated instructional approaches than in promoting active learner participation, collaboration, questioning, and critical thinking tasks. The result implies the need to strengthen learner engagement while sustaining innovative teaching practices in the classroom.

The result is supported by Kuiper and Stein (2019), who emphasized that the school environment influences how teachers respond to instructional needs, learner participation, and classroom expectations. Similarly, Campbell (2020) explained that a healthy school environment includes supportive facilities, classroom climate, leadership practices, resources, and professional relationships that help improve teaching and learning. These authors support the finding because the scholastic environment in Panabo North District was present but still needed strengthening in learner engagement, classroom atmosphere, and student autonomy. Thus, the result suggests that improving the school environment may help teachers create more active, supportive, and learner-centered classrooms.

Teacher Creativity. Teacher creativity among public elementary school teachers was also moderately extensive overall ($M = 3.36$), showing that creative teaching practices were sometimes demonstrated. Creative problem-solving obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.43$), interpreted as extensive, while encouraging student expression had the lowest mean ($M = 3.25$), interpreted as moderately extensive. This suggests that teachers were stronger in solving instructional challenges through varied methods, but weaker in providing consistent



opportunities for learners to express ideas, present unique solutions, and use creative formats. The result emphasizes the need to improve classroom practices that promote learner voice, creative sharing, open-ended tasks, and student expression.

The result is supported by Huang et al. (2019), who explained that teacher creativity is shown through meaningful lesson design, problem-solving, and the ability to respond to learners' needs. Likewise, Anderson et al. (2021) emphasized that creative teaching becomes evident when teachers use flexible strategies, adapt instruction, and encourage learner participation. These views support the finding because teachers in Panabo North District showed creativity in lesson planning and problem-solving, although adaptability and student expression still needed improvement. Therefore, teachers may benefit from more training, resources, and collegial sharing that promote creative and learner-centered instruction.

Collegial Support. Collegial support among public elementary school teachers was moderately extensive overall ($M = 3.23$), meaning support among colleagues was sometimes manifested in the school setting. The highest-rated statement was encouraging open communication and idea-sharing among staff members ($M = 3.59$), interpreted as extensive. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated statement was participating in group discussions or meetings focused on improving teaching practices ($M = 3.10$), interpreted as moderately extensive. This suggests that teachers were more open to communication and sharing ideas, but structured professional discussions, group meetings, team teaching, and collaborative planning still needed strengthening.

The result is supported by Thomas et al. (2021), who stated that collegial support helps teachers improve their professional confidence, instructional practices, and sense of belonging in the school community. Similarly, Nordgren et al. (2021) emphasized that collaboration among teachers supports professional learning because it allows educators to share strategies, reflect on practice, and solve teaching concerns together. These authors support the finding because collegial support was evident through communication and idea-sharing, but more structured professional collaboration was still needed. Hence, school leaders may strengthen collegial support through peer mentoring, professional learning sessions, lesson sharing, and collaborative planning.

Relationship Between Variables. The correlation result showed a direct, positive, strong, and significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity ($r = 0.632$, $p < .001$). This means that higher levels of scholastic environment were associated with higher levels of teacher creativity. The result suggests that teachers who experience a more supportive, engaging, innovative, and learner-centered school environment are more likely to demonstrate creative lesson planning, adaptability, creative problem-solving, and support for student expression. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity was rejected.

The result is supported by Soruç and Griffiths (2023), who emphasized that a supportive learning and teaching environment can influence teachers' professional practices, confidence, and willingness to improve instruction. Likewise, Tuomainen (2023) explained that teacher creativity is strengthened when teachers are given opportunities to experiment, reflect, and adjust instruction according to learners' needs and classroom realities. These authors support the finding because a favorable scholastic environment may encourage teachers to try new approaches, adapt their lessons, and respond creatively to classroom needs. Thus, improving the scholastic environment may be an important step in strengthening teacher creativity among public elementary school teachers.

Moderating Effect of Collegial Support. Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that collegial support significantly moderated the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. In Step 1, scholastic environment significantly predicted teacher creativity ($B = 1.122$, $\beta = 1.128$, $p = .000$), while collegial support also showed a significant coefficient ($B = -0.475$, $\beta = -0.620$, $p = .000$). The model was significant, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.532, $F = 123.554$, and $p = .000$, indicating that scholastic environment and collegial support explained 53.2 percent of the variance in teacher creativity. This means that the two variables contributed meaningfully to explaining teacher creativity among public elementary school teachers.

The result is supported by Meyer et al. (2022), who explained that teacher collaboration and professional support can influence instructional improvement, but their effect depends on the quality and purpose of the interaction. Similarly, Huang and Wang (2021) emphasized that the school environment and professional support systems are important in shaping teachers' creative behavior and instructional innovation. These authors support the finding because collegial support significantly changed the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. However, since the moderating effect was negative, the result suggests that collegial support should be guided toward innovation, reflection, and creative sharing rather than routine compliance, conformity, or repetition of existing practices.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the scholastic environment in Panabo North District, Panabo City Division is moderately extensive, meaning it is sometimes observed in school practice. The school environment provides some support for learner engagement, positive classroom atmosphere, innovative teaching practices, and student autonomy, but these conditions are not yet consistently strong. Innovative



teaching practices are the stronger area, while engagement in learning activities needs more improvement. This means that teachers often use new tools and instructional approaches, but learners still need more opportunities for active participation, collaboration, questioning, and critical thinking.

The study also concludes that teacher creativity is moderately extensive, meaning it is sometimes evident among public elementary school teachers. Teachers demonstrate creativity in lesson planning, adaptability, problem-solving, and encouraging student expression, but these practices are not yet regularly and strongly practiced. Creative problem-solving is the stronger area, while encouraging student expression needs more attention. This shows that teachers are more capable of solving instructional challenges, but they need to provide more opportunities for learners to share ideas, present unique solutions, and express creativity freely.

The study further concludes that collegial support is moderately extensive, meaning it is sometimes practiced among teachers. Teachers support one another through communication, feedback, collaboration, emotional assistance, technology support, and professional development, but these practices are not yet highly consistent. Encouraging open communication and idea-sharing among staff members is the stronger area, while participation in group discussions or meetings focused on improving teaching practices needs more improvement. This means that teachers are open to sharing ideas, but more structured professional collaboration is still needed.

There is a direct, positive, strong, and significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity is rejected. This means that teachers who experience a more supportive, organized, engaging, and innovative scholastic environment tend to demonstrate higher creativity in classroom instruction. The result suggests that improving the scholastic environment may also improve teacher creativity.

Collegial support has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity; thus, the null hypothesis stating that collegial support does not significantly moderate the relationship is rejected. However, the negative interaction result shows a weakening moderating effect, meaning collegial support changed the relationship but did not strengthen it in the expected direction. This means that collegial support should not only focus on routine sharing or common practices but should encourage originality, reflection, innovation, and independent creative teaching. Overall, the study emphasizes the need to improve both the scholastic environment and the quality of collegial support to promote teacher creativity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that DepEd officials strengthen policy support for improving the scholastic environment and teacher creativity in public elementary schools. They may provide division-wide training focused on learner engagement, creative lesson planning, student expression, differentiated instruction, and innovation-oriented collaboration. They may also support future studies in other districts or divisions to determine whether collegial support produces similar moderating effects in different school contexts.

School heads may create school-based programs that strengthen the scholastic environment through adequate instructional resources, supportive classroom conditions, and opportunities for innovative teaching. They may also provide regular spaces for professional dialogue, peer mentoring, lesson sharing, feedback sessions, and collaborative planning among teachers. Since collegial support showed a weakening moderating effect, school heads may ensure that collaboration encourages originality, reflection, and flexible teaching rather than dependence on repeated or common practices.

Teachers may continue improving their creativity by designing lessons that include hands-on learning, creative problem-solving, student expression, and active learner participation. They may also engage in meaningful collegial support by sharing strategies, giving constructive feedback, helping peers use new methods, and participating in professional discussions. Moreover, teachers may use collaboration as a source of new ideas while still maintaining personal creativity, independence, and flexibility in instructional design.

Future researchers may conduct similar studies involving other school districts, divisions, grade levels, or private school teachers to validate the findings in wider contexts. They may also use qualitative or mixed-methods designs to explore why collegial support weakened the relationship between scholastic environment and teacher creativity. In addition, future studies may include other variables such as school leadership, teacher motivation, workload, professional development, instructional resources, and teaching self-efficacy to provide a deeper explanation of teacher creativity.

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