



# SCHOOL HEADS' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AND TEACHER COMPETENCY OF DAVAO DEL NORTE

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## ABSTRACT

*This study explored the significant relationship between leadership behavior and teacher competency among selected teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. Using a descriptive correlational research design, the study engaged 136 teacher-respondents through validated and pilot-tested research instruments. Data were analyzed using Weighted Mean, Pearson product moment correlation, and regression analysis. Results revealed that both leadership behavior and teacher competency were at an extensive level, indicating that they are oftentimes evident in school environments. Furthermore, a significant relationship between the two variables was confirmed. Each of the leadership behavior domains, improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances, was found to significantly influence teacher competency. Regression analysis also showed that these domains were strong predictors of teacher competency, with opportunities and chances having the most substantial impact. The findings imply that leadership behavior plays a pivotal role in enhancing teacher competency, supporting the need for continuous leadership development and collaborative school culture. These results reinforce the theoretical frameworks of Social Learning Theory, Transformational Learning Theory, and Constructivist Theory, all of which highlight the importance of interaction, critical reflection, and contextual learning in developing effective educators and school leaders*

**KEYWORDS-** Leadership Behavior, Teacher Competency, School Leadership, Professional Development, Educational Leadership, Teacher Effectiveness

## INTRODUCTION

Leadership in educational institutions plays a crucial role in shaping the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning. Across the globe, Leadership Behavior among school heads have been closely linked to teacher competency, which directly affects student achievement and school performance. The ability of school heads to create a positive school culture, support teacher development, and implement policies that promote collaboration is essential in fostering highquality education. However, despite the recognition of leadership as a key factor in educational success, challenges remain in ensuring that school leaders exhibit behaviors that enhance teacher competency.

Internationally, studies have emphasized the role of effective leadership in improving educational outcomes. Research suggests that strong Leadership Behavior such as collaboration, vision-setting, and innovation contribute significantly to teacher professional growth and student success (Hallinger, 2020). Many countries have developed leadership training programs to equip school heads with the necessary skills to guide and support teachers effectively. However, studies indicate that in some regions, there is still a gap between leadership expectations and actual practices, leading to inconsistencies in teacher development and student learning (Day & Gu, 2021).

On a national level, the Philippines continues to emphasize the importance of school leadership in improving teacher performance and overall educational quality. The Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented programs aimed at strengthening the leadership capacities of school heads, such as the School Heads Development Program (DepEd, 2021). These initiatives aim to enhance the ability of school leaders to foster a collaborative culture and implement effective instructional strategies. Despite these efforts, reports indicate that some school heads still struggle with fostering a culture of collaboration and shared leadership, which affects teacher motivation and competency (Salandanan & Nolasco, 2022).

Locally, in Davao del Norte, challenges related to Leadership Behavior and teacher competency persist. Many school heads face difficulties in providing teachers with sufficient opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and instructional leadership support (Torres, 2022). One significant gap in the local educational landscape is the inconsistent implementation of Leadership Behavior that promote teacher competency. Some school heads fail to fully engage teachers in decision-making processes, provide structured mentoring programs, and create an inclusive school culture. As a result, teacher performance and instructional effectiveness vary across schools, impacting student learning outcomes.

The need to examine the Leadership Behavior of school heads in Davao del Norte and their impact on teacher competency is crucial. Understanding how Leadership Behavior such as improvement and collaboration, culture-



building, vision-setting, and providing opportunities influence teacher competency can provide valuable insights into addressing these gaps. Identifying areas of weakness in leadership practices can help develop targeted interventions to enhance teacher skills and overall educational outcomes in the province (Gonzales & Reyes, 2023).

This study aims to determine the extent of school heads' Leadership Behavior in Davao del Norte and how these behaviors influence teacher competency. By focusing on specific domains such as fostering a collaborative culture, facilitating improvement, modeling leadership attributes, and performing as referral leaders, this research seeks to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of leadership in enhancing teacher performance.

The significance of this study extends to multiple stakeholders within the educational sector. For school administrators, it offers a deeper understanding of the impact of their Leadership Behavior on teacher competency, guiding them toward more effective leadership strategies. For teachers, it provides insights into how leadership support influences their professional growth and instructional effectiveness. Additionally, for policymakers and education officials, this study serves as a basis for designing leadership training programs and policies aimed at strengthening school leadership and improving teacher competency at the local level.

With education being a key driver of socio-economic development, ensuring that school heads in Davao del Norte possess and apply effective Leadership Behavior is vital. By addressing the identified gaps in leadership practices and their influence on teacher competency, this study contributes to the broader goal of enhancing educational quality in the region. The findings can inform strategic interventions that foster a collaborative, innovative, and supportive school environment, ultimately benefiting students, teachers, and the entire education system.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature of this study provided inputs about Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency. Also, it presented varied studies showcasing the association of the involved variables in this study. The independent variable focused on in this study is Leadership Behavior. It has four indicators namely; improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances (Köse, S. Ş., & Başar, M. A. (2020). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is Teacher Competency. It has three indicators namely; fostering a collaborative culture, facilitating improvement and establishing standards, modeling leadership attributes and skills, and performing as referral leader (Yuet, et al. (2019).

Leadership Behavior Leadership Behavior, as explored in contemporary educational and public management contexts, emphasize adaptability, collaboration, and the ability to navigate complex organizational structures. In educational institutions, leadership is not merely about giving directives but fostering a collaborative environment where all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and administrators, work towards shared goals. This requires leaders to adopt innovative practices that align with the evolving needs of their institutions, particularly in the face of technological advancements and global trends. Bursalıoğlu (2019) underscores the importance of adaptability, noting that managing an organization like a clockwork machine is neither feasible nor effective, given the dynamic nature of modern education systems.

School leaders must embrace transformational and visionary leadership approaches that prioritize inclusivity, adaptability, and innovation. The democratization of school management, as highlighted by scholars such as Gümüşeli (2021), underscores the shift from hierarchical structures to more participatory models. This transition allows leaders to distribute responsibilities effectively and create a sense of ownership among team members, fostering a culture of collective accountability. In this light, Leadership Behavior extend beyond traditional management roles to encompass practices that promote shared decision-making and active engagement from all organizational members (D'Innocenzo et al., 2018).

The concept of scheduled leadership further expands this perspective by emphasizing the importance of social interaction, voluntary collaboration, and shared responsibility in achieving organizational objectives. This leadership style, as defined by Açıroğlu Bakır (2019) and Fullan (2021), aligns with the principles of distributed leadership, which prioritize the collective skills and expertise of all organizational members. Leaders who adopt this approach are better equipped to navigate the challenges posed by diverse and often conflicting stakeholder demands, as noted in studies on public sector leadership (Vandenabeele et al., 2014; Pedersen et al., 2019).

Moreover, effective leadership in complex environments requires a repertoire of behaviors that address various organizational challenges. This 6 repertoire includes visionary strategies to inspire employees, collaborative tactics to engage stakeholders, and managerial skills to oversee internal processes. Yukl (2012) and Kramer et al. (2019) argue that leaders must integrate these behaviors to address ambiguity and adapt to changing organizational contexts. This holistic approach enables leaders to balance competing demands, align diverse interests, and maintain a clear focus on institutional goals.

The relational aspect of leadership is also critical, as leaders operate within interconnected systems that involve internal and external stakeholders. As highlighted by Gerson (2020) and Christensen et al. (2018), leadership effectiveness often depends on the ability to build and maintain relationships across organizational boundaries. This includes fostering trust, facilitating communication, and leveraging the collective knowledge of the organization to drive innovation and improve outcomes. Leadership in ambiguous contexts, such as those often found in educational institutions, requires a nuanced understanding of power dynamics and authority relationships. Groeneveld and Van



de Walle (2011) emphasize that leaders must navigate fragmented authority structures by fostering collaboration and encouraging input from various organizational levels. This distributed approach not only enhances decision-making processes but also ensures that all stakeholders feel valued and empowered to contribute.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of Leadership Behavior lies in their alignment with organizational values and goals. By adopting a repertoire perspective, leaders can address the multifaceted challenges of modern educational and public management systems. This approach recognizes that leadership is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor but a dynamic process that requires continuous adaptation and learning. As noted by Behrendt et al. (2018), successful leaders are those who can synthesize diverse strategies, balance competing priorities, and foster a culture of innovation and collaboration.

### Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between the Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of Leadership Behavior in terms of:
  - 1.1. Improvement and collaboration;
  - 1.2. Culture;
  - 1.3. Vision and responsibility; and
  - 1.4. Opportunities and chances;
2. What is the extent of Teacher Competency in terms of:
  - 2.1. Fostering a collaborative culture;
  - 2.2. Facilitating improvement and establishing standards;
  - 2.3. Modeling leadership attributes and skills; and
  - 2.4. Performing as referral leader.
3. Is there a significant relationship between the Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency?
4. Which of the domains of the Leadership Behavior significantly influence Teacher Competency?

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, specifically employing a descriptive correlational design. Quantitative research emphasizes numerical data collection and statistical analysis to understand patterns, relationships, and underlying phenomena (Apuke, 2018). This approach is particularly effective in exploring measurable variables and their interactions. Descriptive correlational studies focus on identifying the characteristics of variables and examining natural associations between them without direct intervention or manipulation (Davis, 2021). By utilizing this methodology, the study provides an empirical basis for understanding how Leadership Behavior influence Teacher Competency within educational settings.

The descriptive aspect of the design aimed to observe and detail the existing conditions of Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency without altering the variables. This approach aligns with Korrapati's (2018) assertion that descriptive research provides a comprehensive overview of the phenomena under investigation. On the other hand, the correlational aspect sought to establish the degree and direction of the relationship between the independent variable, Leadership Behavior, and the dependent variable, Teacher Competency. Kabir (2018) emphasized that correlational studies are crucial in identifying patterns of association, which can then inform practical applications and interventions in educational systems.

This research design was chosen for its ability to investigate naturally occurring relationships between variables in a real-world context. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) highlighted, the descriptive correlational design is ideal for exploring connections between constructs while maintaining ecological validity. By examining the interplay between Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency, this study provides valuable insights that could inform policy, training programs, and leadership practices in schools.

#### Research Respondents

This study focused on public and private elementary school teachers in the Division of Davao del Norte. The research utilized stratified random sampling to ensure fair representation across various school types, grade levels, and teaching experiences. The total population needed for elementary teachers in the division is 207, and the sample size was determined using Slovin's formula:  $n = \frac{1}{1 + Ne^2} N$ . The computed sample size was 136 respondents. This calculation ensures that the sample adequately represents the population while maintaining statistical reliability (Cochran, 2020). To enhance the relevance of the study, the inclusion criteria focused on teachers with at least three years of teaching experience. This criterion ensures that the respondents have sufficient professional exposure to Leadership Behavior and teacher competency development. Teachers who met this criterion were considered key informants, as they have a deeper understanding of instructional strategies, collaborative school initiatives, and leadership dynamics within their institutions (Davis, 2021). The study specifically targeted teachers actively involved in leadership-related activities, including grade-level coordinators, department heads, and educators engaged in professional development programs. This approach aimed to capture a diverse range of Leadership Behavior and their influence on teacher competency. Moreover, the selection process followed ethical research



guidelines, ensuring that participation was voluntary and that respondents provided informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained in accordance with research ethics standards (American Psychological Association, 2020). By employing these measures, the study ensured the credibility of the findings and upheld the integrity of the research process. The carefully selected sample of teachers provided valuable insights into the interplay between school heads' Leadership Behavior and teacher competency in Davao del Norte.

### Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, leadership behavior and teacher competency. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with Likert-scale items to quantify perceptions and experiences.

For data collection, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set focused on the extent of leadership behavior. The second set focused on the extent of teacher competency.

**Leadership Behavior.** The Leadership Behavior questionnaire was adapted from Kösem, S. Ş., & Başar, M. A. (2020). The instrument consisted of 22 items. It had four indicators namely; improvement and collaboration (1-6), culture (1-5), vision and responsibility (1-6), and opportunities and chances (1-5). The Leadership Behavior Questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing with a small, representative sample of teachers to assess its reliability and validity. The pilot test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items. This result suggests that the instrument is reliable for measuring Leadership Behavior and that the items cohesively capture the underlying constructs of improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances. The high internal consistency supports the questionnaire's applicability in accurately assessing Leadership Behavior in the context of the study (Kösem & Başar, 2020). Such reliability ensures that the data derived from the instrument was both consistent and 44 interpretable, strengthening the validity of the research findings.

**Teacher Competency.** The Teacher Competency questionnaire was adapted from Yuet, et al. (2019). The instrument consisted of 22 items. It had four indicators namely; fostering a collaborative culture (1-9), facilitating improvement and establishing standards (1-5), modeling leadership attributes and skills (1-4), and performing as referral leader (1-4).

The Teacher Competency Questionnaire also underwent pilot testing to evaluate its reliability and clarity. The pilot testing produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating a very high degree of internal consistency. This result demonstrates that the questionnaire effectively measures the constructs of fostering a collaborative culture, facilitating improvement and establishing standards, modeling leadership attributes and skills, and performing as a referral leader. The strong reliability score reinforces the instrument's suitability for use in exploring Teacher Competency in this study (Yuet et al., 2019). The results from 45 pilot testing validate the questionnaire's structure, ensuring that it will yield meaningful and reliable data to support the research objectives.

### Data Analysis

For a more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized:

**Weighted Mean:** To measure the extent of leadership behavior and teacher competency, mean was computed. This tool will provide a comprehensive summary of the data, capturing the levels of each domain for leadership behavior and teacher competency.

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** To determine the relationship between Leadership Behavior and Teacher Competency, Pearson's correlation coefficient was utilized. This statistical tool assesses the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The correlation results will provide insight into whether a significant association exists between the extent of leadership behavior and the competency of teacher leaders.

**Multiple Regression Analysis:** To identify which domains of leadership behavior significantly influence teacher competency, multiple linear regression was performed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher competency. The study was conducted with the selected teachers from the Division of Davao del Norte. There were one hundred thirty-six (136) teachers who participated in this study. A descriptive correlational method of research was used in utilizing adopted research instruments. The said instruments were validated by the panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing before it was made ready for administration. Weighted Mean, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Regression Analysis were statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses in this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

The major findings of the study were the following: the extent of the leadership behavior of the teachers is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the teacher competency of the teachers is also extensive. It was found that there is a significant relationship between leadership behavior and the teacher competency. The hypotheses of no



significant relationship between leadership behavior and teacher competency, and that none of the domains of leadership behavior significantly influence teacher competency, were rejected.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered: The extent of leadership behavior is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of leadership behavior which include improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances, are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident. Meanwhile, the extent of teacher competency is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of teacher competency are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the leadership behavior and teacher competency.

Based on the findings, leadership behavior, and teacher competency are correlated. Also, leadership behavior significantly influences teacher competency. All domains of leadership behavior, namely, improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances significantly influence teacher competency by registering a p-value of .000 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypotheses. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the four domains of leadership behavior, teacher competency also increases.

### Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study: 87 For higher officials in the Department of Education, it is recommended to develop and implement policies that institutionalize continuous leadership training programs focusing on the four domains of leadership behavior—improvement and collaboration, culture, vision and responsibility, and opportunities and chances. These programs should be evidence-based and rooted in transformational and social learning frameworks, ensuring that school leaders are equipped not only with administrative skills but with the behavioral competencies that directly contribute to teacher effectiveness. Additionally, policy support in the form of resource allocation, recognition systems, and structured mentoring programs would further support the development of teacher competencies across the division.

For school principals, the findings emphasize the critical role of their leadership behavior in shaping teacher competency. Principals are encouraged to actively demonstrate leadership practices aligned with improvement and collaboration, cultivate a positive and inclusive school culture, articulate a clear vision with shared responsibilities, and create opportunities for professional growth. These actions should not be sporadic but embedded in the day-to-day school operations. By modeling these behaviors consistently, principals become catalysts of professional growth, encouraging teachers to reflect, adapt, and enhance their own leadership competencies.

For teachers, the study underscores the importance of recognizing the reciprocal relationship between leadership behavior and personal competency. Teachers are encouraged to actively participate in professional learning 88 communities, mentoring programs, and school-wide initiatives that promote shared leadership and continuous improvement. Cultivating teacher leadership not only enhances classroom practices but also contributes to a culture of excellence within the school. Teachers must view themselves as change agents and embrace opportunities to lead, collaborate, and model the very behaviors they expect from their leaders.

For future researchers, this study opens multiple avenues for further exploration. It is recommended to replicate the study across different contexts or geographical areas to validate the findings and enhance generalizability. Future researchers may also explore longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of leadership behavior on teacher performance and student outcomes. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews or focus group discussions could provide deeper insights into how specific leadership practices influence teacher behavior and perceptions. Expanding the theoretical frameworks used in this study, such as integrating emotional intelligence or distributed leadership theories, may also yield richer understanding of leadership dynamics in education. The findings of this research affirm that leadership behavior is not just a managerial function but a transformative process that directly impacts teacher competency and, ultimately, student achievement.

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