



SCHOOL SUPPORT MECHANISMS CATALYST FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN THE DIVISION OF DAVAO DEL NORTE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship between school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership among selected educational leaders, including assistant school heads, head teachers, academic heads, master teachers, and teachers in leadership roles from the Division of Davao del Norte. A descriptive correlational research design was employed, utilizing validated research instruments administered to 80 participants. Data were analyzed using Weighted mean, Pearson product moment correlation, and regression analysis, with hypotheses tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the extent of both school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership is extensive, indicating that these are commonly practiced and evident within the sampled schools. A significant positive relationship was found between school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership, showing that well-defined structural mechanisms foster stronger leadership among teachers. The study identified role clarity, physical structure, and organizational structure as significant predictors of teacher leadership, with each domain demonstrating a substantial influence. These results suggest that enhancing school structure mechanisms can significantly bolster teacher leadership. The study recommends collaborative efforts among school members to strengthen these mechanisms and calls for further research to explore additional factors influencing teacher leadership in various educational contexts.

KEYWORDS- *School Structure Mechanisms, Teacher Leadership, Educational Leadership, Division Of Davao Del Norte*

INTRODUCTION

In the changing field of education, teacher leadership has become a focal point for enhancing student success and fostering school improvement. Teacher leaders are part of the educational landscape as mentors, instructional coaches, developers of curriculum and policy advocates. They do not confine themselves within the walls of a classroom; rather they reshape teaching practices and contribute to professional development in order that we can have a collaborative school culture. However, individual prowess does not determine the effectiveness of teacher leadership alone but it is majorly influenced by school support mechanisms put in place. This research therefore aims at investigating into importance of school support mechanisms in promoting effective teacher leadership in division of Davao del Norte.

Teacher leadership has been recognized as an important element in education reforms aimed at improving instruction and professional development among colleagues. To emphasize this point, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2019) state that good teacher leaders build professional learning communities which encourage collaboration and help teachers improve their teaching practice.

For teacher leaders to thrive there needs to be some sort of school support systems in place such structures resources and policies. These types of support include role clarity, physical structure and organizational structure. For example, 2 role clarity helps define roles and responsibilities thereby assisting with goal alignment for teacher leaders (Klar et al., 2020). Physical structure on the other hand refers to facilities and resources available that create conducive teaching environment where there is maximum satisfaction among teachers leading to effectiveness (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2019). Organizational structure includes such factors as hierarchy in leadership or how decisions are made through various communication channels which enables distributed forms of authority hence empowering those who exercise teacher –leadership over others thus promote collaborative schools cultures (Spillane, 2020).

Effective Teacher Leadership enhances instructional quality and students' achievement. For example; York-Barr & Duke (2019) argue that Teacher leaders improves instructional quality through facilitating professional development, modeling best practices and offering constructive feedback to their colleagues. On the other hand; most schools with strong teacher leadership have high levels of student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2020).

Teacher leadership has been acknowledged globally as an important aspect of educational reform and enhancing students' outcomes. Despite this, identification and implementation of effective school support mechanisms remains a challenge (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2020). Therefore, this study is aimed at contributing to the worldwide discussion



by providing insights from Davao del Norte in the Philippines that will add to the global understanding of teacher leadership.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has been promoting initiatives towards strengthening teacher leadership as part of its 3 educational reform agenda. However, these initiatives are implemented differently hence their effectiveness differs. This research therefore aims at identifying specific support mechanisms in Division of Davao del Norte that can assist in improving teacher leadership and educational outcomes (DepEd, 2020).

At local level, there are various schools within Davao del Norte that provide unique context for exploring how school support mechanisms relate to teacher leadership. The Division contains diverse kinds of public schools ranging from urban ones having ample resources up to few rural schools experiencing myriad challenges. It is important therefore to understand what support structures specifically promote teacher leaders here in order for us develop tailored interventions and policies.

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The intentions of this study are to identify the main school support mechanisms that contribute to helpful teacher leadership, investigate the association between role clarity and teacher leadership, gauge significance of school physical structure on teacher leadership, analyze how school organizational structure affects teacher leadership and provide recommendation on improving school support mechanisms.

This study is significant as it looks at all the factors supporting effective teacher leadership. It gives school administrators and policymakers valuable information. The findings will add to what is known about school leadership in general, and especially in developing areas. Lastly, the study aims to make education better in Davao del Norte by promoting effective teacher leadership. This will help students and the community as a whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature of this study provided inputs about school structure mechanisms as catalyst on effective teacher leadership. Also, it presented varied studies showcasing the association of the involved variables in this study. The independent variable focused on in this study is the school structure mechanisms. It has three indicators namely; role clarity, physical structure of the school, and organizational structure of the school (Galland, 2020). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is teacher leadership. It has two indicators namely; fostering a collaborative culture, facilitating improvement and establishing standards, modeling leadership attributes and skills, and performing as a referral leader (Yuet, et al., 2019).

In the ever-evolving field of education, teacher leadership has become an important part of making schools better and helping students do well. Teacher 5 leaders, who serve as mentors, program developers, and policy advocates, teacher leaders have an impact that goes beyond the classroom to encourage collaboration in the school. However, the efficacy of teacher leadership is significantly influenced by the support mechanisms within the school environment. This explores how these mechanisms, specifically role clarity, physical structure, and organizational structure, enhance effective teacher leadership.

A critical component in the context of educational support mechanisms is trust. The importance of trust as a part of school culture is becoming recognized (Forsyth, 2019). Trust is important for effective and cooperative interactions within schools. This includes superintendents and boards, principals and teachers, parents and schools, and students and teachers (Adams, 2020). As TschannenMoran (2019) asserts, trust is fundamental to school performance.

Bryk and Schneider (2019) argue that schools are more likely to implement changes that enhance student achievement when there is a high degree of relational trust. In environments where trust and cooperative adult efforts are strong, students face greater academic challenges and have an enhanced sense of well-being (Tschannen-Moran, 2019). In these settings, students report they feel safe and like their teachers care about them (Bryk & Schneider, 2019). It is very important to build and keep trust within teacher and parent role groups, especially within current policy environments, to make learning conditions that are healthy and help schools reform (Ainscow, 2019) and improve student achievement (Hoy et al., 2020).

Goddard et al. (2021) found a direct, positive link between teachers' trust in students and parents and better student success in schools. This suggests that trust is an organizational trait that can assist schools in navigating political and social issues. Hoy and Sweetland (2021) also found a strong correlation between trust in clients (students and parents) and student achievement in a sample of 97 high schools. Furthermore, Bryk and Schneider (2019), in their three-year study of Chicago elementary schools, demonstrated that schools with strong trust relationships among teachers, parents, and students were more likely to see substantial gains in student achievement. On the other hand, schools where teachers, parents, and students did not trust each other as much saw little to no improvement in achievement scores.



In addition to faculty trust, student trust has emerged as a predictor of student achievement. Romero (2022) found that trust in teachers was linked to better academic performance, while Casper (2022) noted that collective student trust in teachers accounted for differences in reading and math achievement. Adams (2020) further found that collective student trust was associated with stronger student identification with school and higher student achievement.

The concept of enabling school structures is also relevant to the discussion of support mechanisms for teacher leadership. Hoy and Sweetland (2021) adapted terminology from Adler and Borys's research on organizations to describe school bureaucracy as either enabling or coercive. An enabling bureaucracy supports problem-solving among members rather than enforcing rigid conformity. The term "enabling school structures" evolved from this concept, indicating school environments that motivate teachers, create healthier working conditions, and integrate hierarchical authority with processes affecting daily instruction (Hoy & Sweetland, 2021). Such structures promote trust through behaviors and conditions that encourage problem-solving, innovation, and collaboration (Hoy & Hoy, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between the school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of school structure mechanisms in terms of:
 - 1.1. Role Clarity;
 - 1.2. Physical Structure; and
 - 1.3. Organizational Structure?
2. What is the extent of teacher leadership in terms of:
 - 2.1. Fostering a collaborative culture
 - 2.2. Facilitating improvement and establishing standards
 - 2.3 Modeling leadership attributes and skills
 - 2.4. Performing as a referral leader?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership?
4. Which of the domains of school structure mechanisms significantly influence teacher leadership?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, a quantitative research approach was employed, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational technique. Quantitative research methods involve the collection of numerical data and its subsequent mathematical analysis, often incorporating statistical tools. This approach is employed to elucidate and provide explanations for specific problems or phenomena, as highlighted by Apuke (2017). In the context of descriptive correlational investigations, the focus lies in describing variables and the naturally occurring relationships that manifest among them, as discussed by Davis (2021).

Descriptive research is characterized by a hands-off approach from the researcher, where the variables under study are observed without any manipulation. Its primary objective is to provide an in-depth understanding of the inherent characteristics of these variables, as pointed out by Korrapati (2016). On the contrary, a correlational investigation seeks to establish whether there exists an association between two variables. In line with Kabir (2016), this involves determining whether an increase or decrease in one variable is linked to a corresponding rise or decline in the other.

The study utilized a descriptive correlational design to explore the relationship between school structure mechanisms and effective teacher leadership. This design is appropriate as it allows for the examination of the extent and nature of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables without manipulating the study environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Research Respondents

For this study, a sample size of 80 respondents was chosen. The population for this study includes all educational leaders from selected schools, specifically targeting assistant school heads, head teachers, academic heads, master teachers, and teachers who perform leadership roles. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure that all subgroups within the population were adequately represented (Fowler, 2014). This method helped in obtaining a sample that reflects the diversity of roles and responsibilities among the school leaders.

A purposive sampling technique was employed, targeting experts with at least three years of experience in educational leadership, familiarity with both instructional and administrative roles, and routine use of institutional information systems (Bryman, 2012; O'Leary, 2014). The ideal sample size for the Delphi panel is 15-20 experts, as this range is sufficient to represent the population, conduct the desired research, and remain manageable for the researcher.

In the inclusion and exclusion criteria, all educational leaders from selected 41 schools, specifically assistant school heads, head teachers, academic heads, master teachers, and teachers who perform leadership roles in the Division of



Davao del Norte were given an equal chance to be part of the study. According to Cresswell (2012, p.143), any individual has the same probability of being a participant. Respondents who felt awkward and uncomfortable answering the survey questionnaire were free to withdraw from participating. They were not forced to be part of the study. Their decision to withdraw was duly respected. The respondents' welfare was given utmost importance in the conduct of this study.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, school structure mechanisms and effective teacher leadership. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with Likertscale 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 school structure mechanisms. The second set focused on effective teacher leadership.

Data Analysis

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

Weighted Mean. This was used to measure the extent of school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation. This was utilized to determine the relationship between the school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership.

Regression Analysis. This was used to determine the significant influence of school structure mechanisms on the and teacher leadership effectiveness

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership. The study was conducted in the selected educational leaders specifically assistant school heads, head teachers, academic heads, master teachers, and teachers who perform leadership roles from the Division of Davao del Norte. There were eighty (80) personnel who participated in this study. 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, Regression Analysis were statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses in this study was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

The major findings of the study were the following: the extent of the school structure mechanisms is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the teacher leadership is also extensive. It was found out that there is a significant relationship between school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership. The hypotheses of no significant relationship between school structure mechanisms and teacher 85 leadership and there is no domain of school structure mechanisms significantly influence teacher leadership were rejected.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered: The extent of school structure mechanisms is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. In fact, all dimensions of school structure mechanisms are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident. Meanwhile, the extent of teacher leadership is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. In fact, all dimensions of teacher leadership which include fostering a collaborative culture, facilitating improvement and establishing standards, modeling leadership attributes and skills, and performing as a referral leader, are oftentimes evident. Both variables call all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership.

Based on the findings, school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership are correlated. Also, school structure mechanisms significantly influence and teacher leadership. In fact, all domains of school structure mechanisms, namely, role clarity, physical structure, and organizational structure, significantly influence teacher leadership 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 three domains of school structure mechanisms, teacher leadership also increases.

Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study: For higher officials in the Department of Education, it is imperative to prioritize the establishment and enhancement of the school structure mechanisms. This can be achieved by implementing policies that promote clear role definitions, well-designed physical environments, and efficient organizational structures. Investment in professional development programs that focus on leadership skills for teachers should also be considered. By fostering an environment that supports teacher leadership, higher officials can drive continuous improvement and innovation within the educational system, ultimately enhancing student outcomes.



School principals are pivotal in implementing effective school structure mechanisms. The study recommends that principals prioritize clarifying roles and responsibilities to boost leadership effectiveness by eliminating ambiguity. Additionally, they should ensure the school's physical environment supports collaboration and learning, providing dedicated spaces for teacher interaction and maintaining well-designed classrooms. Promoting a supportive organizational structure that facilitates open communication, decision-making, and professional growth is also crucial. These efforts empower teachers to assume leadership roles, fostering a positive and productive school environment.

For school educational leaders, to effectively enhance teacher leadership and school structure mechanisms, school leaders, including assistant school heads, head teachers, academic heads, master teachers, and teachers in 87 leadership roles, should prioritize clarity in roles, foster a collaborative culture, ensure a conducive physical environment, support ongoing professional development, encourage innovation, model effective leadership, and advocate for necessary resources and administrative support. By focusing on these strategies, they can create an environment where teacher leadership flourishes, leading to improved educational outcomes and student success.

For teachers, embracing and enhancing leadership roles within the school structure is vital for driving educational change and innovation. Teachers should actively seek professional development and mentorship to build their leadership capacities, collaborate with colleagues, and participate in decision-making processes. Advocating for clear role definitions and fostering a supportive, collaborative school environment will not only enhance their professional growth but also contribute to a more effective and innovative educational system.

Future researchers should build upon this study's foundation by exploring the relationship between school structure mechanisms and teacher leadership across diverse educational contexts. Longitudinal studies would provide valuable insights into how these mechanisms influence teacher leadership over time. Researchers should also investigate additional factors that may impact teacher leadership, including cultural and socio-economic variables. Moreover, future research efforts could focus on designing and evaluating interventions aimed at firming school structure mechanisms to foster teacher leadership. By advancing in these areas, researchers can contribute to the development of effective educational practices and policies that support positive outcomes in schools

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