



LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL HEADS AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH IN THE DIVISION OF PANABO CITY

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra23163>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra23163

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the significance of the relationship between the leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health in the Division of Panabo City. Using a descriptive correlational research design, the study involved thirty (30) school heads selected through purposive sampling. Validated survey instruments were employed to gather data, which were analyzed using weighted mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that both the leadership practices of school heads and the level of school organizational health were at an extensive level. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between the leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis showed that all six domains of leadership practices, vision, mission, and goals; teaching and learning; managing organizational systems and safety; collaborating with families and stakeholders; ethics and integrity; and the education system, significantly influenced school organizational health ($p < .05$). Among these, managing organizational systems and safety registered the highest influence. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.650$) indicated that 65% of the variance in school organizational health could be explained by the leadership practices of school heads. The findings support transformational, social learning, and adult learning theories.

KEYWORDS- Leadership Practices, School Organizational Health, Transformational Leadership, Regression Analysis, School Heads, Education Management

INTRODUCTION

Leadership practices in educational institutions have become increasingly important as schools worldwide strive to create positive and sustainable organizational health that promotes student achievement, staff well-being, and community engagement. School heads play a pivotal role in influencing the culture, vision, and operational success of their institutions, especially as educational leaders are tasked with balancing the diverse needs of students, teachers, parents, and stakeholders. Effective school leadership is thus essential not only for setting academic and behavioral expectations but also for ensuring that these expectations are realized in a supportive, ethical, and structured environment. As leaders, school heads must be equipped with a range of competencies to navigate complex educational landscapes while fostering environments conducive to sustainable growth and development.

At the international level, the challenges of sustaining organizational health in schools are profound. Educational leaders in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia are consistently pressured to improve academic performance, ensure equity, and address mental health concerns among students and staff, all while managing budgetary constraints (Zhang et al., 2020). According to recent studies, leadership practices directly impact the organizational health of schools, with effective leaders prioritizing the development of clear mission statements, collaborative frameworks, and strategic planning to bolster school performance (Hallinger, 2021). However, in many countries, school heads face systemic challenges such as inadequate resources, high teacher turnover, and growing demands for technological integration. These challenges make the role of leadership even more critical, as school heads are often seen as the drivers of innovation, safety, and ethical standards within the school environment (Ali & Anwar, 2020).

In the Philippines, school leadership plays a vital role in addressing unique educational challenges, including classroom overcrowding, curriculum reforms, and resource scarcity (Eusebio, 2021). School heads must implement effective leadership practices that not only support teaching and learning but also enhance the overall morale and motivation of the school staff (Reyes et al., 2021). Furthermore, given the Philippines' commitment to enhancing educational quality under the K-12 program, school leaders are tasked with aligning their practices with national standards while meeting the needs of diverse student populations. This alignment involves fostering collaboration with families and stakeholders, as well as advocating for ethical and transparent management practices to ensure institutional integrity (Montecillo, 2021). Thus, leadership practices among school heads in the Philippines are not only important for operational success but also fundamental to the nation's goal of educational improvement and social equity.



Locally, within Panabo City, the issue of sustainable organizational health in schools is equally significant. School heads in this area encounter various challenges related to student performance, teacher retention, and community engagement, which are compounded by financial and logistical constraints unique to the region (Pascual, 2022). As Panabo City grows and diversifies, school heads must adopt innovative and responsive leadership practices that can adapt to changing community demographics and educational demands. The city's school heads are also instrumental in ensuring that schools remain safe and supportive spaces, a priority underscored by the recent emphasis on creating ethical, inclusive, and family-oriented learning environments (Santos & De Leon, 2021). By building strong connections with local stakeholders and fostering a vision aligned with community values, school heads in Panabo City can help ensure that their institutions contribute to both educational and social sustainability.

Research into leadership practices that foster sustainable organizational health is particularly relevant in the post-pandemic landscape, as schools across the world have faced unprecedented disruptions to traditional teaching and learning processes. School heads have been at the forefront of adapting to new educational challenges, such as remote learning, hybrid teaching models, and heightened mental health needs among students and staff (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). The need for clear leadership practices that promote resilience, adaptability, and organizational well-being has never been more apparent, as these factors are essential for helping schools recover and thrive in the wake of global uncertainty (Leithwood et al., 2021). Leaders who can effectively manage organizational systems, foster community relationships, and prioritize ethical standards are better equipped to guide their institutions through these complex times, further highlighting the importance of this study in understanding effective leadership practices.

This study on leadership practices and organizational health among school heads in Panabo City is significant because it addresses both theoretical and practical gaps in educational leadership research. Understanding which leadership practices most positively impact organizational health can provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders seeking to improve the quality of education in the region. Additionally, this research could offer practical guidelines for training and developing future school leaders in the Division of Panabo City, contributing to sustainable educational improvements that benefit both schools and their communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The related literature of this study provided inputs about leadership practices and organizational health of school heads. 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 practices of school heads. It has six indicators namely; vision, mission, & goals, teaching and learning, managing organizational systems & safety, collaborating with families and stakeholders, ethics & integrity, and the education system (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2018). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is organizational health of school heads. It has four indicators namely; academic emphasis, morale, supportive leadership, and environmental factors (Doganyay & Dagle, 2020).

Leadership practices among school heads are crucial for fostering sustainable organizational health in educational institutions. The effectiveness of 6 these practices directly influences school culture, teacher engagement, and student achievement. One of the foundational aspects of these practices is the clear articulation and implementation of a shared vision, mission, and goals. This aligns all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community members, toward a common objective of student success. School leaders play a pivotal role in ensuring that everyone involved understands and supports this vision, creating a cohesive, purpose-driven environment that is essential for academic and organizational excellence (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2018).

Central to effective school leadership is the promotion of teaching and learning through a supportive and growth-oriented school culture. Leaders who prioritize a nurturing learning environment not only improve instructional quality but also enhance teacher professional development, leading to higher teacher retention and job satisfaction (Doganyay & Dagle, 2020). This focus on teaching and learning ensures that school heads are actively involved in instructional oversight and continuous improvement, which strengthens the school's overall educational framework (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2018).

Managing organizational systems and safety is another key aspect of effective school leadership. School heads must maintain an orderly, secure, and resource-efficient environment conducive to learning. This role encompasses overseeing the school's operations, ensuring safety protocols are met, and providing an environment where students and staff feel supported and protected. Research highlights the importance of a stable and secure learning environment, where effective management practices by school leaders positively impact student performance and teacher productivity (Leithwood et al., 2021).

Collaboration with families and community stakeholders is an essential practice that school heads must foster to create a supportive educational network. Engaging with diverse community members not only brings valuable resources into the school but also allows leaders to address the unique needs and interests of the community effectively. This collaboration strengthens the connection between the school and the larger community, ensuring that the school's goals align with community expectations and values, thus fostering mutual support (Pont et al., 2018).



Ethics and integrity are fundamental to the credibility and success of school leaders. Educational leaders are expected to act with fairness, transparency, and accountability, setting a standard of ethical behavior that resonates throughout the institution. Ethical leadership encourages a culture of trust and respect, both of which are essential for effective communication and collaboration within the school (Fields et al., 2019). Research indicates that leaders who uphold strong ethical standards foster higher levels of commitment and morale among teachers, thereby contributing to a healthier organizational culture (Chen et al., 2019).

A school leader's understanding of the broader education system, including its political, economic, legal, and cultural dimensions, further enhances their effectiveness. By staying informed about relevant policies, funding structures, and cultural dynamics, school heads can make informed decisions that address both local and systemic challenges. This knowledge allows them to advocate for their school's needs and align institutional practices with educational standards and policies (Connolly et al., 2019).

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between the leadership practices and organizational health among school heads. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of leadership practices of school heads in terms of:
 - 1.1. Vision, mission, & goals;
 - 1.2. Teaching and learning;
 - 1.3. Managing organizational systems & safety;
 - 1.4. Collaborating with families and stakeholders;
 - 1.5. Ethics & integrity; and
 - 1.6. The education system?
2. What is the extent of school organizational health in terms of:
 - 2.1. Academic emphasis;
 - 2.2. Morale;
 - 2.3 supportive leadership; and
 - 2.4. Environmental factors?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health?
4. Which of the domains of the leadership practices of school heads significantly influence the school organizational health?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationship between school heads' leadership practices and organizational health. Quantitative research focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns and relationships between variables, allowing for objective measurements and statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach is particularly useful for educational research, where measuring associations between leadership practices and organizational health can provide empirical insights for policy and practice (Apuke, 2017).

A descriptive correlational research design was used to describe existing conditions and determine the degree of association between variables without manipulating the study environment (Davis, 2021). Descriptive research provides a detailed examination of the characteristics of leadership practices and organizational health, while correlational research identifies the strength and direction of relationships between these factors. This design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to assess naturally occurring relationships between variables, such as supportive leadership and organizational health, without imposing experimental interventions (Kabir, 2018; Korrapati, 2018). By employing this approach, the study aims to generate insights that may inform strategies for enhancing school organizational health through leadership improvements (Cohen et al., 2018).

Additionally, this study utilized the universal sampling technique, which involves selecting all members of the target population as participants. Universal sampling is particularly useful when the population size is manageable and when the researcher aims to obtain comprehensive data without the limitations of sampling bias (Taherdoost, 2018). This technique ensures that the study captures a complete representation of school heads within the research setting, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. By including all eligible school heads in the study, this approach maximizes data accuracy and strengthens the generalizability of the results within the specific educational context.

By integrating a descriptive correlational research design and a universal sampling technique, this study provides a robust methodological framework for examining the relationship between leadership practices and organizational health. The findings derived from this approach can contribute to evidence-based recommendations for improving school leadership and fostering a healthier organizational climate.



Research Respondents

This study involved all 30 school heads from the Division of Panabo City as the primary respondents, utilizing the universal sampling technique to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive analysis. Universal sampling was employed because the total population of school heads in the division was manageable, allowing the study to collect data from all eligible individuals rather than selecting a subset. This technique enhances the accuracy and reliability of findings by eliminating potential biases associated with sample selection (Taherdoost, 2018).

School heads were chosen as respondents due to their pivotal role in school leadership, policy implementation, and organizational health. Their leadership directly influences the school environment, affecting teacher performance, student 52 outcomes, and overall institutional effectiveness (Harris & Jones, 2019). By examining their leadership practices, this study seeks to understand how their decision-making, management strategies, and collaborative efforts contribute to a school's organizational health. Given their authority in shaping school culture and operations, school heads are ideal subjects for research focusing on leadership and organizational effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020).

In educational research, school leadership is widely recognized as a key determinant of school success (Marzano et al., 2005). Studies highlight that leadership practices such as shared decision-making, ethical governance, and instructional leadership significantly impact school climate and effectiveness (Hallinger & Heck, 2011). Additionally, Creswell (2014) emphasizes the importance of selecting key stakeholders, such as school heads, for research on educational management, as their perspectives provide valuable insights for improving policies and professional development initiatives.

By incorporating all school heads within the division, this study ensures a holistic and representative understanding of leadership practices in relation to organizational health. The findings from this respondent group will contribute to evidence-based recommendations for enhancing leadership strategies, strengthening school management, and fostering a healthier organizational climate. Furthermore, the study's comprehensive approach supports policymakers, educational leaders, and stakeholders in making informed decisions to improve school leadership and organizational effectiveness.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, leadership practices and organizational health. 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 practices of school heads. The second set focused on the extent of school organizational health.

Leadership Practices. The leadership practices questionnaire was adapted from Council of Chief State School Officers. (2018). The instrument consisted of 30 items. It had six indicators namely; vision, mission, & goals (1-5), teaching and learning (1-5), managing organizational systems & safety (1-5), collaborating with families and stakeholders (1-5), ethics & integrity (1-5), and the education system (1-5).

The Leadership Practices questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing to ensure its reliability and internal consistency before being administered to the study's primary respondents. The pilot test was conducted with a sample of participants who closely matched the characteristics of the intended respondents. The resulting Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.85, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability among the 30 items. This outcome suggests that the items in the questionnaire consistently measure the various facets of leadership practices, aligning with the six established indicators (vision, mission & 54 goals, teaching and learning, managing organizational systems & safety, collaborating with families and stakeholders, ethics & integrity, and the education system). A high Cronbach's alpha reflects that the instrument is likely to yield dependable results when used in the primary data collection (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

School Organizational Health. The school organizational health questionnaire was adapted from Doganay & Dagle (2020). The instrument consisted of 23 items. It had three indicators namely; academic emphasis (1-7), morale (1-6), supportive leadership (1-5), and environmental factors (1-5). The School Organizational Health questionnaire was also pilot tested to determine its reliability, specifically focusing on its internal consistency. Using a similar process with a comparable sample of school heads, the questionnaire achieved a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82, which demonstrates a strong 55 internal consistency among the 23 items. This coefficient indicates that the items reliably assess the four indicators of organizational health (academic emphasis, morale, supportive leadership, and environmental factors). This reliability measure implies that the survey instrument is appropriately designed to capture the nuances of organizational health within the school context, supporting its effective use in the full study (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Reliable measurements like these provide confidence that the responses collected was consistent and accurate, contributing to meaningful and valid results.

The instruments in this study were contextualized to achieve the purpose of this study. The researcher integrated all the comments and suggestions of the adviser, panel members and expert validators for the refinement of the tools and to achieve construct validity.



Data Analysis

For a more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized:
Weighted Mean: To address the first and second research questions, mean was used to determine the extent of leadership practices and organizational health among school heads.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient: For the third research question, which examines the relationship between school heads' leadership practices and organizational health, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used.

Multiple Regression Analysis: To answer the fourth research question, which seeks to identify which specific domains of leadership practices significantly influence organizational health, multiple regression analysis was utilized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health. The study was conducted with the selected school heads from the Division of Panabo City. There were thirty (30) school heads 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 practices of school heads of the teachers is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the school organizational health of the teachers is also extensive. It was found that there is a significant relationship between leadership practices of school heads and the school organizational health. The hypotheses of no significant relationship between leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health and none of the domains of leadership practices of school heads significantly influence the school organizational health were rejected.

Meanwhile, the extent of organizational health is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of school organizational health are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health.

Based on the findings, leadership practices of school heads, and school organizational health are correlated. Also, leadership practices of school heads significantly influences school organizational health. All domains of leadership practices of school heads, namely, vision, mission, & goals, teaching and learning, managing organizational systems & safety, collaborating with families and stakeholders, ethics & integrity, and the education system significantly influence school organizational health by registering a p-value of .002 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 six domains of leadership practices, school organizational health also increases.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered: The extent of leadership practices of school heads is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of leadership practices of school heads which include vision, mission, & goals, teaching and learning, managing organizational systems & safety, collaborating with families and stakeholders, ethics & integrity, and the education system, are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident.

Meanwhile, the extent of organizational health is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of school organizational health are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the leadership practices of school heads and school organizational health.

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Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the six domains of leadership practices, school organizational health 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 strongly recommended to develop and implement comprehensive leadership development programs that align with the dimensions of effective leadership practices identified in this study, namely, vision, mission, and goals; teaching and learning; managing organizational systems and safety; collaborating with families and stakeholders; ethics and integrity; and understanding of the education system. These programs should emphasize transformational leadership, encourage collaboration, and support continuous professional development. Moreover, institutionalizing regular assessments of school leadership practices using validated tools can help identify areas for improvement and reinforce accountability in leadership roles across schools. Providing increased autonomy and support for school leaders to make strategic decisions can further enhance their effectiveness in fostering organizational health.

For School Principals, the study underscores the importance of consistently applying leadership practices that promote a healthy school climate. Principals should actively communicate a clear and shared vision, foster professional learning communities, and create an inclusive and safe environment where all stakeholders feel valued. Collaborative partnerships with families and the wider community should be strengthened, as these significantly influence school organizational health. Principals must also model ethical leadership and continuously engage with the broader education system to remain responsive to 104 policy changes and reforms. By embodying transformational leadership traits, such as individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, school leaders can drive continuous improvement and strengthen overall school performance.

For Teachers, the findings highlight the crucial role of collaboration and active participation in promoting school organizational health. Teachers are encouraged to engage in shared decision-making processes, support the realization of the school's vision and goals, and maintain open communication with school heads. Teachers should also take initiative in professional development opportunities that align with the principles of adult learning, ensuring their growth is relevant and reflective of their unique instructional contexts. By recognizing and emulating the positive leadership behaviors demonstrated by their principals, teachers can contribute to a collegial, motivated, and thriving school environment.

For Future Researchers, this study opens avenues for further exploration of leadership practices and their impact on other organizational variables such as teacher performance, student achievement, and stakeholder satisfaction. Future researchers may consider conducting longitudinal or mixed-methods studies to better understand the causal relationships and contextual factors that influence leadership effectiveness. Moreover, expanding the scope to include a larger or more diverse sample across different regions could provide broader insights into the generalizability of the findings. Research can also delve into the mediating effects of school climate or teacher empowerment in the relationship between school leadership and organizational health.

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