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SCHOOL CLIMATE THROUGH AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS COLLABORATION AMONG TEACHERS IN PANABO CITY DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and school climate in selected secondary schools in the Division of Panabo City. Utilizing a quantitative research approach, data were gathered from 110 teacher-respondents using validated research instruments. Statistical tools such as weighted mean, pearson product-moment correlation, and regression analysis were employed to analyze the data. Findings revealed that the extent of after-school programs teacher collaboration, encompassing intensity of collaboration, topics of collaboration, satisfaction with collaboration, and process of collaboration, was extensive. Similarly, the school climate was also rated as extensive. Correlation analysis indicated a significant relationship between after school programs teacher collaboration and school climate. Regression analysis further confirmed that all domains of teacher collaboration significantly influence school climate, with the process of collaboration showing the highest predictive value. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.510$) indicated that 51.10% of the variance in school climate could be attributed to after-school programs teacher collaboration. These findings underscore the necessity for strengthening teacher collaboration through structured programs and policy support. Recommendations were provided for DepEd officials, school administrators, teachers, and future researchers to enhance collaborative practices and sustain a positive school climate.

KEYWORDS- *After-School Programs, Teacher Collaboration, School Climate, Educational Leadership, Professional Development*

INTRODUCTION

A positive school climate is widely recognized as a crucial element for the holistic development of students and the overall effectiveness of educational institutions. School climate, defined as the quality and character of school life, influences students' academic performance, behavior, and emotional well-being, as well as teachers' job satisfaction and retention (Dynarski et al., 2023). A supportive and engaging school environment promotes learning, fosters positive relationships, and enhances the sense of safety and belonging among students and teachers. Thus, improving school climate has become a key priority for educators and policymakers worldwide (Cohen et al., 2019).

One promising approach to enhancing school climate is through collaborative efforts among teachers, particularly in after-school programs. After school programs provide an additional platform for teachers to interact, share ideas, and collectively address the diverse needs of students. Collaboration among teachers in these settings can foster a professional learning community, promote innovative teaching practices, and support the continuous professional development of educators (Vangrieken et al., 2019). The intensity and quality of teacher collaboration can significantly impact not only teachers' professional growth but also the broader school climate by creating a cohesive and supportive educational environment.

Research has shown that teacher collaboration contributes to a positive 2 school climate by enhancing communication, building trust, and creating a shared vision among teachers (Woodland, 2019). Effective collaboration allows teachers to align their efforts, support each other in addressing challenges, and collectively contribute to a nurturing school environment. The process of engaging in dialogue, reflecting on teaching practices, and developing joint solutions in after-school settings encourages a culture of continuous improvement and mutual respect (Jutzi & Woodland, 2019). These collaborative activities are linked to improved school climate indicators such as safety, supportive relationships, and effective teaching and learning processes (Dichoso, 2024).

Despite the potential benefits, the extent and nature of after-school program collaborations among teachers vary widely, and not all collaborative efforts lead to positive outcomes. Factors such as the intensity of collaboration, topics discussed, satisfaction with collaborative efforts, and the processes used play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of these initiatives (Jutzi & Woodland, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to explore how specific aspects of teacher collaboration in after-school programs influence the school climate and identify which domains contribute most significantly to creating a positive environment.

Globally, many schools struggle with maintaining a positive school climate due to factors such as bullying, lack of safety, poor teacher-student relationships, and inadequate support systems (UNESCO, 2020). In many countries, teachers report feeling isolated in their work, lacking opportunities for meaningful collaboration with colleagues, which affects not only their job satisfaction but also the overall learning environment. According to the OECD's Teaching and Learning 3 International Survey, only 44% of teachers in participating countries feel that their schools provide adequate time for collaboration, and this lack of interaction has been linked to lower student engagement and negative school climates (OECD, 2019).

In the Philippines, the challenge of creating a positive school climate is compounded by issues such as overcrowded classrooms, limited resources, and high teacher workload. A study by the Department of Education (DepEd) highlighted that many schools experience strained teacher-student relationships and inadequate learning environments, which hinder student performance and well-being (DepEd, 2022). Additionally, Filipino teachers often work in isolation, with limited opportunities for collaboration, especially in rural and under-resourced areas. This lack of collaboration can result in inconsistent teaching practices and a fragmented approach to addressing students' needs, further exacerbating issues related to school climate (Salandanan, 2023).

Locally, specifically in the Schools Division of Panabo City, the absence of structured after-school programs and collaborative opportunities among teachers has been identified as a barrier to fostering a positive school climate. Teachers often express dissatisfaction with their limited ability to engage in professional dialogue and share best practices due to time constraints and insufficient institutional support (Dichoso, 2024). In response, some schools have attempted to implement after-school programs aimed at enhancing teacher collaboration, but the impact of these initiatives on school climate remains underexplored.

After-school programs provide a valuable opportunity for teachers to engage in collaborative efforts that can directly influence school climate. These programs allow educators to come together outside regular school hours to discuss challenges, share insights, and collectively develop strategies to improve student outcomes. Research shows that effective teacher collaboration in these settings can lead to improved communication, enhanced professional relationships, and a stronger sense of community among teachers, all of which contribute to a more positive school climate (Jutzi & Woodland, 2019). Furthermore, the quality of collaboration, encompassing the intensity, topics, satisfaction, and processes involved, plays a crucial role in determining its effectiveness (Vangrieken et al., 2019).

However, not all collaborative efforts yield positive results. Factors such as the lack of clear goals, inadequate support, and poorly structured collaboration processes can undermine the potential benefits of these initiatives. Understanding which aspects of teacher collaboration are most effective is therefore essential for maximizing the impact of after-school programs on school climate.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and the positive status of school climate. By examining the extent of collaboration among teachers and its impact on various dimensions of school climate, such as safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the institutional environment, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into how collaborative practices can be leveraged to foster a healthier, more engaging school climate. The findings will help educators and school leaders 5 design effective collaborative frameworks that enhance both teacher satisfaction and the overall well-being of the school community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The collaboration among educators has been a focal point of numerous studies, showing a significant link between the quality of teacher collaboration, instructional quality, and student learning outcomes (Hofman, & Bosker, 2021; Woodland, 2019). However, research focusing specifically on collaboration within after-school programs remains sparse. After-school programs have emerged globally as an integral component of school reform, with significant developments seen in countries like the United States and Switzerland (OECD, 2024). after 6 school programs provide additional learning opportunities, such as homework help, extracurricular activities, and skill development in various fields like art, music, and sports, often operating within school premises but as separate entities (Schüpbach, 2014).

In Switzerland, the Canton of Bern has witnessed a 67% increase in after school care hours between 2010 and 2016 due to policy mandates requiring communities to offer After-school programs upon demand from parents (Kull, 2016). In the U.S., participation in After-school programs has grown by 60% over the past decade, involving approximately 10.2 million children, demonstrating the growing demand for structured after-school learning environments (Afterschool Alliance, 2019). Despite this growth, many After-school programs struggle with inadequate funding, as seen in the United States where federal funds are often insufficient to meet the high demand, leaving millions of children unsupervised during after-school hours (O'Donnell & Ford, 2024).

In the context of after-school programs teacher collaboration, the Department of Education has crafted an order on Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions which can be viewed as a structured, school-based professional development strategy to support collaborative efforts among teachers. Defined in DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, LAC sessions

focus on fostering a continuous learning culture within schools where teachers can collaboratively address shared challenges in teaching and learning, including those specific to after-school program needs.

In LAC sessions, teachers engage in problem-solving, self-reflection, and peer learning within a safe, supportive community led by school heads or designated leaders. These sessions not only enhance teaching strategies aligned with the K to 12 Basic Education Program but also create a collaborative space to discuss and refine approaches tailored to after-school program contexts (DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016).

Through structured LAC activities, teachers in after-school programs can collectively address challenges, exchange best practices, and evaluate instructional approaches. This type of collaboration exemplifies how continuous professional learning directly contributes to teachers' confidence and competence, ultimately enhancing program effectiveness and positively impacting the school climate. Thus, integrating LAC sessions into after-school program collaboration initiatives can deepen collective competency, professional reflection, and mutual support among teachers, which are all pivotal to creating a positive and inclusive educational environment.

Teacher collaboration in after-school programs is particularly vital as these programs often share the same students and goals with regular school settings. In both the U.S. and Switzerland, after-school programs coordinator, including after school Directors, work alongside school-based educators like principals and teachers to support student development (Jutzi & Woodland, 2019). After-school programs thus act as complementary institutions to schools, providing structured support for students, including those with behavioral challenges (Vandell, 2024). However, partnerships between schools and after-school programs often face 8 challenges, such as limited integration and collaboration, which can hinder the full realization of these programs' potential (Anthony & Morra, 2020).

The integration of teacher collaboration within after-school programs can significantly enhance the educational experience for students. Effective school After-school programs partnerships have been linked to improved academic outcomes, social skills, and student attendance (Bennett, 2019; Durlak & Weissberg, 2018). The Harvard Family Research Project (2020) highlighted that successful After-school programs require intentional collaboration between in school and out-of-school educators to achieve a shared vision for student learning. However, current collaborations are often superficial, involving only basic communication such as attendance and behavior reports (Bennett, 2019). A deeper and more meaningful partnership, focusing on shared resources, aligned goals, and consistent communication, is essential for maximizing the impact of After-school programs on student achievement.

In educational settings, teacher collaboration is recognized as an essential element of professional development, where educators share knowledge, reflect on practices, and co-develop teaching strategies (Kelchtermans, 2019; Vangrieken et al., 2019). However, studies suggest that the depth and quality of collaboration matter; intense forms of collaboration, such as joint work and collective responsibility, are often more effective in influencing teaching practices than less intensive forms like storytelling and informal exchanges (Meirink et al., 2020; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2019). This is particularly relevant in the context of After-school programs, where collaboration between after-school and in-school 9 coordinator can significantly influence the overall educational outcomes for students.

The limited yet evolving research on After-school programs indicates that collaboration is not a one-size-fits-all concept but rather a multidimensional construct that needs to be tailored to the unique contexts of different educational settings. The complexity of collaboration within After-school programs suggests the need for robust frameworks that capture the nuances of how teachers and after-school educators can effectively work together (Bennett, 2019). Future studies should continue to explore these dynamics, aiming to develop best practices that strengthen the connections between in-school and after-school educational environments, ultimately enhancing student learning and development.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the relationship between after-school collaboration programs and a positive school climate. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of after-school programs teacher collaboration in terms of:
1.1. Intensity of Collaboration
1.2. Topics of Collaboration
1.3. Satisfaction with Collaboration
1.4. Process of Collaboration
2. What is the extent of a school climate being positive in status in terms of:
2.1. Safety
2.2. Relationships
2.3. Teaching and Learning
2.4. Institutional Environment
3. Is there a significant relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and school climate?
4. Which of the domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration significantly influence a positive school climate?

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METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational research design. Quantitative research involves the systematic investigation of observable phenomena through statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques, enabling researchers to quantify data and uncover patterns, trends, and relationships among variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this context, the descriptive correlational technique focuses on describing the variables as they exist and examining the nature of relationships between them without manipulating any of the study conditions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2020). This approach is well-suited for educational research, as it allows for an objective evaluation of the interplay between variables, providing valuable insights into naturally occurring relationships within educational settings (Apuke, 2017).

The descriptive component of this research design is primarily concerned with observing and describing the characteristics of the variables in their natural state. Descriptive research does not involve altering the environment or influencing 36 the variables under study; instead, it seeks to provide a clear and accurate depiction of the phenomenon being examined (Davis, 2021). This approach is beneficial for understanding the dynamics of after-school programs teacher collaboration and its impact on the school climate, as it captures real-world data reflecting how teachers interact and collaborate within after-school contexts. By accurately describing these collaborative practices, the study aims to provide a foundational understanding of how these practices may influence the overall school climate.

The correlational aspect of the study aims to determine the extent and direction of the relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and positive school climate. A correlational study is designed to identify potential associations between variables, allowing researchers to explore whether changes in one variable may be linked to changes in another (Kabir, 2016). This approach does not establish causality but provides evidence of how two variables may relate within the educational environment. The correlational analysis helps to identify patterns and trends, such as whether higher levels of teacher collaboration during after-school programs are associated with improvements in school climate factors like safety, relationships, and teaching and learning (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2017).

Utilizing a descriptive correlational research design is advantageous for this study as it allows for a comprehensive examination of the relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and positive school climate without manipulating variables. This approach is suitable given the study's objective of 37 exploring natural associations, providing insights that can inform educational practices and policies aimed at fostering a more collaborative and supportive school environment (Bryman, 2016). By capturing the complexities of these relationships, the study aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of educational research, enhancing our understanding of how teacher collaboration influences the broader school climate.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this study are teachers actively participating in after school programs across selected Grade 7-10 classrooms within the Panabo City Division. To identify the appropriate sample size, Slovin's formula was employed, resulting in a sample of approximately 110 teachers. Slovin's formula helps determine a representative sample size while considering a margin of error, thus ensuring a level of precision appropriate for the study's objectives.

The target group of respondents includes teachers specifically involved in collaborative after-school activities that contribute to the school's educational environment. After-school programs are important venues for teacher collaboration, providing platforms where teachers engage in knowledge exchange, reflect on teaching practices, and address shared student challenges. Given these responsibilities, teachers in these programs are essential participants for understanding the nature, scope, and effects of collaboration in an educational setting.

To focus on those best suited to offer insights relevant to after-school teacher collaboration, the inclusion criteria were limited to Grade 7-10 teachers who are consistently engaged in after-school collaborative sessions. This purposive sampling approach ensures that the data collected is not only relevant but also reflective of individuals who directly influence and experience the outcomes of collaboration. Purposive sampling, as noted by Palinkas et al. (2015), allows for the selection of participants based on their direct involvement in the phenomena being studied, thereby improving data relevance and richness.

A sample size of 110 teachers was established based on standard statistical parameters for correlational research, ensuring that the study's findings was robust and meaningful. This size, determined with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, is considered sufficient for detecting significant relationships between teacher collaboration in after-school programs and its impact on school climate. Statistical recommendations, such as Cohen's (1988) guidelines for correlational studies, emphasize the importance of a well-calibrated sample size to increase the reliability of the research outcomes.

The Grade 7-10 teachers selected as respondents in this study are not only observers but also active participants and beneficiaries of collaborative practices in after-school settings. As evidenced by Woodland et al. (2019), teacher

collaboration fosters professional growth, enhances instructional methods, and builds a more supportive school environment. Their perspectives and experiences offer valuable insights into the role of after-school collaboration in professional 44 development, as well as its broader implications for creating a positive and cohesive school climate.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, after-school programs teacher collaboration, and the status of school climate. 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 after-school programs teacher collaboration. The second set focused on the extent of the status of the school climate.

After-school Programs Teacher Collaboration. The after-school programs teacher collaboration questionnaire was adapted from Jutzi, M., & Woodland, R. H. (2019). The instrument consisted of 31 items. It had four indicators namely; intensity of collaboration (1-9), topics of collaboration (1-7), satisfaction with collaboration (1-5), and process of collaboration (1-10).

The After-school Programs Teacher Collaboration questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing to ensure the reliability and internal consistency of the items. The pilot test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90, suggesting that the instrument has a high level of internal consistency.

This result indicates that the items in the questionnaire are well-aligned in measuring the four indicators of collaboration, intensity, topics, satisfaction, and 45 process, and that the respondents' responses are consistently reliable. A high reliability score such as this implies that the questionnaire is a dependable tool for assessing the collaborative practices among teachers in after-school programs, providing confidence that the data collected will accurately reflect the extent of teacher collaboration.

Status of School Climate. The status of the school climate questionnaire was adapted from Dichoso, E. (2024), which was modified from the California healthy kids survey school climate module in-school and hybrid. The instrument consisted of 37 items. It had four indicators namely; safety (1-8), relationships (1 15), teaching and learning (1-9), and institutional environment (1-5). The status of school climate questionnaire was also subjected to pilot testing, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.88, indicating that the items possess a relatively high internal consistency.

This score reflects that the questionnaire items effectively capture the various dimensions of school climate, including safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the institutional environment. The high internal consistency suggests that the responses provided by participants are reliable and that the instrument is suitable for assessing the overall climate within schools. This reliability ensures that the data gathered was robust, facilitating accurate analysis and meaningful conclusions regarding the impact of after-school programs teacher collaboration on school climate.

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 were utilized to summarize and describe the data collected on the extent of after-school programs teacher collaboration and the status of the positive school climate. Descriptive statistics provided a comprehensive overview of the responses for each indicator under both independent and dependent variables. Specifically, mean scores were calculated for the four indicators of after school programs teacher collaboration, and the four indicators of positive school climate.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine if there is a significant relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and a positive school climate. This statistical tool is ideal for measuring the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables (Field, 2018). The correlation analysis tested the null hypothesis (Ho1), which posits no significant relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration, and school climate. A positive or negative correlation coefficient would indicate the 50 nature of the relationship, while a p-value less than 0.05 would suggest a statistically significant relationship between the variables.

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to examine which specific domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration significantly influence the positive school climate. This analysis helped identify the extent to which each domain of after-school programs teacher collaboration predicts the outcomes of the positive school climate indicators. This method tested the second hypothesis (Ho2), determining if none of the domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration significantly influence a positive school climate. Multiple regression provided an in-

depth understanding of the predictors by indicating which aspects of teacher collaboration contribute most to fostering a positive school climate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and school climate. The study was conducted with the selected teachers from the Division of Panabo City. There were one hundred ten (110) teachers who participated in this study. A quantitative research approach 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 after school programs teacher collaboration of the teachers is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the school climate of the teachers is also extensive. It was found that there is a significant relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and the school climate. The hypotheses of no significant relationship between after-school programs teacher collaboration and school climate and none 94 of the domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration significantly influence the school climate were rejected.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered: The extent of after-school programs teacher collaboration is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. All dimension of after-school programs teacher collaboration which includes intensity of collaboration, topics of collaboration, satisfaction with collaboration, and process of collaboration are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident. Meanwhile, the extent of school climate is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of school climate are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the after school programs teacher collaboration and school climate.

Based on the findings, after-school programs teacher collaboration, and school climate are correlated. Also, after-school programs teacher collaboration significantly influences school climate. All domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration, namely, intensity of collaboration, topics of collaboration, satisfaction with collaboration, and process of collaboration significantly influence school climate 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 95 indicates that for every unit increase in the four domains of after-school programs teacher collaboration, school climate also increases.

Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight the significant influence of after-school programs teacher collaboration on school climate, providing valuable insights for various stakeholders in the education sector. Based on these results, the following recommendations are offered to ensure the sustainability and enhancement of collaborative practices among teachers and the overall improvement of school climate.

For higher officials in the Department of Education (DepEd), it is recommended that policies be developed to institutionalize and strengthen after school programs that promote teacher collaboration. Since the study established that collaboration significantly impacts school climate, DepEd should provide structured guidelines and resources to encourage regular collaborative activities among teachers. Moreover, funding should be allocated for professional development programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills to engage in meaningful collaboration. Establishing a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these programs will also ensure that schools maximize their benefits.

For school principals, fostering a school culture that supports and prioritizes collaboration among teachers is crucial. As instructional leaders, principals should provide opportunities for teachers to engage in structured collaboration by 96 designating specific time slots within their schedules for professional learning communities (PLCs) or peer mentoring sessions. Encouraging an open environment where teachers can share best practices, reflect on challenges, and co-develop strategies will further enhance school climate. Additionally, recognizing and rewarding teachers who actively participate in collaborative initiatives may serve as motivation for continuous engagement in these activities.

For teachers, the study underscores the importance of their active participation in after-school collaboration programs. Teachers should maximize opportunities to work together in planning lessons, discussing student progress, and sharing innovative teaching strategies. Engaging in meaningful conversations about teaching practices, classroom challenges, and student needs can foster a more positive school climate and enhance their professional growth. Teachers are also encouraged to seek continuous improvement by attending training sessions and collaborating with colleagues in developing new instructional approaches.

For future researchers, this study provides a foundation for further exploration of teacher collaboration and school climate. Researchers may consider investigating the long-term impact of collaborative after-school programs on teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. Additionally, conducting qualitative research through interviews and

case studies could provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of teachers engaged in collaboration. Future studies may also examine the role of leadership styles in facilitating or hindering collaborative practices in schools.

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