



School Heads Leadership and Attributes and Teachers' Morale: Its Implication to School Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship among the school heads' leadership and attributes, teachers' morale and implication to school performance. Respondents of the study were 68 school heads and 532 teachers from public elementary schools of the Division of Laguna. The Level of Teacher's Morale in terms of Teacher Rapport with Principal scored as good; while in terms of Satisfaction with Teaching was found moderately satisfied. Further, the relationship between school head leadership and professional attributes and teacher's Morale in terms of rapport and personal and professional attributes are evident using the Chi-Square Test of Independence. The correlation between Building High Performance Team scores and Teacher Morale in terms of rapport comes out to be highly significant. However, School Leadership in terms of Problem Solving and Coordinating with Others and Leading & Managing Changes were not significant. For Interpersonal Sensitivity of School Heads and Teacher Morale in terms of rapport, the correlation is significant at $p < .05$. There are significant relationships between leading and managing changes to cohort survival, interpersonal sensitivity and completion rate with $p < .05$; and relationship between Teacher's Morale in terms of satisfaction to completion rate. School heads need to evaluate and monitor the training needs assessment to address teachers' professional growth and assist in improvement of the school performance. A similar research can be conducted to determine the validity of the relationship between teacher's morale and school performance and to verify the results of this study.

Keywords: school head leadership, teachers' morale, rapport, completion rate

INTRODUCTION

The effective management of the system should be highly regarded for the fulfillment of the organizational objectives such as school leadership which is considerably an essential aspect in school administration because of its influencing role to the achievement of school goals (Gyang, 2018). Personal and professional attributes and interpersonal effectiveness of administrators have

something to do with the performance of their subordinates and even affect the whole educational system.

Achieving educational objectives and change in leadership can have an impact on teacher morale (Govindarajan, 2012). Education developments have taken a toll on teacher morale because teachers are often blamed for low test scores, yet many factors affecting student achievement are beyond their control (Noddings, 2014, Guthrie, 2010).

High teacher morale makes teaching pleasant for teachers, learning more pleasant for students, and creates an environment conducive to learning (Govindarajan, 2012; Binova, 2002). Principals set the tone of the school and can therefore foster a climate of respect, recognition, and appreciation which in turn contributes to teacher job satisfaction (Shen, Leslie, Spybrook, & Ma, 2011). School effectiveness can be improved through the motivation of teachers, the teachers' feelings toward school and school atmosphere created – this can be described as the morale of teachers, where it can also affect the motivation of teachers and student achievement (Abdullah, Yiing, Ali & Ling, 2016). With the additional accountability and increasing social issues that students face, teacher morale issues are more prevalent in the classrooms of the new millennium (Jones & Egley, 2007). Correspondingly, Gorton, Alston, and Snowden (2006) noted that many researchers such as Edmonds, Lezotte, Korkmaz, and Monroe (2007) believed that the principal's leadership presented itself as the most imperative reason that influenced teacher and school performance.

Hence, this study was conducted to determine the relationship among the school heads' leadership; personal and professional attributes and teachers morale and its implications to school performance. The researchers thought of investigating these areas of concern which may lead to the awareness of the school heads on their over-all personality and would encourage them to help create and provide teacher's climate that will promote professional growth and enhance teachers' morale and consequently the school performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory relevant to this study is Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1968). Maslow's theory consists of five levels pyramid of needs and requires the individual to satisfy their most basic need prior to caring about needs at a higher level and moving up the hierarchy toward self-actualization. The framework identified by Maslow affects all relationships involved in this study. The theory can be applied to the role of the classroom teacher and her relationship with principal. The fundamental needs and a sense of belonging must be established in order for the teacher to achieve the higher- level needs of self-esteem and confidence.

The school head can play a decisive role in the lives of the classroom teachers in the school. Leadership that nurtures an environment that promotes a high level of teacher morale can, at a minimum, satisfy the needs of safety and security for its teachers, and ultimately satisfy the needs for love and belonging as well. The levels of the hierarchy are built upon the satisfaction of the needs below, and the morale of the teacher affects each level in some way. Because Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs deals with individual needs that must be satisfied prior to moving up to the next level, and because the principal-teacher relationship can have a direct effect on the achievement of the students, this theory will be the lens through which all aspects of this study will be viewed.

Another theoretical framework related to this study is the influence of a leader's positive reinforcement on his staff. B.F. Skinner, the father of behavior modification and developed the concept of positive reinforcement (Skinner, 1938). Positive reinforcement is the idea that a behavior is likely to reoccur if that behavior is reinforced. For example, if a teacher who is given praise every time they arrive on time, the results should be more punctuality. The praise is the positive reinforcement and arriving at work on time is the behavior being reinforced. The use of positive reinforcement is utilized by school heads to motivate teachers so that desired behaviors is achieved. Experimental research suggests that reinforcement theory improves the performance of subordinates according to Miltenberg (2004).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

One of the school head's obligations specified in the Education Act of 1982 is that he or she "shall be accountable for the efficient and effective administration and management of the school" which are apparent within the school head's Leadership; Personal and Professional Attributes; and the Interpersonal Effectiveness within the selected domains of National Competency-Based Standards for School Head. Moreover, the level of teacher morale indicated that morale would extend from the teacher to the student and will affect and impact learning and school performance.

Figure 1 shows the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables are the school heads' Leadership and Management Practices, Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness. The dependent variables are the Level of Teachers' Morale which was divided into 10 related factors to give an opportunity to make generalizations regarding teacher morale more meaningful to readers; Satisfaction with Teaching; Rapport Among Teachers; Teacher Salary; Teacher Work Load; Instructional Issue; Teacher Community Status and; School Facilities and Services. Consequently, School Performance is another dependent variable dealt with in this study. Therefore, this study investigated deeper into the relationship between elementary school heads leadership and management practices and teacher morale and sought further to determine if the relationship influenced school performance. The school performance was measured base from Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF) of each scho

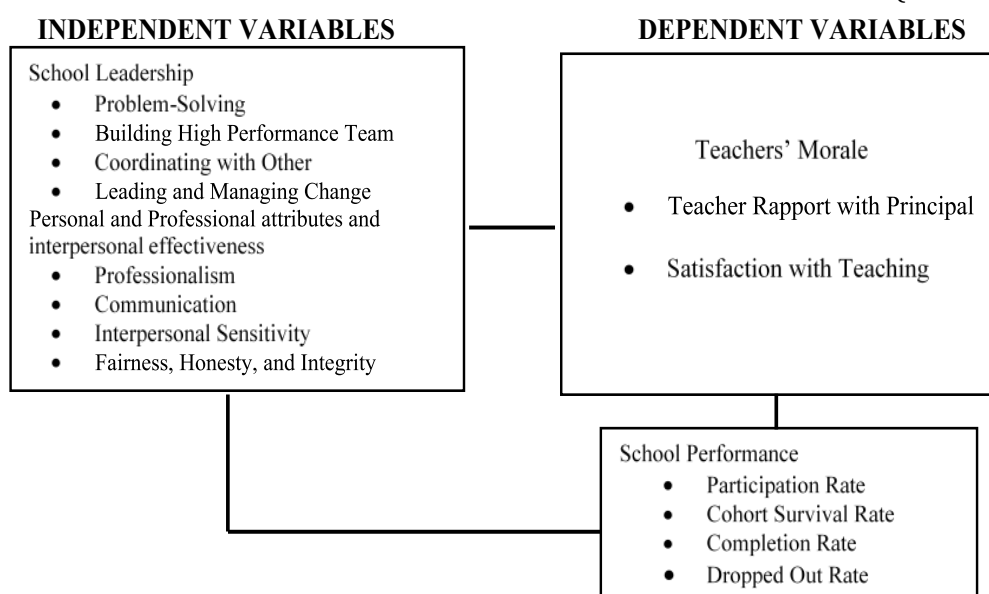


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive correlation method was employed in this study. According to Calmorin and Calmorin (1995), descriptive correlational method is designed to determine the relationship of two variables (X and Y). In this study, the school heads' Personal and Professional Attributes correlated to the level of Teachers' Morale as to Teacher Rapport with Principal and Satisfaction with Teaching to the School Performance to examine the relationship between those variables.

The technique employed in this study was a stratified random sampling procedure for selecting the participants in this study. This is to ensure a fairly equal representation of the variables for the study. The stratification was based on Master list of Public Elementary Schools for school year 2019-2020 obtained from the Division office, through the SEPS-SGOD Planning and Research. Selection was simple random sampling. Total enumeration was used in obtaining data from the school head respondents (such as Participation Rate, Cohort Survival Rate, Completion Rate, and Drop-Out Rate). The respondents of the study were from public elementary schools of the Division of Laguna consisting of 68 school heads and 532 teachers from Districts of Los Banos, Bay, Calauan, Victoria, Pila, Sta. Cruz, Pangil- Pakil, Pagsanjan, Majayjay, Famy-Mabitac, Nagcarlan, Liliw and Sta. Maria.

A survey questionnaire was the main tool used in gathering data for the study. The first part consists of the demographic profile of the respondents and the second part of the questionnaire was the National Competency-Based Standards for School Heads (NCBSSH). It is a tool with a list of competency standards which can be used as basis for the school heads' decision making, actions and performance of their functions. It defines the different dimensions of being an effective school head. For this study, only Domain 1. School Leadership, Strand 1.C-1.F and Domain 7. Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness, Strand 7.A-7.B were answered by the respondents. To elicit the data needed for teachers' morale, 40 items representing the selected subscales of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire by Ralph R. Bentley and Averno M. Rempel (1968) was used. The instrument is designed to provide the opportunity to express the teachers' opinion on the level of their morale. Respondents read each statement carefully. Then indicate, whether the teacher (1) disagree, (2) probably disagree, (3) probably agree, or (4) agree with each statement by circling the corresponding number for each item. Teacher morale was measured using factors one and two of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO), which divided teacher morale into 10 related factors to give an opportunity to make generalizations regarding teacher morale that are more meaningful to readers. The 10 related factors, as reported by Houchard (2005) and shown in Table 1, with the correlating survey items include factors such as Teacher Rapport with Principal and Satisfaction with Teachers.

To test the relationship between the standard competencies of school leadership and management practices; and the significant relationship between teacher morale and school performance level as measured on Office Performance Commitment and Review Form (OPCRF), Pearson r Correlation Coefficient was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As presented in Table 1, the level of School heads' leadership in terms of competency to solve problems, coordinating with other and leading and managing team gathered grand mean of 3.89 which means problem solving is the essence of what leaders exist to do. It strengthens the claim of Llopis (2013) that as leaders, the goal is to minimize the occurrence of problems – which means

leaders must be courageous enough to tackle them head-on before circumstances force their hands. This finding only shows that a leader as problem-solver explores several approaches in handling problems. Further, collaborating with concerned staff on the planning and implementation, providing feedback and updates to stakeholders on the status of progress and completion and mobilizing teachers/staff in sustaining the program and project in a school remain as significant roles of school heads. The finding is parallel to the statement in Career Trends website by Anderson (2018) that an effective administrator needs excellent communication and coordination skills when working with colleagues. He needs to be able to both communicate well, which will make his directives clear and also keep morale high and be organized so that he can coordinate efforts smoothly. Moreover, school heads maintain an open, positive and encouraging attitude toward change and empower teachers and personnel to identify, initiate and manage changes. It strengthens the statement of Sanborn, 2019 that being a change maker is a new term for being a leader. A change maker is someone who leverages his or her influence for the betterment of the world, to collective good of others.

Table 1. Level of School Heads' Leadership

Indicators of School Leadership	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Competency to Solve Problems	3.89	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Building High Performance Team	3.84	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Coor Coordinating with Other	3.89	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Leading and Managing Change	3.89	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same

Legend: 1.00-1.50 (I am not doing this yet); 1.51-2.50 (I am doing a little of this and I need to learn more); 2.51-3.50 (I am doing it but I need to improve); 3.51-4.00 (I am doing it well and can lead others do the same)

The result of the assessment of school heads reveals that they assist teachers and students to understand problems and analyze cause/s of problems critically and objectively with a grand mean of 3.89 and interpreted as I am doing it well and can lead others do the same. Meanwhile, school heads manifest that defining roles and functions of each committee marks a very significant consideration in building highly performing team with a mean of 3.84. This finding corroborates with Blazek (2016) that if everyone knows what to do there will be an assurance that everything gets done. Results bring a great impact as the school leader's role of providing opportunities for growth and development of members as team players not a one man show.

Table 2. Level of School Head Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness

Indicators of School Head Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Professionalism	3.92	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Communication	3.88	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Coor Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.86	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same
Fairness, Honesty, and Integrity	3.94	I am doing it well and can lead others do the same

Legend: 1.00-1.50 (I am not doing this yet); 1.51-2.50 (I am doing a little of this and I need to learn more); 2.51-3.50 (I am doing it but I need to improve); 3.51-4.00 (I am doing it well and can lead others do the same)

A weighted mean of 3.92 denotes that school heads are able to maintain good reputation with respect to financial matters such as the settlement of debts, loans and other financial affairs personally and professionally; while in terms of fairness, honesty and integrity with a highest mean of 3.94 shows that the school heads make individuals accountable for their actions and this also implied that the school heads centralize and decentralize task division and management as this may be related to notions for the staff to make good decisions (Mouritsen and Kreiner, 2016).

Table 3. Level of Teacher's Morale in terms of Teacher Rapport with Principal

Indicative Statement	Mean	Level of Teacher's Morale	Rank
1. The work of individual faculty is appreciated and commended by principal	3.55	Very Good	4
2. Teacher's feel free to criticize administratively policy at faculty meetings called by our principal	3.20	Good	17
3. Our principal shows favouritism in his relations with the teachers in our school	1.97	Fair	20
4. My principal makes a real effort to maintain close contact with the faculty.	3.34	Good	12
5. Our principal's leadership in faculty meetings challenges and stimulates our professional growth.	3.60	Very Good	1.5
6. My principal makes my work easier and more pleasant.	3.38	Good	11
7. My school principal understands and recognizes good teaching procedures.	3.60	Very Good	1.5
8. The lines and methods of communication between teachers and the principal in our school are well developed and maintained	3.48	Good	5
9. My principal shows a real interest in my department.	3.43	Good	6
10. Our principal promotes a sense of belonging among the teachers in our school.	3.57	Very Good	3
11. My principal is concerned with the problems of the faculty and handles these problems sympathetically.	3.39	Good	9.5
12. I do not hesitate to discuss any school problem with my principal.	3.03	Good	19
13. My principal acts interested in me and my problems.	3.16	Good	18
14. My school principal supervises rather than "snoopervises" the teachers in our school.	3.31	Good	13
15. Teachers' meetings as now conducted by our principal waste the time and energy of the staff.	2.24	Fair	16
16. My principal has a reasonable understanding of the problems connected with my teaching assignment.	3.27	Good	15
17. I feel that my work is judged fairly by my principal.	3.30	Good	14
18. My principal tries to make me feel comfortable when visiting my classes.	3.40	Good	8
19. My principal makes effective use of the individual teacher's capacity and talent.	3.41	Good	7
20. Teachers feel free to go to the principal about problems of personal and group welfare.	3.39	Good	9.5
Grand Mean	3.251	Good	

00-1.50(Poor); 1.51-2.50(Fair); 2.51-3.50(Good); 3.51-4.00(Very Good)

The Level of teacher's morale in terms of teacher rapport with principal scored weighted mean of 3.251, interpreted as good. One indicator was rated Fair with a weighted mean of 1.97. This suggests that the school heads perceived to do favors to some and neglect others leaving them with the impression of having favorites. Further, it also implies that the school heads must observe giving credits in accordance to teacher performance evaluation done regularly and properly.

The principal as the primary school leader must always be aware of their decisions, actions, and behaviors daily and how it can impact the morale of teachers and students. It is their duty to protect, support, and encourage their teachers. Smith (2016) believes that principals would do well by being good communicators, encourage professional growth and collaboration, involve teachers in the making decisions, and share leadership responsibilities. These factors increase job satisfaction and morale among staff members (Smith, 2016).

Table 4. Level of Teacher's Morale in terms of Satisfaction with Teaching

Indicative Statement	Mean	Level of Teacher's Morale	Rank
1. Teaching gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction	3.58	Very Satisfied	3.5
2. Teaching enables me to make my greatest contribution to society	3.75	Very Satisfied	2
3. I love to teach	3.81	Very Satisfied	1
4. If I could plan my career again, I would choose teaching	3.58	Very Satisfied	3.5
5. I would recommend teaching as an occupation to students of high scholastic ability.	3.39	Moderately Satisfied	11.5
6. If I could earn as much money in another occupation, I would stop teaching.	2.75	Moderately Satisfied	17
7. I find my contacts with students, for the most part, highly satisfying and rewarding	3.43	Moderately Satisfied	9.5
8. I feel that I am an important part of this school system.	3.46	Moderately Satisfied	8
9. I feel successful and competent in my present position.	3.43	Moderately Satisfied	9.5
11. I enjoy working with student organizations, clubs, and societies.	3.56	Very Satisfied	5
12. I am at a disadvantage professionally because other teachers are better prepared to teach than I am.	2.23	Slightly Satisfied	20
13. As far as I know, the other teachers think I am a good teacher.	3.09	Moderately Satisfied	16
14. The "stress and strain" resulting from teaching makes teaching undesirable for me.	2.58	Moderately Satisfied	18
15. Most of the actions of students irritate me.	2.40	Slightly Satisfied	19
16. My students regard me with respect and seem to have confidence in my professional ability.	3.39	Moderately Satisfied	11.5
17. My students appreciate the help I give them with their schoolwork.	3.48	Moderately Satisfied	7
18. To me, there is no more challenging work than teaching.	3.28	Moderately Satisfied	14
19. As a teacher, I think I am as competent as most other teachers.	3.23	Moderately Satisfied	15
20. I really enjoy working with my students.	3.51	Very Satisfied	6
21. I am well satisfied with my present teaching profession.	3.38	Moderately Satisfied	13
Grand Mean	3.26	Moderately Satisfied	

Legend: 1.00-1.50(Not at all Satisfied); 1.51-2.50(Slightly Satisfied); 2.51-3.50(Moderately Satisfied); 3.51-4.00(Very Satisfied)

As rated by the teachers, the Level of Teacher's Morale in terms of Satisfaction with Teaching was found to be moderately satisfied with a grand mean of 3.26. This proves that the teachers tend to aspire more for their career in spite of having the highest mean " I love to teach" with weighted mean of 3.81.

Teachers' work morale greatly affects students' academic achievement and the school environment. Werang et al (2013) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between school principals' transformational leadership, teachers' job satisfaction, and teachers' work morale at state elementary schools in Boven Digoel Regency, Papua, Indonesia. The research revealed that: there was a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction; principals' transformational leadership and teachers' work morale, and teachers' job satisfaction and work morale.

Table 5. Significant Relationship between School Head Leadership and Professional Attributes and Teacher's Morale

Domain	School Head Competency	Teacher's Morale			
		Rapport		Satisfaction	
		χ^2	$\rho - value$	χ^2	$\rho - value$
School Leadership	Problem Solving	1.078	.583	10.866*	.016
	Building High Performance Team	24.837*	.007	5.113*	.034
	Coordinating with Others	1.078	.583	.545	.461
	Leading & Managing Changes	.100	.951	.071	.789
Personal & Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness	Professionalism	.048	.976	.294	.588
	Communication	.604	.739	.043	.835
	Interpersonal Sensitivity	7.559*	.023	.387	.534
	Fairness, Honesty, and Integrity	.521	.771	.003	.959

The data of table 5 shows the relationship between the SH Leadership and Professional Attributes and Teacher's Morale. For the correlation between Building High Performance Team scores and Teacher Morale in terms of rapport comes out to be 0.007, which is significant. But School Leadership in terms of Problem Solving tends to be not significant at .583 similar with Coordinating with Others and Leading & Managing Changes at .583 and .951 respectively at .05 probability level. For Interpersonal Sensitivity under School Heads' Personal & Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness the correlation comes out to be 0.023 for Teacher Morale in terms of rapport which is significant at .05 probability level.

Table 6. Test of Relationship between Level of School Head Leadership, Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness and School Performance

School Head Leadership, Personal and Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness	Selected Index of School Performance			
	Participation Rate	Cohort Survival	Completion Rate	Dropped Out Rate
Solve Problem	1.672	0.413	0.897	0.017
Performance Team	1.572	0.852	0.782	0.719
Coordinating with Others	0.023	0.413	0.379	0.017
Lead & Managing Changes	1.277	5.280*	1.212	0.055
Professionalism	2.546	0.629	0.014	0.570
Communication	0.047	0.852	0.782	0.719
Interpersonal Sensitivity	3.827	1.821	3.958*	1.067
Fair, Honesty and Integrity	0.506	1.082	2.352	2.604

There is a significant relationship between lead and managing changes to cohort survival at 5.280. Likewise, there is significant relationship between interpersonal sensitivity and completion rate because their threshold value is less than 0.5 level of significance. Thus, it affirms the findings of Buenvenida, 2019 that inspirational motivation received by teachers from school heads maybe reflected in the performance of students in terms of cohort survival rate and completion rate. The teachers as inspired and motivated by school heads, are expected in turn to inspire and motivate the students to attain higher performance, finish their studies and improve themselves as persons and as professionals. However, the correlations between solve problem, performance team, and coordinating with others, professionalism, communication, fair, honesty and integrity and four indicators of students' performance were shown to be not significant.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a significant relationship between the level of school heads' leadership; personal and professional attributes and interpersonal effectiveness and the teachers' morale, the correlation between Building High Performance Team scores and Teacher Morale in terms of rapport is significant; likewise for Interpersonal Sensitivity under School Heads' Personal & Professional Attributes and Interpersonal Effectiveness. There is a significant relationship between leading and managing changes to cohort survival rate, and between interpersonal sensitivity and completion rate. There is a significant relationship between Teacher's Morale in terms of satisfaction to completion rate.

In the light of the findings, School heads need to evaluate and monitor the training needs assessment to address teachers' professional growth and likewise assist in improvement of the school performance.

A similar research can be conducted to determine the validity of the relationship between teacher's morale and school performance and to verify the results of this study.

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