# Empowering Mechanisms of Schools Mediated by Transformational Leadership Towards Fostering Ethical Leadership Behavior

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**Abstract**

Empowering teachers provide direction and serve as emotional glue that causes school community to excel. This study assessed the mediating role of transformational leadership on the relationship between the empowering mechanism and ethical leadership behavior. Descriptive correlational design of research was employed in this study. The study utilized the total enumeration technique wherein 330 respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study and at least had been teaching in Sariaya East District DepEd Division of Quezon Philippines for at least one year. Results of the study revealed a significant indirect effect of empowering mechanism on the ethical leadership behavior. Furthermore, the direct effect of empowering mechanism on the ethical behavior in presence of the transformational leadership as a mediator was also found significant. Hence, transformational leadership partially mediated the relationship between empowering mechanisms and ethical leadership behavior. The researcher encouraged school heads to maximize the empowering mechanisms in school to strengthen teacher empowerment by identifying teachers who seek professional growth and willing to access high quality and continuous professional growth thru the technical assistance program of the school and encourage teacher's participation in school decision making process. School transformational leadership can be seen an essential tool in mediating empowering mechanisms of schools in fostering ethical leadership behavior since it focuses on establishing school culture, vision to enhance the quality of school teaching and learning, develop people, and improve the organization.

Keywords: Empowering mechanisms, Ethical leadership, leadership, school community, Transformational leadership

## 1. Introduction

The heart of every organization is leadership since it determines the direction for the group to find itself. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005) as cited by Del Valle (2016), leadership is vital in a learning organization because it can enhance self-awareness and personal development of its members.

In the past decades, many studies have been conducted and produced theories and views on leadership and its related aspects intended for education reforms. School leadership becomes of great interest as it is increasingly recognized as having a key role in improving students' outcomes (Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016). According to Burns (2010), transformational leadership is a process where leaders and followers work together to advance motivation and morale. It is also a style of leadership that transforms follower's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to a higher realm of motivation. This concept of transformational leadership was further developed by Bernard Bass. In his conception, transformational leadership usually leads to a change of goals and needs. Transformational leadership moves beyond transactions increasing the level of followers' awareness of valued outcomes, by expanding and elevating their needs and encouraging them to transcend their self-interest (Bass, 1985) as cited by Del Valle (2016).

Leithwood (1994) postulated that transformational leadership positively influences schools' leadership's ability to facilitate change in school restructuring initiatives and is best suited for coping with the demands of schools in twenty-first century. He also postulated that transformational leadership styles promise to enhance school leadership's ability to make the necessary school transformations that facilitate meeting stakeholder accountability and performance improvement demands.

Today, school transformational leadership can be seen essential since it focuses on establishing school

culture and vision to enhance the quality of school teaching and learning, develop people, and improve the organization (Shatzer, et.al., 2014). In addition, it will provide direction and serve as the emotional glue that causes organizations and its members to excel.

In view of the concepts, ideas and statements presented, the researcher wants to evaluate the empowering mechanisms of schools mediated by transformational leaders in Sariaya East District of Quezon Province towards fostering ethical leadership behavior in their workplace. It is about time that the school heads of Sariaya East District realize and provide consideration to conducting assessment on the empowering mechanisms which is vital in promoting and establishing relationship among teachers to achieve success. Demonstrating transformational leadership and ethical leadership behavior will help to achieve higher learning outcomes. Result of conducting empowering mechanisms assessment will also identify the gaps between teachers and school head which will eventually lead to applying better practices.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Transformational Leadership

Bernard Bass developed the "Bass' Transformational Leadership Theory". In his theory, the success of transformational leadership as well as the idea of leaders expressing authentic were quantified and ranked. He felt that measuring the impact inspires more authentic community. He also explained the basis of the theory by applying psychological mechanisms. According to Bass, the followers of a leader must feel not only trust and admiration, but also loyalty and respect.

Transformational leaders recognize the needs of organization and staff and stimulate and provide higher level needs inside a person. Transformational leader encourages people to be unified to pursuit higher goals with the aim of a positive important change in an organization. Transformational leadership consists of 4 main dimensions: The impact of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personal considerations (Hoffmeister et al, 2012,) as cited by Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016).

Idealized Influence**.** According to Deveshwar and Aneja (2014) as cited by Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016) leader behaves with his/her subordinates according to their own characteristics and capabilities. Leader pays personal attention to individuals to develop a healthy relationship by providing new learning opportunities according to their interest and skills. Idealized influence describes leaders who have charisma. They are curious and deliver messages with simplicity and tact. These leaders are readily trusted and respected by all members of the team because they are exemplary role models.

Inspirational Motivation. Inspirational and motivational leaders are those who challenge their followers in their jobs and create a clear perspective to reach goals and go toward the future by increasing efficiency in the workplace (Deveshwar and Aneja, 2014) as cited by Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016).

Intellectual Stimulation. Leaders encourage their subordinates to try to create motivation and creativity by modifying approaches and opportunities of their own subordinates. The main purpose of the leader is offering free flow of ideas and imaginations so that their followers and subordinates try to reach new techniques and approaches (Deveshwar and Aneja, 2014) as cited by Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016).

Individual Consideration. Leaders become model for their followers by their friendly behavior. They admire, respect, and trust their followers. They pay more attention to the needs of their followers than their own needs and avoid using the power for personal interests (Deveshwar and Aneja, 2014) Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016).

Organizational commitment is defined as a strong belief in the aims and values of an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to Doan et al. (2020), organizational commitment is the power of identity between individuals and organizations.

Akoto and Allida (2018) state that highly committed teachers are willing to give extra effort to achieve the school vision and goals. Teachers' commitment is a significant factor in determining the success of education reform and school effectiveness. Furthermore, organizational commitment is essential, particularly in today's world, when most teachers are looking for "greener pastures." As a result, organizational commitment refers to an employee's dedication to their employer (Donald, Lucia & Victor, 2016). According to the authors, employees who have a higher level of organizational commitment are more productive, compatible, and loyal to their jobs, have more responsibility, and are more satisfied.

Affective Commitment: Affective Commitment can be defined as employees' feelings of affection for their company or organization. Employees are identified and associated with their organizations as part of affective commitment. Affective commitment, also known as attitudinal commitment, is directly linked to affective reactions to their environment, particularly when adopting a job, which entails forming more robust bonds with the position, colleagues, work environment, and profession (Balay, 2000). Employees that have a high affective commitment to their organizations stay with them because they want it for themselves rather than because they need it.

Continuance Commitment: The primary reason employees feel committed to their organizations and continue working for them is that they need to stay at their organizations.

Normative Commitment: Employees' responsibility feelings about staying with the company are reflected in normative (rule-based) commitment. This sense of commitment encourages them to engage in specific behaviors because they believe their acts are ethical and decent.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

The essential theoretical perspective in this study is grounded in the following theories including transformational leadership theory, ethical leadership theory and empowerment theory. According to Bass (1985), transformational leadership moves beyond transactions increasing the level of followers' awareness of valued outcomes by elevating and expanding their needs and encouraging them to transcend their self-interests.

Moreover, Lai (2011) as cited by Del Valle (2016) stated that leaders motivate the personnel to achieve higher performance and cope with their self-interest by modifying their interests and self-esteem. The assumption of transformational leadership is that association with a higher moral position is motivating and will result in people following a leader who promotes this. In doing so, they model the values themselves and use charismatic methods to attract people to the values and to the leader.

Meanwhile, ethical leadership theory uses the ethical concepts as a guide to manage subordinates. Since ethics deals with the principles of 'right' behavior and leadership with influencing other people to achieve goals, ethical leadership is influencing people through ethics (Leunendonk, 2020). He also added that ethical leadership should also be understood through the lens of its influence over other leadership theories. Being ethical is a core part of other leadership styles and a strong ethical foundation is required for styles such as transformational and charismatic leadership. While strong ethical outlook is required for these leadership theories, ethical leadership places the biggest emphasis on implementing ethical values to every aspect of leadership.

However, the empowerment theory provides principles and a framework for organizing knowledge. The development of empowerment theory helps advance the construct beyond a passing fad and political manipulation. This theory of empowerment suggests ways to measure the construct in different contexts, to study empowering processes, and to distinguish empowerment from other constructs, such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, or locus of control (Zimmerman, 1998).

## 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The relationship between empowering mechanisms, transformational relationships, and ethical leadership behavior was conceptualized based on the abovementioned theories.

As can be seen in Figure 1, empowering mechanisms can affect both the four main elements of transformational leadership: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985) and the dimensions of ethical leadership concerning fairness, power sharing, role clarification (De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2008), ethical guidance, people orientation, concern for sustainability and integrity.

However, when the four factors of transformational leadership are mediated with the dimensions of ethical leadership, it will radically change since each of these four components is essential to the leadership style and helps to transform its followers into better, more beneficial individuals (Bass, 1985). Thus, transformational leadership could be utilized in mediation to foster ethical leadership behavior among the teachers and school heads of Sariaya East District.

The major concept of this study is to assess the extent of *"Empowering Mechanisms of Schools Mediated by Transformational Leaders Towards Fostering Ethical Leadership Behavior in the Workplace"* among the secondary school teachers in Sariaya East District. To conceptualize the relationship of the variables involved in the study, the research paradigm was conceptualized as presented in Figure 1.
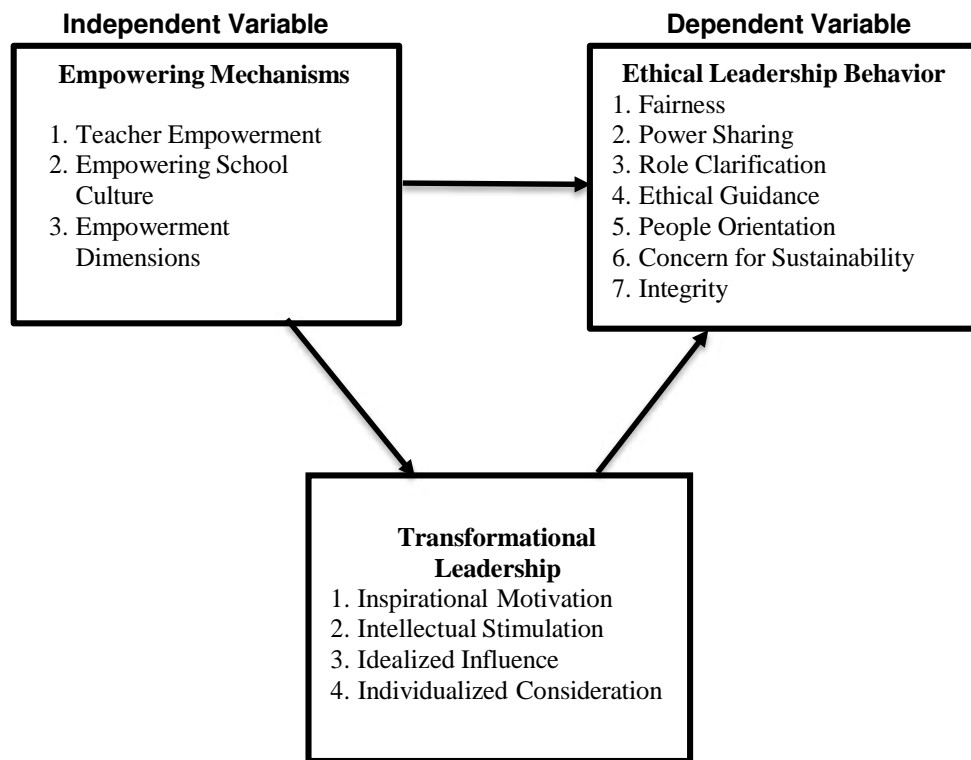
**Independent Variable**                                    **Dependent Variable**

**Empowering Mechanisms**

1. Teacher Empowerment
2. Empowering School
   Culture
3. Empowerment
   Dimensions

**Ethical Leadership Behavior**
1. Fairness
2. Power Sharing
3. Role Clarification
4. Ethical Guidance
5. People Orientation
6. Concern for Sustainability
7. Integrity

**Transformational
Leadership**
1. Inspirational Motivation
2. Intellectual Stimulation
3. Idealized Influence
4. Individualized Consideration

**Figure 1: Research Paradigm**

## 3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were posited in the study:

H1. There is no significant relationship between the perceived level of empowering mechanisms and transformational leadership.

H2. The perceived ethical leadership behavior among secondary school teachers is not significantly affected by the following dimensions:

       H2.1 empowering mechanisms; and
       H2.2 transformational leadership

## 4. Methodology

       This study employed a descriptive correlational design of research to describe the Empowering Mechanisms of Schools Mediated by Transformational Leaders Towards Fostering Ethical Leadership Behavior in the Workplace. The study utilized the total enumeration technique wherein 330 respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study and at least had been teaching in Sariaya East District for at least one year. 86% of the respondents were classified Secondary School Teachers I – III. Majority of them were female, between the age range 21 – 40 years old, have finished their post graduate studies and had been in the teaching profession for 10 years and below. Aside from teaching function, they also served as coordinators, advisers of school organizations and clubs, coach (academic/sports), and grade leaders.

       The researcher used a descriptive correlational design utilizing survey questionnaire as the primary tool in gathering data. A 16 items scale from Bass and Avolio's (1999) Dimensions of Transformational Leadership was adapted while ethical leadership was assessed using a 38 items scale from Ethical Leadership at Work (ELW) questionnaire developed by Kalshoven (2013) was adapted as well by the researcher. On the other hand, the 13 items scale of dimensions of empowering mechanisms was adopted and modified by the researcher and was pilot tested for the reliability of its content. The 67 items were measured with a 5-point Likert scale (5 = Extremely Manifested, 4 = Highly Manifested, 3 = Manifested, 2 = Moderately and 1 = Not Manifested).

The pilot testing improved the made survey questionnaire in terms of the structure of the sentence of every indicator, appropriateness of the terminology used, and accuracy in measurement. Mean and standard deviation are the descriptive measures that was used to describe the variables in the levels of the seven ethical leadership dimensions and the four levels of transformational leadership. The Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was applied to determine the relationship between the level of transformational leadership and ethical leadership to the overall empowering mechanisms. A multiple regression analysis was used to identify the predictor of empowering mechanisms. Mediation analysis using process macro was applied to assess the mediating role of transformational leadership on the relationship between the empowering mechanism and ethical leadership behavior.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

**Table 1**

Perceived Level of Empowering Mechanisms Manifested by Schools

| Empowering mechanisms *enhance…* | | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teacher Empowerment** | | | | |
| 1. Decision making | | 4.18 | 0.74 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Teacher impact | | 4.38 | 0.63 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Teacher status | | 4.17 | 0.67 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Autonomy | | 4.14 | 0.71 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. Professional growth | | 4.28 | 0.68 | Highly Manifested |
| 6. Self-efficacy | | 4.33 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| | **Overall** | **4.25** | **0.55** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Empowering mechanisms develop *teacher's…* | | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Empowering School Culture** | | | | |
| 1. Confidence | | 4.44 | 0.60 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Trust | | 4.52 | 0.59 | Extremely Manifested |
| 3. Innovation | | 4.21 | 0.69 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Collaborative management | | 4.49 | 0.62 | Highly Manifested |
| | **Overall** | **4.42** | **0.52** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Empowering mechanisms is ... | | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Empowerment  Dimension** | | | | |
| 1. Personal | | 4.31 | 0.63 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Close relationship | | 4.42 | 0.61 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Collective | | 4.26 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| | **Overall** | **4.43** | **0.55** | **Highly Manifested** |

Legend: 4.50-5.00 Extremely Manifested; 3.50-4.49 Highly Manifested; 2.50-3.49 Manifested
1.50-2.49 Moderately Manifested; 1.00-1.49 Not Manifested

Table 1 presents the perceived level of empowering mechanisms manifested by school transformational leaders in terms of teacher empowerment, empowering school culture and empowerment dimension. The table reveals that teachers' life skill fosters positive attitudes and seems effectively handled the tasks, obligations, and challenges related to professional activity.

In terms of empowering school culture, trust was extremely manifested. It only shows that respondents foster positive relationship with their students, co-teachers, parents, and principal. Moreover, there is a mutual interest, understanding and exchange of services that make the school community relation life, and community reflects the ideals of the school.

As can be seen from the Table 1, close relationship is the leading predictor of empowerment dimension and suggests that teachers have the capability and willingness to work with his/her co-teachers, parents, and students in achieving a common goal. Ricaforte (2013) mentioned in his study that teacher have several intimate contacts and connections with children and parents. Therefore, the collaboration between different social groups and schools makes education effective and meaningful. For this purpose, it is important to establish partnerships between schools, parents, and communities.

Rondeau & Wagar (2012) emphasized that enabling members of organizations to take part in decision making is an important component of an empowerment culture. An empowering school creates a qualitatively different relationships among various groups within schools that is based on mutual and reciprocal respect for cultural differences that are reflected in school-wide goals, norms, and cultural practices. It provides teachers with opportunities for collective planning and instruction, and shares responsibility for school governance to parents and school staff.

**Table 2**

Perceived Level of Transformational Leadership Manifested by the Teacher-Respondents

| Transformational leadership leads *to*… | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Inspirational Motivation** | | | |
| 1. Talking optimistically about the future | 4.40 | 0.62 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Talking seriously about things that should be done | 4.35 | 0.62 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Emphasizing on the importance of foresight | 4.30 | 0.69 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Giving hope to members about achievable goals | 4.40 | 0.62 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.36** | **0.55** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Transformational leadership leads *to*… | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Intellectual Stimulation** | | | |
| 1. Careful examination of offers to ensure sustainability | 4.24 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Considering different perspective while solving a problem | 4.22 | 0.64 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Requesting examination of problems in different perspective | 4.10 | 0.69 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Suggesting new ways of how to do something | 4.21 | 0.68 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.19** | **0.59** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Transformational leadership leads *to*… | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Idealized Influence** | | | |
| 1. Instilling a sense of pride and honor to members to connect with others | 4.26 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Showing a sense of power and competence | 4.20 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Acting in a way to rise other's respect | 4.36 | 0.63 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Sacrificing personal interest for other's interest | 4.15 | 0.73 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.24** | **0.57** | **Highly Manifested** |

| | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Individualized Consideration** | | | |
| 1. Allocating time for guidance and training | 4.22 | 0.69 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. Treating with members as a person not as a member | 4.44 | 0.66 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. Considering people with different needs, liabilities, and creativities | 4.45 | 0.61 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. Helping others to develop their capabilities | 4.40 | 0.64 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.28** | **0.56** | **Highly Manifested** |

Legend: 4.50-5.00 Extremely Manifested; 3.50-4.49 Highly Manifested; 2.50-3.49 Manifested 1.50-2.49 Moderately Manifested; 1.00-1.49 Not Manifested

Table 2 shows the level of transformational leadership manifested by the teacher-respondents in terms of inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration. The data reveals that talking optimistically about the future and giving hope to members about achievable goals were highly manifested. This only suggests that teachers have a clear and positive vision about the future of their school. This vision will be used by the teachers to excite and drive higher levels of performance. It seems that personalized, authentic communication among the members of the school community can yield extraordinary outcomes that include a stronger relationship, higher levels of trust, engagement, and commitment to achieve the common goal for the school development.

Regarding intellectual stimulation, the respondents viewed careful examination of offers to ensure suitability to be highly manifested. It seems that the respondents of the study checked carefully if an offer or a position given to them are suited based on the qualities and skills that they have. However, requesting for examination of problems from different perspectives earned the lowest mean. This only suggests that teachers lack the opportunity to re-examine problems that they encountered in school since solution to the problems most of the time is in the hand of the school head.

In terms of idealized influence, the data shows that acting in a way to rise other's respect was highly manifested and implies that teachers pay personal attention to individuals to develop a healthy relationship by providing new learning opportunities to become a role model. However, sacrificing personal interest for other's interest got the lowest mean. This only suggest that there are instances that school leaders consider the needs of others over their own personal needs. They share risks with followers and are consistent rather than arbitrary. According to Bass and Avolio (2004), they can be counted on to do the right thing, demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct, and avoid using power for personal gain.

As can be gleaned from the table, considering people with different needs, abilities, and creativities was highly manifested. On the other hand, allocating time for guidance and training obtained the lowest mean. According to Conger (2002) as cited by Moradi, K. M. and Shahbazi, H. (2016) transformational leadership goes beyond incentives for performance, to develop and encourage workers intellectually and creatively, as well as to transform their own concerns into an essential part of the organization's mission.

**Table 3**
Perceived Level of Ethical Leadership Behavior Manifested by the Teacher-Respondents

| Fairness is manifested when ... | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fairness** | | | |
| 1. I hold accountable for problems over which I have no control. | 3.71 | 1.12 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I hold responsible for work that I gave no control over. | 3.64 | 1.12 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. I hold responsible for things that are not my fault. | 3.40 | 1.25 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I never pursue my own success at the expense of others. | 1.98 | 1.06 | Moderately Manifested |
| 5. I focus mainly on reaching my own goals. | 3.39 | 1.27 | Manifested |
| 6. I manipulate my subordinates. | 3.50 | 1.50 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.28** | **0.56** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Power sharing is manifested when ... | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Power sharing** | | | |
| 1. I allow subordinates to influence my critical decisions. | 3.79 | 0.95 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I do not allow others to participate in decision making. | 2.51 | 1.43 | Manifested |
| 3. I seek advice from subordinates concerning organizational strategy. | 1.77 | 0.76 | Moderately Manifested |
| 4. I reconsider decisions based on recommendations by those who report to me. | 3.95 | 0.90 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. I delegate challenging responsibilities to subordinates. | 3.74 | 0.96 | Highly Manifested |
| 6. I seek permit to play key role in setting performance goals. | 3.50 | 1.50 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **3.29** | **0.70** | **Manifested** |

| Role clarification is manifested when ... | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Role clarification** | | | |
| 1. I indicate what the performance expectations of each group members are. | 4.08 | 0.70 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I explain what is expected of each group member. | 4.17 | 0.72 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. I explain what is expected of me and my colleagues. | 4.15 | 0.74 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I clarify priorities. | 4.25 | 0.71 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. I clarify who is responsible for what. | 4.16 | 0.77 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.16** | **0.66** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Integrity is manifested when ... | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Integrity** | | | |
| 1. I keep my promises. | 4.39 | 0.64 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I live in accordance to my deepest values. | 4.48 | 0.61 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. I can be relied on to honor my commitments. | 4.46 | 0.61 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I am honest and having strong moral principles. | 4.48 | 0.62 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.45** | **0.56** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Ethical guidance is manifested when ... | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Ethical guidance** | | | |
| 1. I clearly explain integrity related codes of conduct. | 4.23 | 0.68 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I explain what is expected from a teacher in terms of behaving with integrity. | 4.52 | 0.59 | Extremely Manifested |
| 3. I clarify integrity guidelines. | 4.33 | 0.65 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I ensure that teacher follow the teacher's code of conduct. | 4.18 | 0.72 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. I clarify the likely consequences of possible unethical behavior by myself and my colleagues. | 4.24 | 0.69 | Highly Manifested |
| 6. I stimulate the discussion of integrity issues among teachers. | 4.24 | 0.64 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.29** | **0.56** | **Highly Manifested** |

| People orientation is manifested when … | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **People orientation** | | | |
| 1. I am interested in how I feel and how am I doing. | 4.27 | 0.70 | Highly Manifested |
| 2. I take time for personal contact. | 4.18 | 0.73 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. I pay attention to my personal needs. | 4.08 | 0.82 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I take time to talk about work-related emotions. | 4.11 | 0.81 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. I am genuinely concerned about my personal development. | 4.24 | 0.74 | Highly Manifested |
| 6. I sympathize with others when they have problems. | 4.37 | 0.63 | Highly Manifested |
| 7. I care about my followers. | 4.39 | 0.68 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.24** | **0.60** | **Highly Manifested** |

| Concern for sustainability is manifested when … | Mean | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Concern for sustainability** | | | |
| 1. I want to work in an environmentally friendly manner. | 4.61 | 0.57 | Extremely Manifested |
| 2. I show concern for sustainability issues. | 4.39 | 0.64 | Highly Manifested |
| 3. I stimulate the recycling of items and materials in our department. | 4.19 | 0.71 | Highly Manifested |
| 4. I advocate zero waste at school events. | 4.17 | 0.83 | Highly Manifested |
| 5. I create and start a campus garden. | 3.54 | 1.21 | Highly Manifested |
| **Overall** | **4.18** | **0.60** | **Highly Manifested** |

Legend: 4.50-5.00 Extremely Manifested; 3.50-4.49 Highly Manifested; 2.50-3.49 Manifested
1.50-2.49 Moderately Manifested; 1.00-1.49 Not Manifested

Table 3 presents the level of ethical leadership behavior manifested by the teacher respondents in terms of fairness, power sharing, role clarification, ethical guidance, integrity, people orientation and concern for sustainability. The data reveals that being accountable for problems over which respondents have no control and responsible for work that they gave no control over were highly manifested. It seems that teachers were held accountable if there were problems that arose in the schools and worst became liable with the outcomes of the problems encountered. In these cases, fairness was not served to the teachers. The findings implied that respondents as ethical leaders act with integrity and treat others fairly. According to Brown, et.al (2005) as cited by Kalshoven (2013) fairness is seen as vital form of ethical leadership behavior because ethical leaders do not practice favoritism instead, they are making principled and fair choices, honest and trustworthy and take responsibility for their own actions.

As can be seen from Table 3, power sharing is highly manifested when a teacher was permitted to play a key role in setting performance goals. This implies that teachers were given an opportunity to be involved and took part in planning for performance goals of the school. However, seeking advice from subordinates concerning organizational strategy was moderately manifested. This only implies that school heads tend not to seek advice or help from their teachers. In some instances, the decision of the school head is the decision for all. Brown, et.al (2005) as cited by Kalshoven (2013) suggest that school leaders provide their subordinates the right to be heard and share their ideas, having a voice in the school organization. This makes subordinates less dependent on their leaders.

The table also reveals that clarifying priorities was highly manifested. This only suggests that teacher has many roles to play effectively inside and outside the classroom. One of the roles of teacher is being a resource specialist. Most of time, we seek or ask information from teachers. Aside from this teacher plays the role of a mentor. Student looked up and imitated the special qualities of their teachers. They played as a role models. Teachers also play as leaders, support person and in some instances learners like their students.

Moreover, indicating the performance expectations of each group members was highly manifested. It seems that one of the roles of the teacher is know everyone in his/her classroom. This is one of the good qualities of a teacher; the ability to know their students. Teacher can discover the strengths and weaknesses of their students in a

variety of ways. They were able to showcase the talents of their students and at the same time they have the capability to bring the best of their students. There is no other person in the classroom that could memorize and recognize the students other than him/her. They are fully aware what students can or cannot perform. Teacher knows what to expect and not to expect from his/her students.

Based on the gathered data, explaining what is expected from a teacher in terms of behaving with integrity was extremely manifested. This only implies that teachers are fully aware on how they behave or act inside the classroom and how they interact with their students, parents, co-teachers, and the school head. They are also aware and guided by the professional conduct of teachers. However, ensuring that teacher follow the teacher's code of conduct got the lowest mean. It may be inferred from the findings of the study that school ethical leaders gave importance on the integrity of every teacher. This is manifested by reminding teachers on how to they should behave in the school community, clarifying ethical guidelines, presenting possible consequences for misbehaviors, and addressing some integrity issues. According to Brown et. al. (2005) as cited by Kalshoven (2013) ethical leaders guide followers in setting priorities and ethical dilemmas they experience. He labels this ethical guidance, which implies communication about ethics, explanation of ethical rules, and promotion and reward of ethical conduct among subordinates.

The data reveals that living in accordance with deepest values and being honest and having strong moral principles were highly manifested by the respondents. In may be inferred from the result of the study that school ethical leaders gave importance on living ethical values, exhibiting moral principles, and honoring and keeping promises. Promises were kept when school head and teachers display strong moral principles and ensure the quality of learning among its students. Promises were kept when budget was used appropriately to a project and proper liquidation was presented and made available.

Dineen, Lewicki and Tomlinson (2006) distinguished integrity based on the behavioral integrity literature. Leaders who keep promises can be trusted and believed because they work or behave as expected (Simons, 2002). Thus, ethical leaders keep their promises and act consistently, in a predictable way.

Table 3 uncovers that caring about followers was highly manifested. This implies that teachers were encouraged by their school head to pursue higher education not only to be updated with the latest trends in education but also to be promoted after finishing it. They might be consulted as well by their school head for their welfare. The results pointed out that school ethical leaders are aware of their responsibility and duty to care about their followers and sympathize with them whenever problems occur. It can be implied also from the result that school leaders must display genuine concern to the members and take time to discuss work-related issues.

As can be seen from the table, the respondents perceived that working in an environmentally friendly manner was extremely manifested. This implies that it would be easy for a teacher to work in a conducive environment; free from noise pollution, having a well-ventilated classroom, and good classroom lighting. It can be implied from the finding of the study that school ethical leaders are also considered as sustainable leaders act beyond their self-interests. Thus, it includes environmental orientation as an ethical leader behavior.

**Table 4**

Relationship between the Level of Empowering Mechanisms and Transformational Leadership

| Perceived level of empowering mechanisms | Transformational Leadership | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Inspirational motivation | Intellectual stimulation | Idealized influence | Individualized consideration |
| Teacher empowerment | .636** | .695** | .693** | .723** |
| Empowering school culture | .636** | .695** | .693** | .723** |
| Empowerment dimensions | .636** | .695** | .693** | .723** |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Legend: 0.000 – 0.199 Very Weak; 0.200 – 0.399 Weak; 0.400 – 0.599 Moderate; 0.600 – 0.799 Strong; 0.800 – 1.000 Very Strong

The table revealed that individualized consideration has the strongest association on the level of teacher empowerment (r = 0.723, p < .01) and on the level of empowering school culture (r = 0.723, p < .01). Meanwhile, intellectual stimulation has the strongest correlation to empowerment dimensions (r = 0.695, p < .01).

Intellectual stimulation has the second strongest relationship to the level of teacher empowerment with an r = 0.695, p < .01 and on the level of empowering school culture with an r = 0.695, p < .01. This is followed by idealized influence and inspirational motivation with an r = 0.693 and 0.636, respectively. This only implies that the higher or the more empowered the teachers are, the higher they are considered. When teachers are empowered, they

are more motivated and inspired to perform their duties and responsibilities. Among the sub-dimensions of transformational leadership, inspirational motivation has the least association on the level of teacher empowerment, empowering school culture and empowerment dimensions. This only suggests that inspirational motivation has nothing to do or least association with empowering mechanisms. Considering those results, those variables are heading the same direction. Thus, the more school transformational leadership was practiced, the greater the teachers were empowered.

**Table 5**

Perceived Ethical Leadership Behavior Significantly Predicted by Empowering Mechanisms

| Predictors | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| | .896 | .171 | | 5.241 | .000 |
| Empowering school culture | .303 | .068 | .315 | 4.484 | .000 |
| Teacher empowerment | .242 | .059 | .264 | 4.083 | .000 |
| Empowerment dimensions | .184 | .060 | .202 | 3.042 | .003 |

R = .719; Adj. $R^2$ = .513
F (3, 326) = 116.309; p <.01

Table 5 shows the perceived ethical leadership behavior significantly predicted by empowering mechanisms. As revealed in the table, a significant regression equation was found F (3, 326) = 116.309, p < .01), with an adjusted $R^2$ = of .513. This only suggests that a specific dimension of empowering mechanism was affected by a 1-point increase in ethical leadership behavior while keeping the other dimensions of empowering mechanisms constant. This only means that the ethical leadership behavior comes with empowering mechanisms.

The model further revealed that 51.3% of the variation on participants' self-assessed ethical leadership behavior is significantly explained by empowering school culture, teacher empowerment, and empowerment dimensions. The data also revealed that there is a significant relationship between ethical leadership behavior and empowering mechanisms since all its predictors obtained a p-value lower that the significant level set at 0.01.

Hine & Lavery (2014) as cited by Balkar (2015) stated that teacher empowerment contributes to sustainability of the professional development of teachers, via the autonomy it supplies to the teachers and the positive impacts it makes on their job satisfaction. Moreover, the establishment of professional learning communities that contribute to professional development of teachers as well as their progressive behavior are also supported by empowering behaviors of school leaders (Hollingworth, 2012).

**Table 6**

Perceived Ethical Leadership Behavior Significantly Predicted by Transformational Leadership

| Predictors | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| | .850 | .149 | | 5.721 | .000 |
| Intellectual stimulation | .315 | .052 | .369 | 6.017 | .000 |
| Idealized influence | .185 | .061 | .208 | 3.032 | .003 |
| Inspirational motivation | .127 | .054 | .138 | 2.362 | .019 |
| Individualized consideration | .126 | .059 | .141 | 2.148 | .032 |

R = .782; Adj. $R^2$ = .607
F(4, 325) = 127.863; p <.01

Table 6 illustrates the perceived ethical leadership behavior significantly predicted by transformational leadership. As shown in the table, a significant regression equation was found F(4, 325) = 127.863, p < .01), with an adjusted $R^2$ = of .607. This only means that a specific dimension of transformational leadership was affected by a 1-point increase in ethical leadership behavior while keeping the other dimensions of transformational leadership constant. This implies that the ethical leadership behavior comes with transformational leadership. The model further

revealed that 60.7% of the variation on participants' self-assessed ethical leadership behavior is significantly explained by intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration.

**Table 7**

Mediation Analysis of Transformational Leadership on the Relationship between the Empowering Mechanism and Ethical Leadership Behavior

| Relationship | Total Effect | Direct Effect | Indirect Effect | Confidence Interval Lower Bound | Upper Bound | t-statistics | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EM -> TL -> ELB | 0.655 (0.000) | 0.197 (0.000) | 0.458 | 0.357 | 0.551 | 9.339 | Partial Mediation |

Table 7 presents the mediation analysis of transformational leadership on the relationship between the empowering mechanism and ethical leadership behavior. The results revealed a significant indirect effect of empowering mechanism on the ethical leadership behavior (b=.458, t=9.339). This implies that empowering mechanisms influences indirectly the ethical leadership behavior of the teacher-respondents. This also means that empowering mechanisms come along with ethical leadership behavior.

Furthermore, the direct effect of empowering mechanism on the ethical behavior in presence of the transformational leadership as a mediator was also found significant (b=.197, p<.001). Hence, transformational leadership partially mediated the relationship between empowering mechanisms and ethical leadership behavior. This suggests that transformational leadership helps in facilitating empowering mechanisms and ethical leadership behavior.

## 6. Conclusions

The main purpose of this study is to assess the extent of "Empowering Mechanisms of Schools Mediated by Transformational Leadership Towards Fostering Ethical Leadership Behavior" on the secondary school teachers of Sariaya East District, DepEd Quezon province.

Results of the study showed that among the three dimensions of empowering mechanisms, empowering school culture was found out to be highly manifested while inspirational motivation emerged to be the leading transformational leadership component that was highly manifested by the teachers of Sariaya East District. Among the seven ethical leadership behaviors, integrity, ethical guidance, and people orientation were highly manifested by the respondents in their respective schools. Individualized consideration has the strongest association on the level of teacher empowerment while intellectual stimulation has the strongest correlation to empowerment dimensions. Moreover, among the sub-dimensions of transformational leadership, inspirational motivation has the least association on the level of teacher empowerment, empowering school culture and empowerment dimensions. Considering these results, those variables are heading the same direction. Thus, the more school transformational leadership was practiced, the greater the teachers were empowered.

## 7. Recommendation

The study suggests that school heads may be encouraged to maximize the empowering mechanisms in school to strengthen teacher empowerment by identifying teachers who seek professional growth and willing to access high quality and continuous professional growth thru the technical assistance program of the school and encourage teacher's participation in school decision making process. School heads as well as the teachers may conduct seminar/workshop to be re-oriented on the four sub-dimensions of transformational leadership to strengthen particularly teacher's intellectual stimulation and development opportunities may be provided on the development of the ethical behavior of the teachers particularly on concern for sustainability of the environment. School heads may continue to demonstrate fairness and power sharing among teachers and subordinates to be heard and share their ideas and have a voice in the organization. This will make teachers less dependent and develop their followership and leadership skills.

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