

School Administrators' Leadership Traits and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Good leadership traits of school administrators are essential in schools for teachers to feel confident and satisfied in their work as professionals. This study aimed to determine the leadership traits of school administrators' leadership traits as perceived by the teachers and the teachers' level of job satisfaction and the significant relationship of the school administrators' leadership traits and teachers' job satisfaction and identify which Independent Variables singly or in combination predict the Dependent Variables. The study employed the correlational-causal design. Using Slovin's Formula, a total of 156 elementary school teachers in East II District of the Division of Cagayan de Oro City comprised the respondents of the study. An adapted and modified questionnaire was used to gather the data. Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson Product Coefficient of Correlation, and Multiple Linear Regression were the statistical tools utilized to organize, analyze, and interpret the data. The study revealed that school administrators' leadership traits specifically school operations and resource management and teachers' job satisfaction in terms of teamwork have the highest Mean. School Administrators' leadership traits on teaching and learning and connections with stakeholders have significant relationship to teachers' job satisfaction. Self and others' development and connection with stakeholders of school administrators' leadership traits predict the teachers job satisfaction. Thus, school administrators are encouraged to enhance their leadership traits in teaching and learning, self and others' development and connections with stakeholders through trainings and study.

Keywords: leadership, traits, teachers' job satisfaction

1. Introduction

Good leadership traits of school administrators are very essential in schools for teachers to feel confident and satisfied in their work as professionals. Once they feel the trust towards their administrators' leadership, they can also feel that they can attain the set goals, vision, and mission of the school as a team. They can sense that their concerns related to their tasks will be addressed. Also, there is a feeling of security while they are implementing various programs, activities, and projects for their learners in school. There is a sense of belongingness and unity among the school personnel and school leaders.

Good leadership traits are a must-have for leaders in the workplace. Employees cannot do their best work if they doubt others' intentions or capabilities and the direction or viability of the organization. Leaders can build their employees' trust by making processes fair and transparent, treating people equally, and allocating resources in an equitable way. Frei and Morriss (2021) believed that employees trust their leaders when they are interacting with the real them (authenticity), when they have faith in their judgment and competence and when they feel that their leaders care about them.

In high-trust environments, people show up and do their best work. They gain productive energy, creativity, speed, and better results. They align around a common purpose, take risks, support each other, and communicate openly and honestly. Employees who trust their leaders more are less likely to quit, they tend to believe information from their leader more, and they seem to commit to company's decisions more. They feel more committed, more satisfied, and more likely to stay.

According to Ouslis (2019), leaders who provide structure and are considerate to their employees tended to be trusted more than leaders who did not. Employees who trust their immediate boss have higher job satisfaction, more committed to the company, and feel they are treated more fairly in processes and decision making. Employees who trust their leaders feel their organization supports them more, and feel that their leaders fairly allocate resources, treat others well, and follow procedures transparently.

This holds true in the education sector where teachers' trust in their principals is vital as this influences their attitudes and actions with respect to any assigned tasks. Mansor et al. (2021) claimed that teachers' trust in the management and organization of schools influences their attitudes to any decisions made by school leaders. In the Department of Education, teachers need to trust their leaders in school since they will work together in the delivery of quality education for their learners. They need to work as one committed team in the implementation of various school programs, projects, and activities.

The researcher, who is one of the teachers in the Division of Cagayan de Oro City, considered school administrators' leadership traits as an important feature in determining teachers' job satisfaction. To the knowledge of the researcher, there are other studies using similar variables with this study that were conducted by other researchers. Yet she wanted to investigate East II District school leaders' traits, whether these leadership traits play an important role towards teachers' job satisfaction. Thus, this study was conceptualized.

The researcher considered in her study the Trait Theory of Leadership which was first proposed by Thomas Carlyle in the mid-1800s. According to Carlyle, as cited by Cherry (2022), leadership was based on the rationale that certain traits produce certain patterns of behavior, patterns are consistent across different situations, and people are born with leadership traits. Among the core traits identified are achievement drive, leadership motivation, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability, knowledge of business, and emotional maturity. Moreover, according to this theory, leaders are better at showing themselves off, are psychologically better adjusted to display better judgment, engage themselves in social activities, always know more, and never hesitate to take the lead. In other words, people who want to become good leaders should always learn, be informed, know how to display themselves and appear in situations where these traits could be helpful. In this sense, any of the aforementioned characteristics can be developed over time according to the trait theory of leadership.

Additionally, this study was also anchored in DepEd Order No 24, s. 2020, the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH) which defines school leadership quality in the Philippines. The standards describe the expectations from school heads' increasing levels of knowledge, practice, and professional engagement. At the same time, the standards allow the school heads growing understanding, applied with increasing sophistication across a broader and more complex range of leadership and management situations. The PPSSH is divided into five (5) domains: strategic leadership, school operations and resources management, teaching and learning focused, self and others' development, and connection with stakeholders which were used in this study, as the Independent Variable. and teachers' job satisfaction which included teamwork, leadership, empowerment and participation and communication as the Dependent Variable.

2. Methodology

The correlational-causal research design was used in this study. This method is the appropriate design considering that the study looked into the possible association of school administrators' leadership traits and teachers' job satisfaction. According to Fraenkel et al. (2018), correlational-causal designs in research is a research which purpose is to find the relationship between two or more variables and their cause and effect.

3. Results and Discussion

Problem 1. What is the level of school administrators' leadership traits in terms of the following:

- 1.1 strategic leadership;
- 1.2 school operations and resources management;
- 1.3 teaching and learning focused;
- 1.4 self and others' development; and
- 1.5 connections with stakeholders?

Table 1

Overall School *Administrators'* Leadership Traits

Leadership Traits	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Strategic Leadership	4.23	.59	Always	Very Highly Practiced
School Operations and Resources Management	4.34	.55	Always	Very Highly Practiced
Teaching and Learning Focused	4.29	.61	Always	Very Highly Practiced
Self and Others' Development	4.29	.59	Always	Very Highly Practiced
Connections with Stakeholders	4.16	.59	Almost Always	Highly Practiced
Over-all	4.26	.59	Always	Very Highly Practiced

Note: 4.20-5.0 Very Highly Practiced; 3.41-4.20 Highly Practiced; 2.61-3.40 Moderately Practiced; 1.81-2.60 Less; 1.0-1.80 Very Less Practiced

Table 1 reveals the overall school administrators' leadership traits. It has an Overall Mean of 4.26 with $SD=.59$. This means that school administrators abide and practice their duties and responsibilities defined for them. They functioned as described in their duties and responsibilities mentioned in the Philippine Performance Standards for School Heads. This is the reason that many school administrators got outstanding ratings every end of the school year.

As seen on the table, among the five (5) school administrators' leadership traits, school operations and resources management obtained the highest Mean of 4.34 with $SD=.55$, which is described as Always and interpreted as Very Highly Practiced. This means that the school administrators have the commitment in ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and fairness in discharging functions towards maximizing organizational health. This indicates that school administrators always share the vision, mission, and goals of the school and the Department of Education (DepEd) in general, they always commit themselves to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness in discharging functions towards maximizing organizational health, they always promote the quality of teaching and learning in their respective schools, they always nurture themselves and others to ensure people and team effectiveness, and they always commit themselves in advocating that education is everyone's responsibility.

Meanwhile, the variable, connections with stakeholders got the lowest Mean of 4.16 with $SD=.59$, which is described as Almost Always and interpreted as Highly Practiced. This has the lowest mean but it still practiced by school administrators. This means that school administrators are trying to be closed or to connect with stakeholders but they are so occupied that they cannot have more time to deal with stakeholders. They just delegate it to their teachers. Especially that stakeholders do not stay long in the school where they are assigned to lead. Usually, they stay in a certain school for three (3) years and seldom to stay longer. So they cannot have the chance to be closer to the community. Sometimes, there are also school heads who are ashamed to approach the stakeholders.

Problem 2. What is the level of teachers' job satisfaction in terms of:

- 2.1. Teamwork;
- 2.2 Leadership;
- 2.3 Empowerment and Participation; and

2.4 Communication?

Table 2*Overall Teachers' Job Satisfaction*

Teachers' Job Satisfaction	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Teamwork	4.03	.57	Agree	Highly Satisfied
Leadership	3.99	.66	Agree	Highly Satisfied
Empowerment and Participation	3.83	.64	Agree	Highly Satisfied
Communication	3.86	.61	Agree	Highly Satisfied
Overall Mean	3.93	.62	Agree	Highly Satisfied

Note: 4.20-5.0 Very Highly Satisfied; 3.41-4.20 Highly Satisfied 2.61-3.40 Moderately Satisfied; 1.81-2.60 Less Satisfied; 1.0-1.80 Least Satisfied

Table 2 shows the overall teachers' job satisfaction. It has an overall Mean of 3.93 with SD=.62, which is described as Agree and interpreted as Highly Satisfied. This means that there is a feeling of gratification and happiness towards the present job. It means positive outcomes in the workplace. If teachers are satisfied with their jobs, this means that they trust their school head and that they are loyal towards their organization even during the time that their schools will be confronted with problems as described by Juneja (2022).

Furthermore, highest among the four (4) areas of job satisfaction is the teamwork with a mean of 4.03 with SD=.57 which is described as Agree and interpreted as Highly Satisfied. This means that teachers are satisfied with their jobs because there is camaraderie, understanding and sharing in their schools. Peace prevails in their organization, which means that they understand each other. There is sharing and caring for each other.

Meanwhile, Empowerment and Participation has the lowest Mean of 3.83 with SD=.64, which is described as Agree and Interpreted as Highly Satisfied. This means that teachers are satisfied their current jobs because their school heads highly work with them to attain their full potential. They are being delegated. They have a better relationship with their school leaders and co-teachers in schools. Their school heads highly encourage them to contribute and share responsibilities in schools. In addition, imparting and exchanging of information are highly evident in the workplace where teachers can feel the sense of belongingness in the organization.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between administrators' leadership traits and the teachers' job satisfaction?

Table 3*Correlation Analysis Between Administrators' Leadership Traits and Teachers' Job Satisfaction*

Variables	r-value	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Strategic Leadership	.136	.091	Accept	Not Significant
School Operations and Resources Management	.052	.515	Accept	Not Significant
Teaching and Learning Focused	.225**	.005	Reject	Significant
Self and Others' Development	.084	.296	Accept	Not Significant
Connections with Stakeholders	.453**	.000	Reject	Significant

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the correlation analysis between school administrators' leadership traits and teachers' job satisfaction. The results show that only school administrator's leadership traits on focusing teaching and learning ($p=0.005$), and their connections with stakeholders ($p=0.000$) have highly significant relationship towards their teachers' job satisfaction while strategic leadership ($p=0.91$), school operations and resources management ($p=0.515$), and their self and others' development ($p=0.296$) have no significant connection towards teachers' job satisfaction in the workplace.

As assessed by teacher-participants, they agreed that their school leaders always assist them in the review, contextualization, and implementation of learning standards to make the curriculum relevant for their learners, they provide technical assistance to them on teaching standards and pedagogies within and across learning areas to improve their teaching practice. They use validated feedback obtained from learners, parents, and other stakeholders to help them improve their performance, they utilize learning outcomes in developing data-based interventions to maintain learner achievement and attain other performance indicators. School leaders also provide technical assistance to them in using learner assessment tools, strategies and results consistent with curriculum requirements to ensure accountability in achieving higher learning outcomes. They manage a learner-friendly, inclusive, and healthy learning environment. They ensure integration of career awareness and opportunities in the provision of learning experiences aligned with the curriculum, and they implement learner discipline policies that are developed collaboratively with stakeholders including parents, school personnel and the community. These characteristics of school leaders gave opportunities and support for teachers in the teaching and learning process which can attain their goals for holistic development of learners. Thus, making them to be highly satisfied with their present work as public school teachers.

Toropova et al. (2021) emphasized the substantial association between school-working conditions and teacher job satisfaction. Good working conditions in schools serve as the factors that is closely related to teacher job satisfaction. Moreover, Ortan et al. (2021) argued that self-efficacy, promotion, positive student behavior, and working conditions have significant effects on job satisfaction. These factors influence job satisfaction and well-being in the teaching profession because they ensure a positive work environment in which teachers and students thrive, thus leading to higher levels of involvement from teachers, students, and stakeholders.

Problem 4. Which of the independent variable/s singly or in combination best predict teachers' job satisfaction?

Table 4 presents the regression analysis between administrators' leadership traits and teachers' job satisfaction. The regression coefficients are presented but the results show that only the combination of school leaders' traits on self and others' development, and their connections with stakeholders have highly significant result as indicated by their t - values of 2.531, $p=0.012$; and 6.348 p -value=0.000), respectively; while strategic leadership $p=0.480$, school operations and resources management $p=0.508$, and teaching and learning focused $p=1.07$ have no significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction. A multiple linear regression was conducted, which resulted to the final model: $y = 1.812 + 0.131X_1 + 0.251X_2$. The final model has a highly significant result ($F=11.692$; $p=0.00$). It implies that in every one-unit increase of leadership trait on their self and others' development, the dependent variable – teachers' job satisfaction also increases by 22.8 percent, holding the other leadership trait on their connections with stakeholders constant. Also, in every one-unit increase of leadership trait on their connections with stakeholders, the dependent variable – teachers' job satisfaction also increases by 48.8 percent, holding the other leadership trait on their self and others' development constant.

Table 4
 Regression Analysis between *Administrators' Leadership Traits and Teachers' Job Satisfaction*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standard Coefficient Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	1.812	.327		5.536	.000
Strategic Leadership	.030	.043	.056	.708	.480
School Operations and Resources Management	.026	.039	.053	.664	.508
Teaching and Learning Focused	.065	.040	.127	1.620	1.07
Self and Others' Development	.131	.052	.228	2.531	.012
Connections with Stakeholders	.251	.040	.488	6.348	.000
	R=0.528	R ² =0.279		F=11.692	Sig.=0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Moreover, 27.9 percent of the total variation in teachers' job satisfaction is explained by school leaders' leadership traits on their self and others' development, and their connections with stakeholders while the other 72.10 percent is explained by other factors not included in the model.

School leaders always sets personal and professional development goals based on self-assessment aligned with the Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH), they apply professional reflection and learning to improve one's practice, they participate in professional networks to upgrade knowledge and skills and to enhance practice, they implement the performance management system with a team to support the career advancement of school personnel and to improve office performance. They also implement professional development initiatives to enhance strengths and address performance gaps among school personnel, they provide opportunities to individuals and teams in performing leadership roles and responsibilities, they implement laws, policies, guidelines and issuances on the rights, privileges, and benefits of school personnel to ensure their general welfare, and they implement a school reward system to recognize and motivate learners, school personnel and other stakeholders for exemplary performance and/or continued support.

Teachers also agreed that their school leaders always build constructive relationships with authorities and other stakeholders to foster an enabling and supportive environment for learners, they manage school organizations by applying relevant policies and guidelines to support the attainment of institutional goals, they exhibit inclusive practices to foster awareness, acceptance, and respect, they communicate effectively with them and to other stakeholders, and they also support and initiate partnerships with the community to strengthen support for learner development as well as school and community improvement.

The leadership traits of school leaders that prioritize their own and other school personnel professional development and have a strong relationship with stakeholders can encourage satisfied teachers to perform better in their schools. Baluyos et al. (2019) said that the satisfaction of teachers on school heads' supervision and job security inversely affect the teachers' work performance. In addition, Kadong et al. (2017) mentioned that majority of the teachers are somewhat satisfied on the following facets of job satisfaction: school policies, supervision, interpersonal relations, opportunities for promotion and growth, working conditions, work itself, achievement, recognition, and responsibility. This implies that a teacher is satisfied with their job is also productive. Teaching learning processes are made more efficient and effective and consequently could produce high competitive learners.

Equation Model

$$Y = 1.812 + 0.131X_1 + 0.251X_2$$

Where: 1.812 = constant

Y = Job Satisfaction

X₁ = Self and Others' Development

X₂ = Connections with Stakeholders

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the significant findings of the study the following conclusions are derived.

1. The school administrators' leadership traits are very highly practiced as perceived by the teachers.
2. The teachers are highly satisfied with their job as facilitator and molders of the young minds.
3. Teaching and Learning Focused and Connections with Stakeholders as leadership traits of the school administrators are statistically associated with the teachers' job satisfaction.
4. Self and others' development and connection with stakeholders as leadership traits of the school administrators are the best predictors of teachers' job satisfaction.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The school administrators may reflect and use the results of this study as basis to strengthen their linkage and partnership with stakeholders for possible outsourcing.
2. The school administrators can increase the job satisfaction of the teachers on the area of communication by establishing an open communication channel with them. Furthermore, they may consider teachers' job satisfaction for the benefit of both teaching personnel and learners, such as, leaders may be more aware and cognizant on the importance of the desirable leadership traits in schools to produce highly committed teachers as well as to increase their level of performance.
3. School administrators are encouraged to maintain and even enhanced their leadership traits along the area of Teaching and Learning Focused and Connections with Stakeholders hence, these two are significantly associated with the teachers' job satisfaction.
4. Since, self and others' development and connections with stakeholders are best predictors of job satisfaction, school heads are encouraged to enhance these traits by joining more trainings to develop their skills as school heads and enhance their skill in dealing with stakeholders.
5. Future researchers may replicate the study but with consideration of other variables not identified. For instance, other variables of leadership traits and teachers' job satisfaction may be explored; and that the research instrument on teachers' job satisfaction and leadership traits can also be subjected for further content validation to ensure its content validity.

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