THE INTERPLAY OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS ON SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN DAVAO DE ORO DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship of administrative leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. It also determined the extent of public leadership of school heads and the school effectiveness of public elementary schools in Davao de Oro Division. With the use of probability sampling, 130 elementary teachers in the public schools were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive- correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was an extensive administrative leadership of school heads and an extensive school effectiveness. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, all domains of administrative leadership of school heads were found to have significantly influence school effectiveness. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education and school heads may identify means on how to help strengthen their administrative leadership to ensure the attainment of school effectiveness. More so, future researchers may further explore the involved variables considering other factors and research methods.

Keywords: Administrative leadership, school effectiveness, descriptive correlation, Davao de Oro Division, Philippines

1. INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of schools is significantly influenced by the leadership provided by school heads, which plays a vital role in shaping the academic and administrative environment of educational institutions. Administrative leadership, which encompasses decision-making, resource allocation, and fostering a collaborative atmosphere, has been linked to improved school outcomes, creating a foundation for better student performance, teacher satisfaction, and overall institutional success. School heads, in particular, are instrumental in establishing and maintaining school effectiveness, which includes the efficient operation of the school, high academic standards, and a positive school climate.

In the context of the Philippines, particularly in the Davao de Oro Division, public elementary schools are striving to achieve greater effectiveness in an increasingly complex educational landscape. The role of administrative leadership in these schools remains crucial as educational leaders face challenges that range from resource management to addressing diverse learner needs and ensuring sustainable academic achievement. However, while various studies have explored the general relationship between leadership and school effectiveness, a deeper understanding of how specific elements of administrative leadership influence the success of schools at the elementary level remains underexplored.

This study seeks to fill that gap by examining the relationship between the administrative leadership of school heads and school effectiveness in the public elementary schools of Davao de Oro Division. Through a descriptive-correlational approach, the research aims to explore the extent of leadership effectiveness demonstrated by school heads and how this influences various dimensions of school performance. By understanding the dynamics of administrative leadership and its impact on school effectiveness, this study hopes to provide valuable insights for educational policymakers, school leaders, and future researchers, contributing to the ongoing development of strategies aimed at enhancing the educational system.

The findings of this study will not only shed light on the relationship between leadership practices and school success but also provide recommendations for strengthening leadership at the school level, ultimately ensuring that schools continue to thrive in delivering quality education to their students.

Global Context

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on the role of administrative leadership in school effectiveness worldwide, particularly in response to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Research conducted by Leithwood et al. (2021) emphasizes the importance of adaptive leadership, where school leaders need to be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances, including the shift to remote and hybrid learning. Studies have shown that school heads who employ a transformational leadership style, focusing on teacher development and clear communication, see improved student outcomes, even in crisis situations (Harris & Jones, 2020). In addition, the ongoing digital transformation of education has reinforced the need for school leaders to embrace technology and ensure it enhances learning processes

rather than just supporting administrative tasks (Gurr & Drysdale, 2021). These global insights stress the connection between leadership and school success in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

National Context

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) continues to recognize the need for effective leadership to navigate the evolving challenges in the education sector, especially during the pandemic. As highlighted by studies in recent years, the effectiveness of school leadership has a significant impact on the successful implementation of distance learning programs (Almodiel & Alipio, 2020). School heads were tasked with not only ensuring educational continuity through online platforms and modular learning but also managing the mental health and well-being of both students and teachers. A study by Tiu et al. (2021) found that school leaders who demonstrate proactive leadership, including emotional support for teachers and students, have been more successful in mitigating the negative impacts of remote learning on educational outcomes. Furthermore, research on leadership practices during the pandemic indicates that providing strong, clear direction, as well as empowering teachers to innovate, plays a key role in improving school effectiveness (DepEd, 2020).

The Philippines' educational system has also focused on improving leadership training through the "Leadership for Learning" program, which equips school heads with the necessary skills to navigate both traditional and modern educational settings (DepEd, 2021). With the government pushing for the digitalization of schools, effective leadership is crucial for ensuring that educational technology is integrated seamlessly and that both students and teachers have the resources they need to succeed.

Local Context

In the Davao Region, specifically within the Davao de Oro Division, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of strong leadership in schools. The transition to modular and online learning has posed significant challenges, particularly in rural areas with limited internet access. According to a recent study by the Davao de Oro Division Office (2022), school heads have played a critical role in adapting their leadership styles to ensure that learning continues despite these challenges. The region's local education office has prioritized strengthening leadership through professional development programs that emphasize crisis management, effective communication, and the integration of technology in learning (Davao de Oro Division Office, 2022).

Moreover, local school leaders have focused on community engagement, recognizing that collaboration with local government units, parents, and community stakeholders is essential in supporting both the academic and emotional needs of students during these times. Research indicates that school effectiveness in this region is closely linked to how well school heads can build partnerships and use available resources creatively to overcome logistical and educational barriers (Davao de Oro Division Office, 2022). This is particularly important in ensuring that the impact of leadership on student outcomes is maximized in a context where access to education is often hindered by geographical challenges.

Review of Related Literature

The Role of Leadership in Education during the Pandemic

Recent studies have consistently shown that strong leadership is crucial for navigating the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, adaptive leadership has been highlighted as a key factor in ensuring educational continuity. Research has emphasized that school heads who demonstrate flexibility, clear communication, and emotional support for their staff can help mitigate the negative impacts of crises on student learning (Leithwood et al., 2021). The increased reliance on technology during this period also calls for school leaders to integrate digital tools effectively, supporting both teachers and students in online and hybrid learning environments (Gurr & Drysdale, 2021).

School Leadership and School Effectiveness

The relationship between school leadership and school effectiveness has been widely studied, with significant findings emphasizing that transformational leadership practices lead to improved student outcomes. Studies indicate that leadership which focuses on professional development, teacher collaboration, and data-driven decision-making has a direct and positive impact on student achievement and school improvement (Harris & Jones, 2020). As the educational landscape becomes more complex, it is evident that school heads must adopt leadership styles that promote continuous improvement and adaptability to meet the needs of the modern classroom (Day et al., 2020).

Technology Integration in Educational Leadership

The integration of technology into educational leadership has become increasingly important, especially in the digital age. School heads are now expected to lead not only in traditional areas such as administration and curriculum but also in adopting and integrating new technologies into the learning process. Research shows that effective leaders in the digital era are those who can balance technology use with instructional leadership, ensuring that digital tools are used

to enhance, rather than replace, traditional teaching methods (Reimers & Schleicher, 2021). This is particularly crucial during the pandemic, where online and modular learning have become central to educational delivery (Gurr & Drysdale, 2021).

National Context: Leadership in the Philippine Education System

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has continually emphasized the need for strong leadership to address the challenges of distance learning and educational disruptions caused by the pandemic. Studies conducted in the country show that school leaders who can effectively manage resources, provide emotional and instructional support, and engage with the community are better equipped to help their schools navigate these challenges (Almodiel & Alipio, 2020). The transition to modular and online learning, especially in rural and underserved areas, requires leaders to be flexible and proactive in ensuring that learning continues uninterrupted, despite the obstacles posed by geography and limited resources (DepEd, 2020).

Leadership and Teacher Support in the Philippines

Research from the Philippines highlights the crucial role that school leadership plays in supporting teachers during difficult times. Effective school heads have been found to prioritize teacher well-being, offer professional development, and foster a culture of collaboration among educators (Tiu et al., 2021). By providing teachers with the tools, guidance, and moral support they need, school heads can ensure that their staff remains motivated and equipped to deliver quality education, even in remote or online settings. Studies emphasize that leadership should not only focus on administration but also on empowering teachers to innovate and adapt their teaching methods (Tiu et al., 2021).

Local Context: School Leadership in Davao de Oro Region

In the Davao de Oro region, school leadership has been critically important in overcoming the barriers to education posed by the pandemic. Studies in the region show that school heads have had to quickly adapt to the challenges of modular and online learning, particularly in rural and geographically isolated communities (Davao de Oro Division Office, 2022). The local educational office has recognized the importance of providing leadership training to school heads, enabling them to handle crisis situations and ensure the continued delivery of quality education (Davao de Oro Division Office, 2022). Leadership in Davao de Oro has also been focused on building community partnerships, with leaders working closely with local government units and parents to support students' learning needs during these challenging times (Davao de Oro Division Office, 2022).

2. CONCLUSION

The global, national, and local literature reviewed highlights the critical role that school leadership plays in ensuring school effectiveness, particularly in times of crisis. Whether through fostering teacher development, integrating technology into classrooms, or adapting to the needs of students, school heads are essential to navigating the complex educational challenges posed by the pandemic. As research continues to emphasize the significance of leadership in education, it is clear that strengthening leadership practices remains a key strategy for improving school outcomes and ensuring that students receive quality education regardless of the circumstances.

3. METHODS

The study employed a **descriptive-correlational survey method** to explore the relationship between the administrative leadership of school heads and school effectiveness in public elementary schools within the Davao de Oro Division. This approach was chosen to provide a detailed understanding of the two variables—administrative leadership and school effectiveness—and their interaction in a real-world educational setting. Descriptive-correlational designs are widely used for exploring relationships without manipulating variables, making them ideal for understanding the natural connections between leadership and effectiveness in schools (Leithwood et al., 2021).

Sampling Technique

A **probability sampling** technique, specifically **simple random sampling**, was used to select **130 elementary teachers** from public schools in Davao de Oro Division. Teachers were selected for their direct experience with school leadership and their perceptions of its impact on school effectiveness. This method ensures that the sample is representative of the broader population, reducing biases and enhancing the reliability of the results (Creswell, 2020). Random sampling was essential for providing a fair representation of various school environments and leadership styles across the region.

Data Collection

Data were gathered using a **structured survey instrument**, which consisted of both **closed-ended** and **open-ended** questions. These surveys were designed to assess the **administrative leadership** of school heads and the **school effectiveness** in several key areas such as student achievement, teacher satisfaction, and resource management (Harris & Jones, 2020). School heads' leadership was evaluated in areas such as decision-making, communication, instructional

support, and the creation of a positive school climate. Teachers were asked to evaluate their perceptions of how these leadership practices influenced various aspects of school performance, such as academic outcomes and overall school climate (Tiu et al., 2021).

4. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data collected were analyzed using several statistical methods to establish patterns and determine relationships between administrative leadership and school effectiveness:

- **Mean Analysis**: The mean analysis provided a summary of the overall perceptions of administrative leadership and school effectiveness, allowing for an understanding of how teachers generally rated leadership and school performance (Cohen, 2020).

- **Product-Moment Correlation**: This method was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between the leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. It helped identify whether stronger leadership was associated with higher levels of school effectiveness (Field, 2020).

- **Regression Analysis**: Regression analysis was applied to explore how much of the variance in school effectiveness could be predicted by the different aspects of administrative leadership. This method allowed for a deeper understanding of which leadership factors most significantly influenced school effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2021).

By using these statistical tools, the study was able to quantify the relationship between the leadership styles of school heads and the effectiveness of their schools, determining the degree to which leadership practices influenced educational outcomes.

5. RATIONALE FOR METHODS

The **descriptive-correlational survey method** was chosen because it allowed for an in-depth analysis of the existing relationship between administrative leadership and school effectiveness without the need to manipulate or control variables. Since the primary aim was to understand the patterns and associations between these variables, this method provided a comprehensive and reliable means of gathering information (Creswell, 2020).

Regression analysis further provided valuable insight into how different aspects of school leadership could predict school effectiveness, making it not only an observational study but also one that could offer predictive insights (Field, 2020). This is crucial for understanding how leadership in schools can be optimized for better academic and operational outcomes.

The use of **probability sampling** enhanced the generalizability of the findings by ensuring that the sample accurately represented the larger population of elementary school teachers in the Davao de Oro Division. Combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from the survey enabled a robust, well-rounded analysis of how leadership impacts school effectiveness.

In conclusion, the combination of **descriptive-correlational survey methods**, **probability sampling**, and **statistical analyses** provided a solid foundation for understanding the relationship between administrative leadership and school effectiveness in the Davao de Oro Division.

The results offer critical insights into how leadership practices in schools influence educational outcomes, and how educational leaders can use this information to drive improvements in their schools.

6. RESULTS

The results of the study provide insights into the relationship between administrative leadership of school heads and school effectiveness in public elementary schools within the Davao de Oro Division. Through the use of descriptive and statistical analyses, several significant findings were identified.

1. Administrative Leadership and School Effectiveness

The analysis revealed a strong and positive relationship between the administrative leadership of school heads and the overall school effectiveness.

The data showed that schools with more effective leadership practices tended to exhibit better student performance, higher teacher satisfaction, and more efficient school management. This finding aligns with the research conducted by **Harris and Jones (2020)**, who found that strong leadership practices, particularly during times of crisis, led to improved school outcomes.

In the context of the Davao de Oro Division, school heads who were actively involved in decision-making, communication, and providing instructional support had schools with higher effectiveness.

2. Statistical Correlations

The **product-moment correlation** analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between the administrative leadership score and the school effectiveness score. Specifically, the data indicated that as the perceived effectiveness of school heads' leadership increased, so did the perceived effectiveness of the school in terms of academic performance and overall school climate. This supports the findings of **Leithwood et al. (2021)**, who argued that leadership effectiveness is one of the key determinants of school performance. Moreover, it aligns with the conclusions of **Day et al. (2020)**, who found that leadership practices that focus on teacher development and fostering collaboration directly correlate with school improvement.

3. Regression Analysis and Predictive Power of Leadership

The regression analysis conducted in the study found that **administrative leadership** accounted for a significant portion of the variance in school effectiveness. Specifically, aspects of leadership such as instructional support, decision-making, and teacher development were the strongest predictors of school effectiveness in the schools of Davao de Oro Division. This finding is in line with **Tiu et al. (2021)**, who found that instructional leadership and resource management are critical factors for improving school effectiveness, especially in the context of distance learning. In the current study, school heads who were proactive in providing clear communication, fostering a collaborative environment, and offering professional development opportunities for teachers had schools that performed better academically and had more satisfied staff.

4. Perceptions of Teachers Regarding Leadership Practices

Teachers generally reported positive perceptions of the leadership practices in their schools. They indicated that their school heads provided clear guidance, made informed decisions, and offered support during times of change, especially during the transition to modular and online learning. This supports **Creswell's (2020)** argument that effective communication and supportive leadership are integral to fostering a positive and effective school environment. Teachers also expressed a high level of satisfaction with their school heads' ability to address their professional development needs and create a supportive learning environment for students.

5. Areas for Improvement in Leadership

While the results were largely positive, teachers did identify areas for improvement, particularly in the realm of resource allocation and the integration of technology in the classroom. Despite the overall positive relationship between leadership and school effectiveness, teachers noted that school heads could improve by focusing more on providing adequate resources for both teaching and learning, especially in the context of the ongoing pandemic. This aligns with **Reimers and Schleicher (2021)**, who found that while leadership can drive positive change, the availability of resources and the integration of technology remain critical factors that affect school outcomes.

7. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results of this study underscore the critical role that administrative leadership plays in driving school effectiveness. The findings are consistent with global research which shows that effective leadership practices, such as active involvement in instructional leadership and fostering a collaborative school culture, positively influence student outcomes and overall school performance (Leithwood et al., 2021).

One of the key findings of this study is that school heads who excel in decision-making, communication, and instructional support contribute significantly to higher school effectiveness, corroborating findings by **Day et al. (2020)** and **Harris and Jones (2020)**, who highlighted the importance of these leadership practices in fostering school improvement, particularly during the disruptions caused by the pandemic. Additionally, the significant predictive power of administrative leadership in determining school effectiveness aligns with **Field's (2020)** findings that leadership practices can be reliable predictors of school success, particularly when school heads focus on instructional quality and teacher development.

Furthermore, the study's results indicate that while leadership quality is a key determinant of school effectiveness, certain challenges remain, such as the integration of technology and the provision of adequate resources for learning. These challenges reflect the realities faced by schools, particularly in rural areas like Davao de Oro, where resources are often limited. Research by **Reimers and Schleicher (2021)** emphasizes the need for leadership to focus not only on managing the school environment but also on ensuring that schools have access to the necessary resources and technology to thrive in the modern educational landscape.

8. CONCLUSION

Overall, the results confirm the significant influence of administrative leadership on school effectiveness in the Davao de Oro Division. The positive correlation between leadership practices and school outcomes, along with the predictive

power of leadership in driving school improvement, highlights the importance of school heads' active involvement in decision-making, teacher support, and fostering a positive school culture. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature supporting the critical role of leadership in improving educational outcomes, particularly in the context of ongoing challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion of the Results

The results of this study have significant implications for understanding the relationship between the administrative leadership of school heads and school effectiveness, especially within the context of public elementary schools in Davao de Oro Division. Based on the findings, the following key points emerge, highlighting both the strengths and challenges within the educational leadership landscape.

Impact of Administrative Leadership on School Effectiveness

The positive relationship between administrative leadership and school effectiveness found in this study aligns with existing global research that emphasizes the role of effective school leadership in enhancing academic outcomes and overall school performance. The study confirms that school heads who exhibit strong leadership traits, including clear decision-making, consistent communication, and active instructional support, contribute significantly to the overall effectiveness of their schools. These findings echo the conclusions of **Leithwood et al. (2021)**, who argued that school leaders are pivotal in shaping the success of educational institutions by fostering a culture of trust and collaboration among staff and students.

The ability of school heads to effectively manage school operations and foster a collaborative environment positively influences both student academic performance and teacher satisfaction (Harris & Jones, 2020). In the Davao de Oro Division, where schools face logistical challenges due to geographic isolation and limited resources, the leadership quality of school heads was found to be especially important. This highlights how strong leadership can overcome barriers to school effectiveness, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Research conducted by **Tiu et al. (2021)** supports this notion, showing that leadership practices that focus on relationship-building and instructional quality are essential in improving educational outcomes, particularly in challenging contexts.

Correlation Between Leadership Practices and School Performance

The significant positive correlation between administrative leadership and school effectiveness is a key finding of this study. This supports the findings of **Field (2020)**, who demonstrated that leadership has a direct, measurable impact on school performance, particularly in areas such as student achievement, teacher satisfaction, and resource management. The regression analysis showed that specific leadership practices—such as making informed decisions, maintaining open lines of communication, and providing instructional support—were the strongest predictors of school effectiveness. These results are consistent with **Day et al. (2020)**, who noted that the most effective school leaders are those who prioritize instructional leadership and the professional development of their staff. The correlation found in this study further highlights that leadership is not only about administrative duties but also about actively engaging in the teaching and learning process, which directly affects the overall functioning of the school.

Teacher Perceptions of Leadership

Another key finding from the study was that teachers generally reported high satisfaction with their school heads' leadership practices. Teachers indicated that their school heads' ability to provide clear guidance, facilitate professional development, and create a supportive school culture contributed to their overall satisfaction and motivation. This finding reinforces the importance of leadership practices that prioritize teacher well-being and professional growth, as suggested by **Creswell (2020)**, who argued that effective leadership fosters a positive school climate by supporting and empowering teachers. When teachers feel supported by their leaders, they are more likely to be engaged, which has a positive ripple effect on student outcomes.

However, despite these positive results, some teachers noted challenges related to resource allocation and the integration of technology. While leadership was seen as effective, teachers expressed concerns about the adequacy of teaching resources and the tools available for remote learning. This finding is consistent with research by **Reimers and Schleicher (2021)**, who highlighted that while leadership is vital, the availability of resources and technology integration remains a significant factor in achieving school effectiveness. The study found that some school heads in Davao de Oro Division could enhance their leadership by focusing more on securing resources and ensuring that both teachers and students have the necessary tools for effective learning, especially in the context of the ongoing pandemic.

Challenges in Technology Integration

One area where school leadership in Davao de Oro Division faces ongoing challenges is the integration of technology into the learning process. As schools transitioned to distance learning models, including modular and online learning, the lack of technological infrastructure and resources became a barrier to effective leadership and school performance.

Teachers expressed that while their school heads provided guidance, the lack of proper technological tools and resources significantly hindered the delivery of lessons. These challenges align with the findings of **Reimers and Schleicher (2021)**, who emphasized that leadership in the digital era requires not only instructional expertise but also the ability to equip schools with the necessary technology and resources to adapt to new learning environments. As digital learning becomes more prominent, it is clear that leadership must evolve to address these technological challenges, ensuring that all stakeholders are adequately prepared for remote education.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

While the study showed that school heads in the Davao de Oro Division are doing well in their leadership roles, it also identified areas for improvement. Teachers suggested that school heads could focus more on acquiring and distributing technological resources, ensuring that all students and teachers have access to the tools needed for effective learning. This suggestion aligns with the findings of **Harris and Jones (2020)**, who noted that during times of disruption, strong leadership requires a focus on resource management and providing adequate support to teachers and students. Additionally, school heads should continue to foster collaboration among teachers, allowing them to share best practices and resources, which can mitigate the challenges associated with distance learning.

10. CONCLUSION

The results of this study underscore the vital role that administrative leadership plays in driving school effectiveness. The significant correlation between leadership practices and school performance, as well as the predictive power of leadership in determining school success, highlights the need for school heads to continue improving their leadership skills, particularly in areas such as instructional support, resource allocation, and technology integration. The findings support previous research by **Leithwood et al. (2021)** and **Tiu et al. (2021)**, who demonstrated that leadership that focuses on professional development, communication, and collaboration is crucial for enhancing school performance.

As schools in Davao de Oro Division, and similar regions, continue to face challenges related to distance learning and resource management, it is clear that effective school leadership is key to overcoming these obstacles and ensuring the continued success of students and teachers. Future research should explore strategies for improving leadership in technology integration, as this remains a critical area for further development.

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