

Leadership Traits and Teachers' Motivation in East Districts, Division of Cagayan De Oro City

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Abstract

Leadership shapes the educational environment and influences teachers' performance and motivation. This study aimed to determine the Leadership Traits and Teachers' Motivation in the East II Districts Division of Cagayan de Oro, School Year 2022-2023. Specifically, this study aimed to assess the school administrators' leadership traits; find out the teachers' level of motivation; and determine the relationship between the respondents' assessment of leadership traits and their level of motivation. The respondents were 178 public junior high school teachers in the schools where this study was conducted using a stratified sampling technique, a descriptive-correlational research design was used with a modified survey questionnaire. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) were used to describe the raw data.

The findings revealed that the respondents' assessment of the school administrator's leadership traits is very positive, particularly in terms of intelligence. Furthermore, the level of motivation is high, with the work environment as the highest. However, the relationship between the respondents' assessment of the school administrator's leadership traits and their motivation is not significant. It can be concluded that intelligence helps school administrators manage efficiently; it does not influence teachers' motivation. Instead, teachers are motivated by particular factors like family, salary, and their commitment to students. It is recommended that school administrators should practice reflective and sympathetic leadership, providing actionable feedback, assigning responsibilities fairly, and exercising authority with empathy to foster confidence, motivation, and professional progress among teachers.

Keywords: leadership traits and teachers' motivation

1. Introduction

School administrators' leadership traits play an essential role in promoting teachers' professional growth, motivation, and wellbeing, as well as maintaining a positive and effective learning environment. However, concerns in Cagayan de Oro's Second District highlight challenges such as poor communication, lack of support, favoritism, unfair recognition, misuse of authority, public humiliation, and disregard for teachers' personal concerns and mental health. These practices may weaken teachers' trust, confidence, job satisfaction, and willingness to remain in their institutions. Effective school leadership requires honesty, fairness, respect, empathy, transparency, and shared decision making, particularly in addressing conflicts, supporting professional development, recognizing teachers' contributions, and ensuring their safety during

emergencies and extreme weather conditions. Research findings also emphasize that disrespectful and authoritarian leadership can create conflicts that affect the entire school community, while open communication, professional support, and a positive working environment can strengthen teachers' motivation and overall well-being. Furthermore, school administrators must consider teachers' actual needs when allocating school resources to ensure that appropriate support is provided. These concerns highlight the importance of examining the relationship between school administrators' leadership traits and teachers' motivation to promote a more supportive, equitable, and productive educational environment.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the Leadership Traits and Teachers' Motivation in the East Districts, Division of Cagayan de Oro during the School Year 2022-2023.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do the respondents assess the leadership traits of their school administrators in terms of personality, social background, intelligence, and ability?
2. What is the respondents' level of motivation based on job design, working environment, and training development?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the leadership traits of their school administrators and their level of motivation?

Significance

The results of the study would be useful to the following entities:

The results of this study would support School Administrators in the Department of Education to be more positive in terms of personality, social background, and intelligence in dealing with people. A total of 36 positive characteristics of teachers' motivations were found to have an impact on the teachers' motivations. The ability to receive different types of feedback is one of the positive characteristics that can help solve problems in the organization of the school. When the school administration exhibits humble qualities, such as being open to correcting itself after committing a mistake, it can lead to improvement of the institution. This study can assist in developing job fulfillment through improved teacher motivation; improving salaries; and acknowledging that teachers are the ones who create professionals within the industry. Professional development can create more opportunities for teachers to participate in training programs and seminars. Every teacher should be placed into the area where he/she excels and educated to effectively control the young people's confidence and mental health. This study can also provide a valuable resource for other researchers studying leadership characteristics, teacher motivation, and educational administration.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on the Leadership Traits and Teachers' Motivation in East Districts, Division of Cagayan de Oro City, School Year 2022-2023. The respondents were the one hundred seventy-eight (178) public secondary teachers in the division mentioned above. The independent variables were limited only to the leadership traits of school administrators such as personality, social background, intelligence, and ability. Moreover, the dependent variables were also limited to teachers' motivation based on job design, working environment, and training and development. This study specifically evaluated school

administrators in Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools. It discussed the leadership traits and teacher motivation as assessed by school administrators in the division mentioned above.

Literature Review

Leadership Traits of School Administrators

School administrators influence teachers' motivation through their personality, social background, intelligence, and professional abilities. Purnomo (2020) emphasized that administrators' personal characteristics influence their actions and relationships, while Vinluan and Bautista (2024) highlighted the importance of transformational leadership in promoting positive organizational change and motivating teachers. Fischer, Sipple, and Knutti (2021) stressed the need for cultural understanding, collaboration, and trust in addressing the diverse needs of school personnel. Furthermore, Abdullah (2020) underscored the importance of emotional intelligence in managing conflicts, regulating emotions, and maintaining positive relationships within the school community. Turner and Garvis (2023) also emphasized that effective leadership requires resilience, empathy, workload management, and digital competence. Overall, school administrators who demonstrate integrity, fairness, emotional intelligence, sound decision making, and strong professional abilities can establish a supportive working environment, strengthen teachers' commitment, and promote school improvement.

Teachers' Motivation

Teachers' work motivation is influenced by job design, the working environment, and opportunities for training and professional development. Dela Cruz and Macalisang (2024) emphasized that excessive administrative tasks, heavy workloads, and unfair task distribution contribute to teacher burnout and hinder professional growth. Kumar and Goel (2025) highlighted that supportive school leadership helps teachers feel valued, recognized, and satisfied with their work. Similarly, Mulang (2021) stressed that a positive and reliable working environment improves teacher performance and contributes to better educational outcomes. Aquino et al. (2023) emphasized that professional development motivates teachers to apply effective teaching strategies and improve their competencies. Moreover, James (2024) highlighted the importance of collaboration, mentorship, and continuous professional learning in strengthening teachers' motivation. Overall, school administrators can enhance teachers' work motivation by distributing responsibilities fairly, providing adequate resources, maintaining a safe and supportive working environment, recognizing teachers' contributions, and ensuring equitable access to training and professional development opportunities.

2. Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive-correlational method of research in determining the factors affecting teachers' motivation and knowing the school administrators' leadership traits. In the correlational method, the true meaning of the data collected is reported from the point of view of the objectives and the basic description of the study. This follows a logical process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

A correlational research design meticulously explores the intricate interplay between variables without the researcher exerting control or making modifications to them. This approach systematically observes the relationships between different factors, helping them to understand their influences in various contexts. By applying statistical methods to the data, researchers can identify patterns and correlations, revealing

trends that may not be immediately obvious. However, it is essential to recognize that while correlation can illuminate the connections between variables, it does not imply causation. A correlation represents a link's strong point and/or trajectory between two or more variables. The direction of a correlation can be either positive or negative (Bhandari,2023).

Participants

The respondents of the study were the one hundred seventy-eight (178) Junior High School teachers in Agusan National High School, East Gusa National High School, Lapasan National High School, Cugman National High School, and Puerto National High School in the East District, Division of Cagayan de Oro City who were currently teaching in School Year 2022-2023.

Data Collection

The instrument used in gathering the data was a questionnaire composed of two parts.

Part 1 of the questionnaire inquired about the respondent's assessment of their school administrator's leadership traits on personality, social background, intelligence, and ability. These were based upon Taylor's (1994) Trait Theory of Leadership. The indicators were patterned and modified from the study of Matthews and Holmes (1982) titled "A Method for Assessing Teachers' Motivation". Each variable has ten indicators with the options: 4 Strongly Agree, 3 Agree, 2 Disagree, and 1 Strongly Disagree.

Part 2 of the questionnaire elicited teachers' motivation based on job design, working environment, and training and development. These were patterned and modified from the study of Ramzan et al(2023) titled "Construction and Validation of the Teachers' Motivation Questionnaire (TMQ): A Detailed Exploration". The indicators were also patterned and modified from the same author. Each variable has ten (10) indicators with the options: 4 At All Times, 3 Most of the Time, 2 Sometimes, and 1 Never.

Data Analysis

In this survey, the forms collected from respondents were subjected to statistical treatments. Individual responses were implied as being recorded and then categorized so as to facilitate an easier interpretation of findings. To allow for easier reading and interpreting of findings, the findings were put into tables, allowing the researcher to link relationships formed by ideas of those surveyed. This approach offered sources for consideration of how school administrator's leadership characteristics were being observed within the work place of schools and how teacher motivation was being observed.

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to provide a clearer picture of what was observed. The mean showed the overall level of agreement among the respondents. It displayed if the respondents either "Strongly Agreed," "Agreed," etc., with the provided records. The standard deviation showed how reliable the results were and how variable the results were. These two together allowed for a clear and consistent representation of how school administrator leadership characteristics were being examined in relation to teacher motivation.

Descriptive analyses were done as well as examining the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) to see if there is any correlation between the two main variables. The use of this type of statistical test enabled the researcher to determine if the situation being studied is unique or occurs frequently to many people and if the relationship between school administrator and teacher motivation exists.

3. Results and Discussions

Problem 1. How do the respondents assess the leadership traits of their school administrators in terms of personality, social background, intelligence, and ability?

Table 1
Summary Distribution of the Respondents' Assessment on the Leadership Traits of Administrators

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Personality	3.35	0.40	Very Positive
Social Background	3.42	0.50	Very Positive
Intelligence	3.45	0.47	Very Positive
Ability	3.40	0.59	Very Positive
Overall	3.41	0.49	Very Positive

Table 1 presents the respondents' assessment of school administrators' leadership traits, which obtained an overall mean of 3.41 and a standard deviation of 0.49, interpreted as Very Positive. This indicates that teachers generally perceive their administrators positively in terms of intelligence, personality, decision making, communication, integrity, fairness, and responsibility. Intelligence received the highest mean of 3.45, suggesting that teachers value administrators' ability to solve problems, manage workplace concerns, make sound decisions, and ensure the safety and well-being of the school community. Meanwhile, personality obtained the lowest mean of 3.35, although it remained Very Positive, indicating that interpersonal qualities and approachability may be less consistently demonstrated than administrative and intellectual abilities. The findings emphasize that effective educational leadership requires not only intelligence and professional competence but also emotional intelligence, empathy, flexibility, and genuine concern for teachers. Administrators who combine sound judgment with compassion and fairness can strengthen collaboration, build trust, support teachers' professional growth, and create a positive and productive school environment.

Problem 2. What is the respondents' level of motivation based on job design, working environment, and training development?

Table 2
Summary Distribution of the Respondents' Level of Motivation

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Job Design	2.79	0.89	High
Working Environment	2.95	0.91	High
Training and Development	2.93	0.90	High
Overall	2.89	0.90	High

Table 2 presents the respondents' assessment of teachers' level of motivation, which obtained an overall mean of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.90, interpreted as High. This indicates that teachers generally

demonstrate strong motivation in performing their professional responsibilities, supported by positive working environments, meaningful relationships, and commitment to teaching. The working environment received the highest mean of 2.95, suggesting that a supportive, safe, and inclusive school atmosphere contributes to teachers' dedication, happiness, and productivity. In contrast, job design obtained the lowest mean of 2.79, although it remained High, indicating that workload distribution, excessive paperwork, unclear responsibilities, and limited recognition may affect teachers' motivation. The findings emphasize that teachers' motivation is influenced not only by their passion for teaching but also by the quality of their workplace and the fairness of administrative practices. Therefore, school administrators should promote a supportive environment, recognize teachers' contributions, distribute tasks equitably, and provide opportunities for professional growth to sustain teachers' commitment, well-being, and effectiveness in delivering quality education.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the leadership traits of their school administrators and their level of motivation?

Table 3
Test Statistics Relationship between Respondents' Assessment on the Leadership Traits of Administrators and Their Level of Motivation

Leadership Trait	Teachers Motivation				
	Job Design	Working Environment	Envi- ment	Teachers Train- ing and Develop- ment	Overall
Personality	r=-.097	r=-.039		r=-.037	r=-.061
	p= .197	p=.610		p=.629	p=.422
	NS	NS		NS	NS
Social Background	r=.025	r=-.014		r=.070	r=.029
	p= .736	p=.849		p=.353	p= .701
	NS	NS		NS	NS
Intelligence	r= .027	r=.045		r=.050	r=.043
	p= .726	p=.551		p=.508	p=.566
	NS	NS		NS	NS
Ability	r=.038	r=.018		r=.028	r=.030
	p= .612	p=.199		p=.713	p=.694
	NS	NS		NS	NS

Table 3 presents the relationship between school administrators' leadership traits and teachers' motivation. The findings indicate that the relationship between the two variables was generally not statistically significant, suggesting that teachers' motivation may be influenced by factors beyond administrators' personality, social background, intelligence, and abilities. The results further show that these leadership characteristics had very weak relationships with teachers' motivation in terms of job design, working environment, and training and development. Teachers may draw motivation from their passion for teaching, responsibility for student learning, family needs, financial stability, professional aspirations, and

personal fulfillment. However, the findings also highlight the importance of fair treatment, recognition, balanced workloads, supportive relationships, and equal access to professional development opportunities in maintaining teachers' morale and commitment. Although the statistical results did not establish a significant relationship, effective leadership practices remain important in fostering trust, collaboration, and a positive school climate. Overall, teachers' motivation appears to be influenced by a combination of personal, professional, and workplace factors, emphasizing the need for school administrators to provide equitable support and meaningful opportunities for growth.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Discussion

The results of the study are in contrast to Nalzar Jr.(2022), who described how principals are basically accountable for enhancing the commitment of teachers' professional responsibilities, commitment, and accountability in teaching. Teachers' participation and learning are affected by a lack of support such as revisiting previous topics and unattractive speakers; including the food provided during teacher training and development. Additionally, the work environment, and observations made by teachers about the speakers and coordinators of the training, also impact teacher engagement. It appears that it is the responsibility of school administrators to make sure teachers understand how valuable, strategic and appreciated their training was. If this is not done, then even the most effective leaders will be unable to act upon improving the processes used in developing and implementing teacher training/seminars. This section provides an understanding of the results of the study and provides insights into the findings. The schools that are represented in the results are directly related to the study's statement of the problem and use the appropriate statistical methods/tools for evaluation. Although school administrators clearly exhibit leadership characteristics such as personality, social background, intelligence and ability that could provide a positive base for leading and supervising, the study found that those characteristics do not have a strong relationship with teachers' motivation. Therefore, although school administrators exhibit strong leadership characteristics, teachers' desire to continue working hard and remain motivated stems from several other variables such as love for teaching, financial rewards, and aspirations for professional growth. School administrators reshuffling affects teacher's perspectives to get their motivation from their inner self, rather than reliant on the leadership traits of their school administrators. On top of that, the results indicate that the intelligence of school administrators positively marks the general status of the school, contributing to a helpful working environment for teachers.

5. Conclusion

This study has shown that the first result was unexpected, so I can conclude that intelligence assists school administrators in directing and guiding; but it does not affect teacher motivation. Rather, teachers are motivated by factors such as family, salary, and their dedication to students. Despite having little help, many teachers can achieve success if the working environment is flexible and accommodating. Leadership for long periods tends to have a greater impact than receiving a short-term award. In addition, the best administrators aren't only smart. Leaders that are most effective can demonstrate compassion, humility, and honesty in creating positive working relationships. Teachers appreciate an administrator that supports teachers holistically.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

1. It is recommended that school administrators go through an intensive process of self-reflection before reacting. In order to build trust among teachers, administrators must first reflect upon themselves and make sure that any criticism is used to help improve, rather than focus on what was done wrong; then leaders need to quickly use individual assessments to recognize areas where improvements can be made, as well as collect teacher's responses to determine the impact.
2. School administrators must also consider all options when creating teachers' schedules and assignments to perform at their best. Job designs must also reflect the characteristics, abilities and experiences of each teacher, along with the other responsibilities associated with the position, so that each teacher will experience job satisfaction, feel that their work is meaningful and experience overall well-being.
3. School administrators may use their authority in a thoughtful manner, considering how their influence serve as a motivation of teachers through their presence. To achieve this, school administrators must actively engage with teachers by establishing structured opportunities for growth and support while displaying understanding and solutions to directly meet teachers' requirements. School administrators can successfully encourage teachers through establishing high standards of open communication and collaboration.

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