

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDERS' RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the leadership practices of the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District in the Division of Camarines Norte and effective stakeholders' relationships. This study employed quantitative method using descriptive-correlational design with survey questionnaire checklist as the data-gathering instrument. Total enumeration was employed in this study which involved 26 public elementary and secondary school heads, 26 faculty presidents (teachers), 26 SPTA presidents and 26 student leaders, for a total of 104 respondents. Findings revealed that the school heads, teachers, parents and students in Mercedes District strongly agree that leadership practices were implemented needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders. Moreover, the effectiveness of the relationship between school heads and stakeholders along distribution of responsibility, along empowerment of others and decision making were interpreted as very highly effective. Furthermore, it identified no significant relationship between the leadership practices of the public school elementary and secondary administrators and the effectiveness of their relationship with stakeholders. Finally, the school heads in Mercedes District encountered issues and concerns along leadership practices affecting the relationships to school stakeholders. As a results of this study, the researcher proposed plan of actions to address the leadership practices of the school administrators needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a significant role in the success of all endeavors undertaken by human resources within organizations, particularly in educational institutions (Everett & Raven, 2018). According to Rehman et al. (2019), principal leadership directly impacts the activities within schools. Effective school principals, who possess managerial skills and are open to input from teachers and stakeholders, significantly influence the

success of educational initiatives within their schools (Cilek, 2019).

The Department of Education is entrusted with the primary responsibility of serving students and teachers. Schools are central to the formal education system, serving as hubs of learning. School heads, including principals and administrators, are tasked with both instructional leadership and effective school management. Active participation of parents and the community in their child's education is strongly promoted. Encouraging maximum involvement, volunteerism, and coordination among schools, local

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school boards, Parent-Teachers Associations (PTAs), and all sectors is emphasized to ensure sustainable growth and development in education (Republic Act 2011). This mandate outlines clear roles and responsibilities for school administrators, guiding them in initiating programs and activities aimed at achieving quality, equitable, culture-based, and comprehensive basic education.

Schools were reshaped because of various challenges shifting focus from academics to holistic support for stakeholders' needs. Research underscores the crucial role of school relationships, emphasizing safety, belonging, and social connection (O'Toole & Simovska, 2022; Striepe & Cunningham, 2022). Likewise, Zhu et al. (2022) investigated how personal resilience and strong teacher relationships helped protect students' mental health amidst rising cyber victimization and online learning challenges. Intrapersonal and social factors were critical in promoting and safeguarding students' wellbeing, especially for elementary students dealing with peer victimization and mental health issues.

Moreover, schools that prioritize building strong relationships can support families and students in overcoming various challenges (Butler et al., 2022; Lopez et al., 2021). Additionally, Ryu et al. (2020) highlighted that effective caring leadership involves aligning school and community needs and resources. Emphasizing social capital (relationships), decisional capital (expert decision-making), and human capital (knowledge and skills) enhances professional development. The practice of caring leadership not only fosters organizational growth but also positively impacts all stakeholders involved. Rushton et al. (2020) found that strong teacher relationships significantly affect students' needs, particularly those who often struggle with weaker connections to teachers, academic difficulties, and lower behavioral ratings compared to peers.

Despite the disruptions caused by the various challenges in schools, there is an opportunity to respond proactively and progress. Educational leaders have a responsibility to establish a new standard by demonstrating resilience. The current research suggests that this begins with identifying leadership strategies that promote strong relationships. Emphasizing community partnerships and collective responsibility can revitalize the concept that "It takes a village to raise a child." Education as to some educationally inclined person is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders. This means that learning could not readily be attained in school, and as such, good relationships to all school internal and external stakeholders in the educative process is necessary.

The Division of Camarines Norte, specifically Mercedes District is composed of 17 elementary schools, 7 secondary schools, and 2 integrated schools. School administrators and teachers are also having challenges in terms of stakeholders' participation and involvement in the implementation of various school policies, programs and activities. It is imperative then, for a research study

about leadership practices of the public elementary and secondary school administrators and effective stakeholders' relationship in Mercedes District in the Division of Camarines Norte as a means of attaining more educational success, thus, this research was conceptualized aims to determine the leadership practices of school administrators and effective stakeholders' relationship. Specifically, it answered the following sub – problems: 1) What are the leadership practices implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District to foster effective stakeholders relationships; 2) How effective is the relationship between school administrators and stakeholders along a) distribution of responsibility, b) empowerment of others, and c) decision making; 3) Is there a significant relationship between leadership practices and effective stakeholders' relationships implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District; 4) What are the issues and concerns encountered by the school administrators along leadership practices affecting the relationships to school stakeholders; and 5) What interventions may be proposed to address the leadership practices of the school administrators needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders?

2. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive method was used to describe the leadership practices implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District to foster effective stakeholder's relationships. It was also utilized to describe how effective is the relationship between school administrators and stakeholders along distribution of responsibility, empowerment of others, and decision making and the issues and concerns encountered by the school administrators along leadership practices affecting the relationships to school stakeholders. Meanwhile, the correlation design was used to determine the relationship between the leadership practices and effective stakeholders' relationships implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District.

Total enumeration was used, involving 26 public elementary and secondary school heads, 26 faculty presidents (teachers), 26 SPTA presidents, and 26 student leaders, for a total of 104 respondents. The sources of data were the answers of the respondents in the survey questionnaire checklist.

The data on the implementation of the leadership practices of school administrators and effective stakeholders' relationships were analyzed using weighted mean and Pearson product moment of correlation. Weighted mean determined the leadership practices implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District to foster effective stakeholders' relationships, how effective is the relationship between school administrators and

stakeholders along distribution of responsibility, empowerment of others, and decision making, and issues and concerns encountered by the school administrators along leadership practices affecting the relationships to school stakeholders. Meanwhile, Pearson product moment of correlation determined the significant relationship between the leadership practices and effective stakeholders' relationships implemented by the public elementary and secondary school administrators in Mercedes District.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results of the data analysis in response to the problems covered by this study.

3.1 Leadership Practices Implemented by the Public Elementary and Secondary School Administrators

The table 1 presented the leadership practices implemented by the public elementary and secondary administrators in Mercedes District.

Table 1. Leadership Practices Implemented by the Public Elementary and Secondary Administrators in Mercedes District

	Indicators	School Heads		Teachers		Parents		Student		Overall	Int.
		WM	Int.	WM	Int.	WM	Int.	WM	Int.	WM	
1.	Involving everyone in the team in making decisions.	4.58	SA	4.08	A	3.27	MA	3.47	A	3.85	A
2.	Good at bringing out the best in other people	4.46	SA	3.42	A	4.50	SA	3.74	A	4.03	A
3.	Take on a leadership role when needed, but don't consider myself a leader	4.00	A	3.08	MA	4.55	SA	3.79	A	3.86	A
4.	Happy to act as the spokesperson for our group	3.96	A	3.38	MA	4.50	SA	3.84	A	3.92	A
5.	Good at adapting to different situations	4.69	SA	4.58	SA	4.73	SA	3.53	A	4.38	SA
6.	Determined to push projects forward and get results	4.54	SA	4.31	SA	3.09	MA	3.68	A	3.91	A
7.	People are be allowed to make mistakes in order to learn	4.46	SA	3.96	A	3.36	MA	4.37	SA	4.04	A
8.	Enjoy working on committees	3.77	A	3.92	A	3.77	A	4.16	A	3.91	A
9.	The most important thing for a group is the well-being of its members	4.62	SA	4.62	SA	4.45	SA	4.79	SA	4.64	SA
10.	Can see situations from many different perspectives	4.15	A	4.69	SA	4.55	SA	4.16	A	4.39	SA
11.	Do not mind how long discussions last, so long as he/she consider every angle	3.81	A	4.38	SA	3.50	A	3.68	A	3.84	A
12.	Good at organizing other people	3.92	A	4.31	SA	3.27	MA	4.42	SA	3.98	A
13.	All group members should abide by formal decisions, so long as they follow proper procedures	4.15	A	4.00	A	3.27	MA	3.79	A	3.80	A
14.	Set high standards and expect others to do the same for themselves	3.58	A	3.92	A	4.00	A	3.74	A	3.81	A
15.	Enjoy role playing exercises	3.92	A	3.81	A	3.55	A	3.95	A	3.81	A
16.	Love helping other people develop	4.46	SA	4.62	SA	4.18	A	4.53	SA	4.45	SA
	Grand Mean	4.19	A	4.07	A	3.91	A	3.98	A	4.04	A

Legend

Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
3.40 – 4.19	Agree (A)
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Agree (MA)
1.80 – 2.59	Disagree (D)
1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Based on table 1, the leadership practices implemented by the public elementary and secondary administrators in Mercedes District got a grand mean of 4.19 for the group of school heads, 4.07 for the group of teachers, 3.91 for the group of parents, 3.98 for the group of students, and 4.40 for all groups of respondents, all interpreted as "agree."

This implies a generally positive perception of the leadership practices among stakeholders in the Mercedes District. This suggests that, on average, administrators are viewed favorably by teachers, parents, students, and school heads. While there is an overall positive

perception, it is notable that there are slight variations among different stakeholder groups. These variations may reflect differing expectations and experiences with leadership effectiveness.

3.2 Effectiveness of the Relationship between School Administrators and Stakeholders

Fostering an effective relationship between school administrators and stakeholders is fundamental to creating a supportive, inclusive, and successful educational environment. These relationships promote collaboration, communication, engagement, and

ultimately contribute to the holistic development and achievement of students.

Table 2 revealed the effectiveness of the relationship between school heads and stakeholders along distribution of responsibility got a grand mean of 4.27 for all groups of respondents interpreted as “very highly effective,”

along empowerment of others got a grand mean 4.28 for all groups of respondents interpreted as “very highly effective,” along decision making got a grand mean of 4.30 interpreted as “very highly effective” for all group of respondents

Table 2. Effectiveness of the Relationship between School Administrators and Stakeholders

Indicators	Teachers		Parents		Student		Overall	Int.
	GM	Int.	GM	Int.	GM	Int.	GM	
1. Distribution of responsibility.	4.16	HE	4.32	VHE	4.32	VHE	4.27	VHE
2. Empowerment of others.	4.08	HE	4.43	VHE	4.34	VHE	4.28	VHE
3. Decision making.	4.31	VHE	4.13	HE	4.46	VHE	4.30	VHE

Legend

Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	Very Highly Effective (VHE)
3.40 – 4.19	Highly Effective (HE)
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Effective (ME)
1.80 – 2.59	Partially Effective (PE)
1.00 – 1.79	Not Effective (NE)

The high mean scores indicating effectiveness in the relationship between school heads and stakeholders in decision-making underscore the importance of inclusive leadership practices. These findings highlight school heads' ability to cultivate a collaborative and supportive environment where stakeholders feel valued, engaged, and empowered to contribute to the school's success and educational excellence. These findings corroborate the findings of Verbos et al. (2007) that leadership styles and practices of school heads in implementing school programs and policies directly influences team performance, school's success and educational excellence.

3.3 Relationship with association between Leadership Practices and Effective Stakeholders Relationships Implemented by the Public Elementary and Secondary School Administrators

Table 3 shows that the two variables considered failed to obtain significant relationship since all the p-values are greater than 0.05 level ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). Hence, there is no significant relationship between the leadership practices of the public school elementary and secondary administrators and the effectiveness of their relationship with stakeholders. With this the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Table 3. Test for Significant Relationship between Leadership Practices and Effective Stakeholders Relationships Implemented by the Public Elementary and Secondary School Administrators

Effective Stakeholders Relationship	Leadership Practices		Remarks	Decision
	r	p-value		
Distribution of Responsibility	-.147	.235	Not Significant	Failed to Reject H_0
Empowerment of Others	.063	.615	Not Significant	
Decision-Making	.062	.616	Not Significant	

The results suggest that the leadership practices of the public elementary and secondary school administrators do not have a direct effect on the effectiveness of stakeholders' relationship implemented along distribution of responsibility, empowerment of others and decision making. Hence, the leadership practices cannot be considered as predictors in the effectiveness of the stakeholders' relationship implemented along the aforementioned variables.

These findings highlight the need for school administrators to consider a holistic approach to leadership development. While practices like empowering others and involving stakeholders in decision-making are important, administrators should also focus on fostering a supportive organizational culture, enhancing communication strategies, and

aligning stakeholder expectations to enhance the overall effectiveness of relationships.

3.4 Issues and Concerns Encountered by the School Administrators

The issues and concerns encountered by the school administrators are presented in Table 4. As revealed, the issues and concerns with the highest rating was “poor participation of the school stakeholder (parents) with a mean score of 4.42 interpreted as “strongly agree”. The findings indicate that school heads perceive a significant issue regarding the poor participation of school stakeholders, specifically parents. This could indicate challenges in effectively communicating the importance of parental involvement or barriers that prevent parents from participating actively in school affairs. Poor participation of parents can impact the overall school

community and its ability to achieve its goals effectively. When parents are less engaged, there may be missed opportunities for collaboration, support for school initiatives, and meaningful partnerships between home and school. This can affect the school's ability to create a cohesive and supportive environment for students.

Table 4. Issues and Concerns Encountered by the School Administrators

Issues and Concerns		WM	Int.
1.	Poor participation of the school stakeholder (parents)	4.42	SA
2.	Management of time given the multiple tasks	4.23	SA
3.	Limited resources	4.31	SA
4.	Competency of the school stakeholders	2.73	N
5.	Attitude, beliefs and understanding of the stakeholders	3.85	A
6.	Provisions of technical support and assistance to school stakeholder	3.96	A
7.	Collaboration and partnership with parents of learners	3.77	A
8.	Lack of training to cater diverse learners	3.73	A
9.	Establishing ways of communication to parents	4.19	A
10.	Dissemination of the school programs and activities	3.69	A
Overall Weighted Mean		3.88	A
Rating Scale	Descriptive Interpretation		
4.20 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	(SA)	
3.40 – 4.19	Agree	(A)	
2.60 – 3.39	Neutral	(N)	
1.80 – 2.59	Disagree	(D)	
1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree	(SD)	

Other issues encountered by the school heads was on “management of time given the multiple tasks” with a mean score of 4.23 interpreted as “strongly agree”. The findings suggests that school heads feel overwhelmed by the volume and complexity of their responsibilities. Managing multiple tasks can lead to increased stress, burnout, and difficulty in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. This can impact job satisfaction and overall well-being.

Moreover, the issue “limited resources” with a mean score of 4.31 interpreted as “strongly agree”. A high mean score suggests that school heads encountered limited resources as a substantial challenge within their educational environment. This could encompass financial constraints, inadequate staffing, insufficient facilities or equipment, and limited access to educational materials or technology.

3.5 Intervention to Address the Leadership Practices of the School Administrators Needed for Effective Relationship to School Stakeholders

DepEd Order No. 24 (2020) issued by the Department of Education (DepEd) aligns with the leadership practices needed for effective relationships with school stakeholders by promoting accountability, stakeholder engagement, professional development, data-driven decision making, and ethical evaluation practices among school administrators.

By adhering to these guidelines, school leaders can cultivate a supportive and inclusive school environment that prioritizes the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders, ultimately contributing to the holistic development and success of the school community. Table 5 presents the recommendations to address the leadership practices of the school administrators needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders.

Table 5. Intervention to Address the Leadership Practices of the School Administrators

Title: Leadership Practices of the School Administrators Needed for Effective Relationship to School Stakeholders

Objective: To enhance school heads’ competencies necessary to effectively implement leadership practices needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders

Enhance Communication Channels:

- Implement clear and effective communication strategies that foster transparency, openness, and regular updates between school administrators and stakeholders. This includes utilizing multiple platforms such as newsletters, social media, and community meetings to keep stakeholders informed about school policies, initiatives, and achievements.

Increase Stakeholder Engagement:

- Actively involve stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, community members) in decision-making processes. Create opportunities for input and feedback on important matters affecting the school community, such as curriculum development, school policies, and resource allocation. This can be facilitated through advisory councils, committees, or regular forums.

Promote Collaborative

- Leadership: Foster a collaborative leadership approach where school administrators work alongside stakeholders as partners in achieving common goals. Encourage shared decision-making, teamwork, and mutual respect among all members of the school community.

Empowerment and Capacity Building:

- Provide professional development opportunities for school administrators to enhance their leadership skills in stakeholder management, conflict resolution, and community relations. Equip them with tools and resources to effectively engage and empower stakeholders in meaningful ways.

Address Resource Limitations:

- Advocate for adequate resources and funding to support school programs, facilities, and educational initiatives. Develop strategic plans that prioritize resource allocation based on the needs identified through collaborative efforts with stakeholders.

Cultural Competence and Diversity:

- Foster a culturally responsive environment that respects and values the diversity within the school community. Ensure that leadership practices promote inclusivity, equity, and sensitivity to the cultural backgrounds and perspectives of stakeholders.

Evaluate and Adapt:

- Regularly assess the effectiveness of leadership practices in fostering positive relationships with stakeholders. Collect feedback from stakeholders through surveys, focus groups, or informal discussions to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and emerging needs.

Build Trust and Accountability:

- Establish trust through consistent and ethical leadership practices that prioritize integrity, fairness, and accountability. Demonstrate responsiveness to stakeholder concerns, address feedback constructively, and follow through on commitments made to the school community.

Celebrate Successes and Recognize Contributions:

- Acknowledge and celebrate successes achieved through collaborative efforts with stakeholders. Recognize contributions made by individuals and groups within the school community to foster a sense of pride, ownership, and collective accomplishment.

Community Partnerships:

- Strengthen partnerships with external organizations, businesses, and community groups to leverage additional resources and support for school initiatives. Engage stakeholders beyond the school walls to broaden support and enhance the overall impact of educational programs and services.
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By implementing these recommendations, school administrators can cultivate effective leadership practices that strengthen relationships with stakeholders, promote a positive school climate, and ultimately contribute to improved educational outcomes for all members of the school community.

4. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were arrived at: 1) The school heads, teachers, parents and students in Mercedes District strongly agree that leadership practices were implemented needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders. In addition, 2) the effectiveness of the relationship between school heads and stakeholders along distribution of responsibility, along empowerment of others and decision making were interpreted as very highly effective, Moreover, 3) there is no significant relationship between the leadership practices of the public school elementary and secondary administrators and the effectiveness of their relationship with stakeholders. With this the null hypothesis will not be rejected.

Furthermore, 4) the school heads in Mercedes District encountered issues and concerns along leadership practices affecting the relationships to school stakeholders. Finally, 5) the researcher proposed plan of actions to address the leadership practices of the school administrators needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations to the area of research and development are hereby given: 1) To strengthen leadership effectiveness, school administrators may consider enhancing collaboration and communication with stakeholders. This can include more transparent

decision-making processes, opportunities for meaningful involvement in school governance, and regular communication about school goals and initiatives, 2) school heads may establish effective teams foster cohesive, productive work environments among staff, enhancing collaboration and goal achievement for the benefit of both staff and students, 3) school heads may actively encourage and support innovative practices, and provides teachers with opportunities to develop new skills, experiment with new approaches, and continuously improve their instructional competence, 4) school heads can cultivate a more collaborative school culture where ideas, perspectives, and contributions from all stakeholders are welcomed and integrated into strategic planning and implementation. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and collective responsibility towards achieving educational excellence and overcoming the challenges they faced, 5) the utilization of the proposed intervention to enhance leadership practices of the school heads in Mercedes District needed for effective relationship to school stakeholders may commence after this has undergone a thorough evaluation by the Schools Division Office.

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