

School Heads' Leadership Styles on Teachers' Competence in Marabut District, Division of Samar

GARRY ANTHONY A. GABUTAN
JITKA TISHA A. JADMAN
ROXAN A. TIMOSA

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The authors are all affiliated with Northwest Samar State University, Calbayog City, pursuing a Master of Arts in Education, Major in Administration and Supervision.

jitkatisha.jadman@deped.gov.ph

roxan.timosa001@deped.gov.ph

garrygabutan@deped.gov.ph

Abstract — This study investigated the impact of school heads' leadership styles on teachers' competence in Marabut District, Samar, Philippines. The research aimed to understand the relationship between various leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, democratic, and charismatic) and teachers' competence across several domains: content knowledge and pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum and planning, assessment and reporting, community linkages, and personal and professional development. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing a three-part questionnaire distributed to 15 school heads and 180 teachers selected through stratified random sampling. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages) and inferential statistics (ANOVA, MANOVA, Pearson r correlation, linear regression).

The findings revealed that school heads in Marabut District demonstrated a "Very Good" level of proficiency across all six leadership styles examined, with laissez-faire leadership scoring slightly higher than others. Teachers' competence was consistently rated as "Competent" across all domains, indicating a generally high level of professional capability. A significant positive correlation was found between transformational and democratic leadership styles and teachers' competence, suggesting that empowering and collaborative leadership approaches are most effective in enhancing teacher performance. Conversely, laissez-faire and autocratic styles showed weaker correlations. Furthermore, teachers' profiles (age, educational attainment, years of service, and training attended) significantly influenced both their competence and the leadership styles of their school heads. Sex and civil status, however, did not significantly impact either variable.

The study concludes that effective school leadership, particularly transformational and democratic styles, is crucial for fostering teacher competence and improving educational outcomes. The strong positive correlation between these leadership styles and teachers' competence highlights the importance of empowering and collaborative leadership approaches in creating a supportive and productive learning environment. The study recommends the development of capability-building programs focused on enhancing school heads' understanding and application of transformational and democratic leadership styles, as well as providing ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers. These interventions are expected to further improve teacher competence

and, ultimately, the quality of education in Marabut District. Further research could explore the mediating role of school context and resources on the relationship between leadership styles and teacher competence.

Keywords — School Heads' Leadership Styles, Teachers' Competence, Transformational Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Laissez-faire Leadership, Autocratic Leadership, Charismatic Leadership, Teacher Performance, MANOVA, Pearson r Correlation

I. Introduction

This study investigates the impact of school heads' leadership styles on teachers' competence within Marabut District, Division of Samar, Philippines. The research is significant because effective school leadership is widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing teacher performance and, ultimately, student achievement (e.g., Leithwood, 2016; Hallinger, 2018). However, while numerous leadership theories exist (e.g., transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, democratic, charismatic), empirical evidence specifically examining the relationship between these styles and teacher competence within the context of Marabut District is limited. This gap in research hinders the development of targeted professional development programs tailored to the specific needs and challenges of this region.

The rationale for this study stems from several key observations. First, school heads in the Philippines face increasing pressure to fulfill both administrative and instructional leadership responsibilities under Republic Act 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act), yet inconsistencies exist between policy and practice, particularly in Marabut District (Castaño & Litao, 2021). Second, while research highlights the importance of effective school leadership in driving organizational achievement (Oco, 2022), inconsistent teacher performance evaluations and National Achievement Test (NAT) scores in Samar Division suggest a need for improved leadership practices in Marabut District (Samar Division Reports, 2023). Third, existing research often focuses on general leadership theories, lacking localized studies that explore the practical application of different leadership styles within the unique context of Marabut schools, including their limited resources, geographic isolation, and diverse student populations.

This research directly addresses these limitations by investigating the prevalent leadership styles employed by school heads in Marabut District and their correlation with teachers' competence across various domains, including content knowledge, pedagogy, learning environment, and assessment practices. The findings will inform the development of a tailored capability-building program designed to enhance school heads' leadership effectiveness and, consequently, improve teacher competence and student outcomes in Marabut District. The study employs a descriptive-correlational research design, utilizing questionnaires to collect data from both school heads and teachers, and applying statistical analyses such as ANOVA, MANOVA, and Pearson r correlation to test the relationships between variables. The results will contribute valuable insights into the practical application of leadership theories within a specific educational

context, providing evidence-based recommendations for improving educational quality in the region.

Literature Review

The literature review examines leadership theories (behavioral, contingency, trait), focusing on transactional, democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire styles. While descriptions draw upon established sources like Northouse (2018), a critical analysis of their limitations within the Philippine context is missing. For example, the discussion of contingency theory mentions situational factors but doesn't explore how specific Marabut District factors might moderate the relationship between leadership styles and teacher competence. Similarly, trait theory is presented without engaging with contemporary critiques.

The review explores leadership styles, but a nuanced comparison is lacking. The potential strengths and weaknesses of each style in enhancing teacher competence aren't fully explored. For instance, while autocratic leadership's drawbacks are mentioned, the conditions under which it might be effective aren't discussed. The democratic leadership discussion lacks an assessment of its potential challenges, such as time constraints or decision paralysis.

The section on teacher competence uses Gibbs (2022) to highlight resilience and adaptability, but lacks a systematic examination of competence dimensions using frameworks like the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). The review mentions teacher evaluation but doesn't critically discuss limitations or biases in evaluation methods.

Finally, the connection between leadership styles and teacher competence relies on cited studies, but lacks detailed analysis of methodologies and critical evaluation of findings. Positive correlations between transformational leadership and teacher performance are mentioned without discussing mediating variables or limitations of correlational designs. Overall, the review provides an overview but needs more critical analysis, contextualization, and methodological evaluation to strengthen its contribution.

II. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between school heads' leadership styles and teachers' competence in Marabut District, Samar. Data were collected using a three-part questionnaire administered to a sample of 15 school heads and 180 teachers selected through a combination of universal and stratified random sampling. The questionnaire assessed leadership styles across six dimensions and teacher competence across seven domains. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and inferential tests including Pearson r correlation, ANOVA, and MANOVA to examine the relationships between variables. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and data confidentiality, were strictly adhered to throughout the research process.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. This quantitative approach was chosen to describe the relationship between school heads' leadership styles and teachers' competence without manipulating any variables. The descriptive aspect focused on profiling both school heads and teachers based on demographic and professional characteristics (age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, years of service, training). The correlational component investigated the associations between these profiles, leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, democratic, charismatic), and teachers' competence across various domains (content knowledge, pedagogy, learning environment, diversity of learners, curriculum planning, assessment, community linkages, personal and professional development). This design allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the existing relationships between the variables within the context of Marabut District.

Sample of the Study

A combination of universal sampling (for all school heads in Marabut District) and stratified random sampling (for teachers) was utilized to ensure a representative sample. All 15 school heads participated, providing a complete representation of leadership perspectives within the district. For teachers, stratified random sampling ensured a balanced representation across various schools, experience levels, and roles. The sample size for teachers was determined based on the total population of teachers in the district, aiming for a sufficient number to maintain statistical power and generalizability of the findings. This sampling strategy aimed to minimize bias and ensure the results were generalizable to the wider population of teachers and school heads in Marabut District.

Measures

A three-part questionnaire was developed and used to collect data. Part 1 gathered demographic information (age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, years of service, training attended) for both school heads and teachers. Part 2 used a 30-item, 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to assess school heads' leadership styles across six dimensions (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, democratic, charismatic). Part 3 employed a 35-item, 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to assess teachers' competence across seven domains based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Prior to data collection, the questionnaires underwent validation by experts and pilot testing to ensure reliability and validity (Cronbach's alpha values of 0.87 and 0.83 for leadership styles and teacher competence, respectively).

Procedures

The study obtained necessary ethical approvals and permissions from relevant authorities. Questionnaires were distributed to school heads and teachers, with researchers providing assistance to ensure accurate completion. Data were collected through a structured survey process, ensuring consistency and minimizing bias. The researchers personally administered and retrieved the questionnaires to maximize response rates and address any questions or concerns respondents might have. This approach also helped to ensure the integrity of the data collected.

Data Processing

Data were coded, cleaned, and analyzed using statistical software (SPSS/Jamovi). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) summarized demographic profiles, leadership styles, and competence levels. Inferential statistics were used to test hypotheses. Pearson's r correlation assessed relationships between variables, while ANOVA and MANOVA investigated differences among groups. Results were interpreted at a significance level of $p < .05$, and effect sizes were calculated to assess the practical significance of the findings. The entire data analysis process adhered to rigorous statistical methods to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results.

Ethical Considerations

The study prioritized ethical considerations throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, emphasizing voluntary participation and data confidentiality. Anonymity was maintained by using numerical codes instead of names. Data security was ensured through password-protected storage and restricted access. The study also addressed potential power imbalances by using external survey administrators not affiliated with school leadership. The research adhered to the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 and other relevant ethical guidelines to protect participant rights and well-being. Transparency was maintained by providing participants with access to general findings after the study.

III. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the study on school heads' leadership styles and their impact on teachers' competence in Marabut District, Division of Samar. The results are organized to address the research questions, beginning with a description of the profiles of school heads and teachers. Subsequent sections detail the levels of various leadership styles among school heads and teachers' competence across different domains. Finally, the relationships between these variables, along with the influence of teacher and school head profiles, are analyzed using correlation and ANOVA/MANOVA. The discussion integrates these findings with relevant literature to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the results and their implications for enhancing educational quality in the district.

Profile of School Heads and Teachers

The study revealed that most school heads in Marabut District are female (53.33%), aged 39-45 years, married, and hold a Master's degree. A significant portion have participated in national and international professional development activities. Teachers, similarly, are predominantly female (66.11%), with most falling within the 39-45 age range and holding a Master's degree or equivalent units. A majority of teachers have participated in division-level professional development, reflecting a commitment to continuous learning. These findings align with research suggesting that experienced and well-educated leaders and teachers are associated with improved educational outcomes (Saleem et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). The relatively high proportion of female school heads and teachers is noteworthy and warrants further investigation into its impact on leadership styles and teacher competence.

Level of Leadership Styles of School Heads

School heads demonstrated a "Very Good" level of proficiency across all six leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, autocratic, democratic, charismatic), with laissez-faire scoring slightly higher. This suggests adaptability and competence in employing diverse leadership approaches. The high scores across all styles, however, warrant further investigation into the potential for a more nuanced and context-specific approach to leadership development. While the balanced proficiency is positive, it might mask underlying needs for targeted professional development in specific leadership areas. The findings contrast with some literature that suggests a stronger emphasis on transformational leadership is ideal (Mumford, 2006), prompting a need to explore the contextual factors contributing to the observed balanced proficiency.

Level of Teachers' Competence

Teachers demonstrated a consistent "Competent" level across all seven domains of competence (content knowledge, learning environment, diversity, curriculum, assessment, community linkages, personal growth). This suggests a generally high level of professional capability. However, the relatively low scores in certain sub-domains within each category (e.g., "Apply strategies to make lessons relevant and engaging for students" within Content Knowledge and Pedagogy) highlight areas for targeted professional development. The consistent "Competent" rating, while positive, might not reflect the full spectrum of teacher capabilities. Further qualitative research could explore the nuances of teacher performance and identify factors contributing to variations within each competence domain. This aligns with the emphasis on continuous professional development to enhance teacher effectiveness (Gibbs, 2022).

Relationship Between Leadership Styles and Teachers' Competence

Significant positive correlations were found between transformational ($r = 0.614-0.622$) and democratic ($r = 0.570-0.602$) leadership styles and teachers' competence across all domains. This suggests that empowering and collaborative leadership approaches are most effective in enhancing teacher performance. Conversely, laissez-faire and autocratic styles showed weaker correlations, indicating that more directive or less participatory styles may not be as effective in fostering teacher competence. These findings strongly support the existing literature emphasizing the positive impact of transformational and democratic leadership on teacher effectiveness (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2021; Mumford, 2006). The study's findings provide empirical evidence to support the implementation of leadership development programs focused on these styles.

Influence of Teacher and School Head Profiles on Competence and Leadership

The study revealed significant relationships between the profiles of both teachers and school heads and their respective competence and leadership styles. Specifically, age, educational attainment, years of service, and participation in professional development significantly influenced both variables. However, sex and civil status did not significantly impact either variable. These findings align with research highlighting the importance of experience, education, and ongoing professional development in enhancing both leadership effectiveness and teacher competence (Saleem et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). The lack of significant influence from sex and civil status underscores the importance of focusing on professional development opportunities as key drivers of improved performance, regardless of demographic factors.

Proposed Capability-Building Program

Based on the findings, a capability-building program is proposed to enhance school heads' understanding and application of transformational and democratic leadership styles, and to provide ongoing professional development for teachers. The program will focus on developing practical strategies for fostering teacher competence in key areas. This program directly addresses the identified gaps in leadership practices and teacher development, aligning with the recommendations to improve the quality of education in Marabut District. The program's design incorporates various methods such as workshops, mentoring, and collaborative action planning to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. The program's structure reflects the need for a multi-faceted approach to leadership and teacher development, recognizing the interconnectedness between effective leadership and teacher competence.

IV. Conclusion

This study concludes that school heads' leadership styles significantly influence teachers' competence in Marabut District, Division of Samar. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between transformational and democratic leadership styles and teachers' overall competence across various domains, including content knowledge, pedagogy, learning

environment, and assessment practices. This underscores the importance of empowering and collaborative leadership approaches in fostering a supportive and productive learning environment that enhances teacher effectiveness. Conversely, laissez-faire and autocratic styles showed weaker correlations, suggesting that more directive or less participatory styles may not be as effective in promoting teacher growth and development.

The study also highlights the significant influence of teacher and school head profiles on both leadership styles and teacher competence. Age, educational attainment, years of service, and participation in professional development significantly impacted both variables, emphasizing the importance of experience, education, and ongoing professional development in enhancing both leadership effectiveness and teacher performance. This finding reinforces the need for continuous professional development initiatives for both school heads and teachers to improve the quality of education in the district.

The significance of these findings lies in their practical implications for improving educational outcomes in Marabut District. The strong positive correlation between transformational and democratic leadership and teacher competence provides empirical evidence supporting the development of targeted capability-building programs focused on enhancing school heads' understanding and application of these leadership styles. Such programs should include workshops, mentoring, and collaborative action planning to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability. Furthermore, ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers should be prioritized to enhance their competence in key areas such as content knowledge, pedagogy, assessment, and community engagement.

The study's limitations include its reliance on self-reported data and its correlational design, which cannot establish causality. Future research could employ mixed-methods approaches to explore the mechanisms through which leadership styles influence teacher competence and to investigate the mediating role of school context and resources. Nevertheless, the findings provide valuable insights into the relationship between school leadership and teacher effectiveness within a specific educational context, offering evidence-based recommendations for improving educational quality in Marabut District and potentially serving as a model for other similarly situated districts in the Philippines. The consistent "Competent" rating for teachers across all domains, while positive, also suggests the need for ongoing efforts to further enhance teacher capabilities and address any identified gaps in specific areas of competence. The study's contribution lies in its provision of locally relevant data to inform policy and practice, highlighting the importance of context-specific research in improving educational outcomes.

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