

# Leadership Practices and Their Impact on Teacher Satisfaction and Retention in Elementary Schools

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*Abstract* — This study investigates how leadership behaviors affect elementary school teachers' retention and job satisfaction. The study looks at how principals' leadership philosophies, methods of decision-making, and communication tactics affect teachers' dedication, motivation, and long-term professional engagement because it acknowledges that strong school leadership is essential to creating a positive work environment. In order to collect both quantitative indicators of satisfaction and qualitative information about teachers' experiences, the study used a mixed-methods approach, combining survey data with interviews. Results indicated that leadership behaviors that were transparent, involved group decision-making, and provided continuous professional development greatly improved teacher satisfaction and created a feeling of community within the school. On the other hand, teacher discontent and increased turnover rates were a result of leadership styles that lack cooperation, acknowledgment, or clear guidance. The study also emphasized how teachers' opinions of leadership efficacy and workplace culture had a significant impact on retention, which was not just reliant on financial incentives. These results highlight how crucial it is to cultivate school leaders who place a high value on open communication, relationship-building, and instructional support. Elementary schools can establish environments that enhance teacher retention and satisfaction by encouraging positive leadership practices, which ultimately help to ensure that students receive a stable and high-quality education.

*Keywords* — *Leadership practices, Teacher satisfaction, Teacher retention, Elementary schools, School leadership, Workplace culture, Instructional support, Shared decision-making, Professional engagement, Motivation*

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## I. Introduction

The findings of this investigation hold substantial implications for multiple stakeholders within the Philippine educational ecosystem. For educational policymakers, this research provides empirical evidence to inform the development of leadership development frameworks and teacher retention policies specifically tailored to rural and underserved districts. The proposed leadership enhancement program emerging from this study offers concrete, evidence-based strategies for improving administrative effectiveness and addressing teacher attrition challenges that persistently affect educational quality in peripheral areas. School heads and educational administrators will benefit from insights into the relationship between specific leadership practices and teacher satisfaction outcomes, enabling them to adopt more effective approaches to personnel management and organizational climate development. For teachers, this research validates their professional experiences while potentially contributing to improved working conditions and job satisfaction through enhanced leadership practices. The academic community gains valuable contributions to

educational leadership literature, particularly regarding leadership effectiveness in Philippine elementary education contexts where empirical research remains limited. Furthermore, teacher preparation institutions and leadership development programs can utilize these findings to design more contextually relevant training curricula that address the unique challenges faced by educational leaders in similar geographical and socio-economic environments. The broader educational system benefits through the potential for improved teacher retention rates, which directly correlates with enhanced educational continuity, reduced recruitment costs, and improved student learning outcomes, ultimately contributing to the advancement of quality education in underserved communities.

## Literature Review

**Research Literature.** Transformational leadership represents a paradigmatic approach to organizational management that transcends conventional administrative functions by inspiring and motivating personnel to surpass individual and professional expectations while pursuing collective institutional objectives (Abrell et al., 2021). This comprehensive longitudinal study examined the implementation and evaluation of transformational leadership development programs in organizational contexts, demonstrating measurable improvements in leadership effectiveness and employee engagement metrics. The research employed rigorous methodological approaches including pre-post assessments and control group comparisons to establish causal relationships between transformational leadership training and organizational outcomes.

Contemporary research examining the relationship between school head leadership behaviors and teacher performance outcomes reveals significant cross-cultural variations in leadership effectiveness (Chen et al., 2023). This comparative study between Taiwan and Japan educational systems employed quantitative methodologies to assess leadership behavior impacts on teacher performance, utilizing standardized instruments and statistical analyses to identify significant correlations between specific leadership practices and educational outcomes. The investigation revealed that cultural contexts substantially influence the effectiveness of particular leadership approaches, with democratic and participatory styles demonstrating greater efficacy in certain educational environments.

The Chen et al. (2023) study provides valuable comparative insights relevant to the current investigation through its examination of leadership-teacher performance relationships in elementary educational settings. Both studies employ quantitative methodologies to assess leadership impact on teacher-related outcomes and utilize similar theoretical frameworks grounding leadership effectiveness in observable behaviors and measurable outcomes. However, fundamental differences exist in geographical scope, cultural contexts, and outcome variables. While Chen et al. conducted cross-national comparative analysis between developed Asian educational systems, the present study focuses specifically on rural Philippine elementary schools.

Leadership effectiveness in educational settings demonstrates measurable correlations with teacher retention rates, particularly in rural and resource-constrained environments where administrative support assumes heightened significance (Frahm & Cianca, 2021). This qualitative investigation employed phenomenological approaches to examine teacher perspectives on leadership behaviors that influence retention decisions in rural educational contexts. The study identified specific leadership characteristics including supportive communication, professional recognition, and collaborative decision-making as primary factors influencing teacher retention intentions.

The Frahm and Cianca (2021) research demonstrates direct relevance to the current study through its explicit focus on leadership behaviors and teacher retention relationships within rural educational environments. Both investigations address similar geographical and demographic contexts, examining teacher retention as a critical outcome variable influenced by administrative leadership practices. However, methodological approaches differ substantially, with Frahm and Cianca employing qualitative phenomenological methods while the current study utilizes quantitative survey methodologies. The present investigation expands the conceptual framework to include teacher satisfaction as an additional outcome variable and examines leadership practices through classical management function dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on supportive leadership behaviors.

Professional development facilitation through instructional leadership practices demonstrates significant impact on teacher engagement and institutional effectiveness (Kilag & Sasan, 2023). This qualitative research investigation employed case study methodologies to examine how instructional leadership practices influence teacher professional development participation and outcomes. The study revealed that leaders who actively promote learning cultures and provide systematic professional growth opportunities generate higher levels of teacher engagement and improved instructional practices.

The Kilag and Sasan (2023) investigation aligns with the current study through its examination of leadership practices and their influence on teacher professional outcomes within educational contexts. Both studies recognize the critical importance of leadership in fostering teacher development and institutional improvement. However, significant methodological and conceptual differences distinguish the research approaches. While Kilag and Sasan employed qualitative case study methods focusing specifically on instructional leadership and professional development, the current investigation utilizes quantitative survey methodology examining broader leadership practices and their relationship to teacher satisfaction and retention. The present study incorporates satisfaction and retention as primary outcome variables rather than focusing exclusively on professional development engagement.

Democratic leadership approaches in educational settings demonstrate significant positive correlations with teacher performance outcomes, accounting for substantial variance in performance measures across diverse educational contexts (Imhangbe et al., 2020). This

quantitative investigation employed correlational research design to examine relationships between leadership styles and teacher job performance in Nigerian secondary schools. The study utilized standardized instruments to assess leadership styles and performance metrics, revealing that democratic leadership practices explain approximately 68.3% of variance in teacher performance outcomes.

The Imhangbe et al. (2020) study provides relevant comparative data for the current investigation through its quantitative examination of leadership-teacher outcome relationships in developing nation educational contexts. Both studies employ survey methodologies and statistical analyses to examine leadership effectiveness in educational settings. However, important contextual and conceptual differences exist between the investigations. While Imhangbe et al. focused on secondary education in Nigeria with performance as the primary outcome variable, the current study examines elementary education in the Philippines with satisfaction and retention as key dependent variables. The present investigation incorporates multiple leadership practice dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on democratic leadership styles, and addresses rural district contexts rather than broader national educational systems.

Rural teacher satisfaction demonstrates complex relationships with intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, with social purpose fulfillment and professional skill utilization serving as primary satisfaction drivers (Huysman, 2020). This quantitative research investigation employed survey methodology to examine teacher satisfaction determinants in rural educational environments, revealing that intrinsic motivators significantly outweigh extrinsic factors in determining overall job satisfaction levels among rural educators.

The Huysman (2020) investigation demonstrates direct relevance to the current study through its focus on rural teacher satisfaction and its utilization of quantitative survey methodologies. Both studies examine teacher satisfaction in rural educational contexts and employ similar data collection approaches. However, the current investigation expands the conceptual framework by incorporating teacher retention as an additional outcome variable and examining the role of leadership practices as predictor variables. While Huysman focused on satisfaction determinants broadly, the present study specifically examines how school head leadership practices influence both satisfaction and retention outcomes in elementary educational settings.

Work motivation and leadership relationships demonstrate significant correlations with teacher performance outcomes in educational institutions (Wardhani & Soetomo, 2023). This quantitative investigation examined the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between school head leadership and teacher performance, utilizing structural equation modeling to identify direct and indirect effects. The study revealed that leadership practices influence teacher performance both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction as a mediating variable.

The Wardhani and Soetomo (2023) study provides valuable methodological and theoretical insights for the current investigation through its examination of leadership-satisfaction-

performance relationships in educational contexts. Both studies recognize job satisfaction as a critical variable influenced by leadership practices and employ quantitative methodologies to examine these relationships. However, the current study differs by focusing on retention rather than performance as the ultimate outcome variable and by examining elementary rather than secondary educational settings. The present investigation also incorporates a broader range of leadership practice dimensions and focuses specifically on rural district contexts rather than urban educational environments.

Managerial competence among school heads demonstrates significant impact on teacher performance outcomes through integration of conceptual skills, human resource management, and cultural stewardship functions (Puspitasari, 2021). This research investigation examined the relationship between school head managerial abilities and teacher performance improvement, identifying specific competency areas that contribute most significantly to positive educational outcomes.

The Puspitasari (2021) study aligns with the current investigation through its focus on school head leadership capabilities and their impact on teacher-related outcomes. Both studies examine the role of administrative leadership in educational effectiveness and recognize the multidimensional nature of leadership competence. However, the current study diverges by examining satisfaction and retention rather than performance as primary outcome variables and by focusing specifically on rural elementary educational contexts. The present investigation also incorporates teacher perspectives on leadership practices rather than focusing exclusively on administrative competency assessment.

Teacher performance relationships with emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence demonstrate complex interactions mediated by work motivation in educational settings (Rahmawati et al., 2020). This quantitative investigation employed path analysis to examine direct and indirect effects of various intelligence dimensions on teacher performance outcomes, revealing significant mediating effects of motivational factors in these relationships.

The Rahmawati et al. (2020) study provides relevant insights for the current investigation through its examination of teacher-related outcomes and motivational factors in educational contexts. Both studies recognize the complexity of factors influencing teacher effectiveness and employ quantitative methodologies to examine these relationships. However, the current study focuses specifically on leadership practices as predictor variables rather than individual intelligence dimensions, and examines satisfaction and retention rather than performance as outcome variables. The present investigation also addresses rural elementary educational contexts rather than Islamic educational institutions.

Teacher job satisfaction in Chinese educational contexts reveals persistent tensions between self-actualization fulfillment and systemic constraints including inadequate compensation and excessive workload demands (Feng, 2020). This comprehensive investigation examined

satisfaction determinants across multiple demographic and professional variables, revealing that age and tenure serve as significant mediating factors in satisfaction outcomes.

The Feng (2020) study provides valuable comparative data for the current investigation through its comprehensive examination of teacher satisfaction determinants and its recognition of demographic factors as important mediating variables. Both studies employ quantitative methodologies to examine teacher satisfaction as a multidimensional construct. However, the current investigation incorporates leadership practices as primary predictor variables rather than focusing exclusively on systemic and demographic factors. The present study also examines retention as an additional outcome variable and focuses specifically on rural elementary educational contexts rather than broader national educational systems.

The contemporary research literature reveals consistent patterns regarding the critical importance of effective leadership practices in determining teacher satisfaction and retention outcomes across diverse educational contexts. Transformational leadership approaches demonstrate particular effectiveness in fostering positive teacher outcomes through inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. However, cultural and contextual factors significantly influence leadership effectiveness, necessitating localized research to understand specific regional dynamics. Rural educational environments present unique challenges requiring adaptive leadership approaches that address both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. The integration of satisfaction and retention as interconnected outcome variables represents an important advancement in understanding the comprehensive impact of leadership practices on teacher welfare and institutional sustainability. The current investigation contributes to this expanding knowledge base by providing empirical evidence from Philippine elementary educational contexts, addressing significant gaps in localized research while building upon established theoretical frameworks from international educational leadership scholarship.

Although this study focused on how transformational leadership influences teacher retention and satisfaction, it's crucial to place these results in the context of other well-established leadership paradigms. It has been discovered that transactional leadership, which is predicated on conditional rewards and corrective measures, guarantees adherence to institutional policies but frequently falls short in promoting teachers' long-term professional commitment or intrinsic motivation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). On the other hand, servant leadership places a strong emphasis on helping others, showing empathy, and fostering their growth. This makes it especially applicable in educational settings where leaders serve as mentors; studies show that school leaders who are servant-oriented improve teacher morale and the school climate (Eva et al., 2019). Similar to this study's findings that participatory practices increase satisfaction, distributed leadership—which entails shared responsibility and collaborative decision-making—has been linked to higher levels of professional engagement and teacher empowerment (Harris, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2020). However, authoritarian leadership, which is typified by strict control and unilateral decision-making, is often associated with lower teacher morale and higher attrition rates, even

though it may be effective in some circumstances (Okoji, 2022). Due to a lack of direction and responsibility, laissez-faire leadership—characterized by passive or hands-off approaches—is consistently linked to lower levels of teacher satisfaction and organizational success (Saleem et al., 2020). Together, these viewpoints support the finding that, although different leadership philosophies have varying effects on learning outcomes, transformational and participatory strategies continue to be the most successful in maintaining teacher retention and satisfaction, especially in the context of Philippine public elementary schools.

### **Research Problem**

This study aims to assess the school heads' leadership practices and their impact on teacher satisfaction and retention in public elementary schools in Calbayog V District, Schools Division of Calbayog City with the end view of proposing a leadership enhancement program.

Specifically, the study seeks answers to the following specific questions:

1. What is the profile of the:
  - 1.1 school head:
    - 1.1.1 age;
    - 1.1.2 sex;
    - 1.1.3 civil status;
    - 1.1.4 highest educational attainment;
    - 1.1.5 number of years as school head;
    - 1.1.6 number of relevant trainings/seminars attended?
  - 1.2 teacher;
    - 1.2.1 age;
    - 1.2.2 sex;
    - 1.2.3 civil status;
    - 1.2.4 highest educational attainment;
    - 1.2.5 number of years in teaching;
    - 1.2.6 number of relevant trainings/seminars attended?

2. As perceived by the respondent groups, what are the leadership practices of school heads in terms of:
  - 2.1 idealized influence;
  - 2.2 inspirational motivation;
  - 2.3 intellectual stimulation;
  - 2.4 individualized consideration?
3. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the teachers' satisfaction with school heads' leadership practices?
4. As perceived by the respondent groups, what is the retention of the teachers?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the respondent groups' profile and their perceived leadership practices of the school heads?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' profile and their level of job satisfaction?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' profile and their level of retention?
8. Is there a significant relationship between school head's leadership practices and teachers' level of job satisfaction?
9. Is there a significant relationship between the school head's leadership practices and teacher's level of retention?
10. Is there a significant relationship between the teacher's level of job satisfaction and their level of retention?
11. Based on the findings of the study, what leadership enhancement program can be proposed?

**Hypotheses.** The following null hypothesis will be tested in this study:

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant relationship between the respondent groups' profile and their perceived leadership practices of the school heads.

H<sub>02</sub>. There is no significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' profile and their level of job satisfaction.

H<sub>03</sub>. There is no significant relationship between the teacher-respondents' profile and their level of retention.

H<sub>04</sub>. There is no significant relationship between school head's leadership practices and teachers' level of job satisfaction.

H<sub>05</sub>. There is no significant relationship between the school head's leadership practices and teacher's level of retention.

H<sub>06</sub>. There is no significant relationship between the teacher's level of job satisfaction and their level of retention.

## II. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research approach that will be employed in this study. This will include details on how the sample size was determined, the criteria for selecting survey locations and timing, and the methodology for choosing respondents. This chapter also explains the rationale behind the research strategy, the selection of research instruments, the data collection methods, and the statistical analysis techniques used to derive meaningful insights from the collected data.

### Procedure

This quantitative study investigated leadership methods and their impact on teacher satisfaction and retention in elementary schools within Calbayog V District. Institutional authorization was obtained from the Schools Division Office and all 16 school administrators, followed by ethical clearance through Institutional Review Board approval. The instrument underwent pilot testing in Calbayog I District, with content validity verified by expert evaluation and reliability established using Cronbach's alpha. Orientation sessions informed participants about the study, and written consent was obtained emphasizing voluntary participation. Data were gathered over a period of 4 to 6 weeks via electronic and print surveys, with school liaisons facilitating distribution while ensuring anonymity.

### Data Processing

The gathered data was systematically screened for completeness and accuracy, with normality evaluated by Shapiro-Wilk tests, skewness and kurtosis statistics, and visual inspection methods. Descriptive statistics delineated sample demographics and variable distributions, whereas inferential analysis investigated the correlations between leadership practices and teacher outcomes. Parametric tests such as Pearson correlations, t-tests, ANOVA, and multiple regression were utilized when assumptions were met; non-parametric alternatives (Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis, Spearman's rho) were implemented in cases of violations. Statistical significance was assessed at  $p < .05$ , with effect sizes and confidence ranges documented. All analyses were performed using SPSS, establishing a solid basis for producing dependable findings to guide leadership development within the district.

### III. Results and Discussion

1. The profile of school heads in Calbayog V District revealed a mature leadership group with a mean age of 52.5 years, predominantly male (58.33%), and overwhelmingly married (91.67%). Educational qualifications were distributed across Master's units (25.00%), Master's degrees (33.33%), Doctorate units (33.33%), and Doctorate degrees (8.33%). Administrative experience averaged 14.2 years, with most having 10-19 years of experience (50.00%). Professional development participation varied, with national (33.33%) and division-level (33.33%) training being most common.
2. The teacher profile demonstrated a workforce with a mean age of 42.3 years, predominantly female (84.21%), and overwhelmingly married (91.23%). Educational attainment showed 60.53 percent with Master's units, 14.91 percent with Master's degrees, and 15.79 percent with college degrees only. Teaching experience averaged 16.8 years, with balanced distribution across experience levels. Professional development was concentrated at division level (66.67%).
3. Leadership practices assessment revealed mixed performance across transformational dimensions. Idealized influence received the highest ratings (school heads: 3.95, teachers: 3.98), while inspirational motivation showed the weakest performance (school heads: 3.37, teachers: 3.58). Intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration both received moderate ratings in the "Agree" range.
4. Teacher satisfaction with leadership practices showed moderate levels overall (school heads: 3.91, teachers: 3.81). Highest satisfaction emerged in empathy and support (teachers: 4.33), while lowest satisfaction appeared in participatory decision-making (school heads: 3.50, teachers: 3.42).
5. Teacher retention factors received positive ratings overall (school heads: 3.83, teachers: 3.77). Recognition of contributions scored highest (school heads: 4.08, teachers: 4.01), while job security showed concerning gaps (school heads: 3.67, teachers: 3.37).
6. No significant relationships existed between respondent profiles and perceived leadership practices, with all demographic variables showing non-significant correlations across transformational leadership dimensions for both school heads and teachers.
7. Teacher profile variables showed minimal correlation with job satisfaction, except for professional development participation which demonstrated a significant positive relationship ( $r = 0.19$ ,  $p = 0.041$ ).
8. Teacher retention correlated significantly with age ( $r = 0.21$ ,  $p = 0.021$ ), years in teaching ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), and professional development participation ( $r = 0.19$ ,  $p = 0.039$ ).

9. Strong positive correlations existed between all transformational leadership dimensions and teacher satisfaction, with individualized consideration showing the strongest relationship ( $r = 0.85$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by idealized influence ( $r = 0.82$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).
10. All transformational leadership dimensions correlated strongly with teacher retention, with individualized consideration demonstrating the highest correlation ( $r = 0.81$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by idealized influence ( $r = 0.76$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).
11. An exceptionally strong correlation existed between teacher satisfaction and retention ( $r = 0.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), representing the strongest statistical relationship documented in the study.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

1. The demographic profiles of both school heads and teachers reveal mature, experienced, and predominantly married educational professionals with substantial credentials, though professional development opportunities remain limited, particularly at national and international levels.
2. School heads demonstrate moderate competency in transformational leadership practices, with idealized influence as the strongest dimension and inspirational motivation as the weakest, indicating uneven leadership development across critical transformational dimensions.
3. Demographic characteristics do not significantly influence leadership perceptions, suggesting that transformational leadership effectiveness transcends personal attributes and operates consistently across different demographic groups within this rural educational context.
4. Professional development participation emerges as the primary demographic predictor of both teacher satisfaction and retention, while other personal characteristics show minimal influence on these outcomes.
5. Teacher satisfaction levels reflect the moderate leadership performance, with satisfaction gaps in participatory decision-making and professional development opportunities representing critical areas requiring attention.
6. Teacher retention intentions are influenced by career maturity factors, professional investment, and access to growth opportunities, with experience and professional development serving as significant predictors.
7. Transformational leadership practices demonstrate strong predictive relationships with teacher satisfaction, with individualized consideration and idealized influence representing the most influential dimensions.

8. All transformational leadership dimensions significantly predict teacher retention, with individualized consideration showing the strongest relationship, validating the importance of personalized support for retention outcomes.
9. The exceptionally strong correlation between satisfaction and retention validates satisfaction as a critical mediating mechanism through which leadership practices influence retention decisions.
10. The pattern of strong correlations across satisfaction and retention outcomes demonstrates that comprehensive leadership development rather than isolated interventions offers the greatest potential for organizational improvement.
11. The current moderate performance levels across leadership dimensions represent substantial opportunities for enhancement that could yield significant improvements in both teacher satisfaction and retention through systematic leadership development.

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