Public Leadership of School Heads as a Construct of School Effectiveness of Public Secondary Schools in IGACOS Division

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Abstract— This study explored the relationship of public leadership and school effectiveness since this had never been explored specifically in the local setting. With this, the study determined the extent of public leadership of school heads and the school effectiveness of public secondary school in IGACOS Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables. With the use of probability sampling, 150 secondary teachers in the public schools were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive-correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was an extensive public leadership of school heads and an extensive school effectiveness. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education and school heads may identify means on how to help strengthen their public leadership to ensure the attainment of school effectiveness. More so, future researchers may further explore the involved variables considering other factors and research methods.

Index Terms— public leadership, school effectiveness, descriptive correlation, IGACOS division, Philippines.

1. Introduction

School effectiveness is crucial for fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and personally, laying the foundation for their future success. A highly effective school not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates essential life skills, critical thinking, and a love for learning, shaping well-rounded individuals ready to contribute to society. The impact of school effectiveness extends beyond the classroom, influencing the overall development of students and playing a pivotal role in building a strong, educated, and empowered community. However, schools are confronted with so many challenges. These challenges stem from inadequate resources, including insufficient funding, outdated infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified teachers. Additionally, the attainment of school effectiveness can be hindered by challenges arising from ineffective public leadership of school heads, including issues such as poor decision-making, lack of strategic vision, and insufficient support for faculty and staff.

In USA, there is ample evidence to suggest that American schools perform worse than schools in many other countries. The U.S. ranks toward the bottom of the industrialized nations on international tests of academic achievement in science and mathematics. Not only may American schools perform worse but they may do so at the same time as they use more resources than other schools systems. In essence, American schools may not only be poor in quality but less efficient [1]. A bad teacher and particularly a group of incompetent teachers can derail a school's effectiveness quickly. Every student who has a poor teacher has the potential to fall behind academically [2].

In the Philippines, many of the causes of failure and deterioration of schools today are attributed to factors such as the lack of curriculum framework, mismanagement, poor staff relationship, ineffective teaching practices, inadequate funding, lack of trained and qualified teachers, outdated curriculum, and insufficient infrastructure and poor academic performance of students [3]. The impact of low-quality education in the Philippines is a matter of concern that requires urgent attention. As a result, the country is facing dire consequences such as high illiteracy rates, limited employment opportunities, and a growing skills gap [4].

Within the IGACOS Division, the school was grappling with the challenge of achieving school effectiveness. Notably, many schools faced budgetary issues leading to insufficient funding, while others contended with overcrowded classrooms, outdated educational infrastructure, and restricted access to contemporary teaching resources and technology. Furthermore, a scarcity of qualified teachers persisted, as only a few had been afforded training opportunities. Additionally, ineffective leadership was apparent, with some school heads demonstrating laxity in their leadership roles.

Nevertheless, the mentioned circumstances were purely observational and lack validation through research. In this context, the researcher was driven to investigate the state of school effectiveness, specifically focusing on the public leadership of school heads. The study revealed correlations between these variables. Moreover, this undertaking sought to provide meaningful insights for policymakers, empowering them to craft policies, programs, interventions, projects, and activities that would promote a robust framework for public

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leadership among school heads. This, in effect, would create avenues for all members of the school community to achieve school effectiveness for the well-being of the students. Additionally, the researcher intended to share the study's findings in local, national, and international forums and would pursue publication in a Scopus-indexed journal.

This study was primarily grounded in the Transformational Leadership Theory [5]. One of the prominent theories that addressed the relationship between public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness is the Transformational Leadership Theory. This theory emphasized the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes beyond their self-interests. In the context of education, transformational leaders are believed to foster a positive school culture, encourage innovation, and promote a shared vision among staff, contributing to overall school effectiveness. This theory posited that effective leaders can influence organizational culture and enhance teacher motivation, which are critical factors in achieving positive educational outcomes. Leaders should adapt their strategies to align with the unique characteristics and challenges of their school environment.

Public leadership is not associated with the structural administration of public institutions, it is also related to complicated social, political and cultural relationships exceeding the organization limits. This type of leadership, in addition to organizational hierarchy, rules and procedures, is an output of an understanding in which all the stakeholders are included in the process of administration, an extensive network is established and the organizational limits are exceeded [6].

Furthermore, public leadership includes the approaches of shared and distributed leadership and consists of all leadership actions that integrate purpose, process and implementations with public values and promote innovation [7]. In the light of previous information, public leadership contains different types of leadership, such as accountability leadership, rule-following leadership, political loyalty leadership and network governance leadership [8].

The behaviours of school leaders have a considerable impact on school effectiveness [3]. In this regard, previous studies indicated that the type and characteristics of leadership is important to generate an effective school [9]. The new concepts that emerged with the understanding of new public management, such as accountability and network, are accounted for effective school leaders [10].

In the literature, there are also several studies that have found that effective school leadership has had an indirect effect on student achievement through enhancing teachers' professional skills, class implementations and collaboration [11].

The principal as the leader of the education unit is required to be able to move all components and resources of the school to achieve effectiveness and effective learning by focusing on efforts to improve the quality of the process and learning outcomes. The principal as the leader is responsible for micromanagement, which is directly related to the learning process in the school. The principal has formal authority to translate ideas and suggestions into school management. The principal can also act as a motivator to provide motivation and instill awareness to his subordinates about the importance of the quality of work results by prioritizing the implementation of tasks and responsibilities rather than their personal interests [12].

Among the factors influencing school effectiveness were strong and effective principal's leadership and sustained focus on instruction and learning. In addition, the school principal also manages human resources in such a way that they can motivate teachers and coordinate various teacher tasks. Teacher training and development coordinated by the principal and the principal's responsiveness to various teacher questions relating to the work of the teacher can improve various components of the school in achieving effective schooling [13].

2. Method

A. Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach, specifically employing a descriptive correlational technique, involving the collection of numerical data and subsequent mathematical analysis, often incorporating statistical tools [14]. The chosen approach aims to elucidate and provide explanations for specific problems or phenomena. In the context of descriptive correlational investigations, the emphasis is on describing variables and the naturally occurring relationships among them [15].

Categorized as a quantitative study, this research relied on numerical data for analysis and interpretation, adopting a descriptive approach to assess the public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. Additionally, it fell under the correlational category, as its objective was to examine the relationship between the public leadership of school heads and the effectiveness of public secondary schools in the IGACOS Division.

B. Research Respondents

A total of 150 public secondary teachers were invited to participate in and respond to this study. It had been asserted that a minimum of 50 samples was required for simple regression analysis, and generally, 100 samples were suitable for most research situations [16]. Therefore, the inclusion of 150 respondents was considered more than adequate to fulfill the objectives of this study.

For the inclusion and exclusion criteria, this study selected secondary teachers with a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience, as this duration in the public-school setting was deemed beneficial for assessing the impact of public leadership on school effectiveness. Participants who felt uneasy or uncomfortable responding to the survey questionnaire were free to withdraw from their involvement, and they were not compelled to participate. Their decision to withdraw was fully respected, emphasizing the utmost importance of the respondents' well-being in the execution of the study.

C. Research Instruments

Public Leadership: The public leadership questionnaire was adapted from Tummers and Knies [17]. The instrument

consisted of 21 items. It had five indicators, namely: accountability leadership (1-6), rule-following leadership (1-4), political loyalty leadership (1-5), and network governance leadership (1-6). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .70 suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

School Effectiveness: The school effectiveness questionnaire was adapted from Cakir and Kesme [18]. The instrument consisted of 33 items. It had the following indicators, namely: effectiveness of the school climate (1-9), school administration effectiveness (1-7), effectiveness of the relationship with the local community (1-5), effectiveness of educational practices (1-5) and sense of belonging (1-5).   The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .73 suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

The instruments in this study were contextualized to achieve the purpose of this study. The researcher integrated all the comments and suggestions of the adviser, panel members and expert validators for the refinement of the tools and to achieve construct validity.

Table 1 provides the summary on the extent of public leadership of school heads. It is exhibited that the overall mean of public leadership of school heads is 3.51, which is in an extensive level. This means that public leadership of school heads is oftentimes evident.

Data show that all four (4) indicators are in an extensive level. As arranged chronologically, network governance leadership has the highest mean score (3.63). This is followed by rule following leadership (3.53), accountability leadership (3.52), and political loyalty leadership (3.43).

The results of the study reveal a consistent and prevalent manifestation of public leadership by school heads across various dimensions. The data, organized chronologically based on mean scores, indicate an overall extensive level of public leadership. Network governance leadership emerges with the highest mean score suggesting a notable emphasis on fostering extensive networks and connections both within and outside the educational institution. Following closely is rule-following leadership reflecting a commitment to adherence to policies and procedures. Accountability leadership is also evident underscoring the emphasis on transparency and communication in decision-making processes. Lastly, political loyalty leadership indicates a substantial commitment to maintaining

positive relationships with political figures. These findings collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of public leadership among school heads, encompassing network governance, rule adherence, accountability, and political loyalty as integral components of their leadership approach.

The widespread public leadership demonstrated by school heads serves to reinforce Brookes' [19] commonly held notion that public leadership is characterized by a set of competencies fostering behaviors such as personal impact, purposefulness, goal orientation, strategic thinking, and a commitment to learning and self-improvement. Ospina [20] defined public leadership as a form of collective leadership wherein public bodies and agencies collaborate to realize a shared vision rooted in common goals and values.

Similarly, Tummers and Knies [17] outlined four roles for public leaders, which involve facilitating employees in addressing accountability-related issues, adhering to governmental rules and policies, demonstrating political loyalty, and engaging in network governance.

Table 2 provides the summary on the extent of school effectiveness. It is exhibited that the overall mean of school effectiveness is 3.52, which is in an extensive level. This means that the school effectiveness is oftentimes evident.

Data show that all three (5) indicators are in an extensive level. As arranged chronologically, effectiveness of educational practices has the highest mean score (3.58). This is followed by effectiveness of the relationship with local community (3.56), sense of belonging (3.52), school administration effectiveness (3.49), and school climate (3.43).

The study's results point towards a consistent and noteworthy demonstration of overall school effectiveness across various dimensions. The data, organized chronologically based on mean scores, indicate an extensive level of positive perceptions regarding different aspects of the school's performance. Effectiveness of educational practices emerges with the highest mean score reflects a strong emphasis on enriching learning experiences, self-directed learning, and evidence-based teaching methodologies. Following closely is the effectiveness of the relationship with the local community highlighting positive interactions, collaboration, and support between the school and its local surroundings. The sense of belonging suggests that the school is often successful in fostering a community where students feel connected and engaged. School

Table 1
Summary on the extent of public leadership of school heads

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	Accountability Leadership	3.52	Extensive
2	Rule following Leadership	3.53	Extensive
3	Political Loyalty Leadership	3.36	Extensive
4	Network Governance Leadership	3.63	Extensive
Overall		**3.51**	**Extensive**

Table 2
Summary on the extent of school effectiveness

No.	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	School Climate	3.43	Extensive
2	School Administration Effectiveness	3.49	Extensive
3	Effectiveness of the Relationship with Local Community	3.56	Extensive
4	Effectiveness of Educational Practices	3.58	Extensive
5	Sense of Belonging	3.52	Extensive
Overall		**3.52**	**Extensive**

Table 3
Significance of the relationship between public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness

Public Leadership of School Heads Indicators	Dependent Variable	r-value	p- value	Decision on Ho
Accountability Leadership		0.458	0.000	Rejected
Rule Following Leadership	School Effectiveness	0.464	0.000	Rejected
Political Loyalty Leadership		0.449	0.000	Rejected
Network Governance Leadership		0.468	0.000	Rejected
Overall		**0.460***	**0.000**	**Rejected**

*Significant at 0.05 significance level

administration effectiveness indicates prudent resource management and support for both teachers and students. Lastly, the school climate underscores positive perceptions about the overall atmosphere within the school. These findings collectively demonstrate that the school is frequently effective in multiple dimensions, contributing to a holistic and positive educational environment.

The positive outcomes of this study align with the conclusions drawn by Feldhoff et al. [21] which indicate that the investigation into school effectiveness aims to identify the characteristics of effective schools and distinguish educational achievements among them. Mupa [22] asserted that a key benchmark for evaluating effectiveness lies in the educational outcomes of students, including their performance on tests or examinations.

For instance, Ozgenel [23] mentioned that principals evaluate effectiveness by examining bureaucratic aspects of schools, including maintaining order, ensuring adherence to rules, fostering a culture of continuous improvement among educators, and overseeing activities that prioritize educational objectives. In contrast, the European Commission [24] pointed out that educators emphasize the methodologies and strategies they employ, while students, parents, and the broader community prioritize outcomes such as academic achievements and the cultivation of students' value systems.

As outlined by Beshara [25], a school is deemed effective when it demonstrates a shared vision, productive teaching and learning practices, seamless collaboration among stakeholders, a positive learning environment, and robust assessment mechanisms. Işik [26] noted that a school's effectiveness requires an investment in exemplary educational leadership, efficient management strategies, and the creation of an environment conducive to students' academic achievements. Although individual schools may have unique characteristics, the fundamental functions remain consistent.

Presented in Table 3 are the data on the significance of the relationship between public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. Reflected in the hypothesis, the relationship was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The overall r-value of .460 with a p-value of <0.05 signified the rejection of the null hypothesis. It means that there is a significant relationship between public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. This shows that public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness.

Doing a pairwise correlation among the measures of both variables, it can be gleaned that accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership revealed computed r-values of 0.458, 0.464, 0.449, and 0.468 respectively with p-values which are less than 0.05 in the level of significance. This implies that as

accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership increases, the school effectiveness increases.

The overall analysis, with an r-value of .460 and a p-value <0.05, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating a significant relationship between the public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness. This finding highlights the importance of leadership in influencing the overall effectiveness of a school. Further examination through pairwise correlations between specific leadership measures and school effectiveness reveals that accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership all exhibit positive and significant relationships with school effectiveness. These results suggest that as the levels of accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership increase, there is a corresponding increase in school effectiveness. This reinforces the idea that specific dimensions of public leadership, when practiced by school heads, contribute significantly to the overall effectiveness of the educational institution.

The result is in consonance to the study conducted by Javornik and Mirazchiyski [27] revealed that the behaviours of school leaders have a considerable impact on school effectiveness. In this regard, previous studies such as the study of Ertuk [28] and Martin [29] indicated that the type and characteristics of leadership is important to generate an effective school. Erdag and Karadağ [10] emphasized that the new concepts that emerged with the understanding of new public management, such as accountability and network, are accounted for effective school leaders.

According to the findings of Kocak and Bostanci [30] public leadership had a direct effect on school effectiveness. Effective school leadership and qualified teacher behaviours are regarded as the determinants of school effectiveness in the studies [23]. Among the direct effects on school effectiveness leadership are managerial processes such as communication, management, accountability, rule-following, human resources management.

3. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:

The extent of public leadership of school heads in the public secondary schools implies that it is oftentimes evident in the school. In fact, all dimensions are oftentimes evident from the school heads, namely, accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership.

Meanwhile, the extent of school effectiveness is oftentimes

evident. Apparently, all indicators are found to be oftentimes evident specifically on school climate, school administration, effectiveness of the relationship with local community, effectiveness of educational practices, and sense of belonging.

Based on the findings, public leadership of school heads and school effectiveness are related. All domains of public leadership are linked to the school effectiveness of teachers.

Also, public leadership of school heads significantly influences school effectiveness. In fact, all domains of public leadership of school heads, namely, accountability leadership, rule following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership significantly influence school effectiveness by registering a p-value of .000 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the four domains of public leadership of school, the school effectiveness will increase.

4. Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study:

In light of the results indicating extensive public leadership among school heads but with a lower mean score in political loyalty leadership, it is recommended that DepEd officials prioritize targeted professional development programs focusing on enhancing political acumen and loyalty-building skills for school leaders. Additionally, considering the lower mean score in school effectiveness related to school climate, officials may explore initiatives to bolster positive and inclusive atmospheres within schools, including fostering collaborative relationships among stakeholders, implementing measures to enhance the overall school climate, and providing support systems for school leaders to navigate political dynamics effectively. These actions could further enhance the leadership capacities of school heads and contribute to overall school effectiveness.

Moreover, it is recommended that school heads prioritize developing strategies to strengthen relationships with political figures and foster greater loyalty among stakeholders. Simultaneously, addressing the lower mean score in school effectiveness related to school climate suggests a need for school heads to focus on creating a positive and inclusive environment within their institutions. Proactive measures such as promoting collaborative initiatives, enhancing communication channels, and fostering a supportive atmosphere can contribute to an improved school climate and, consequently, overall school effectiveness.

Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers actively engage in open communication with school leaders, offering constructive feedback and building collaborative relationships to contribute to a more supportive and loyal school environment. Additionally, considering the lower mean score in school effectiveness related to school climate, teachers are encouraged to participate in initiatives that foster a positive and inclusive atmosphere within the school community, such as contributing to extracurricular activities and promoting a culture of mutual respect. By actively engaging in these efforts, teachers can play a pivotal role in enhancing both the political loyalty leadership of school heads and the overall effectiveness of the school climate.

Lastly, future researchers may conduct in-depth investigations into the mechanisms through which specific dimensions of public leadership influence various aspects of school effectiveness. Exploring the nuances of each domain within public leadership, such as accountability leadership, rule-following leadership, political loyalty leadership, and network governance leadership, could provide a more nuanced understanding of their individual impacts on school effectiveness. Additionally, longitudinal studies could help uncover the long-term effects of sustained public leadership practices on the overall performance and sustainability of educational institutions.

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