

SUBSTANTIAL LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS AND SCHOOL CLIMATE IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the influence of substantial leadership of the school heads towards school climate in the post pandemic era. A total of 106 public school teachers in Cabadiangan Integrated School at Cabadiangan, Sto. Nino, Talaingod District, Division of Davao Del Norte were identified through sample size computation. The study utilized a quantitative correlation design. Mean and regression analysis were used as statistical tools of the study. Results showed that on the extent of substantial leadership of school heads in the post pandemic era in terms of leader's perspective, motivational value state, and needs value state was always evident. On the extent of school climate in the post pandemic era in terms of effective teaching, positive and nurturing environment, and safety and discipline was always evident. Based on the result, the substantial leadership namely: leader's perspective, motivational value state, and needs value state significantly influenced school climate namely: effective teaching, positive and nurturing environment, and safety and discipline by registering a p-value of .000 which is <.05 in the level of significance. Further, the result indicated that for every unit increase in the three domains of substantial leadership, the school climate also increases by holding other factors constant. Substantial leadership influenced the school climate. Hence, this study suggested that teachers identify effective aspects of substantial leadership and their impact on school climate. Understanding these findings can guide teachers in their professional development, helping them to refine their teaching strategies and collaboration with school leaders to enhance the overall learning environment.

Keywords: Substantial leadership, school climate, school heads, teachers, motivational value state

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of a school critically depends on effective leadership. Over the decades, scholars have endeavored to comprehend the fundamentals of effective leadership, identifying key responsibilities that drive school improvement. These include stakeholder communication, assessment of practices, and the promotion of shared values. Shamsuddina (2012) emphasizes that schools should establish a supportive climate where students can develop both socially and academically, aligning with governmental goals of developing human resources for knowledge-based economies. Effective school leaders significantly influence this climate. Busemeyer, Wang, and Townsend (2016) define substantial leadership as the ability to guide organizations toward their future ideal states, engaging everyone within the organization. Substantial leaders inspire high performance among staff, emphasizing productivity, performance, and profitability. Banks (2018) identifies three principles of substantial leadership: mind, thought, and consciousness, which significantly influence leaders' commitment.

Mind represents the driving force of the cosmos, thought shapes our perception of reality, and consciousness allows us to understand our experiences. Williams (2009) found a significant connection between school climate and leadership behaviors in the United States. Similarly, Al-Safran, Brown, and Wiseman (2014) noted the indirect relationship between leadership style and school environment using data from Kuwait and the USA, identifying distinct leadership approaches that impacted student achievement. Villar (2021) found significant associations between leadership style and school climate characteristics in Quezon City, while Ingay (2018) highlighted the correlation between leadership style and teacher morale in the Davao Region.

This study aims to assess the extent of substantial leadership and school climate in the post-pandemic era, focusing on the interaction between leadership style and school climate. The limited literature on this topic highlights the need for further research to understand their relationship in this context. This chapter presents principles, theories, and literature relevant to the study, focusing on substantial leadership in terms of leaders' perspectives, motivational value states, and needs value states, and school climate in terms of effective teaching, a positive and nurturing environment, and safety and discipline.

Substantial Leadership. Busemeyer, Wang, and Townsend (2016) define substantial leadership as guiding organizations into the future by involving everyone and inspiring high performance. Banks (2018) identifies three principles: mind, thought, and consciousness, which influence leaders' commitment. Okpara (2014) emphasizes dynamic leader-follower relationships, while Giles (2018) highlights the importance of uniting management and employees. Substantial leadership, grounded in chaos theory and complexity science, is most effective in dynamic, ambiguous settings (Fris &

Lazaridou, 2006). Zohar (1997) describes people as "perturbations" in an infinite energy field, co-creating realities through relationships. This co-creation defines organizational activities and is the fundamental source of leadership. Foster (1986) describes leadership as enabling others, making every group member a potential catalytic leader. Leadership thrives in a culture of collaboration and integration, distinct from bureaucratic control (MacBeath, 2005). Emerging knowledge suggests substantial leadership involves more than meets the eye, relying on an energy field produced by neuronal activity, explaining moments of inspiration in problem-solving (Lazaridou, 2002).

Substantial leaders must adapt to rapid technological changes and embrace new ideas (O'Grady & Malloch, 2013). They inspire organizational learning and positive transformation (Watson et al., 2018), emphasizing growth potential and pursuing visions beyond profit (Laszlo, 2019). Substantial leadership advances society by embracing chaos and complexity (Curtin, 2011; Akmal, 2019), bridging gaps between internal and external, reason and feeling, self and others, awareness and reality (Barrash, 2012). Dynamic leaders are essential for organizational quality and innovation (Haris, Budiman & Haris, 2016). Substantial leadership integrates new management strategies for a globalized environment, emphasizing intellectual, analytical, and interpersonal skills (Kocak, 2020). It combines predictions of progress with theory, proposing an integrative model based on internal significance and vision (Laszlo, 2020; Watson et al., 2018). Leaders encourage professional and personal growth, fostering technical, intellectual, affective, and cognitive development (Dargahi, 2013; Üredi et al., 2018).

Leader's Perspective. The substantial leader perspective emphasizes interaction and co-determination, influencing internal dynamics (Haris et al., 2016). School heads must adapt to new practices and markets, enhancing commitment and vision (Wheatley, 2015; Powell, 2017). Agrawal and Sharda (2013) highlight substantial physics principles for strategic planning. Kotter (2018) emphasizes developing organizational vision and motivating stakeholders. Substantial leadership in schools involves anyone recognizing opportunities, driving change in attitudes, commitment, and service (Haris et al., 2016; Grossman & Valiga, 2014). Leaders must understand the dynamics of substantial fields for effective leadership (Tsao & Laszlo, 2019). The school head's leadership style and school climate affect student achievement (Robinson, 2010; Deal & Peterson, 1999). Creating a healthy school climate involves dialogue and promoting teachers' voices (Davies, 2005). A positive school climate is associated with student success, high morale, productivity, and effective management (Kappan, 1987). Studies show a significant relationship between leadership effectiveness and school climate (Bulach et al., 1994; Kelly et al., 2005). Teachers' perceptions of leadership influence school climate and student outcomes.

Motivational Value State. Substantial leaders seize opportunities for significant improvements, fostering interaction and cooperation (Kilmann, 2017; Cameron & Green, 2015). Leaders must transform organizational culture and behavior, embracing chaos and innovation (Karp, 2015; Laszlo, 2016). School heads need to motivate and inspire teachers, creating a supportive work environment (Fiumara, 2016; Srivastava & Bhatia, 2013). Motivational strategies impact school goals positively or negatively (Apolline, 2015; Falola et al., 2014). Motivated teachers perform better and contribute to a positive school climate (Zwalango, 2014). Effective motivational techniques include staff training, development, compensation, and participatory decision-making (Burton, 2012). School heads' motivation and leadership are crucial for creating a conducive school climate (Latt, 2008).

Needs Value State. Substantial leaders possess values essential for pursuing goals and success (Hall & Shafi, 2008). Leading from an emerging future involves collaboration and idea-broadening efforts (Scharmer & Kaufer, 2013). Leaders must embrace transformation and cooperation, differing from bureaucratic control (Renihan, 2012). Substantial leadership thrives in complex, chaotic environments, fostering continuous improvement (Laszlo, 2016). Organizations must adapt to constant change, encouraging innovation and new leadership norms (Ellis & Pennington, 2014). School heads should develop a shared vision, motivating staff and fostering commitment (Kotter, 2018). Addressing individual needs and goals positively impacts the school climate, fostering a supportive environment (Coelho & Dell'Aglio, 2019). Reducing conflicts and tensions within the community enhances the school climate (Coelho & Dell'Aglio, 2019).

School Climate. School climate encompasses the social, emotional, physical, and academic aspects of the school community, influencing experiences and interactions (National School Climate Council, 2007; Schneider et al., 2013). A positive school climate is associated with improved student performance and teacher effectiveness (Freidberg, 1998; Kytte & Bogotech, 2000). School heads must understand the importance of school climate in raising student achievement (Lindahl, 2011). Effective leadership fosters a positive school climate, promoting respect, trust, and community (Balyer, 2012). A good school climate narrows the achievement gap and supports student success (Berkowitz et al., 2016). School climate significantly impacts academic achievement, behavior, and overall well-being (Thapa et al., 2013). Leadership style influences school climate, affecting teacher and student outcomes (George, 2003). Effective leadership and a positive school climate are crucial in the post-pandemic era. This study aims to explore the

extent of substantial leadership and its influence on school climate, focusing on effective teaching, a positive and nurturing environment, and safety and discipline. Understanding these dynamics helps educational institutions address pandemic-related challenges and create a conducive learning environment. The findings provide valuable insights for stakeholders, contributing to improved educational outcomes and well-being.

2. METHODS

The study utilized a quantitative correlation design, which involves collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns, make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results (Bhandari, 2020). This approach was chosen to examine the relationship between the substantial leadership of school heads and school climate in the post-pandemic era. Additionally, a descriptive design was used to gather and interpret information about the current status or trends related to the variables under investigation (Calderon & Gonzales, 2013). Correlational designs, as highlighted by Creswell (2012), are effective for predicting scores and explaining relationships among variables. Similarly, Gay, Geoffrey, and Airasian (2012) noted that correlational designs involve collecting data to determine the existence and extent of relationships between variables. In this context, the study aimed to determine the significant relationship and influence of substantial leadership of school heads on school climate in the post-pandemic era.

Research Respondents. The respondents of the study were public school teachers at Cabadiangan Integrated School in the Division of Davao Del Norte. A total of 106 respondents participated, selected based on specific inclusion criteria: teachers must be regular employees holding a permanent teaching position and have served the school for over a year. The exclusion criteria included non-permanent teachers and those with less than one year of teaching experience.

Research Instrument. To collect the quantitative data, two adapted survey questionnaires were used. The first part of the instrument, measuring substantial leadership, was adapted from Hall and Shafi (2008) and consisted of five-item statements for each indicator of substantial leadership. This questionnaire had a Cronbach alpha value of .832, indicating good reliability. The second part, measuring school climate, was adapted from Stuckey (2019) and also demonstrated good reliability with a Cronbach alpha value of .977. The instruments were subjected to content validation by a panel of experts and pilot tested to ensure their reliability. The substantial leadership questionnaire's reliability index was .909, while the school climate questionnaire's reliability index was .849. The numeric and descriptive interpretations for the extent of substantial leadership and school climate ranged from "Very High" (4.20 – 5.00) to "Very Low" (1.00 – 1.79).

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure involved several steps:

Permission to Conduct Study: The researcher obtained approval from the Dean of the Graduate School of Rizal Memorial Colleges and the Office of the Division Superintendent. This approval was then presented to the principals of the respondent schools.

Content Validation and Pilot Testing: The questionnaires were validated by experts who assessed the items based on specific criteria. This was followed by pilot testing with 30 teachers not included in the main study to evaluate the reliability of the instruments.

Administration and Distribution of Questionnaires: The surveys were distributed both online via Google Forms and through face-to-face setups. Respondents were given ample time to complete the surveys.

Retrieval of Questionnaires: Completed questionnaires were collected through online submissions or in-person handoffs.

Analysis and Interpretation: The collected data were analyzed and interpreted using statistical tools such as mean and linear regression analysis.

Ethical Considerations. The researcher adhered to ethical principles as outlined by RMC's Research Ethics, including social value, informed consent, risk, benefits and safety, privacy and confidentiality, justice, transparency, qualification of the researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement.

Social Value: The study aimed to benefit various stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, and students, by providing relevant data on teaching competencies in the post-pandemic period.

Informed Consent: Respondents were fully informed about their roles and responsibilities and provided written consent. They were assured that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety: The study posed minimal risk to respondents, with the primary benefit being the enhancement of teaching competencies.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Personal information was kept confidential, adhering to the principles of the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring that data could not be traced back to individual respondents.

Justice: All respondents were treated equally and fairly, with tokens provided to compensate for their time.

Transparency: Respondents were informed about the study methods and their roles. The results were presented objectively and disseminated through appropriate channels.

Qualification of Researcher: The researcher was qualified to conduct the study, having completed relevant academic units and passed comprehensive examinations.

Adequacy of Facilities: The researcher had access to necessary resources and facilities. Expert feedback was sought for data analysis when needed.

Community Involvement: The findings were shared with the community to highlight the importance of teachers' mental health and pedagogical attainment, contributing to the overall cognitive development of students.

Data Analysis. The study used the mean to assess the extent of substantial leadership of school heads and school climate in the post-pandemic era. Linear regression analysis was employed to determine the influence of substantial leadership of school heads on school climate in the post-pandemic era.

3. RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings and interpretations of the study. The analysis includes the extent of substantial leadership of school heads and school climate in the post-pandemic era, the influence of substantial leadership domains on school climate, and the predictive model derived from the regression analysis.

Substantial Leadership of School Heads in the Post-Pandemic Era

Leadership Perspective: The study found that the leadership perspective of school heads in the post-pandemic era is highly evident. School heads frequently see their schools as organized entities shaped by stakeholder involvement, understand the value of holistic operations, and emphasize problem-solving through exploration and stakeholder participation. This high level of leadership perspective suggests that school heads are adapting well to the complexities and uncertainties introduced by the pandemic, consistently demonstrating strong leadership qualities.

Motivational Value State: The motivational value state of school heads is also highly evident. School heads place significant importance on continual personal growth, responsibility towards organizational issues, and empathy in understanding their organizations. This strong motivational stance indicates that school heads are deeply committed to personal and professional development, which positively influences their leadership effectiveness and the overall school climate.

Needs Value State: The needs value state, which reflects the intrinsic values necessary for effective leadership, is equally prominent. School heads prioritize holistic decision-making, a sense of belonging to a larger community, and introspection to understand their environment. This indicates that school heads are not only focused on immediate organizational goals but also on long-term visions and the broader impact of their leadership.

School Climate in the Post-Pandemic Era

Effective Teaching: The study reveals that effective teaching is highly evident in the post-pandemic school climate. Teachers are actively making their classes interesting, ensuring student understanding, explaining the importance of subjects, and providing individual attention. These practices contribute significantly to a positive school climate, fostering better student engagement and learning outcomes.

Positive and Nurturing Environment: A positive and nurturing environment is also a key characteristic of the post-pandemic school climate. Students respect their teachers, are publicly recognized for good behavior and academic success, and know they have supportive adults in the school. This nurturing environment is crucial for holistic student development and academic success, creating a supportive and motivating atmosphere for students.

Safety and Discipline: Safety and discipline are highly evident in the post-pandemic school climate. Students feel safe in their schools, classrooms are well-managed, and bullying incidents are minimized. This secure environment is essential for effective learning, as it ensures that students can focus on their studies without fear of harm or disruption.

Relationship Between Substantial Leadership and School Climate

The study found a very strong positive correlation between substantial leadership of school heads and school climate in the post-pandemic era.

As the domains of substantial leadership (leadership perspective, motivational value state, and needs value state) increase, so does the school climate. This significant relationship highlights the critical role of effective leadership in shaping a positive and conducive school environment.

Predictive Model of School Climate

The regression analysis identified that the leadership perspective has the highest influence on school climate, followed by motivational value state. The predictive model suggests that for every unit increase in effective teaching, a positive and nurturing environment, and safety and discipline, there is a corresponding increase in the overall school climate. This model underscores the importance of enhancing leadership qualities in school heads to improve the school climate effectively.

In conclusion, the findings indicate that substantial leadership of school heads significantly influences the school climate in the post-pandemic era. Effective leadership, characterized by a strong leadership perspective, motivational value state, and needs value state, is crucial for fostering a positive and supportive school environment. Enhancing these leadership qualities can lead to better school climates, ultimately benefiting students' academic and personal development.

4. CONCLUSION

The study reveals a very strong positive correlation ($r=0.84$, $p<0.05$) between substantial leadership and school climate. The regression analysis identifies leader's perspective as the most significant predictor of a positive school climate, followed by motivational value state. The predictive model suggests that improvements in substantial leadership domains can significantly enhance the school climate.

The results underscore the importance of substantial leadership in shaping a positive school climate. Effective leadership, characterized by a strong perspective, motivational commitment, and holistic needs, directly influences teaching effectiveness, nurturing environments, and school safety. Enhancing these leadership qualities can foster a supportive and productive educational environment, ultimately benefiting students' academic and personal development.

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