

The Impact of the Leadership Practices on the Organizational Commitment of the School Heads in the Public Elementary Schools in Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte

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ABSTRACT

Leadership in public elementary schools plays a critical role in shaping teacher engagement, school performance, and organizational sustainability. This study examined the impact of distributed leadership practices on the organizational commitment of school heads in the public elementary schools of Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte, for School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it determined the extent of leadership practices employed by school heads in terms of collaboration and teamwork, empowerment, capacity building, school performance, and sustainability and continuity of leadership. It further assessed the impact of these practices on organizational commitment along teachers' sense of belonging, job satisfaction and motivation, professional growth and empowerment, and commitment to organizational goals. The study also tested the significant agreement in rank orders of leadership practices and their impact on organizational commitment among respondent groups. A descriptive–evaluative–correlational research design was employed. Using purposive sampling for locale selection and total enumeration for respondents, the study involved twenty-one (21) school heads and two hundred nineteen (219) teachers. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using weighted mean, ranking, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W), and chi-square tests at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that empowerment ($WM = 4.70$) and school performance ($WM = 4.63$) were rated as Very Much Employed, while collaboration and teamwork ($WM = 4.40$), capacity building ($WM = 4.47$), and sustainability and continuity of leadership ($WM = 4.40$) were rated as Much Employed. Significant agreement was found among respondents regarding the extent of leadership practices ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, the impact of leadership practices on organizational commitment was rated as Very Much Evident across all domains, particularly teachers' sense of belonging ($WM = 4.81$) and job satisfaction and motivation ($WM = 4.72$). Statistical analysis likewise indicated significant agreement in most aspects of organizational commitment. The results underscore that distributed leadership practices significantly strengthen teachers' commitment, foster collaborative school culture, and enhance institutional performance. Policy recommendations emphasize structured leadership rotation, institutionalized mentoring systems, participatory governance, and formalized succession planning frameworks to sustain leadership continuity and improve educational outcomes.

1. Introduction

Leadership in educational institutions is a decisive factor in shaping school culture, teacher engagement, and overall institutional effectiveness. In public elementary schools, leadership extends beyond administrative supervision; it involves cultivating collaborative practices, fostering teacher empowerment, and sustaining a shared vision for school improvement. Contemporary leadership paradigms increasingly recognize that effective school leadership cannot rest solely on formal authority but must be distributed across members of the organization to mobilize collective expertise and enhance institutional capacity. Distributed leadership emphasizes shared responsibilities, interdependent interactions, and participatory decision-making processes that build sustainable systems of improvement and organizational resilience.

In the Philippine educational context, leadership practices are framed within constitutional and legislative mandates that prioritize quality, inclusive, and accessible education. Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution affirms the State's duty to establish and maintain a complete and integrated system of education. Complementing this constitutional directive, Republic Act No. 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act) institutionalizes school-based management, empowering school heads to exercise decentralized leadership functions. Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013) further strengthens instructional reforms under the K–12 program, while the Department of Education's MATATAG Agenda emphasizes shared governance, teacher support, learner well-being, and sustainable educational reforms.

These policy frameworks collectively underscore the importance of leadership models that promote collaboration, accountability, and professional growth within schools.

Distributed leadership theory posits that leadership functions are not confined to a single individual but are shared among organizational members who contribute their expertise toward common goals. Scholars such as Tian (2016), Diamond and Spillane (2016), and Goksoy (2016) argue that distributed leadership strengthens organizational agency, enhances empowerment, and improves institutional performance by mobilizing leadership potential at multiple levels.

In school settings, distributed leadership manifests through collaborative decision-making, teacher participation in planning and evaluation, capacity-building initiatives, and systems that ensure continuity of leadership even during transitions. By fostering interdependence rather than hierarchical control, distributed leadership creates a culture of shared responsibility and collective efficacy.

Organizational commitment, on the other hand, refers to employees' emotional attachment, identification with, and dedication to their organization. In educational settings, teachers' organizational commitment influences job satisfaction, motivation, professional engagement, retention, and ultimately student achievement. High levels of commitment are associated with a stronger sense of belonging, alignment with institutional goals, and willingness to contribute beyond formal job descriptions. Prior studies on organizational commitment among teachers highlight its relationship with leadership style, professional development opportunities, and school climate. However, limited empirical research has examined how distributed leadership practices specifically impact organizational commitment within localized public elementary school contexts in the Philippines.

In the Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte, public elementary schools operate within diverse institutional sizes and community settings. While school heads are expected to perform multifaceted roles—as instructional leaders, administrators, managers, and community partners—there remains a need to assess how effectively distributed leadership practices are implemented and how these practices influence teachers' organizational commitment. Empirical evaluation of leadership dimensions such as collaboration and teamwork, empowerment, capacity building, school performance, and sustainability of leadership is necessary to determine whether leadership approaches translate into meaningful organizational outcomes.

Thus, this study investigates the impact of distributed leadership practices on the organizational commitment of school heads in public elementary schools in Paracale District for School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it examines the extent of leadership practices employed by school heads; determines the level of agreement among respondent groups on the rank orders of these practices; assesses the impact of distributed leadership on teachers' sense of belonging, job satisfaction and motivation, professional growth and empowerment, and commitment to organizational goals; and formulates policy recommendations based on the findings. By generating empirical evidence grounded in local educational realities, the study contributes to strengthening leadership practices, enhancing teacher commitment, and supporting sustainable school improvement efforts within the framework of national education reforms.

2. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive–evaluative–correlational research design to determine the impact of distributed leadership practices on the organizational commitment of school heads in the public elementary schools of Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte, for School Year 2024–2025. The descriptive component was used to assess the extent of leadership practices employed by school heads in terms of collaboration and teamwork, empowerment, capacity building, school performance, and sustainability and continuity of leadership. The evaluative component examined the extent of the impact of these leadership practices on organizational commitment along teachers' sense of belonging, job satisfaction and motivation, professional growth and empowerment, and commitment to organizational goals. The correlational component determined the level of significant agreement on the rank orders of leadership practices and their impact on organizational commitment among different groups of respondents.

The study was conducted in the Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte, which comprises public elementary schools categorized as big, medium, and small institutions. The district operates within diverse school contexts and community environments, providing a suitable setting for examining distributed leadership practices and their organizational implications.

The respondents of the study consisted of twenty-one (21) school heads and two hundred nineteen (219) teachers, selected through purposive sampling for locale inclusion and total enumeration of school heads and teachers within the district. The inclusion of both groups enabled comparative analysis of perceptions regarding the extent of leadership practices and their impact on organizational commitment.

A researcher-developed questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument. The instrument was structured into two major parts: (1) the extent of distributed leadership practices across five dimensions—collaboration and teamwork, empowerment, capacity building, school performance, and sustainability and continuity of leadership; and (2) the extent of the impact of leadership practices on organizational commitment across four domains—teachers' sense of belonging, job satisfaction and motivation, professional growth and empowerment, and commitment to organizational goals. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale with corresponding verbal interpretations ranging from lowest to highest levels of implementation and impact.

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert validation by professionals knowledgeable in educational leadership and research methodology. Necessary revisions were incorporated prior to final administration. Ethical considerations, including voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and exclusive use of data for academic purposes, were strictly observed.

Data collection was conducted upon securing approval from the Schools Division Office and concerned school heads. The questionnaires were personally administered and retrieved to ensure accuracy and completeness of responses.

The data gathered were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the distribution of respondents. The weighted mean determined the extent of leadership practices and their impact on organizational commitment. Ranking established the order of dimensions within each variable. To determine the level of significant agreement on the rank orders among respondents, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W) and the chi-square test were applied at a 0.05 level of significance. Decisions regarding the null hypotheses were based on the computed chi-square values and corresponding probability levels.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Extent of the Distributed Leadership Practices Employed by School Heads

The results revealed that distributed leadership practices were generally rated between Much Employed and Very Much Employed across the five dimensions examined. Empowerment and school performance emerged as the highest-rated dimensions, indicating that school heads actively delegate responsibilities, encourage shared decision-making, and focus on improving instructional outcomes. Collaboration and teamwork, capacity building, and sustainability and continuity of leadership were also positively rated, reflecting the presence of shared governance mechanisms within schools.

Table 1: Summary of the Extent of Distributed Leadership Practices

Leadership Dimension	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Empowerment	4.70	Very Much Employed
School Performance	4.63	Very Much Employed
Capacity Building	4.47	Much Employed
Collaboration and Teamwork	4.40	Much Employed
Sustainability & Continuity	4.40	Much Employed

Empowerment (WM = 4.70) obtained the highest rating, suggesting that school heads effectively provide teachers with leadership opportunities, delegate authority, and encourage participatory governance. Analytically, this indicates a shift from traditional hierarchical leadership toward a more inclusive and shared model. Empowerment enhances teachers' confidence, autonomy, and accountability, thereby strengthening institutional resilience.

School performance (WM = 4.63) also received a Very Much Employed rating, demonstrating that distributed leadership positively influences instructional quality, student achievement, and school climate. This finding supports the premise that collaborative leadership structures contribute to improved organizational outcomes.

Collaboration and teamwork (WM = 4.40) and capacity building (WM = 4.47) were rated as Much Employed. These findings indicate active but potentially improvable engagement in shared planning, professional development, and collective problem-solving. Sustainability and continuity of leadership (WM = 4.40) suggests that while leadership functions are shared, formalized succession planning and institutional continuity mechanisms may require further strengthening.

3.2 Test of Significant Agreement on the Rank Orders of Leadership Practices

To determine whether there was significant agreement among respondent groups on the rank orders of leadership practices, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W) and chi-square tests were conducted.

Table 2: Test of Significant Agreement on the Rank Orders of Leadership Practices

Dimension	Kendall's W	Computed χ^2	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Leadership Practices	Significant	$\chi^2 > \text{Critical Value}$	< 0.05	Reject H_0	Significant Agreement

The statistical analysis revealed a significant agreement among respondents regarding the rank orders of distributed leadership practices ($p < 0.05$). This indicates consistency in perceptions between school heads and teachers concerning the implementation of distributed leadership. Analytically, such agreement reflects shared understanding and mutual recognition of leadership dynamics within schools, reinforcing organizational coherence and transparency.

3.3 Extent of the Impact of Distributed Leadership on Organizational Commitment

The findings further showed that the impact of distributed leadership practices on organizational commitment was rated as Very Much Evident across all four domains examined.

Table 3: Summary of the Impact of Distributed Leadership on Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment Dimension	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Teachers' Sense of Belonging	4.81	Very Much Evident
Job Satisfaction & Motivation	4.72	Very Much Evident
Professional Growth & Empowerment	4.69	Very Much Evident
Commitment to Organizational Goals	4.65	Very Much Evident

Teachers' sense of belonging (WM = 4.81) obtained the highest rating, indicating that distributed leadership fosters inclusion, trust, and emotional attachment to the institution. Analytically, when teachers feel valued and involved in decision-making processes, they develop stronger affective commitment to the organization.

Job satisfaction and motivation (WM = 4.72) were also highly rated, demonstrating that participatory leadership enhances morale and work engagement. Professional growth and empowerment (WM = 4.69) further highlight the role of distributed leadership in creating opportunities for teacher development and leadership skill enhancement. Commitment to organizational goals (WM = 4.65) suggests alignment between leadership practices and institutional mission, strengthening normative and continuance commitment.

3.4 Test of Significant Agreement on the Rank Orders of Organizational Commitment

Table 4: Test of Significant Agreement on the Rank Orders of the Impact on Organizational Commitment

Dimension	Kendall's W	Computed χ^2	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Organizational Commitment	Significant	$\chi^2 > \text{Critical Value}$	< 0.05	Reject H_0	Significant Agreement

The results indicated statistically significant agreement among respondents on the rank orders of the impact of distributed leadership on organizational commitment ($p < 0.05$). This finding suggests that both school heads and teachers consistently perceive distributed leadership as a major contributor to organizational commitment.

The overall findings demonstrate that distributed leadership practices are effectively implemented in the Paracale District and significantly influence teachers' organizational commitment. Empowerment and participatory governance emerged as central strengths, directly enhancing teachers' sense of belonging and job satisfaction. The statistical agreement among respondents further validates the reliability of these perceptions and reflects institutional coherence.

The slightly lower ratings in sustainability and continuity of leadership indicate potential areas for policy refinement, particularly in institutionalizing leadership succession planning and formalized mentoring systems. Nonetheless, the uniformly high ratings across organizational commitment domains confirm that distributed leadership contributes to affective, normative, and continuance commitment dimensions.

Collectively, the findings affirm that distributed leadership is not merely a theoretical construct but a practical and impactful leadership approach that strengthens school culture, improves performance, and fosters long-term institutional sustainability. By embedding collaborative structures and empowering teachers, schools enhance both professional engagement and commitment to organizational goals.

4. Conclusions and Implications

4.1 Conclusions

This study concludes that distributed leadership practices are effectively implemented among school heads in the public elementary schools of Paracale District, Division of Camarines Norte. The findings indicate that empowerment and school performance are the most strongly manifested dimensions of distributed leadership, reflecting a shift toward participatory governance and shared accountability within schools. Collaboration and teamwork, capacity building, and sustainability and continuity of leadership were likewise positively practiced, suggesting that leadership functions are distributed across organizational members, though institutional mechanisms for long-term continuity may require further strengthening.

The study further concludes that there is a statistically significant agreement among respondent groups regarding the rank orders of distributed leadership practices. This consensus demonstrates coherence in perceptions between school heads and teachers, reinforcing the validity of the findings and suggesting that distributed leadership is both visible and experienced consistently across schools.

Moreover, distributed leadership practices were found to have a very strong impact on organizational commitment. Teachers' sense of belonging emerged as the most significantly affected domain, followed by job satisfaction and motivation, professional growth and empowerment, and commitment to organizational goals. The significant agreement in rank orders regarding the impact of leadership practices confirms that distributed leadership substantially strengthens affective attachment, professional engagement, and alignment with institutional objectives. Collectively, the findings affirm that distributed leadership contributes not only to improved school performance but also to enhanced teacher commitment and organizational sustainability.

4.2 Implications

The findings of this study carry important implications for educational leadership practice, policy formulation, and institutional development.

At the leadership level, school heads are encouraged to further institutionalize distributed leadership structures by formalizing collaborative teams, delegating decision-making authority, and embedding participatory governance into routine school operations. Sustaining empowerment mechanisms—such as leadership task rotation, teacher-led committees, and structured mentoring systems—can deepen teacher engagement and reinforce a culture of shared responsibility.

From a policy perspective, the Department of Education may consider integrating distributed leadership competencies into leadership development programs, performance evaluation systems, and professional standards frameworks. Embedding collaborative leadership indicators within the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) and leadership training modules may strengthen alignment between policy expectations and school-level practice.

In terms of sustainability, the slightly lower ratings in leadership continuity highlight the need for structured succession planning and institutional memory mechanisms. Developing formal leadership pipelines, documentation systems, and transition protocols can ensure that leadership gains are preserved despite personnel changes.

For organizational commitment, the results suggest that fostering inclusive decision-making environments significantly enhances teachers' sense of belonging and motivation. Policies that promote teacher participation in strategic planning, curriculum development, and school improvement initiatives may further solidify commitment levels and reduce attrition risks.

Finally, future research may explore longitudinal analyses of distributed leadership effects, comparative studies across districts, or the mediating role of school climate in strengthening organizational commitment. Such investigations would provide deeper insights into the long-term sustainability and scalability of distributed leadership models in public school systems.

In sum, this study affirms that distributed leadership practices serve as a strategic lever for strengthening teacher organizational commitment, enhancing school performance, and promoting sustainable educational governance. Continued institutional support, policy alignment, and capacity-building initiatives are essential to maximizing the transformative potential of distributed leadership in Philippine public elementary schools.

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