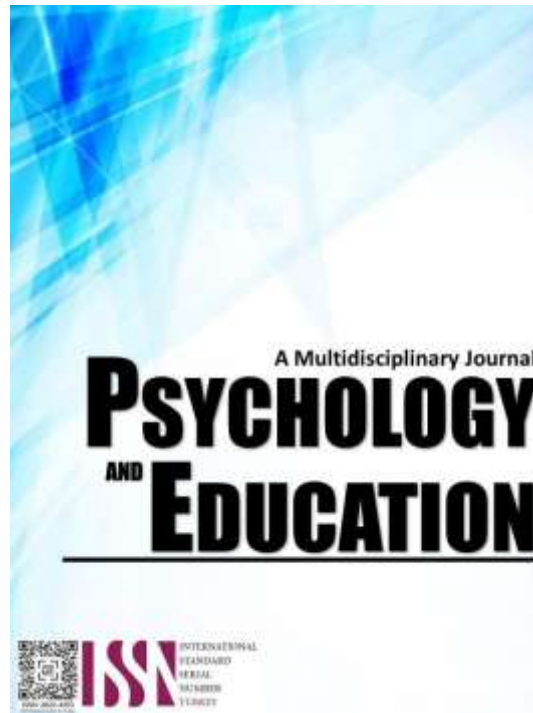


UNDERSTANDING TEACHER LEADERSHIP: ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON ITS ROLE IN SHAPING CLASSROOM DYNAMICS



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 31

Issue 7

Pages: 704-711

Document ID: 2025PEMJ2999

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.14823341

Manuscript Accepted: 01-14-2025

Understanding Teacher Leadership: Elementary Students' Perspectives on Its Role in Shaping Classroom Dynamics

Rona Marie P. Laporre*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

Educational leadership is a crucial factor in shaping students' academic and personal development, operating within an interpersonal framework that emphasizes the significant role of educators and school leaders. However, previous studies highlight challenges, such as some educators' lack of sustained action, self-control, or compassion toward their students. This study explored the impact of teacher leadership on classroom dynamics from the perspectives of elementary students. A qualitative-descriptive approach was used to capture the depth of students' experiences and perceptions. Data collection included in-depth interviews (IDIs) with seven participants and focus group discussions (FGDs) with six participants. Thematic analysis revealed that teacher leadership, marked by empathetic guidance, strong relationships, and motivational support, plays a critical role in students' academic success and personal growth. Teachers who foster collaboration, provide encouragement, and create supportive environments emerged as transformative figures in shaping students' educational experiences. The findings emphasize the importance of teacher leadership in creating dynamic, inclusive classrooms where students thrive. By inspiring participation and fostering motivation, teacher leaders contribute to meaningful learning experiences, laying the foundation for students' lifelong growth and success.

Keywords: *teacher leadership, classroom dynamics, elementary students, qualitative, Philippines*

Introduction

Educational leadership is essential for educators and school leaders (Gojo Cruz, 2018). It is a key factor for students' learning and flourishing as it occurs in an asymmetrical and interpersonal relationship (Espinosa & González, 2023). However, a school leadership review shows that some teachers lack the will and/or skill to sustain action, lack self-control or the ability to self-correct, and are uncaring or unkind to their students (Kellerman, 2004). In fact, this finding reveals that lack of professionalism and ethics, limited leadership skills, lack of teacher and student advocacy, limited listening and communication skills, and poor culture and climate are indicators of why students meet physical and learning challenges in school (Burkett & Hayes, 2023).

At Western Michigan University, USA, a meta-analysis examined how teacher leadership was related to students' academic achievement (Shen et al., 2020). Based on these findings, teacher leadership became less about sharing managerial responsibilities and more about sharing responsibility for making change. School improvement is complex work, and principals alone cannot achieve and sustain the expected levels of school improvement. Teachers are also crucial in bridging school-level decisions and classroom-level practices (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teacher leadership development in educational practice has led to a proliferation of related research. However, empirical studies to assess the contribution of teacher leadership are still somewhat limited (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Wenner & Campbell, 2017; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Muijs and Harris (2003) claimed that "much more empirical evidence is required if policy-makers, researchers, and practitioners are to be convinced of the merits of teacher leadership in principle and practice" (p. 445).

In the Philippines, in a 2015 study by Troy James Palanca, research conducted in public schools highlighted that a substantial number of students drop out each year due to various challenges, including teenage pregnancy, family issues, and financial hardships. Despite these obstacles, public schools remain a critical focus for society, as they serve approximately 90% of Filipino children and are seen as key to enhancing the country's global competitiveness and positively shaping the future of Filipino youth.

Moreover, the Philippine government views the K-12 curriculum as a critical solution to the longstanding challenges in the country's basic education system, aiming to develop graduates with strong literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills (Department of Education, 2011). However, this reform has faced criticism, particularly from families in lower socio-economic groups, who see it as an added financial and time burden. Others are skeptical of the program's ability to drive meaningful change, as past government efforts focused on structural or program reforms have often fallen short of making a significant impact (Alegado, 2018).

Significantly, the researcher failed to access relevant studies about exploring the impact of teacher leadership on classroom dynamics through elementary students' perspectives specifically here in Bunawan Aplaya, Davao City, Philippines. Moreover, it is believed that the positive impact of teacher leadership on student achievement positively influences the student academic performance of students (David, 2024).

The study will also help school leaders enhance their school culture and climate, as teacher leadership is associated with improving students' and educators' performance. Teacher leaders are considered collaborators who share good instructional practices among the school (Wenner & Campbell 2017).

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the impact of teacher leadership on classroom dynamics through elementary students' perspectives, specifically in Bunawan Aplaya, Davao City, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do elementary students in Bunawan Aplaya perceive teacher leadership and its role in shaping classroom interactions and dynamics?
2. What specific teacher leadership practices positively influence classroom engagement and student behavior according to elementary students in Bunawan Aplaya?
3. How does teacher leadership impact students' sense of participation, motivation, and learning experience within the classroom setting in Bunawan Aplaya?

Literature Review

Teacher Leadership and Classroom Dynamics: Elementary Students' Perspectives. A grounded theory design by Sabatini (2002) reveals that teacher empowerment is a key theme in teachers' experiences with emerging teacher leaders. Teachers feel empowered to take charge of their own learning by initiating relationships with emerging teacher leaders grounded in shared experiences, expertise, and accessibility. These relationships foster meaningful interactions, occurring both within the classroom and at the school level. Classroom-based interactions include curriculum support, instructional assistance, collaboration, and observation, while school-level interactions involve inquiry and shared decision-making. Teachers report that these relationships and interactions lead to improved teaching, student benefits, "collective ownership," enhanced leadership capacity, stability, and boosted morale.

In a globalized educational context, culture and the environment play a key role in shaping teacher leadership and self-efficacy. Research has shown that the two cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism profoundly influence teachers' leadership styles and self-efficacy (Luo et al., 2024). Teacher leadership refers to the ability of educators to take on leadership roles beyond their conventional classroom duties, thereby positively influencing student learning, instructional practices, and overall school development efforts (Ghamrawi et al., 2023a, 2023b; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). It involves teachers taking initiative, working collaboratively with colleagues, and actively engaging in decision-making processes that shape educational practices (Harris & Jones, 2019).

Teacher Leadership and Student Engagement in Elementary Classrooms. Classroom management encompasses the strategies and techniques teachers use to create and maintain a disciplined, efficient, and supportive learning environment (Shinta, Febriani, & Widiati, 2021). Classroom management also involves the strategies educators use to create a structured environment that promotes learning. Effective classroom management, combined with high student engagement, is crucial for academic success. While it initially focused on maintaining discipline and order, it has evolved to include approaches that cultivate a supportive learning atmosphere (Cook et al., 2018). The emphasis has shifted from solely managing behavior to fostering an environment where students feel respected, supported, and motivated to learn.

Teacher-student relationships play a pivotal role in classroom settings, directly influencing students' willingness to engage in activities and adhere to rules. Strong relationships between teachers and students enhance classroom management effectiveness, as students are more receptive to guidance and expectations (Thornberg et al., 2020). Effective classroom management fosters a structured and supportive environment that motivates students to actively participate and learn. Such interactions thrive when teachers build strong connections with students, who are more likely to engage when they feel understood, supported, and valued by their educators.

Methodology

Research Design

Given the exploratory nature of the research questions, a qualitative approach was identified as the most suitable methodology for this study. This approach facilitated a deeper exploration of students' subjective experiences and emotions regarding teacher leadership and its influence on classroom dynamics. The qualitative - descriptive research design was particularly effective in uncovering nuanced insights into the educational leadership and professionalism demonstrated by teachers within the classroom.

Participants

The participants of this study were Grade 6 - elementary students from Bunawan Aplaya Elementary School in Davao City, Philippines. To ensure a representative sample, random sampling was employed within the Grade 6 - intermediate level, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the research questions. This approach ensured that diverse perspectives were captured while maintaining the focus on the target demographic. Given the participants' age and status as minors, the study adhered strictly to ethical guidelines. Informed consent forms were provided to and signed by the participant's parents or guardians, ensuring that all parties were fully informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and rights, including the assurance of confidentiality and privacy. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, steps were taken to create a supportive and comfortable environment during data collection. Participants were briefed in age-appropriate language, ensuring clarity about the process. Careful consideration was given to the phrasing of interview and focus group discussion questions, ensuring they were accessible to the participants' comprehension level.



Additionally, the study included measures to confirm that the participants were in a sound state of mind and well-prepared to engage with the research process. By fostering a trusting and respectful atmosphere, the study ensured that the responses provided were thoughtful, authentic, and reflective of the participants' genuine experiences. This rigorous approach supported collecting high-quality data that directly informed the research objectives.

Instrument

The instruments used in this study were designed to gather comprehensive and meaningful data that would address the research questions effectively. To gain an in-depth understanding of the students' experiences, the study employed two key methods: in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD). Seven participants were selected for the IDIs, allowing for detailed, individualized insights into their subjective experiences regarding teacher leadership and classroom dynamics. This method provided the opportunity for participants to elaborate on their personal views, emotions, and perceptions in a one-on-one setting, facilitating rich data collection.

In addition to the IDIs, six participants participated in focus group discussions (FGD). This method enabled the researcher to capture a broader range of perspectives and encouraged group interaction that stimulated deeper discussion. The FGD format also allowed participants to respond to one another's ideas, enriching the conversation and uncovering themes that may not have emerged in individual interviews. The instruments were carefully selected to complement each other and provide a well-rounded understanding of the research topic. Both the IDIs and FGDs were structured to be age-appropriate and easy to comprehend for the elementary student participants. The questions used in both methods were designed to explore the participants' views on teacher leadership, classroom dynamics, and related experiences, ensuring that the data collected was reliable and deeply reflective of the students' perspectives. To ensure the ethical integrity of the study, informed consent was obtained from the parents or guardians of the participants, ensuring that they understood the nature of the research and the steps taken to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality. This thorough approach to data collection allowed the generation of valuable qualitative data that directly informed the study's findings.

Procedure

The research procedure began with submitting a formal request to the Principal of Bunawan Aplaya Elementary School, seeking permission to conduct the study within the school. Upon review, the Principal approved the research, acknowledging its alignment with the school's educational goals. Following this, confirmation and additional approval were sought from the District Division of Bunawan to ensure that the research adhered to the educational district's regulations and policies governing research. Once approval was obtained from the District Division, the next step involved obtaining informed consent from the parents or guardians of the potential participants.

Informed Consent Forms were distributed to the parents of the students, outlining the purpose of the study, the methods involved, and the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality and safety of the participants. The forms emphasized the voluntary nature of participation, ensuring that the parents or guardians understood that their children could withdraw from the study without any negative consequences. Once the parents consented, the eligible students were invited to participate in the study.

With the necessary permissions in place and informed consent obtained, the research selected participants. Seven students were chosen to participate in the in-depth interviews (IDI), and six were selected for the focus group discussions (FGD). The data collection methods were carefully planned and structured to ensure that the process was ethical and practical in gathering the required data. Throughout the research process, the participants' safety, privacy, and well-being were prioritized, and appropriate measures were taken to create a comfortable and supportive environment for all involved.

Ethical Considerations

Establishing trustworthiness is a fundamental aspect of qualitative research, as it ensures the validity and reliability of the findings. To uphold trustworthiness in this study, the four key criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985)—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—were rigorously followed. To enhance credibility, member checking was employed, allowing participants to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses. This process ensured that the data reflected the participants' perspectives and experiences. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, including the participant selection process, the study setting, and the data collection and analysis methods. This transparency enables future researchers to assess the applicability of the findings to other contexts or populations. An audit trail was maintained for dependability, documenting every step of the research process, from data collection to analysis. This allowed for a thorough review of the study's methodology, ensuring consistency and reliability in the research process. Lastly, confirmability was addressed through reflexivity, a process of continual self-evaluation that examined potential researcher biases and subjectivity. By reflecting on how personal perspectives may influence the study, steps were taken to mitigate these biases, ensuring that the findings were shaped by the data rather than personal preconceptions. Together, these strategies ensured the trustworthiness of the research, reinforcing the integrity and reliability of the study's conclusions.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the qualitative interviews, emphasizing the key themes aligned with the research objectives. Each theme is supported by the participants' insights, with the findings analyzed in relation to the existing literature and research questions.

Profile of Participants

The participants of this study were elementary students from Bunawan Aplaya Elementary School in Davao City, Philippines. The study's findings were generated through thematic analysis, which allowed for identifying key patterns and insights within the data.

To ensure a representative sample, random sampling was employed within the intermediate grade levels. This approach enabled a comprehensive exploration of the research questions by capturing diverse perspectives while focusing on the target demographic. The study ensured a broad and inclusive view of the research topic by selecting participants from various backgrounds within the intermediate grades.

Table 1. Student Perception of Teacher Leadership and Its Impact on Classroom Dynamics

<i>Emerging Themes</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>
Teacher's Leadership as Supportive and Nurturing	Providing Time and Guidance for Student Learning Empowering Students through Teaching and Support
Teacher's Leadership Creates Positive Relationships among Students	Fostering Collaboration and Teamwork Promoting Mutual Respect and Support
Teacher Leadership and Student Motivation	Motivating Students through Positive Reinforcement Feeling Valued and Supported

Teacher's Leadership as Supportive and Nurturing. Several students describe how the teacher gives them time and space to focus on their learning, especially reading. This nurturing environment fosters a sense of comfort and confidence in their academic growth.

"Gitagaan ko ni Ma'am ug time para magtoon ug basa" (Ma'am gave me time to study and read).

"Katong time na dili ko kabalo mo basa, nagpasalamat ko ka Ma'am ni gitudluan ko niya unsaon pagsabot"

(During the time when I couldn't read, I thanked Ma'am for teaching me how to understand).

Teachers' leadership in helping students overcome challenges, especially in understanding subjects, boosts student learning and fosters personal development.

"Gitabangan ko ni Ma'am ug pasabot na anion pag answer ug nakabalo nako mo answer" (Ma'am helped me understand how to answer, and now I know how to respond).

"Maminaw ug dili ko magkiat para si Ma'am malipay ug tabangan nako ang akong classmates" (I listen and avoid being mischievous so that Ma'am will be happy, and I help my classmates).

Teacher's Leadership Creates Positive Relationships among Students. Teacher leadership encourages students to help each other, contributing to a collaborative atmosphere in the classroom where students learn together. "Tabangan nako akong classmates para makatoon og basa. Nalipay si Ma'am nakakita sa amoa nag tinudluay ug basa" (I help my classmates learn to read. Ma'am is happy to see us helping each other). "Tabangan na kog basa akong classmate" (I help my classmate read).

Students acknowledge the importance of mutual respect, both from the teacher and among themselves. Teachers' leadership cultivates a sense of responsibility toward each other's learning. Example from responses: "Malipay ko na siya ang leader pero naay time na mahadlok ko ug maluoy ko sa isa ka Ma'am kay busy siya" (I'm happy she is the leader, but sometimes I feel afraid and pity her because she is busy).

Teacher Leadership and Student Motivation. The teacher's leadership, marked by encouragement and recognition, motivates students to work harder and actively participate in class activities.

"Daghan ko makat-unan (lot of learning) sa akong maestra na si Ma'am Rona" (I have learned a lot from my teacher Ma'am Rona).

"Daghan ko ug ma kat-onan pag magtudlo si Ma'am" (I learn a lot when Ma'am teaches). Students also feel a sense of value and importance through their teacher's leadership, which fosters their motivation to engage and improve their performance.

"Nalipay ko ug nakulbaan gamay pag magpabasa si Ma'am" (I feel happy and a little nervous when Ma'am asks me to read).

"Gitagaan mi ni Ma'am ug time para sa pagtuon ug basa sa English na katuon na kog basa" (Ma'am gave us time to study and read English, and now I can read).

Table 2. Specific Teacher Leadership Practices

<i>Emerging Themes</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>
Use of Interactive and Contextualized Teaching Strategies	Use of visual aids like TV enhances understanding (e.g., Science and sight words). Group activities such as peer reading and memorization make learning enjoyable. Activities like spelling and reading foster engagement and improve literacy skills.
Positive Reinforcement and Communication to Sustain Focus	Teachers use verbal communication to redirect attention and maintain discipline. Constructive dialogue helps in preventing misconduct and cheating. Encouraging attentive behavior through teacher-led reminders increases focus.



Structured Rules and Routines for Behavior Management	Daily reminders and adherence to rules motivate students to behave well. Reward systems, such as early dismissal for good behavior, encourage compliance. Creating a sense of enjoyment through consistent routines instills a positive classroom environment.
---	--

Use of Interactive and Contextualized Teaching Strategies. Teachers who use interactive tools and methods, such as TVs for science lessons or spelling games, emphasize experiential learning. Responses like “Mga TV kay para makasabot mi sa Science” connect directly to the idea that multimedia tools simplify complex concepts.

Similarly, spelling and reading activities (“Ang ganahan nako mag spelling mi ka para makabasa ug makatoon ko ug basa”) highlight that interactive practices make learning enjoyable and meaningful. These practices demonstrate the teacher’s leadership in designing engaging, student-centered activities, which enhance the educational experience.

Responses such as “Mga TV kay para makasabot mi sa Science” show how incorporating technology creates an engaging, easy-to-understand environment, enabling teacher leadership to address diverse learning needs.

Activities like spelling (“Ang akong ganahan kay spelling kay pirmi ko makasabay”) demonstrate how participatory methods help students enjoy learning while staying active and involved in class. “Mag memorize mi sa akong classmate para malingaw ug basa” highlights how leadership practices integrate academic skill-building into engaging formats, helping students simultaneously learn and enjoy.

Positive Reinforcement and Communication to Sustain Focus. This aligns with responses like “Gi istoryahan ko ug tarung ni Ma'am para dili mi mag kupyahanay,” which shows how constructive dialogue reinforces accountability. The consistent use of verbal encouragement (“Istoryahan ni Ma'am para maminaw”) reflects a leadership style centered on trust and respect, emphasizing the importance of communication over punitive measures.

Answers like “Kasab-an mi ni Ma'am para maminaw mi” reflect how timely correction ensures discipline while maintaining the teacher’s authority as a leader. “Istoryahan ni Ma'am para maminaw” connects directly to how clear and empathetic communication sustains student interest and participation. Responses like “Gi istoryahan ko ug tarung ni Ma'am” reflect the teacher’s ability to create a nurturing and accountable space, promoting focused behavior.

Structured Rules and Routines for Behavior Management. Rules and consistent routines provide the structure students need for success. Comments like “Ginapahinudom adlaw-adlaw ni Ma'am” underscore the effectiveness of repetitive reinforcement in building discipline.

Additionally, incentives such as early dismissal for good behavior (“Mag small nap mi para makauli ug sayo”) reveal how motivational strategies inspire adherence to rules, demonstrating the teacher’s strategic leadership in balancing discipline with student motivation.

“Ginapahinudom adlaw-adlaw ni Ma'am” demonstrates leadership by ensuring students understand and adhere to classroom expectations.

“Mag behave mi para maka uwi kami nang maaga” reflects how positive reinforcement motivates compliance with classroom rules, making students more disciplined and excited about learning.

Responses like “Ganahan ko sa rules” illustrate how structured leadership makes students appreciate and internalize classroom norms.

Table 3. *The Impact of Teacher Leadership on Student Participation, Motivation, and Learning Experience*

<i>Emerging Themes</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>
Encouragement Fosters Participation	Teachers instill confidence in students to express themselves. Specific instructions from teachers motivate students to engage actively.
Achievement-Oriented Motivation	Students are motivated by the aspiration to pass and support their families. Recognition and rewards drive students to excel.
Leadership Enhances Comprehension and Learning	Teacher leadership leads to better comprehension of lessons Students attribute their improved literacy skills to their teacher’s leadership

Encouragement Fosters Participation. For instance, a recurring response such as “Gi ingnan mi ni Ma'am na dili mahadlok” reflects how teacher-led encouragement removes the fear of participation. This aligns with the core idea, teachers instill confidence in students to express themselves, showing that confident, open classroom interactions arise when students feel safe to express themselves. Furthermore, when teachers actively guide students, such as “Gi ingnan mi ni Ma'am ug pataas ug kamot para maka answer,” participation becomes structured and goal-oriented. This reflects the relationship between leadership clarity and student engagement.

The answers illustrate that students are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors under their teacher’s guidance. Responses like “Para mapasar ko ni, ug para makatabang ko sa pamilya” highlight the intrinsic desire to support one’s family, while “Para maka medal” underscores the extrinsic motivation of earning recognition. These insights support the theme Achievement-Oriented Motivation, emphasizing how teacher leadership shapes students' aspirations and persistence through goal-setting and encouragement.

The statement "Mas nakasabot nami" shows that students credit their enhanced understanding of lessons to their teacher's leadership. Similarly, "Mas nakabalo na mo basa" suggests that teacher-led initiatives directly improve literacy skills, linking to the theme Leadership Enhances Comprehension and Learning. These responses underline that teacher leadership not only facilitates immediate academic gains but also prepares students for long-term success, as indicated in "Mas nakasabot ko ug para makatabang sa akong pamilya."

The interplay between participation, motivation, and comprehension reflects the multifaceted impact of teacher leadership. Teachers who encourage participation foster a classroom culture that connects effort with rewards, as seen in "Gusto ko mo taas ug kamot para mo taas akong grade." This cyclical effect enhances motivation, leading to a deeper engagement in learning. Ultimately, improved learning experiences, as described in "Mas daghan ka og matun-an," validate the significance of teacher leadership in fostering an environment conducive to holistic student growth. By interpreting these themes, educators can tailor leadership strategies to maximize student participation, intrinsic motivation, and comprehensive learning outcomes.

The findings highlight the pivotal role of teacher leadership in fostering a supportive, nurturing, and motivating environment for students. Many students described their teachers as instrumental in creating a space that prioritizes learning and growth, particularly in reading. This supportive approach makes students feel comfortable and confident as they navigate their academic challenges. For instance, one student expressed, "Gitagaan ko ni Ma'am ug time para magtoon ug basa" (Ma'am gave me time to study and read), reflecting the teacher's willingness to provide dedicated time for personal development. This emphasis on nurturing leadership not only supports academic learning but also instills a sense of gratitude and trust in the students. Another student shared, "Katong time na dili ko kabalo mo basa, nagpasalamat ko ka Ma'am ni gitudluan ko niya unsaon pagsabot" (During the time when I couldn't read, I thanked Ma'am for teaching me how to understand). These examples underscore the teacher's ability to guide students through their learning struggles, fostering resilience and self-assurance.

Teacher leadership also plays a critical role in building positive relationships among students. By encouraging collaboration and mutual assistance, teachers cultivate a classroom environment where students learn collectively. One student noted, "Tabangan nako akong classmates para makatoon og basa. Nalipay si Ma'am nakakita sa amoa nag tinudluay ug basa" (I help my classmates learn to read. Ma'am is happy to see us helping each other). This culture of peer support not only enhances academic outcomes but also strengthens interpersonal connections among students. The teacher's leadership sets the tone for mutual respect and shared responsibility, as evidenced by another student's remark, "Maminaw ug dili ko magkiat para si Ma'am malipay ug tabangan nako ang akong classmates" (I listen and avoid being mischievous so that Ma'am will be happy, and I help my classmates). These insights demonstrate how teacher leadership extends beyond instruction, shaping the social dynamics of the classroom in meaningful ways.

Moreover, the motivational influence of teacher leadership is evident in the students' expressions of gratitude and enthusiasm for learning. The encouragement and recognition they receive from their teacher inspire them to participate actively and strive for improvement. One student remarked, "Daghan ko makat-unan sa akong maestra na si Ma'am Rona" (I have learned a lot from my teacher Ma'am Rona), reflecting the teacher's impact on fostering academic curiosity. Additionally, students expressed a sense of accomplishment and pride, as exemplified in the statement, "Gitagaan mi ni Ma'am ug time para sa pagtuon ug basa sa English na katuon na kog basa" (Ma'am gave us time to study and read English, and now I can read). This highlights how teacher leadership not only enhances academic skills but also boosts students' confidence and motivation, encouraging them to take ownership of their learning journey.

The use of interactive and contextualized teaching strategies illustrates how educators leverage tools and activities to foster experiential learning and enhance student engagement. For instance, responses such as "Mga TV kay para makasabot mi sa Science" emphasize the role of multimedia in simplifying complex scientific concepts, making them more accessible to learners. Similarly, interactive activities like spelling and reading ("Ang ganahan nako mag spelling mi ka para makabasa ug makatoon ko ug basa") reflect a deliberate effort by teachers to create meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. These examples highlight how teacher leadership manifests in designing activities that prioritize student participation and understanding, ultimately enriching the educational process.

Moreover, these teaching strategies underscore the importance of leadership in tailoring approaches to meet diverse learning needs. For instance, the sentiment expressed in "Ang akong ganahan kay spelling kay pirmi ko makasabay" reveals how participatory methods sustain student interest and enable active engagement. Additionally, collaborative practices such as memorization exercises ("Mag memorize mi sa akong classmate para malingaw ug basa") showcase how academic skill-building can be seamlessly integrated with fun, promoting both cognitive and social development. By implementing these interactive approaches, teachers demonstrate their capacity to cultivate a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

Positive reinforcement and effective communication are vital components of sustaining student focus and accountability. Responses like "Gi istoryahan ko ug tarung ni Ma'am para dili mi mag kupyahanay" highlight how constructive dialogue fosters trust and discourages dishonest practices, creating a culture of responsibility. Similarly, consistent verbal encouragement ("Istoryahan ni Ma'am para maminaw") reflects a leadership style grounded in respect and empathy, reinforcing the teacher's role as a supportive guide. Even corrective measures, such as those illustrated in "Kasab-an mi ni Ma'am para maminaw mi," demonstrate how timely interventions can maintain discipline without diminishing the teacher-student relationship.

Thus, structured rules and routines are essential for behavior management, providing a stable framework for students to thrive. Daily reminders (“Ginapahinumdom adlaw-adlaw ni Ma’am”) exemplify the effectiveness of repetitive reinforcement in instilling discipline and aligning student behavior with classroom expectations. Moreover, motivational strategies, such as offering incentives for good behavior (“Mag small nap mi para makauli ug sayo”), reveal the strategic leadership involved in balancing discipline with encouragement. Students’ appreciation of these practices (“Ganahan ko sa rules”) underscores how a structured approach fosters both compliance and enthusiasm for learning. Together, these practices reflect the teacher’s ability to create a nurturing, well-regulated, and motivational environment conducive to holistic development.

Encouragement is pivotal in fostering student participation, as reflected in the recurring response, “Gi ingnan mi ni Ma’am na dili mahadlok.” This highlights how teacher-led encouragement alleviates fear and builds a sense of confidence among students. When teachers actively guide classroom interactions, such as instructing students to raise their hands to answer, “Gi ingnan mi ni Ma’am ug pataas ug kamot para maka answer,” participation becomes both structured and purposeful. These findings underscore the core idea that clarity in leadership coupled with encouragement cultivates a supportive environment where students feel safe and motivated to express themselves.

Student motivation emerges as a dynamic interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic factors, shaped significantly by teacher leadership. Responses like “Para mapasar ko ni, ug para makatabang ko sa pamilya” reveal students’ intrinsic drive to succeed for personal and familial advancement, while “Para maka medal” illustrates the impact of extrinsic rewards in driving their persistence. These insights align with the theme Achievement-Oriented Motivation, demonstrating how goal-setting and encouragement by teachers inspire students to strive for excellence. This duality of motivations, guided by effective leadership, reflects a comprehensive approach to fostering persistence and resilience among learners.

Teacher leadership also plays a crucial role in enhancing comprehension and learning outcomes. Statements like “Mas nakasabot nami” and “Mas nakabalo na mo basa” reveal that students attribute their improved understanding and literacy skills to teacher-led strategies. These responses align with the theme Leadership Enhances Comprehension and Learning, emphasizing the direct impact of leadership on academic performance. Moreover, the sentiment “Mas nakasabot ko ug para makatabang sa akong pamilya” suggests that these academic gains extend beyond the classroom, preparing students for future responsibilities and success.

The interconnectedness of participation, motivation, and comprehension highlights the multifaceted influence of teacher leadership. Encouraging participation builds a foundation where effort and rewards are intertwined, as noted in “Gusto ko mo taas ug kamot para mo taas akong grade.” This cyclical relationship not only fosters motivation but also drives deeper engagement and improved learning experiences, as expressed in “Mas daghan ka og matun-an.” Ultimately, these findings validate the role of teacher leadership in cultivating

Conclusions

In summary, the findings illustrate that teacher leadership, characterized by nurturing guidance, relationship-building, and motivational support, significantly impacts students’ academic and personal growth. By providing a supportive environment, fostering collaboration, and inspiring students to excel, teachers serve as transformative leaders who shape their students’ educational experiences in profound and lasting ways.

By interpreting these themes, educators can refine their leadership strategies to maximize participation, enhance intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and support comprehensive learning outcomes, ensuring that students are equipped for both academic and life-long success.

The study underscores the critical role teachers play in shaping not only academic outcomes but also the classroom environment as a whole. By examining students’ perspectives, we gain valuable insights into the nuanced ways teacher leadership influences participation, motivation, and learning experiences.

Further, the exploration of teacher leadership’s impact on classroom dynamics reveals profound insights into how elementary students perceive and experience their learning environment. Teacher leadership emerges not merely as a position of authority but as a dynamic interplay of encouragement, guidance, and inspiration that reshapes students’ participation, motivation, and learning outcomes.

Beyond participation and motivation, teacher leadership profoundly influences the quality of students’ learning experiences. Effective leadership translates complex concepts into relatable and comprehensible lessons, leading to improved literacy, critical thinking, and understanding. Students recognize their teachers’ efforts in enhancing their academic capacities, attributing newfound skills to leadership-driven methodologies. This transformation not only builds students’ academic competencies but also prepares them for future roles as contributors to their communities and families.

The interrelationship between participation, motivation, and comprehension underscores the pivotal role of teacher leadership in shaping classroom dynamics. A participatory approach to teaching nurtures confidence, which in turn fuels motivation and enables deeper engagement with learning materials. This cycle of growth highlights how teacher leadership transcends traditional notions of authority, evolving into a guiding force that empowers students to take ownership of their learning journey.

In conclusion, the perspectives of elementary students offer invaluable insights into the transformative power of teacher leadership. By

fostering participation, instilling motivation, and enhancing comprehension, teacher leaders create dynamic classrooms where students not only thrive academically but also develop a strong foundation for lifelong learning. This understanding underscores the importance of cultivating leadership practices that resonate with the needs and aspirations of young learners, ensuring that classrooms remain vibrant, inclusive, and empowering spaces.

References

- Alegado, P. J. E. (2018). Unraveling social epidemia through the lens of public education in the Philippines. *World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) Chronicle*, 2(1). Retrieved from <https://www.worldcces.org/article-2-by-alegado>
- Burkett, J., & Hayes, S. D. (2023). Ineffective school leadership: Teachers weigh in. *School Leadership Review*, 18(1), Article 7.
- Cook, C. R., Coco, S., Zhang, Y., Fiat, A. E., Duong, M. T., Renshaw, T. L., Longs, A. C. J., & Frank, S. (2018). Cultivating positive teacher-student relationships: Preliminary evaluation of the establish–maintain–restore (EMR) method. *School Psychology Review*, 47(3), 226–243. <https://doi.org/10.17105/spr-2017-0025.v47-3>
- Fernández Espinosa, V., & López González, J. (2023). The effect of teacher leadership on students' purposeful learning. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2197282>
- Ghamrawi, N. (2023). “Toward Agenda 2030 in Education: Policies and Practices for Effective School Leadership.” *Educational Research for Policy and Practice* 1–23.
- Gojo Cruz, M. G. (2018). The impact of teacher leadership in public high school.
- Harris, A., & M. Jones. (2019). “Teacher Leadership and Educational Change.” *School Leadership & Management* 39 (2): 123–126.
- Heck, R. H., & Hallinger, P. (2009). Assessing the contribution of distributed leadership to school improvement and growth in math achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(3), 659–689
- Katzenmeyer, M., & G. Moller. 2009. *Awakening the Sleeping Giant: Helping Teachers Develop as Leaders*. 2nd ed. CA: Corwin Press.
- Kellerman, B. (2004). *Bad leadership: What is it, how it happens, why it matters*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Luo, X., Alias, B. S., & Adnan, N. H. (2024). Exploring the interplay between teacher leadership and self-efficacy: A systematic literature review (2013–2024). *Education Sciences*, 14(9), 990. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14090990>
- Maher, Asma & David, S. A. (2024). The Impact Of Teacher Leadership On School Improvement: Exploring The Experiences And Views Of School Leaders And Teachers In Private Schools In Sharjah. *Globus Journal of Progressive Education*. 14. 18-30. 10.46360/globus.edu.220241004.
- Muijs, D., & Harris, A. (2003). Teacher leadership improvement through empowerment? An overview of the literature. *Educational Management & Administration*, 31(4), 437–448.
- Sabatini, E. M. (2002). *Teachers' perspectives of emergent teacher leadership in an elementary school* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia).
- Shen, J., Wu, H., Reeves, P., Zheng, Y., Ryan, L., & Anderson, D. (2020). The association between teacher leadership and student achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, 31, 100357. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100357>
- Shinta, L.G.B., Febriani, A. & Widiati, U. (2021). Teacher-student relationships at a kindergarten school as viewed from classroom management principles. *Jurnal Obsesi*, 6(2), 611–621. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i2.1366>
- Thornberg, R., Forsberg, C., Chiriac, E. H., & Bjereld, Y. (2020). Teacher–student relationship quality and student engagement: A sequential explanatory mixed-methods study. *Research Papers in Education*, 37(6), 840–859. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2020.1864772>
- Wenner, J. A., & Campbell, T. (2017). The theoretical and empirical basis of teacher leadership: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 87(1), 134–171.
- York-Barr, J., and K. Duke. 2004. “What do we Know About Teacher Leadership? Findings from two Decades of Scholarship.” *Review of Educational Research* 74 (3): 255–31

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Rona Marie P. Laporre

Bunawan Aplaya Elementary School
Department of Education – Philippines