

Leadership Style of School Heads and Its Moderating Impact on Work Stress of Teachers in a District

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Abstract

This study sought to examine the significant relationship between the leadership style of school heads and teachers' stress levels. This research used the descriptive method of analysis. A closed-ended researcher-modified survey questionnaire was employed to collect quantitative data from Sta's 232 elementary and secondary teachers. Cruz District, Sta. Cruz, Zambales. To determine the significant relationship between school heads' leadership styles and teachers' work stress levels in Sta. Cruz district, Pearson product-moment correlation with an alpha of 5% was used. Other statistical tools used in this study were frequency count, percentage, and weighted mean. The study yielded a few noteworthy results—most teachers in Sta. Cruz district is female. Furthermore, most teachers were in their young adulthood stage or from 31-40. For the years in service and position at the Department of Education, the study found that most teachers have 1 to 10 years in service and occupy the Teacher I position. While more than half of the teachers at Sta. Cruz district already has master's degrees, and only a few finished their doctorate. Not very surprising, teachers in Sta. Cruz district is experiencing moderate stress at work. Furthermore, most of the respondents strongly agree that school heads of Sta. Cruz district is authoritative. Half of the respondents agree that school heads are democratic or participative, and most strongly agree that school heads are laissez-faire/ delegative leaders. In addition, this study also revealed that gender and length of service have no significant variations in teachers' work stress levels. However, age, highest educational attainment, and position considerably vary with work stress. Finally, the study found that an increased authoritative leadership style contributes to a higher level of work stress. In comparison, democratic/participative and laissez-faire/delegative leadership contributes slightly lower work stress to the teachers. The study proved that the leadership style of the school head, either authoritative, democratic/participative, or laissez-faire/delegative has a significant relationship to the level of work stress.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Work Stress, Authoritative, Descriptive Method, Philippines

Introduction

One profession with a high rate of work-related stress is teaching. Kyriacou (1998), Naghie et al. (2013) and Alson (2019) described teacher stress as a reaction syndrome characterized by negative emotions such as rage or depression, often accompanied by potentially harmful physiological changes such as an elevated heart rate. Teacher stress is characterized by the leadership styles of the school head (Moore, 2012; Jones & Glennon, 2018). Leadership style is a critical determinant of teachers' job satisfaction and commitment (Burns, 2017; Malik & Batool, 2017). The principal's leadership style influences the teachers' performance and effectiveness. In Countries like England, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, there is a rapid and increasing consciousness in a variety of sectors and fields, owing to a rapidly growing number of teachers, including educational institutions such as universities, colleges, and high schools (MoE, 2011; Abasilim & Osibanjo, 2019). Leadership style is an excellent determinant of teachers' work satisfaction. That is why different studies on the relationship between leadership style and teacher work stress or job satisfaction were conducted (Chandan, 1987; Okumbre, 1998;

Nyenyembre, 2016; Syed & Kitchlew, 2018).

Many researchers connect leadership styles and job satisfaction (Nyenyembre et al., 2016; Syed et al., 2018; Wren, 2019; Tokgoz, & Onen, 2021). At the same time, some researchers may agree that there is a link between the school head's leadership style and teachers' work-related stress. Munir, H., and Iqbal (2018) mentioned that the democratic leadership style had influenced the practice of employees and is supported by the study of Sharma and Singh (2013). ASEAN studies on Secondary school teachers in Barbados, West Indies, found significant negative correlations between teachers' stress and principal leadership style. Demonstrating the need for this study, researchers like Nosheena (2010) had identified a connection between central leadership style and teacher occupational stress. Teachers experienced considerable stress when principals used autocratic leadership styles and less stress when they used democratic leadership styles. However, Hackman and Johnson (2009) revealed that the Laissez-faire style is the most effective because employees are highly motivated. Other studies have examined teachers' stress levels about transformational leadership styles and discovered that transformational leadership

approaches moderate teachers' stress and satisfaction levels (Moore, 2012; Asaloei & Werang, 2020).

Therefore, it agrees with global and ASEAN studies that teachers' stress levels about transformational and transformational leadership styles are related to lower stress levels. (Nosheena, 2010). Moreover, the administrators shared that supporting teachers' autonomy, relatedness, and competence is another motivational strategy (Shepherd-Jones & Salisbury-Glennon, 2018; Atasoy, 2020; Celdran, 2020). While many researchers agree that school leaders' leadership styles affect teachers' work stress and job satisfaction, Hsin-ying Hsieh (2015)'s findings in his study can be seen differently and are described as follows: Different backgrounds, cognitive leadership styles, job stress, work stress, and job satisfaction have significant differences. Likewise, leadership style has a significant influence on job stress. In addition, Hsin-Ying Hsieh also found that leadership style significantly influences teachers' work stress. Furthermore, his study revealed that leadership is positively correlated with job satisfaction while job stress is negatively correlated, which is supported by the study of İnandı, and Giliç (2021).

In contrast, not all styles are effective school leadership styles appropriate for school teachers (Hysa, 2015). Teachers are reported leaving or relocating within the field due to a lack of influence and autonomy, despite a healthy relationship between school administration and teachers fostering a positive learning environment (Ingersoll, 2003; Kersaint, 2005). Moreover, few studies have been done on the impact of principal leadership styles on teacher motivation, specifically their autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Bellibas & Liu, 2017; Collie et al., 2013; Eyal & Roth, 2010). Instructors have reported leaving or relocating within the field owing to restricted influence and autonomy, even though a healthy relationship between school administration and teachers fosters a positive learning environment (Kersaint, 2005; Ingersoll, 2003). The question being addressed and should be investigated is whether there is a link between principal leadership and teacher stress, as suggested in the study. "School improvement is predicated on the leadership style of public-school principals, as well as the work performance and morale of school employees" (Stewart-Banks, Branch, Kuofiee, & Hakim, 2015).

Furthermore, Aquino (2013) suggests that the leadership style of the school head influenced teachers' work stress. This study provides a foundation for surveying school heads' leadership styles and stress in

Sta. Cruz, District, Schools Division of Zambales. This research study aims to provide an empirical foundation for the debate on the relationship between school head leadership and teacher stress in Sta. Cruz District. Teachers often experience stress at work, leading to physical, emotional, and mental health problems, increased sickness absence, teacher resignations, unsatisfactory work performance, and a decline in children's performance and health (Naghieh et al., 2013). Workplace stress is a severe problem for all diverse groups of employees at all levels of an organization, from the top to the lowest. Therefore, we must learn more about how to reduce the prevalence of teachers' work stress and how the leadership style of school heads may help address the possible problem.

The path-goal theory advanced by House (1968) and symbolic interactionism articulated by Blumer (1969) have been chosen for this study. The path-goal theory proclaims that a good leader should enhance subordinates' job performance and motivation by clarifying and setting goals with them.

This research study described the relationship between the School Heads' Leadership style and Elementary and Secondary School Teachers' Stress in Sta. Cruz District.

Methodology

A descriptive correlational design was employed to investigate the principal leadership style and teachers' work stress. This enabled the researcher to collect and describe a large variety of data related to the leadership style and teacher work stress. A descriptive correlational research study is where the researcher is primarily interested in describing relationships among variables. As Kumer (1999) argued, the descriptive research design describes the nature of the existing conditions. Seyoum and Ayalew (1989) also agreed that "descriptive survey design is the more appropriate to gather several kinds of data in a broad size to achieve the study's objectives." In the same argument, the research employed a descriptive survey method by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches, emphasizing quantitative as the leading method through close-ended questions. The quantitative approach was emphasized because

investigating the principal leadership style on teacher level of work stress of public secondary school teachers in Sta. Cruz district could better be understood by collecting extensive quantitative data formally, structured, and rigidly. The employment of descriptive-correlational research design was parallel to the paper's objective: to describe the relationship between leadership style and teacher's work stress. The status of an identified variable is aimed to provide accurate information about a phenomenon. It also sought to describe the frequency of teachers' exposure and experiences with the school head's leadership style and teachers' stress.

The respondents of this research are the public-school teachers rendering services to primary education and the elementary and secondary schools within the Schools District of Sta. Cruz, Schools Division of Zambales, each barangay was represented from Brgy. Babuyan to Brgy. Tubo-tubo South. Sta. Cruz is a first-class municipality with abundant fertile land suitable for farming. The fertile province of Zambales has earned the title of "home of the best carabao mango in the world." The municipality has 438.46 square kilometers, constituting 12.03% of Zambales's total area. Sta Cruz is composed of 25 barangays. The 2015 Census determined a 58,151 population. Sta. Cruz represented 9.84% of the total population of Zambales province or 0.52% of the overall population of the Central Luzon region. Based on these figures, the population density is computed at 133 inhabitants per square kilometer or 343 inhabitants per square mile (Phil. Atlas). Schools District of Sta. Cruz comprises twenty-six (26) elementary and ten (10) public secondary schools. Sta Cruz North Central School is the largest elementary school with 37 teachers, and Lipay High School has the highest number of secondary school teachers with 59. The second-biggest school is Don Marcelo C. Marty Elementary school with 26 teachers and Guisguis National High School with 37 secondary school teachers, followed by Sta. Cruz South Central School with 25 teachers and Don Brigido Miraflores Integrated School with 33 secondary school teachers. Among the 25 barangays, Brgy. Lipay recorded the highest population, which was 6,190 per the 2015 Census of population, making the Lipay National High School the largest school in Sta. Cruz district. The second most populated barangay is Brgy. Lucapon South with a recorded population of 3,941, followed by Brgy. Biay, with a recorded population of 3,925. The least populated is Brgy. Babuyan with a recorded population of 523. The sample respondents used in this study were drawn from a population of twenty-six (26) elementary schools and ten (10) Junior high schools in Sta. Cruz, District, Schools Division of

Zambales.

<i>Name of School</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Almasin Elementary School	9	1.54
Babuyan Integrated School	8	1.37
Bangcol Elementary School	8	1.37
Bulawon Elementary School	8	1.37
Canaynayan Elementary School	8	1.37
Don Brigido Miraflores IS	15	2.56
Don Marcelo C. Marty ES	26	4.44
Gama Elementary School	8	1.37
Guinabon Elementary School	12	2.05
Sta. Cruz North Central ES	37	6.31
Guisguis Elementary School	14	2.39
Malabago Elementary School	13	2.22
Pagatpat Elementary School	13	2.22
Pamonoran Elementary School	9	1.54
Tabalong Elementary School	5	0.85
Acoje Elementary School	8	1.37
Bayto Elementary School	17	2.90
Bolitoc Elementary School (Annex)	7	1.19
Bolitoc Elementary School (Main)	14	2.39
Lucapon South Elementary School	14	2.39
Lupa Elementary School	11	1.88
Mapalad Elementary School	4	0.68
Naulo Elementary School	8	1.37
Pecson Memorial Elementary School	8	1.37
Sabang Elementary School	8	1.37
San Fernando Elementary School	9	1.54
TuboTubo Elementary School	8	1.37
Sta. Cruz South Central ES	25	4.27
Acoje National High School	8	1.37
Babuyan Integrated School	5	0.85
Don Brigido Miraflores Integrated School	33	5.63
Don Marcelo C. Marty High School	30	5.12
Guisguis National High School	37	6.31
Sta. Cruz South High School	21	3.58
Mena Memorial National High School	22	3.75
San Fernando High School	10	1.71
Lipay National High School	59	10.07
Sta. Cruz National High School	27	4.61
Total	N=586 n=232	100

Using Slovin's Formula, 232 teachers from 586 will be considered study respondents. To ensure that the sample was well represented in the study, the researcher employed the purposive sampling method in identifying the 232 teacher- respondents. Table 1 summarizes the number of public-school teachers in Sta. Cruz District, Schools Division of Zambales.

A closed-ended researcher-modified survey questionnaire was employed to collect quantitative data from selected teachers. This is because it is convenient to conduct surveys and acquire necessary information from many study subjects within a short period. Furthermore, it makes an economy of time and expense possible and provides a high proportion of usable responses (Best & Kahn, 2003). The questionnaire was subdivided into three (3) parts: Part I gathered data on the profile of the respondents, which included their age, gender, length of service, highest educational attainment, and position. Part II collected the respondents' work stress levels regarding the bulk of teaching load, the number of subject preparations,

communicating with students and parents, attending seminars, school reports, and non-teaching-related tasks. Part III described the Leadership Style of the School head as Planning, Decision making, Communicating, Delegation, and Professional Development. The closed-ended items were prepared by using Likert Scales. The value of the scales was between one and four. The self-designed questionnaire was piloted by ten (10) elementary school teachers and ten (10) Junior High School teachers in Masinloc District. The pilot testing respondents answered the questionnaire via googles forms. No comments or suggestions from the respondents were gathered.

Before and during data collection, some ethical considerations were undertaken to ensure the following rights of the respondents were safeguarded. (1) Right to Privacy - Respondent information was anonymized as no personal information such as name, address, contact number, email, age, and gender were gathered to protect and secure their data privacy. (2) Right to Fairness - The researcher ensured that all the 25 barangays made up the Municipality of Sta. Cruz is duly represented in the survey, and no discrimination is made in selecting the population. (3) Right to Safety - In this time of the pandemic, the health and safety of the respondents is the primary consideration for using a Google survey form in data collection. This ensured no face-to-face meet-up with the respondents to mitigate the risk of the researcher or the respondents being infected with the COVID -19 virus. (4) Right to Voluntary Participation Permission from school heads was first sought before teachers were enjoined to participate. Moreover, individual respondents' participation was voluntary.

The following were the procedures undertaken in the collection of data. The researcher notifies the Schools Division Office of Zambales of the intent to conduct the study and asks permission from the Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Romeo M. Alip, CESO V, thru Dr. Lani A. Miraflor, Public Schools District Supervisor of Sta. Cruz to proceed with the study in public secondary schools within the district. Second, a letter to the School Principals is crafted to seek permission to float the questionnaires with the approved consent of the Schools Division Superintendent attached as their reference. The survey questionnaires were administered to the respondents through the Google form link. The researcher also provided contact details to explain to the respondents the nature of the study and to ask further questions. The researcher adjusted the manner of floating the questionnaires to the current situation of the world with the COVID – 19 pandemic. The researcher did

not do personal visits to the respondents to strictly observe all the necessary, proper health protocols of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), Department of Health (DOH), Office of the president of the Philippines, and other authorized agencies.

The required data were collected, organized, and tabulated to employ the appropriate statistical treatment necessary to extract the results. As quantitative descriptive research, this attempted to turn raw numbers into meaningful data, which became the basis for accepting or rejecting the formulated hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

Gender

The composition of respondents has more female (180 or 77.59%) teachers than male (52 or 22.41%). The findings support the fact that teaching is a female-dominated profession. According to Wong (2019), women might be more willing to accept teaching's low wages because the job is, in theory, more amenable than other careers to the needs of women. According to the world bank collection, the Philippines reported 87.09% of female teachers in 2019.

Age

The majority of (38.36%) of the teacher respondents are aged 31-40 years old. This agrees with Tun, Ye, and Yan's (2019) study that Asian teachers are mostly females, and one-third of the population are young teachers. Data analysis could infer that young teachers were active and alert in an academic environment and could manage work stress compared to the old age group.

Length in service

Surprisingly, most of the respondents (130 or 56.03%) are in Career stages 1 and 2 or beginning teachers; and had 1 to 10 years in the service; while 59 or 25.43% had 11 to 20 years; 32 or 13.79% had 21 to 30 years, and only 11 or 4.74% had 31 to 40 years in service respectively. This finding contradicts the study of Salvan & Hambre (2020) conducted in Cagayan de Oro, about 50% of the teacher respondents have been teaching for 22-26 years. The same study by Tun, Ye, and Yan (2019) on the demographic profile of Asian teachers states that most teachers had teaching experience of 6 to 10 years while only 10% had 20 years or more.

Highest educational attainment

Many of the respondents (132 or 56.90%) have units in a master's degree. With 70 or 30.17%, some respondents have completed their bachelor's degree. In comparison, 23 or 9.91 % have completed master's degrees, a few with 6 or 2.59% have units in a doctorate, and only 1 or 0.43% have a doctorate. This finding agrees with the same study by Salvan & Hambre (2020), which reveals that most (66.7%) of the teacher-respondents are pursuing their master's degrees. According to Corpuz and Salandanan (2007), teachers must undertake appropriate ongoing professional development to promote competence in teaching. Teachers have often upgraded their competencies and educational qualifications to be promoted to the next level position in a school ranking system in the academic field. The result contradicts the study of Tun, Ye, and Yan (2019) that most teachers in Myanmar graduated with just a diploma in Education. Thus, it could be assumed that teachers could not have the opportunity to learn higher education programs for their professional development and might have financial difficulty and other social-economic disturbances. People living on the Myanmar-China border were interested in just doing business and were not interested in supporting and encouraging learning. Also, the regional education department appointed most of the local teachers.

Position

Most of the respondents have the position of Teacher I with 93 or 40.09%. Some are Teacher III with 62 or 26.72% and Teacher II with 59 or 25.43%. Only a few hold the Master Teacher I position with 16 or 6.90%, and Master Teacher II with 2 or 0.86%. This finding conforms with the length of service, which further implies that respondents are at career stages 1 and 2.

Level of Work Stress of the Teachers

The bulk of the teaching load

It is not surprising that most teaching loads are very stressful for teachers. (2.52). Amalu (2013) stated in her study that many teachers go to school late, teach students sparingly, rarely conduct tests, and take too long to mark and grade due to the bulk of work assigned. The regular workload of a public-school teacher is 6 hours a day. (Department of Education 2009). This implies that the workload of educators in the Philippines is overloaded, and teachers need more time to finish the task assigned to them. Most educators agree that work is continuous as a teacher and does not practice their authority over their work. Lack of acknowledgment and appreciation is also an issue as autocratic and democratic leadership styles

impact job satisfaction (Bhatti et al., 2012). Although, the Department of Education clarifies that the workload should not be blamed for the teacher's stress, depression, and suicide because other factors may contribute (Mateo, 2018; Reyes, 2018).

The number of subject preparations

In line with the bulk of the teaching load, the number of subject preparations is also very stressful. (2.37). It agrees with the study about Preparations and Qualifications of Public-School Teachers (1997). Teachers' feeling of preparedness affects teaching performance. The higher the number of subject preparations increases the stress level of teachers.

School reports

School reports are not limited to preparing grades, and other student documents are very stressful to teachers. (2.64). Debra (1995) sees work overload and working under time pressure as stressful since teachers are anxious when they have a lot to do before the deadline; as time runs out, a feeling of impending disaster increases. This event happens on teachers with demands on school reports to submit immediately with limited time provided.

Parent and students' communication

The study reveals that parent and student communication is moderately stressful for teachers (2.10).

Working Condition

Working conditions, including faculty and classroom setup, facilities, and resources, are moderately stressful for teachers (2.09). Recently, the government has increased funding to schools, improved classrooms, and physical facilities, provided laboratories, and provided an allowance to teachers to improve performance and reduce stress.

Attending Seminars

Attending seminars and webinars during this pandemic is moderately stressful for teachers (2.16). Arnold and Feldman (1986) noted that school heads provide teachers support on non-professional duties, minimizing the number of meetings and using the meeting time for effectively timetabling blocking of time for teachers to meet.

Non-teaching-related task

Other non-teaching-related tasks, including government census, surveys, and other school management committees, are moderately stressful to teachers. In Amalu's (2012) study, some teachers rarely (hardly) help supervise school co-curricular

activities.

Overall, teachers' work stress level is Moderately Stressful with a grand mean of 2.33. This agrees with the study of Mingo (2017) conducted in schools in Metro Manila that the teaching profession is very stressful, and the factors that teachers perceive to cause them stress are the combination of work-related such as oversized classes, further studies, non-teaching duties, incompetent superiors, and too much paper works. This study also conforms with Amalu's (2012) study that classroom management, lesson presentation, and supervision of co-curricular activities have a high-stress level for teachers.

Perceived Leadership Style of School Heads

Authoritative leadership style

Teacher-respondents Strongly Agree that the school head retains the final decision-making authority for the school (3.25), closely monitors teachers and staff (3.32), and is determined to push all the projects and output on time and expect a quality result (3.25). While teachers agree that the school head tells the teacher and school staff what to do, how to do it, and when they want it to be done (3.15), set high-performance standards for teachers and expect others to do the same themselves (3.19), overall, teacher-respondents agree (3.23) that the school head has an authoritative leadership style. This result implies that teachers perceived that the school heads of Sta. Cruz district is authoritative. Lewin (2018) found that decision-making is less creative under authoritarian leadership. Lewin also found it more challenging to move from an authoritarian to a democratic style than vice versa. Abuse of this style is usually viewed as controlling, bossy, and dictatorial.

Democratic/participative

Data shows that teachers Strongly Agree that the school head has a democratic/participative leadership style with an overall mean of 3.48. Moreover, Teacher-respondents Strongly Agree that the school head encourages teachers (3.46); considers suggestions and comments (3.47); organizes a meeting with a happy and enjoyable ambiance (3.53); allows teachers and staff to set priorities (3.50), and does the confrontation privately (3.44). Nsubuga (2008) study revealed that democratic leadership was the most preferred form of leadership style in school.

Laissez- Faire/Delegative

It reveals that teacher-respondents also Strongly Agree that the school head uses a laissez-faire/delegative leadership style with an overall mean of 3.48. Teachers

strongly Agree that the school head considers teachers' suggestions and thoughts in decision-making (3.42); allows teachers to demonstrate a high degree of innovativeness, initiative, and creativity in the decision-making process of the school (3.47); encourages cooperation among the teaching staff during the decision-making process (3.51); addresses problems as soon as they see them (3.44); and is always available to their teachers and staff (3.54). In a related study, Adeyemi (2011) found that principals' leadership style positively impacted the job satisfaction of public-school teachers. The study found that teachers' job performance was better in schools with principals using autocratic leadership styles than in schools with democratic or laissez-faire leadership styles.

Significant variations in the level of work stress of teachers when grouped according to their profile

The F-values of 5.345, 1.939, and 7.166, respectively, are all significant at 5%. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that age, highest educational attainment, and position of the teachers vary in their stress level. These findings are paralleled to those of Baytar (2010). Her study posited a relationship between demographic profile (age and position) and stress factors related to organizational structure and management, such as responsibilities with roles and their density, imbalance between responsibility and authority, and a feeling that organizational objectives and policies are not well performed. It also agrees with Ventayen's (2021) study that Bachelor's graduate and master's level teachers have a higher level of workplace stress than those who graduated with a master's degree and doctoral degree. However, there are no significant variations in work stress among teachers when grouped according to gender and length of service. The null hypothesis is accepted. It conforms with the study of Sharma & Jain (2020), which concludes that age and gender have no significant relation to stress at work, while only income and marital status relate significantly to the stress level.

The significant relationship between the perceived leadership styles of the school heads and the level of work stress of the teachers

As exposed, there is a significantly high positive correlation between the authoritative leadership style of the school heads and the teachers' work stress level, with an R-value of 0.805. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the authoritative leadership style of the school head positively increases teachers' stress levels. Similarly, Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh,

Hashmi, and Shaikh (2012) found that employees feel uneasy when working under autocratic/authoritative leaders, which increases their stress and lowers job satisfaction. While there is a significant moderate negative correlation between the democratic/participative leadership style and the teachers' work stress level, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% alpha with an r -value of -0.624 . This implies that the democratic/participative leadership style slightly reduces teachers' stress levels. The result agrees with Phil, Otube, Wamunyi, and Runo's (2016) findings that special education teachers in Southern Ghana preferred that school heads use the democratic leadership style rather than an autocratic one. While the study also finds out that teachers' stress level is lower when the school heads use the democratic leadership style compared to autocratic and laissez-faire.

This conforms with the study of Omeke and Onah (2012). According to their dominance, the results revealed that most principals adopted three leadership styles: autocratic, laissez-faire, and democratic. Teachers agreed that only democratic leadership enhances job satisfaction and reduces work stress. Similarly, there is a significant moderate negative correlation between the school heads' laissez-faire / delegative leadership style and teachers' level of work stress with an r -value of -0.599 . The null hypothesis is rejected at a 5% level. This also implies that the school head's laissez-faire/delegative leadership style slightly reduces teachers' work stress. The result agrees with Bogler's (2001) study that the leadership styles of headteachers and principals significantly influenced teachers' job satisfaction and retention. Satisfied teachers are less stressed teachers. A related study by Adeyemi (2011) found that teachers' job performance was better, and the stress level is lower in schools with principals using an authoritative leadership style than in schools with democratic or laissez-faire leadership styles. The same study confirms that job performance reduces stress and that laissez-faire leadership allows teachers to be free and trust them in decision making, which lessens their work stress.

Conclusion

This research aimed to determine the significant variations between the respondent's profile and the teacher's work stress level and the correlation between the school head's leadership style and the teacher's stress level. The study yielded a few noteworthy results. Teachers in Sta. Cruz district was majority of female. Furthermore, the study found that most

teachers were in their adulthood stage. In terms of years in service at the Department of Education, most teachers were at their career stages 1 and 2, with a mean of 12.22. While more than half of the teachers in Sta. Cruz District already has units in master's degrees, and only a few finished their doctorate. These findings positively correlate with the teaching position in which most of the teachers in Sta. Cruz district is Teacher 1. Not very surprising, this study reveals that teachers in Sta. Cruz district is experiencing moderate work stress.

Furthermore, most of the respondents strongly agree that school heads of Sta. Cruz district is authoritative. Half of the respondents agree that school heads are democratic or participative, and most strongly agree that school heads are laissez-faire/ delegative leaders. On the other side, this study also revealed that gender and length of service have no significant variations with teachers' level of work stress. However, age, highest educational attainment, and position significantly vary with teachers' work stress. Finally, the study found that an increased authoritative leadership style contributes to a higher level of work stress for teachers. While democratic/participative and laissez-faire/delegative leadership, the school head contributes slightly lower work stress to the teachers.

The study proves that the leadership style of the school head, either authoritative, democratic/participative, or laissez-faire/delegative has a significant relationship to teachers' work stress. Although the findings may be valuable inputs to improve leadership style among school heads, future researchers may further improve the study by considering other leadership styles commonly implemented in the Schools Division of Zambales.

Moreover, this study supports that the teaching profession is stressful, especially in Sta. Cruz district. To reduce the level of work stress of teachers not only in Sta. Cruz district, but the school heads in Sta. Cruz District should also make use of a combination of leadership styles. A particular style should depend on the situation and the issue at stake. Teachers are most young adults whose authoritative leadership style is not very practical to young professionals. Through the help of the Department of Education (DepEd) division office, learning the combination leadership styles through seminars, webinars, and training to school heads should be provided. Effective school-based management (SBM) programs should continue improving the guidelines suited to the need of the school and the school head.

Factors that cause teachers stress also come from

personal matters. The researcher wishes further studies on authoritative, democratic, and delegative leadership styles. The researcher also recommends studying teachers' stressors that affect work performance. Although stress is part of a teacher's profession, and that work environment combined with personal matters can be stressors, teachers should find stress relievers in any form that would be effective for their lifestyle. Stress management benefits the teachers' health, which has a domino effect on the school, co-workers, students, and family.

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