

# Elementary School Administrators' Leadership Skills, The School Ethos and Pupils' Academic Performance of the Two Divisions of Zamboanga del Norte and Dapitan City

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*Abstract* — The study aimed to find out the elementary school administrators' leadership skills, the school ethos and pupils' academic performance of the two divisions of Zamboanga del Norte and Dapitan city. Correlational method of research was used in the study. The study occurs in the Province of Zamboanga del Norte within the two schools division; Dapitan city Division and Zamboanga del Norte Division with twenty-four central school administrators, teachers and grade VI pupils as respondents of the study. The statistical methods used were weighted mean and pearson chi-square. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the level of school ethos of the two school divisions.

*Keywords* — *School ethos, academic performance, Leadership skills*

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## I. Introduction

Schools are planned, organized, and settled organizations that help people socialize, improve their economic productivity, recognize and realize themselves, and adopt the policies of the nation. The mission that schools are responsible for in terms of personal and social development is of vital importance. The reason why schools are essential for society is that it is the most productivity-based, concrete, and functional part of the education system (Acikalm, 1994). If schools operate in the right way, pre-determined goals and expectations of society from education will be met.

The effectiveness and efficiency of schools are significant in educating students and meeting society's expectations. School management plays a key role in establishing effective schools ( Fullan, 2005; Schulte, Slate, and Onwuegbuzie, 2010; Wong and Nicotera, 2007). The school administration is the leader that carries the school to success, just like a ship's captain. Accordingly, school administrators have important missions in student success and establishing effective schools.

As led managers, school principals play a key role in school success and their leadership skills highly contribute to the effectiveness of schools ( Cemaloglo, 2002; Sisman, 2004). A competent and effective leader is one who affects others in the success of the organization, motivates them, and includes them in the process. The primary duty of school principals is to have their school reach its goal.

The researcher is a teacher in one of the public elementary schools of Zamboanga del Norte division, who from her experience in the profession she noticed the diversity of school administrators leadership skills. The leadership skills of these administrators' contributed to the ethos of the school which speaks the social environment and well-being that affect the condition of learning and academic achievement of pupils. Hence, the leadership of school heads is needed to address the present demand of culture and relationships that SBM brings to schools. These observations made the researcher think that the new approach of managing schools requires school leaders with another set of skills which are congruent to the system, thus the study came to birth.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study aimed to find out the elementary school administrators' leadership skills, the school ethos and the pupils' academic performance. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of school administrators in terms of:
  - 1.1 age
  - 1.2 gender
  - 1.3 educational qualification
  - 1.4 length of service as school administrator
2. What is the level of administrators' leadership skills in Dapitan city and Zamboanga del Norte school divisions along:
  - 2.1 Building strategic alliances
  - 2.2 Vision and goal setting
  - 2.3 Creating and Managing Change
  - 2.4 Solving problems creatively
  - 2.5 Promoting empowerment
  - 2.6 Executive presence
3. What is the level of school ethos in Dapitan city and Zamboanga del Norte school divisions?
4. What is the academic achievement of pupils in the two school divisions?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the academic achievement of pupils by school divisions?

## Literature Review

As in every organization, leadership plays the most important role in conducting business in school organizations as well. According to Gorton and Schneider (1991), strong leadership has a crucial position in school organizations and strong leaders can create effective, creative, visionary, encouraging, knowledgeable, and principled leaders is vitally important to eliminate various problems in schools and to continuously improve school education (Girard, 2000).

A principal has the power to shape up the organization's direction and stirs the course of action to realize its vision. "The vision is a representation of the beliefs and ideals the organization embraces about learning, teaching, and relationships" (Zepeda, 2007 as cited by ECRA, 2010). Critical functions of the principal therefore include developing the methods by which the vision is carried out, mentoring in-school and external leaders, representing the school in the community, managing human resources and recruiting staff, and encouraging professional development" (Portin et al., 2003 as cited by ECRA, 2010).

Skelly (2012) affirmed that the pivotal role of post primary school principals as positional leaders of school ethos. She found that school ethos is critically important in creating an inclusive learning environment and as a means of guiding social interaction conducive to positive relationships within the school community. There is a growing consensus that "Successful school leaders influence students' achievement through two important pathways: 1.) the support and development of effective teachers and 2.) the implementation of effective organizational process" (Christie et. Al., 2009). Management is viewed the guidance and control of action and a system is seen as a set of components interconnected for a purpose. Unarguably, a management system is a set of components, interconnected for the guidance and control of action. This suggests that the interconnection has been planned for a reason, and that the purpose would not be achieved without the interconnection. It has become apparent that commitment is a complex and multifaceted construct. The success or failure of an organization is closely related to the effort and motivation of its employees. The motivation of employees is often the product of their commitment towards their job or career (Luza-Tabiolo, 2018). According to Lombardi as cited by Redmond and Carter (2015), individual commitment to a group effort is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, and a civilization work. Hence, individual commitment of every member of an organization or institution, when combined together, results to organizational commitment.

## II. Methodology

### Research Method

The researcher used correlational method of research because this type of study links the elementary school administrators' leadership skills, the school ethos and pupils' academic performance. The study tried to look for a positive association of the independent to the dependent variables.

### Settings of the study

The study occurs in the province of Zamboanga del Norte within the two schools division. Dapitan city division with its location in Dapitan City proper has five school districts with all central schools in each district as respondent school. The division of Zamboanga consists of schools in the three congressional districts of the province. District 1 consists of nine school districts with five central schools as respondent schools, district II has eleven school districts with seven central schools as respondent schools and district III has fifteen school district with seven central schools as respondent schools.

### Respondents of the study

The respondents of the study were the twenty-four central school administrators, their teachers and grade VI pupils. The subjects of the study were the twenty-eight school administrators and five hundred twelve teachers of the schools of dapitan city division and Zamboanga del norte division, region IX, Zamboanga peninsula.

### Sampling technique

Purposive method was used in the study. Purposive means that the researcher purposively included the particular respondent central schools by direct selection.

## III. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Dapitan city school division yielded significant result with a pearson Chi-square of 33.871, degree of freedom of 1, tabular value at 0.05 level of significance of 3.841 and a contingency coefficient of 0.53. There was a significant relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Dapitan city school division.

**Table 1. The relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Dapitan city division**

School ethos		Leadership skills		Total
Positive	Observed	19	2	21
	Expected	8.1	12.9	21.0
Very positive	Observed	9	43	52
	Expected	19.9	32.1	52.0
Total	Observed	28	45	73
	Expected	28.0	45.0	73.0

$X^2 = 33.871$      $df=1$     Tabular value@ 0.05= 3.841 C=.563    Interpretation = Significant

While Table 2 presents the relationship between the school administrators’ leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Zamboanga del Norte Division.

School ethos		Leadership Skills				Total
		Less skillful	Moderately Skillful	Very Much Skillful	Skillful	
Less Positive	Observed	1.0	0	0	0	1
	Expected	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.5	1.0
Moderately positive	Observed	1	27	7	1	36.0
	Expected	0.2	3.0	14.7	18.1	36.0
Positive	Observed	0	9	115	15	139
	Expected	0.6	11.7	56.8	69.8	139.0
Very Positive	Observed	0	1	57	204	262
	Expected	1.2	22.1	107.1	131.6	262.0
Total	Observed	2	37	179	220	438
	Expected	2.0	37.0	179.0	220.0	438.0

$\chi^2=619.741$   $Df=9$  Tabular value @ 0.05 =16.919C=.765 Interpretation= Significant

The table shows the pearson chi-square, degree of freedom, tabular value, contingency coefficient and corresponding interpretation. The relationship between the school administrators’ leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Zamboanga del Norte division yielded significant result with a pearson chi-square of 619.741, degree of freedom of 9, tabular value at 0.05 level of significance of 16.919 and contingency coefficient of 0.765. There was a significant relationship between the school administrators’ leadership skills and the level of school ethos of Zamboanga del Norte School Division.

From an International perspective the concept of school “ethos” is a contested one within the educational arena. School ethos is regarded by many as an obscure concept, but an important one (Furlong, 2000). Numerous educationalists have linked the ethos of a school with school effectiveness (Rutter et al., 1979). Furthermore, it can be used to explain why schools react in different ways to national and international policy initiatives. There is general consensus in academic literature and commentary that school leaders have a pivotal role in leading school ethos (Skelly, 2012).

#### Summary of findings:

1. Most of the school administrators were 41-50 years old, females, MA holder and doctoral units with 11-20 years length of service.
2. The school administrators’ of Dapitan city school division were very much skillful in leadership skills.

3. The school administrators' of Zamboanga of Zamboanga del norte division were skillful in leadership skills.
4. The level of school ethos in Dapitan city division was very positive.
5. The level of school ethos in Dapitan city division was very positive.
6. The academic achievement of pupils in Dapitan city school division was closely approximating mastery.
7. The academic achievement of pupils in Zamboanga del norte school division was closely approximating mastery.
8. Dapitan city school division:
9. Two of the profiles yielded no comparison on Age and educational attainment. There was a significant difference between the school administrators leadership skills when grouped according to gender.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Generally, there was a significant relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the level of school ethos of the two school divisions. This means that school administrator with higher level of leadership skills have schools with better school ethos. The study also found out that there was no significant relationship between the school administrators' leadership skills and the academic achievement of the pupils of the two school divisions. This implies that even the school leader has poor or excellent leadership skills it has nothing to do with the academic achievement of the pupils in the National Achievement Test (NAT). Furthermore, the study found out that there was no significant relationship between the school ethos and the academic achievement of the pupils of the two school divisions. This means that even the school has poor or better school ethos it has not influenced the academic achievement of pupils in the NAT.

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