

Connecting People Around the School: Principal Leadership in Building School-Community Partnership

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the relationship of principal leadership in building school-community partnership. The quantitative research design will be used in this study to determine the level of quality of principal leadership, importance of building school-community partnership and the relationship of principal leadership in building school-community partnership. Teachers, parents, and barangay officials of a school whose principal has worked there for five years or more make up the study's respondents. Three (3) schools in the sub-office of Santa Maria are respondents of the study.

It is evidently discovered that school that the quality of principal leadership affects in building school-community leadership. School head must need to have a good communication skill, organizational skill, decision-making skill, interpersonal skill and problem-solving skill in building school-community partnership in establishing students' achievement, teachers' engagement and school development. Through strategic planning and encouraging involvement in school-related issues, school administrators can cultivate genuine parent ties. Leaders are driven to learn why and how parent participation fails because it is a problem in many schools. Participation is important, for instance, but schools hardly ever get the required level of family involvement. By removing obstacles to family involvement, principals can have a significant impact on student achievement and parent relationships.

To solve the problems in building school-community partnership, it is important that the school head must need to have a good quality of leadership. This study was limited in sub-office of Santa Maria. Future research should examine schools outside of this sample in different sub-offices and schools. This study surveyed elementary teachers. Future research could include teachers in secondary. The school heads may provide opportunities to improve their practices on engaging stakeholders' participation and school environment by sending them to various seminars and trainings. The school heads may revitalize the involvement of the stakeholders by providing them programs that will capture and nurture their support. The mechanisms employed by the school heads in sustaining school-community partnerships be maintained and reviewed to further improve the school-community relations.

Keywords: Leadership, School-Community Partnership

INTRODUCTION

Partnerships between schools and the community have showed potential as a means of reshaping education. With the help of these collaborations, schools broaden their usual teaching goal to include social and health services for kids and families as well as to engage the local community. These collaborations have been shown to strengthen schools and improve student learning (Valli, 2013). Since teachers often emulate their principals, principals who upheld a posture of continuous learning, built collegial relationships with staff, focused on student success, provided opportunities for teachers to learn, and included teachers in decision-making and implementation were more successful in creating learning communities. (Hord, 1997). The

school principal's leadership is essential for school improvement. According to Edmonds (1979), strong leadership is one of the key characteristics of successful schools, particularly the principal, who plays a key role in establishing the academic climate of the institution, assisting in the selection of suitable teaching methods, and planning and allocating school supplies.

Families take the initiative to actively support their children's development and learning through family-school-community partnerships, which are a shared responsibility and reciprocal process between schools and other community agencies and organizations and families. Additionally, parents are given assistance, listened to, and given the resources they need to participate actively in their children's education by schools and community groups. While parent and community participation has always been a cornerstone of public schools, more acknowledgement and support of these cooperative efforts is required if we are to ensure that kids reach their full potential.

Researchers have promoted the advantages of collaborations among communities, families, and schools as a way to boost student achievement since the 1980s (Epstein & Sanders, 1998; Henderson, 1987; Enderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 007). School-community partnerships are a means of obtaining extra resources, social support, and educational experiences to enhance students' in-school learning opportunities, as school staff are finding it more and more difficult to meet the diverse needs of students with the resources they currently have (Merz & Furman, 1997). Hands (2005) states that parents and children around the country are banding together to demand more equitable education policies in their states and districts, as well as tangible change in their schools, by using their combined strength. Over the past 20 years, these organized parent and student groups in the country's most underprivileged schools have grown into a powerful force for school reform, going beyond conventional parent or community involvement. According to a recent estimate, there are 500 community organizing groups working on education reform nationwide (Warren, 2010). More than 30 community organizing groups with active education campaigns were identified during a scan of the six New England states (Renée, McAlister, & Potochnik, 2011). According to Bryk, Lee, and Smith (1990) and Smrekar and Goldring (1999), school choice is often described as a potent force for establishing the constituent pieces of the parent-school community. For instance, a large body of research on charter schools indicates that, in comparison to regular public schools, parent involvement and satisfaction are higher (Bifulco & Ladd, 2005; Bulkley & Fisler, 2003). This is in line with the idea that since charter schools are answerable to parents as "consumers," they will be more receptive to their needs. Additionally, charter schools have more adaptable school structures, which should lessen the barriers that big bureaucracies frequently create between parents and schools (Seeley, 1993).

A school-community partnership involves "the connections between schools and community individuals, organizations, and businesses that are forged to promote students' social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development" (Saunders, 2001). Schools are held responsible for what their pupils learn and know. But schools can't accomplish this on their own. Partnerships between schools and communities can be useful in this situation. Because the community may occasionally supply resources that schools actually cannot afford to provide, children in these various partnerships are given the finest opportunity to achieve success in school.

Through strategic planning and encouraging involvement in school-related issues, school administrators can cultivate genuine parent ties. Leaders are driven to learn why and how parent participation fails because it is a problem in many schools. For instance, involvement is important, yet schools never get the required level of family involvement (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Principals can positively influence parent connections and student achievement by removing barriers to familial involvement (Epstein, 2001). According to Epstein and Dauber (1991), "Parents are more likely to become partners in their children's education if they perceive that the schools have strong practices to involve parents at school" (p. 289). Active school administrators that respect family involvement look for methods to lower these obstacles and consider how they may best meet the requirements of families. Diverse families want their school administrators and families to be approachable, inviting, and welcoming (Pena, 2000). As a result, leadership attitudes must respect and honor

families and modify expectations to accommodate their needs. As our understanding of familial involvement grows, the definition expands to include parent engagement and parent collaborations in addition to standard measurements (Rothengast, 2016). Family involvement is significantly impacted and guided by the goals and results of the main actions.

To understand how the principals' leadership, build school-community partnership, three research questions was developed:

1. What is the demographic profile in terms of:
 - position,
 - age,
 - sex,
 - length of Service, and
 - educational attainment?
2. What is the level of quality of principal leadership in terms of:
 - communication skill,
 - organizational skill,
 - decision making skill,
 - interpersonal skill, and
 - problem-solving skill?
3. What is the level of importance of building school-community partnership in terms of:
 - students' achievement,
 - Teacher's engagement, and
 - School development?
4. Is the principal leadership significantly related in building school-community partnership?

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative research design will be used in this study to determine the level of quality of principal leadership, importance of building school-community partnership and the relationship of principal leadership in building school-community partnership. The research used purposive sampling method. Teachers, parents and Brgy. Officials whose school principal has worked there for five years or more make up the study's respondents.

The research instrument of this study is a checklist questionnaire consist of 3 parts. Part 1 is for demographic profile of the respondents, part 2 is about the level of quality of principal leadership and part 3 is about the importance of building school-community partnership.

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographic Profile

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Position		
Teacher	32	50.0
Parent	21	32.8
Brgy. Officials	11	17.2
Total	64	100

Age		
20-29	5	7.8
30-39	14	21.9
40-49	27	42.2
50-59	13	20.3
60-69	5	7.8
Total	64	100
Sex		
Male	11	17.2
Female	53	82.8
Total	64	100
Length of Service		
1-5	32	50.0
6-10	12	18.8
11-15	3	4.7
16-20	10	15.6
Others	7	10.9
Total	64	100
Educational Attainment		
Elementary Graduate	1	1.6
High School Graduate	26	40.6
Bachelor's Degree Holder	19	29.7
MA/MS Degree with Units	8	12.5
Master Degree Holder	9	14.0
Doctor's Degree with Units	1	1.6
Doctor's Degree Holder	0	0
Total	64	100

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of position, age, sex, length of service and educational attainment. In terms of position, teacher is the majority respondents of the group with 50 or 50.0% respondents followed the parents with 21 or 32.8% and barangay officials with 11 or 17.2%.

With regards to age of the respondents, 27 or 42.2% belongs to 40-49 years old age bracket while 5 or 7.8% belongs to 60-69 years old. The youngest respondents are in the age bracket of 20-29 with 5 or 7.8% respondents. Other respondents are 30-39 years old composed of 14 or 21.9% and 50-59 years old with 13 or 20.3% respondents.

As to sex of the respondents, majority of the respondents is female with 53 or 82.8% of the respondents and 11 or 17.2% are male.

In terms of length of service as Teachers, PTA Officers and Barangay Officials, most of the respondent are 1-5 years in service with 32 or 50.0% respondents, followed by 6-10 years in service with 12 or 18.8% respondents. 10 or 15.6% of the respondents are 16-20 years in service. 11 to 15 years in service consist only of 3 or 4.7% of the total respondents. Other respondents who are 21 years and above in the service composed of 7 or 10.9%.

In terms of educational attainment, majority of the respondents are high school graduate consists of 26 or 40.6%. It has 1 or 1.6% respondents who are elementary graduate as well as with units in doctor's degree. 19

or 29.7 of the respondents are high school graduate. 9 or 14.0% are master's degree holder and 8 or 12.5% are with units in master's degree.

2. Level of Quality of Principal Leadership

Table 2. Level of Quality of Principal Leadership of School Head

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Communication Skills		
<i>My Principal...</i>		
1. Interact with other people including parents, teachers and students.	4.75	Excellent
2. Keep everyone up to date on what's going on the school.	4.72	Excellent
3. Show that you care by asking for employees' opinions, ideas, and feedback.	4.67	Excellent
4. Build trust amongst their team and foster an environment where employees feel empowered to share their ideas and collaborate.	4.69	Excellent
5. Define the desired result of a project or strategic initiative and be clear about what you want to see achieved by the end of each milestone.	4.63	Excellent
Average	4.69	Excellent
Organizational Skills		
<i>My Principal...</i>		
1. Identifying future innovations and opportunities.	4.61	Excellent
2. Thinking strategically, system-wide, and holistically.	4.66	Excellent
3. Spreading the organization's vision and inspiring others to share in that vision.	4.64	Excellent
4. Relationship- and team-building including developing leadership potential in others.	4.63	Excellent
5. Using integrity and ethics.	4.61	Excellent
Average	4.63	Excellent
Decision Making Skills		
<i>My Principal...</i>		
1. Seek data to validate accuracy and relevancy in potential solutions.	4.34	Very Good
2. Combine experience and intuition with data to find the best solution.	4.28	Very Good
3. Assess ideas, choices, proposals, and possible outcomes.	4.34	Very Good
4. Build critical thinking skills, evaluate options accurately and establish priorities.	4.25	Very Good
5. Make timely decisions	4.30	Very Good
Average	4.30	Very Good
Interpersonal Skills		
<i>My Principal...</i>		
1. Principals are in contact with students, staff, faculty, parents and community members, and having the ability to communicate and share information appropriately is the key to success.	4.45	Very Good
2. Building and managing respectful relationships with others through social awareness and empathy will help a principal interact with whoever walks through their office door.	4.41	Very Good
3. Listening carefully to both sides and using creative problem-solving skills can solve the issue by arriving at a solution that works for everyone.	4.38	Very Good
4. The ability to put yourself in someone else's situation to understand how they are feeling is a key skill for a school administrator.	4.33	Very Good

5. Knowing when to delegate by recognizing that some faculty or staff members might handle certain tasks better is a sign of a successful leader.	4.48	Very Good
Average	4.41	Very Good
Problem Solving Skills		
<i>My Principal...</i>		
1. Clarify a problem through research and feedback from those impacted.	4.38	Very Good
2. Armed with new insights, generate as many solutions as possible.	4.39	Very Good
3. Instruct everyone to develop as many ideas as possible in an allotted time frame without passing judgment.	4.27	Very Good
4. Rather than arriving at the same conclusion (convergent thinking), instruct everyone to come up with a unique idea for a given prompt (divergent thinking).	4.28	Very Good
5. Execute the strongest idea, ensuring clear communication with all stakeholders about its potential value and deliberate reasoning	4.34	Very Good
Average	4.47	Very Good

Table 2 shows the level of quality of leadership of principal in school in terms of communication skill, organizational skill, decision-making skill, interpersonal skill and problem-solving skill.

Communication skill of school heads is excellent with its mean of 4.69. It shows that the school heads can interact in the people around the school including teachers, parents, students and others. They show that they care by asking others' opinion, ideas and feedback to share their ideas and collaborate. They keep everyone update on what's happen in the school most especially in the result of their initiative projects ang how it was achieved.

In terms of organizational skill of the school heads it was also excellent with its mean of 4.63. As school head, they plan future innovations and opportunities for their school through thinking strategically, system-wide, and holistically using integrity and ethics. The school heads shared the vision and mission of school to people around the community to have a harmonious relationship and team-building in the success of the plans and projects.

With regards to decision-making skill of the school head, it is very good with its mean of 4.30. It shows that the school head seek information to validate accuracy and relevancy in potential solutions. Build critical thinking skills, evaluate options accurately and establish priorities. They have to make timely decisions to solve the problems in their school.

In terms of interpersonal skills of the school head, it is also very good with its mean of 4.41. Principals are in contact with students, faculty, parents and community members, and having the ability to communicate and share information appropriately is the key to success. Building and managing respectful relationships with others through social awareness and empathy will help a principal interact with whoever walks through their office door. Listening carefully to both sides and using creative problem-solving skills can solve the issue by arriving at a solution that works for everyone.

Problem-solving skill of a principal is very good with its mean of 4.47. It implies that school heads are ensuring clear communication with all stakeholders about its potential value and deliberate reasoning to solve problems. Rather than arriving at the same conclusion, school head instructs everyone to come up with a unique idea for a given prompt.

These findings implied that the quality of school head is important. School head must need to have a good communication skill, organizational skill, decision-making skill, interpersonal skill and problem-solving skill. It supports the study of Hords, 1997 which revealed that principals who maintained a posture of continual learning combined with developing collegial relationships with staff, focusing staff on student

success, making opportunities for teachers to learn, and inviting teachers into decision making and implementation were more successful in establishing learning communities, as teachers tended to follow the example set by their principals.

3. Importance of Building School-Community Partnership

Table 3. Importance of Building School-Community Partnership

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Students' Achievement <i>Building school-community partnership...</i>		
1. Enhance the learning outcomes of the students.	4.66	Excellent
2. Support the needs of the students to increase learning opportunities	4.55	Excellent
3. Develop social and emotional experience of the students.	4.59	Excellent
4. Improve positive behavior and initiative of the students to perform in different school activities.	4.66	Excellent
5. Encourage the students in shared responsibility that contribute to the learning goals of the students.	4.64	Excellent
Average	4.62	Excellent
Teachers' Engagement <i>Building school-community partnership...</i>		
1. Connect the teachers with people within the school and the community regularly.	4.66	Excellent
2. Find the teachers opportunities to share knowledge and skills in the school and community.	4.64	Excellent
3. Establish good and harmonious relationship with the school and community between teachers and parents and other stakeholders.	4.61	Excellent
4. Encourage the teachers to attend different community events and provide opportunities to contribute to decision-making.	4.59	Excellent
5. Allows himself to become involved in outside activities to become effective teacher.	4.70	Excellent
Average	4.64	Excellent
School Development <i>Building school-community partnership...</i>		
1. Develop intelligent public understanding of the school in all aspects of its operations.	4.64	Excellent
2. Help the citizens feel more responsibly for the quality of education the school provides.	4.56	Excellent
3. Involve the community in the work of the school and in solving educational problems.	4.58	Excellent
4. Promotes genuine spirit of cooperation between the school and community for the improvement of school.	4.59	Excellent
5. Secure community support for the school and its programs.	4.64	Excellent
Average	4.60	Excellent

Table 3 shows the importance of building school-community partnership. School-community partnership has an impact in the students' achievement, teachers' engagement and school development.

In terms of students' achievement, building school-community partnership in the schools is excellent with its mean of 4.62. It shows that building school-community partnership enhance the learning outcomes of the

students, support the needs of the students to increase learning opportunities, develop social and emotional experience of the students, improve positive behavior and initiative of the students to perform in different school activities and encourage the students in shared responsibility that contribute to the learning goals of the students.

With regards to teachers' engagement, building school-community partnership is excellent with its mean of 4.64. It shows that building school-community partnership affects the teachers' engagement in terms of connecting the teachers with people within the school and the community regularly, find the teachers opportunities to share knowledge and skills in the school and community, establish good and harmonious relationship with the school and community between teachers and parents and other stakeholders, encourage the teachers to attend different community events and provide opportunities to contribute to decision-making and allows himself to become involved in outside activities to become effective teacher.

As school development, building school-community is excellent with its computed mean of 4.60. This shows that school-community partnership is important in school development in developing intelligent public understanding of the school in all aspects of its operations, help the citizens feel more responsibly for the quality of education the school provides, involve the community in the work of the school and in solving educational problems, promotes genuine spirit of cooperation between the school and community for the improvement of school and secure community support for the school and its programs.

These findings revealed that building school-community partnership is important in establishing students' achievement, teachers' engagement and school development. This supports that study that partnerships between schools and the community have showed potential as a means of reshaping education. With the help of these collaborations, schools broaden their usual teaching goal to include social and health services for kids and families as well as to engage the local community. These collaborations have been shown to strengthen schools and improve student learning according to Valli, 2013.

4. Significant Relationship of Principal Leadership and Building School-Community Partnership

Table 4. Relationship of the Quality of Principal Leadership in Building School-Community Partnership

Variables	Mean	t-Value	p-Value	Decision
Level of Quality of Principal Leadership	4.43	1.669	0.000279	Reject Null Hypothesis
Importance of Building School-Community Partnership	4.63			

Table 4 shows significant relationship of quality of principal leadership and building school-community partnership. With its computed value of 0.000279 which is less than the threshold p-value of 0.05, it shows that the quality of principal leadership affects in building school-community partnership. It is important in students' achievement, teachers' engagement and school development.

The findings implied that as school leaders, they need to search and make ways to improve school, students and teachers' performance. For school improvement to occur, the leadership of the school principal is crucial. According to Edmonds (1979), one of the main commonalities among effective schools is strong leadership, especially the principal who is instrumental in setting the academic tone for the school, in helping to select appropriate instructional strategies, and in organizing and distributing school resources.

CONCLUSIONS

This research aims to investigate the relationship of principal leadership in building school-community partnership.

It is evidently discovered that school that the quality of principal leadership affects in building school-community leadership. School head must need to have a good communication skill, organizational skill,

decision-making skill, interpersonal skill and problem-solving skill. Building school-community partnership is important in establishing students' achievement, teachers' engagement and school development.

School leaders can develop authentic parent relationships with strategic planning and inviting participation in school matters. Because many schools struggle with lack of parent participation, leaders are motivated to understand why and how it fails. For example, participation matters; yet schools rarely achieve familial involvement to the expected degree (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Principals can positively influence parent connections and student achievement by removing barriers to familial involvement (Epstein, 2001). According to Epstein and Dauber (1991), "Parents are more likely to become partners in their children's education if they perceive that the schools have strong practices to involve parents at school" (p. 289). Engaged school leaders who value familial involvement seek ways to reduce these barriers and ask how they can best respond to families' needs. Families of diversity wish for accessibility, invitation, and welcome from their school leaders and families (Pena, 2000). As such, attitudes of leadership must provide respect and value for families and adjust expectations in light of familial needs. As familial involvement becomes better understood, the definition moves beyond traditional measures into parent engagement and parent partnerships (Rothengast, 2016). The intentions and outcomes from principal actions instrumentally impact and guide familial involvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To solve the problems in building school-community partnership, it is important that the school head must need to have a good quality of leadership.

The following recommendations for further only you can base on the findings from this research study to further investigate the relationship between the quality of good leadership and building school-community partnership.

This study was limited in sub-office of Santa Maria. Future research should examine schools outside of this sample in a different sub-offices and schools.

This study surveyed elementary teachers. Future research could include teachers in secondary.

The school heads may be provided the opportunities to improve their practices on engaging stakeholders' participation and school environment by sending them to various seminars and trainings.

The school heads may revitalize the involvement of the stakeholders by providing them programs that will capture and nurture their support.

The mechanisms employed by the school heads in sustaining school-community partnerships be maintained and reviewed to further improve the school-community relations.

Further studies may be conducted to supplement the findings revealed in this study and the inclusion of other variables not previously included.

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