



# STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL HEADS AS DETERMINANT OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PANABO CITY DIVISION

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra16748>

DOI No: 10.36713/epra16748

## ABSTRACT

The study explored the relationship between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning in public secondary schools of Panabo City Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables and the domains of strategic leadership of school heads that significantly influenced organizational learning. With the use of probability sampling, 150 secondary teachers in the public schools were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive-correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was an extensive strategic leadership of school heads and an extensive organizational learning. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, all domains of strategic leadership of school heads were found to have significantly influenced organizational learning. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education may identify means on how to help the school heads in strengthening their strategic leadership to ensure the attainment of organizational learning. More so, future researchers may further explore the involved variables considering other factors and research methods.

**KEYWORDS:** Strategic leadership, organizational learning, Panabo City Division, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

School as learning organization focuses on developing and sharing a vision centered on the learning of all students. It aims to create and support continuous learning opportunities for all staff. It promotes team learning and collaboration among all staff. More so, it establishes a culture of inquiry, innovation and exploration. It intends to establish systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning. In short, a school as learning organisation has the capacity to change and adapt routinely to new environments and circumstances as its members, individually and together, learn their way to realizing their vision (OECD, 2016). Organizational learning is a process by which an organization improves itself over time through gaining experience and using that experience to create knowledge. However, organizational learning is restrained due to poor leadership.

Ashkewari and Ghasemi (2023) argued that the challenge in developing a strategically focused school is to ensure that it is not only giving importance to developing planning documentation that emphasizes the strategic dimension but also giving equal importance to developing the strategic conversation and dialogue to build a strategic perspective in the school. It is only by this process that we will be able to develop strategic leadership characteristics within all those who have leadership responsibilities in the school (Amin & Haleem, 2023).

In Indonesia, it was revealed that leadership and dialogue are few of the challenges in the attainment of organizational learning (Yuliana, 2020). In Africa, organizational learning becomes impossible due to ineffective knowledge sharing which was precipitated by a counter collaborative culture, top down communication and decision making, absence among staff, the principals' inaccessibility to non-managerial staff, and chronic teacher absenteeism. Some employees tend to shy away from externalizing their tacit knowledge. This is mainly because more often than not, school



leadership does not value the input of teaching and administrative personnel and other stakeholders in knowledge sharing activities (Min, 2017; Perez-Soltero et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, organizational learning has been impossible due to the challenges that the school head of the school has encountered. According to a report by the Department of Education, around 5,000 schools in the Philippines have no access to electricity, while 10,000 have no access to potable water. This lack of basic amenities puts students and teachers at a significant disadvantage, affecting the quality of education they receive. In addition, many schools lack adequate classrooms, textbooks, and teaching materials, making it challenging for students to learn effectively. This challenge is not only limited to rural areas but is also present in urban areas. The lack of textbooks and teaching materials also hinders the learning process, as students may not have access to the necessary information to understand the concepts taught in class. Another important issue facing the education system in the Philippines is the lack of resources and infrastructure in many schools, especially in rural areas (Bai, 2023).

In the Division of Panabo City Division, it was observed that poor organizational learning is attributed to unsupportive leadership. Teachers believed that school heads were not that committed in promoting learning and growth leading to poor organizational learning. Teachers were encouraged or motivated to engage in continuous learning. More so, teachers believed that they were restrained in empowering themselves. In addition, insufficient investment in training, development programs, and resources for learning hindered teachers' ability to acquire new skills and knowledge needed for their roles. Lack of funding for training or access to relevant learning materials was a disappointing learning for teachers.

However, the mentioned circumstances were purely observation only, as the researcher had not encountered any existing study focusing on the school's organizational learning within the local context, particularly considering the strategic leadership of school heads. Given this scenario, the researcher was driven to delve into the magnitude of strategic leadership exhibited by school heads and its impact on the organizational, specifically within the public secondary schools of Panabo City Division. Moreover, the objective was to explore the relationship between these two variables and the facets of strategic leadership of school heads which significantly influenced the organizational learning of the school.

This endeavor also offered valuable insights to policymakers in formulating policies, programs, interventions, projects, and activities that could encourage all school leaders to demonstrate strategic leadership worth emulating. Additionally, the researcher intended to present this study in various local, national, and international forums, with the ultimate goal of publishing it in a journal indexed by Scopus.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In this research, a quantitative approach was utilized, precisely employing a descriptive correlational technique. Quantitative research involves gathering numerical data and then applying mathematical analysis, frequently integrating statistical tools. This methodology is employed to clarify and offer insights into particular problems or phenomena (Apuke, 2017). In the realm of descriptive correlational studies, the emphasis is on delineating variables and the inherent relationships that emerge among them (Davis, 2021).

Descriptive research involves a non-interventionist approach by the researcher, observing variables without any manipulation. Its principal aim is to offer a comprehensive comprehension of the fundamental attributes of these variables, as highlighted by Korrapati (2016). Conversely, a correlational study aims to ascertain if a relationship exists between two variables. According to Kabir (2016), this entails assessing whether a change, either an increase or decrease, in one variable is connected to a corresponding increase or decrease in the other.

This study fell under the quantitative category as it depended on numerical data for analysis and interpretation. It was descriptive in nature as it assessed both the strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning of the schools. Furthermore, this academic undertaking was considered correlational because it examined the association between the strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning of the public secondary schools in Panabo City Division.



### Participants and Sampling

A total of 150 public secondary teachers were invited to participate in this study. According to Hair et al. (2018), it was suggested that a minimum of 50 samples was required for simple regression analysis, and typically around 100 samples sufficed for most research scenarios. Therefore, having 150 respondents was more than sufficient to fulfill the objectives of this study.

In selecting the study's sample, a two-staged cluster sampling, a form of probability sampling, was utilized. This sampling method allows for determining the probability or likelihood of inclusion for each item. Essentially, every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being part of the sample (Ragab & Arisha, 2018).

In research, cluster sampling is a widely adopted technique that involves dividing the population into clusters. A cluster comprises unique units, forming exhaustive and mutually exclusive subsets (Thomas, 2020). The two-stage cluster sampling was employed due to the random selection of a sample from each specified cluster or division. In the context of this study, all secondary teachers from the public secondary schools of Panabo City Division were taken into account.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for this study specified the selection of elementary teachers with a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience. This criterion was essential as it allowed teachers with at least a 2-year tenure in public schools to effectively evaluate the strategic leadership of their school heads and its impact on the school's organizational learning. Additionally, participants who felt uneasy or uncomfortable answering the survey questionnaire had the option to voluntarily withdraw from participating in the study. They did not face any pressure to continue their involvement, and their decision to withdraw was fully respected, emphasizing the paramount importance of the respondents' welfare in the study's conduct.

### Research Instruments

Regarding data collection, this study utilized a customized survey questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this project had two distinct sets. The initial set centered on evaluating the strategic leadership of school heads, while the subsequent set focused on assessing the organizational learning.

**Strategic Leadership.** The questionnaire on strategic leadership was adapted from Kirigi (2020). This tool had 15 statements. Of which 5 items were intended for each indicator, namely: visioning, focusing, and implementing. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the 15 items is .74 suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

### Data Analysis

For more comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, the following statistical tools were utilized.

*Mean.* This was used to measure the extent of strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning.

*Pearson r.* This was utilized to determine the relationships between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning.

*Regression Analysis.* This was employed to determine the significant influence of strategic leadership of school heads on organizational learning.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning in public secondary schools. The study was conducted in the selected secondary schools in Panabo City Division. There were one hundred fifty (150) secondary teachers who participated in this study. Descriptive correlational method of research was used in this study utilizing adopted research instruments. The said instruments were validated by the panel of experts and subjected to pilot testing before it was made ready for administration. Mean, Pearson Product Correlation of Coefficient, and Regression Analysis were the statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses raised in this study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.



The extent of strategic leadership of school heads is extensive which means that strategic leadership is oftentimes evident among school heads. This extensive level suggests that school heads often engage in activities associated with strategic leadership, fostering a proactive and visionary approach to school management.

Meanwhile, the extent of organizational learning is extensive which means that it is oftentimes evident. This extensive level suggests that organizational learning practices, such as ongoing professional development and collaboration, are commonly embraced and implemented within schools.

It was found out that there is a significant relationship between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning. The hypothesis of no significant relationship between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning was rejected. The significant relationship between strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning, indicated by a p-value of .000, underscores the influential role of leadership in fostering a culture of continuous learning within educational institutions. Rejecting the null hypothesis suggests that strategic leadership practices, including visioning, focusing, and implementing, are closely associated with the promotion and sustenance of organizational learning initiatives.

More so, it was revealed that all the domains of strategic leadership of school heads significantly influence organizational learning. The robust relationship between strategic leadership and organizational learning underscores the importance of leadership domains such as visioning, focusing, and implementing in driving the learning culture within schools. These findings emphasize the imperative for school leaders to prioritize strategic practices to cultivate an environment conducive to continuous learning and development among staff and stakeholders.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:

The extent of strategic leadership of school heads means that it is oftentimes evident in the school. In fact, all dimensions are oftentimes evident from the school heads, namely, visioning, focusing, and implementing.

Meanwhile, the extent of organizational learning is oftentimes evident. Apparently, all indicators are found to be oftentimes evident specifically on trusting and collaborative climate, shared and monitored mission, taking initiatives and risks, and ongoing, relevant professional development.

Based on the findings, strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning are related. All domains of strategic leadership of school heads are linked to the organizational learning.

Also, strategic leadership of school heads significantly influenced organizational learning. In fact, all domains of strategic leadership of school heads, namely, visioning, focusing, and implementing significantly influence organizational learning by registering a p-value of .000 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the three domains of strategic leadership of school heads, the organizational learning will also increase.

The strong correlation between the strategic leadership of school administrators and organizational learning aligns with Taylor's (2011) concept of Strategic Leadership, which underscores the indispensable role of leadership in organizational success. This theory emphasizes that strategic leadership is a collaborative process within a group, as highlighted by Gusmao et al. (2018), necessitating leaders to engage actively with their teams. Strategic leadership entails the capacity to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and collaborate effectively with others to initiate transformative changes aimed at securing a brighter future for the organization.

Additionally, Alhyasat and Mat Sharif (2018) posited that strategic leadership involves persuading individuals to make decisions that enhance the organization's long-term stability while safeguarding its short-term financial health. Furthermore, Palladan et al. (2016) asserted that in the modern era, strategic leadership and operational innovation are indispensable for achieving and sustaining strategic competitiveness. Recognized as one of the most prominent leadership styles, strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in attaining competitive advantages.



### Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study:

Given the extensive strategic leadership of school heads and organizational learning evident within educational institutions, DepEd officials may foster and support initiatives that further enhance these areas. Investing in leadership development programs that reinforce visioning, focusing, and implementing skills among school administrators may help sustain and strengthen strategic leadership practices. Additionally, promoting a culture of continuous learning and collaboration within schools, through professional development opportunities and knowledge-sharing platforms, may enrich organizational learning processes.

Moreover, school heads are encouraged to capitalize on these strengths to drive continuous improvement and excellence. They may prioritize fostering a collaborative and innovative environment where visioning, focusing, and implementing strategies are actively promoted and supported. Also, school heads may invest in leadership development programs and provide opportunities for ongoing training and professional growth to empower staff members to become effective leaders and contributors to the organizational learning process. Through these efforts, school heads may foster a dynamic and adaptive school community that thrives on strategic leadership and continuous learning, ultimately benefiting both educators and students alike.

Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to actively engage in collaborative initiatives and embrace opportunities for professional growth and development. By aligning themselves with the vision and goals set forth by school leaders, teachers may contribute to the collective effort of fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. They may also leverage the supportive environment created by strategic leadership to share insights, exchange best practices, and actively participate in ongoing learning opportunities. Through their active involvement in the organizational learning process, teachers may not only enhance their own professional skills and knowledge but also contribute to the overall growth and success of the school community.

Lastly, future researchers may delve deeper into identifying specific mechanisms through which strategic leadership influences organizational learning processes within educational institutions. Additionally, studies may focus on examining the contextual factors that facilitate or hinder the effective implementation of strategic leadership practices and their impact on organizational learning outcomes. They may conduct comparative research across different educational contexts and cultures can provide valuable cross-cultural perspectives on the role of strategic leadership in promoting organizational learning. Overall, future research endeavors may strive to advance theoretical frameworks and practical implications to inform the development of effective leadership strategies.

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