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# TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS AND ITS IMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A SELF-INVENTORY APPROACH

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study aimed to determine the significance of the relationship between teacher characteristics and educational leadership among Grade 8 teachers in the Division of Panabo City. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, the study involved 145 teacher-respondents and employed validated and pilot- tested instruments. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, Pearson product- moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that both teacher characteristics and educational leadership were rated at an extensive level, suggesting that these are frequently demonstrated in the school context. A significant relationship was found between teacher characteristics and educational leadership, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Furthermore, regression analysis indicated that all three domains of teacher characteristics, teacher-student interaction, teaching profession, and humanistic and justice characteristics, significantly influenced educational leadership. Of the three, humanistic and justice characteristics showed the strongest influence. These findings emphasize the vital role that teachers' professional behaviors and ethical values play in fostering effective educational leadership. The study highlights the need for sustained support from educational leaders, school administrators, and policymakers to enhance both the personal and leadership capacities of teachers. It also offers a theoretical foundation for future research aiming to improve teacher quality and school leadership performance.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Teacher Characteristics; Educational Leadership; Teacher-Student Interaction; Teaching Profession; Humanistic Values; Panabo City.*

## INTRODUCTION

In Education plays a fundamental role in shaping societies, fostering economic growth, and nurturing individuals who contribute to the development of their communities. However, ensuring an effective learning environment remains a significant challenge due to various factors that impact both educators and students. Among these, teacher characteristics have emerged as a crucial element in determining the success of classroom management and instructional leadership. The way teachers interact with students, uphold professional standards, and exhibit humanistic and justice-oriented values directly influences educational outcomes. While international and national efforts aim to improve teaching quality, the persistence of challenges, particularly at the local level, calls for an in-depth examination of the issue.

Internationally, numerous education systems struggle with teacher preparedness, professional development, and the ability to maintain effective classroom management. Research indicates that many educators worldwide experience difficulties in establishing meaningful teacher-student interactions, often due to inadequate training and insufficient support systems (OECD, 2021). In many developing countries, teachers are not adequately prepared to manage diverse classrooms, leading to issues such as student disengagement and behavioral problems (Schleicher, 2019). Additionally, teachers in low-resource settings face challenges in adapting to the increasing demand for 21st-century skills, particularly in digital literacy and student-centered instruction (World Bank,2020). These global issues highlight the need for comprehensive teacher development programs that prioritize both pedagogical skills and interpersonal competencies.

Another pressing issue at the international level is the growing concern over teacher burnout and job dissatisfaction. Studies have shown that the increasing workload, administrative tasks, and pressure to meet academic targets contribute to high stress levels among educators (Kim et al., 2022). Teachers who experience chronic stress are less effective in managing classrooms, often resorting to authoritarian methods that hinder student engagement and learning outcomes (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Moreover, the lack of continuous professional development opportunities limits teachers' ability to refine their instructional strategies and address emerging challenges in education (UNESCO, 2021). Addressing these concerns requires stronger institutional support, policies that promote teacher well-being, and investments in professional growth programs.

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Nationally, the Philippines has long faced challenges in improving teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes. A significant issue is the lack of adequate training and professional development for teachers, which affects their ability to maintain discipline and engagement in the classroom (DepEd, 2022). Many Filipino educators struggle with managing large class sizes, making it difficult to provide personalized attention to students (Mendoza & Roldan, 2021). Furthermore, there is a widespread concern over the implementation of competency-based education, as teachers often lack the necessary pedagogical tools to adapt to diverse student needs (Briones, 2020). These challenges have resulted in lower student performance and decreased motivation among educators.

Additionally, teacher retention and job satisfaction remain problematic in the Philippines. Many teachers report high levels of stress due to heavy workloads, low salaries, and limited career advancement opportunities (Garcia & Ramos, 2023). The demands of administrative responsibilities often take precedence over actual teaching, reducing the time educators can dedicate to improving classroom management and instructional leadership (Luz, 2021). Moreover, the increasing use of temporary and contractual employment for teachers has contributed to job insecurity, affecting their overall commitment to the profession (Torres, 2021). These issues underscore the urgent need for policies that support teacher well- being, enhance training programs, and provide sustainable career pathways for educators.

At the local level, Panabo City schools face unique challenges that hinder effective classroom management and educational leadership. One of the most pressing concerns is the struggle of teachers in establishing strong teacher- student interactions. Many educators in the region find it difficult to engage students actively, as they lack training in student-centered teaching approaches and classroom discipline strategies (Dela Cruz et al., 2021). The reliance on traditional, teacher-dominated instruction limits students' participation and reduces their motivation to learn. Additionally, some teachers report difficulties in addressing behavioral issues, often resorting to punitive measures rather than constructive discipline techniques (Santos & Rivera, 2022). These factors contribute to an overall decline in classroom engagement and learning effectiveness.

## REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT LITERATURE

The related literature of this study provided inputs about teacher characteristics and educational leadership. Also, it presented varied studies showcasing the association of the involved variables in this study. The independent variable focused on in this study is teacher characteristics. It has three indicators namely; teacher-student interaction, teaching profession, humanistic and justice (Yaratan, H., & Muezzin, E. 2016). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is educational leadership. It has nine indicators namely; educated person, diverse perspectives, school goals, school culture, educational standards, school improvement, professional development, staff evaluation integration, and school community relations (Hallinger, P., & Jacobson, L. 2010).

### *Teacher Characteristics*

Teachers play an influential role in shaping not only the academic success of their students but also the broader society. The characteristics they exhibit are critical to their effectiveness and the overall learning environment. As Dag (2020) notes, teaching is a profession that demands not just knowledge but a deep commitment to the art of education. Teachers must exhibit specific attitudes and behaviors that align with the demands of the profession, which ultimately ensures both their success and that of their students. This involves a passion for teaching, a dedication to personal growth, and a commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment. Without these characteristics, teachers are unlikely to find fulfillment in their roles, which can hinder their ability to meet their own personal needs for happiness and self-actualization. Consequently, they may struggle to effectively engage students or contribute meaningfully to the teaching profession.

One essential characteristic of effective teachers is their ability to provide personalized learning experiences that consider the unique characteristics of their students. Seferoğlu (2004) emphasizes that effective teachers design learning activities tailored to students' diverse needs and levels of capacity, using a variety of methods and instructional materials. By doing so, teachers ensure that each student has the opportunity to engage with the content in a way that suits their individual learning style, thus promoting more equitable educational outcomes. In a rapidly evolving educational landscape, the ability of teachers to adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate diverse learners is more important than ever. This is particularly relevant in multicultural and socio-economically diverse settings, where students may face additional challenges outside the classroom that affect their learning.

Furthermore, teachers must believe in the importance of thorough planning and preparation to ensure that lessons are not only delivered effectively but also meet the learning objectives set forth in the curriculum. The process of planning before implementation is a hallmark of professionalism in teaching, as it ensures that the teacher is fully prepared to engage students in meaningful learning experiences. According to Cafoğlu (2020), teachers who are skilled in classroom management and instructional planning are better equipped to maintain student engagement and manage classroom dynamics. In today's educational settings, where teachers often face large class sizes and a wide range of student abilities, effective planning is critical to maintaining an organized and conducive learning environment.

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Another vital teacher characteristic is their capacity to foster student interaction and participation in the learning process. This engagement helps students take responsibility for their own learning, a skill that is essential for their academic success and personal development. Teachers who encourage collaboration and active participation are not only imparting knowledge but also instilling critical life skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. As education moves toward more student-centered approaches, the ability to facilitate peer interaction and self-directed learning has become a core aspect of teaching. Studies have shown that when students are actively engaged in their learning, they are more likely to retain information and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter (Pianta et al., 2020).

A key component of a teacher's effectiveness is their understanding of the broader social and emotional needs of their students. Effective teachers are attuned to the physical, emotional, and mental characteristics of their students, designing instructional activities that not only address academic needs but also support the holistic development of the child. This humanistic approach to teaching aligns with the principles of justice and equity, ensuring that all students have access to a supportive learning environment regardless of their background. Teachers who are empathetic and compassionate can better understand and respond to the individual challenges their students face, whether these challenges stem from socio-economic factors, family issues, or learning disabilities (Yaratan & Muezzin, 2016).

Teacher effectiveness is also linked to their commitment to continuous professional and personal development. In an ever-changing educational landscape, teachers must engage in lifelong learning to stay current with new pedagogical strategies, technologies, and content knowledge. This commitment to growth is not only beneficial for teachers' professional satisfaction but also enhances their ability to meet the needs of their students. Research has shown that teachers who actively pursue professional development opportunities are more likely to employ innovative teaching methods, use data-driven approaches to instruction, and improve student outcomes (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2021). In the Philippines, where access to professional development can be limited in rural areas, teachers' dedication to self-improvement is especially important for ensuring high-quality education.

Moreover, teachers' knowledge of the educational system and their ability to collaborate with parents and the wider school community are critical for promoting student success. Teachers who understand the structure and functioning of schools are better positioned to advocate for necessary reforms and improvements. They are also more likely to take leadership roles within the school, contributing to decision-making processes that impact the entire school community. In this regard, teacher leadership is increasingly being recognized as an essential component of school effectiveness (Hallinger & Jacobson, 2010). Teachers who work closely with parents and other stakeholders can create a more supportive learning environment for their students, addressing both academic and non-academic factors that influence student achievement.

Several studies have explored the impact of teacher characteristics on student outcomes, with a particular focus on teacher experience, certification, and educational background. For instance, research has consistently shown that teacher experience plays a significant role in student achievement, particularly in the early years of teaching. Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor (2019) found that the benefits of teacher experience on student achievement are most pronounced during the first three years of teaching, after which the gains plateau. Experienced teachers are better able to manage classrooms, differentiate instruction, and adapt to the unique needs of their students. This finding aligns with the broader body of literature suggesting that teacher quality is one of the most important factors influencing student outcomes (Hanushek, 2021).

Interestingly, studies have found mixed results regarding the impact of advanced degrees, such as a master's degree, on student achievement. While some research suggests that teachers with advanced degrees do not necessarily produce better student outcomes, National Board certification has been shown to be a more reliable indicator of teacher quality. National Board-certified teachers have been found to raise student achievement by a measurable margin, indicating that this certification process may be a valuable tool for identifying highly effective teachers (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2020). These findings highlight the importance of developing policies that recognize and reward teacher quality based on meaningful criteria rather than simply educational attainment.

The characteristics of teachers, ranging from their personal traits to their professional behaviors, play a pivotal role in shaping educational outcomes. Teachers who exhibit a strong commitment to their profession, engage in continuous self-improvement, and build meaningful relationships with their students are more likely to succeed in fostering a positive learning environment. As policymakers continue to explore ways to improve teacher quality, it is essential to focus on the characteristics that truly make a difference in student achievement. By supporting the development of these characteristics through targeted professional development and certification programs, education systems can ensure that all students have access to high-quality teachers who can lead them to success.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study determined the relationship between teacher characteristics and educational leadership. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of teacher characteristics in terms of:
   1.1. Teacher-Student Interaction,
   1.2. Teaching Profession, and
   1.3. Humanistic and Justice
2. What is the extent of educational leadership in terms of:
   2.1. Educated Person,
   2.2 Diverse Perspectives,
   2.3 School Goals,
   2.4 School Culture,
   2.5 Educational Standards,
   2.6 School Improvement,
   2.7 Professional Development,
   2.8 Staff Evaluation Integration, and
   2.9 School Community Relations
3. Is there a significant relationship between teacher characteristics and educational leadership?
4. Which of the domains of teacher characteristics significantly influence educational leadership?

## METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the methodological aspect of the study. This covers the research design, research respondents, research instruments, data gathering procedure, and data analysis employed in this investigation.

### *Research Design*

This study employed a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a descriptive correlational design. Quantitative research is particularly suited for studies that involve the collection and analysis of numerical data to uncover patterns and relationships. Creswell and Creswell (2018) describe quantitative research as a systematic method that enables researchers to test hypotheses and establish relationships among variables. The descriptive correlational design was chosen for this study as it aims to describe the existing characteristics of the variables and determine their correlations without manipulation. This approach is effective in exploring naturally occurring relationships, particularly between teacher characteristics and educational leadership, as emphasized by Apuke (2019).

### *Research Respondents*

In this study, the research respondents comprise Grade 8 teachers from various schools within the Division of Panabo City. The total population of Grade 8 teachers in this division is 226. To determine an appropriate sample size that ensures representativeness while maintaining statistical accuracy, Slovin's formula is employed. Slovin's formula is expressed as: n=1+Ne2N where $n$ is the sample size, $N$ is the total population, and $e$ represents the desired margin of error. For this study, a margin of error of 5% (0.05) is selected.

Rounding up, the sample size is determined to be 145 respondents. This calculation ensures that the sample accurately reflects the population within an acceptable margin of error. Slovin's formula is particularly useful in survey sampling to estimate sample sizes when the population size is known, and a specific margin of error is desired.

Respondents must have a minimum of three years of teaching experience. This criterion ensures that participants have substantial exposure to the educational environment and have likely encountered various teaching and leadership scenarios. Respondents should have experience in educational leadership roles. This includes positions such as department heads, curriculum coordinators, or involvement in school committees that influence educational policies and practices. Inclusion of educators with leadership experience is crucial, as their insights can provide valuable perspectives on the interplay between teaching practices and leadership dynamics.

### *Research Instruments*

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed to measure both, teacher characteristics and educational leadership. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions with likert-scale items to quantify perceptions and experiences.

For data collection, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set focused on the extent of teacher characteristics. the second set focused on the extent of educational leadership.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented in this chapter are the findings based on the results of the data, the conclusions drawn from the findings, and the recommendations for consideration.

The main focus of the study was to determine the significance of the relationship between teacher characteristics and educational leadership. The study was conducted with the selected teachers from the Division of Panabo City. There were one hundred forty-five (145) Grade 8 teachers who participated in this study. A descriptive correlational method of research was used in 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. Weighted mean, Pearson product moment correlation, and regression analysis were statistical tools used in analyzing the data. The hypotheses in this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

The major findings of the study were the following: the extent of the teacher characteristics of the teachers is extensive. Meanwhile, the extent of the educational leadership of the teachers is also extensive. It was found that there is a significant relationship between teacher characteristics and the educational leadership of teachers. The hypotheses of no significant relationship between teacher characteristics and educational leadership of teachers and none of the domains of teacher characteristics significantly influence the educational leadership of teachers were rejected.

***Conclusions***

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered: The extent of teacher characteristics is extensive, which implies that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of teacher characteristics which include teacher-student interaction, teaching profession and humanistic and justice characteristics, are at an extensive level, which means it is oftentimes evident. Meanwhile, the extent of educational leadership is also extensive, which means that it is oftentimes evident. All dimensions of educational leadership are oftentimes evident. Both variables call for all school members to work hand in hand to strengthen the existing status of the teacher characteristics and educational leadership of teachers.

Based on the findings, teacher characteristics, and educational leadership are correlated. Also, teacher characteristics significantly influences educational leadership. All domains of teacher characteristics, namely, teacher-student interaction, teaching profession, and humanistic and justice characteristics significantly influence educational leadership by registering a p-value of .001 which is less than .05 in the level of significance. This leads to the rejection of the null hypotheses. Further, the result indicates that for every unit increase in the three domains of teacher characteristics, educational leadership also increases.

***Recommendations***

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

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