

Principal leadership, good governance, and teachers' commitment to organizational change

Shaolin Y. Ladra,^{1,2} Joanne D. Gorospe¹

¹ Graduate School, Occidental Mindoro State College, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, Philippines 5100

² Department of Education-Division of Antique, Antique 5700

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between principal leadership, good governance, and teachers' commitment to organizational change. Specifically, it aims to identify which indicators of principal leadership and governance significantly influence teacher commitment to change initiatives. A total of 100 teachers across ten public elementary schools in Caluya, Antique, participated in the study. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected through a researcher-constructed survey questionnaire to systematically measure perceptions of leadership, governance, and commitment to change. The findings revealed a positive correlation between teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and their commitment to change, suggesting that effective leadership fosters stronger engagement in change initiatives. Similarly, good governance practices, particularly participatory decision-making, were identified as influential in strengthening teachers' commitment. Interestingly, while principal leadership as a whole did not significantly predict commitment levels, the governance aspect of participatory decision-making emerged as a notable predictor.

The study underscores the critical role of inclusive governance practices in enhancing teacher commitment during organizational change. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge in educational leadership by offering empirical evidence on the dynamics of school governance and leadership in shaping change readiness. These insights hold practical implications for school leaders and policymakers in designing context-responsive leadership and governance frameworks. Future research is recommended to expand the scope and address the study's limitations by exploring additional variables and applying the model in varied educational settings.

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Corresponding Author:

Shaolin Y. Ladra

Department of Education-Division of Antique, Antique 5700

Email: shaolin.ladra@deped.gov.ph

1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving landscape of the 21st century, the effective implementation of change stands as a formidable challenge for leaders across various sectors. Within academic institutions, this challenge is compounded by the need to navigate technological advancements, societal shifts, economic developments, and policy reforms (Groenewald, et al., 2024).

Central to the success of educational reforms is the commitment of teachers to organizational change. As frontline implementers, their dedication is pivotal in ensuring the effective execution and sustainability of reforms. Recent efforts by the Department of Education in the Philippines to overhaul the education system underscore the critical role teachers play in driving change. Bading (2022) echo these sentiments, highlighting the significant contribution of committed teachers to the success of change initiatives.

However, the extent of teachers' commitment to organizational change is influenced by various factors, with leadership being paramount among them. Principals, in particular, wield significant influence over the culture, direction, and effectiveness of educational institutions. Meyer et al. (2023) emphasize the multifaceted nature of principal leadership, which extends beyond mere administrative duties to shape teachers' commitment to navigate and embrace change. Transformational leadership, characterized by vision-building, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation, has been shown to positively impact teachers' motivation and commitment to organizational goals.

Furthermore, the importance of good governance cannot be overstated in fostering an environment conducive to change. Effective governance dictates how institutions operate, make decisions, and engage with stakeholders, thereby influencing teachers' commitment to organizational change. Participatory decision-making, transparency, and accountability are key governance practices that can enhance teachers' sense of ownership and alignment with institutional objectives (Sari, 2023).

Despite the acknowledgment of the pivotal role of leadership and governance, empirical studies reveal gaps in understanding the precise mechanisms through which they impact teachers' commitment to change. For instance, while transformational leadership has been linked to increased organizational commitment, the mediating effects of teachers' beliefs and professional learning remain underexplored. Additionally, the interplay between authentic leadership, teacher well-being, and social-emotional competence warrants further investigation to fully comprehend their collective impact on commitment levels.

As the study aimed to explore how principal leadership and good governance influence teachers' commitment to organizational change, it pursued several specific objectives. First, it sought to determine the predominant leadership style of school principals as perceived by teachers, focusing on three dimensions: transformational leadership, distributed leadership, and instructional leadership. Second, the study aimed to assess the extent to which principals implement good governance practices, as experienced by teachers, particularly in the areas of transparency and accountability, participatory decision-making, responsive public service, and sustainable resource allocation. Third, it intended to evaluate the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change, categorized into affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Furthermore, the study sought to examine whether a significant relationship exists between the predominant principal leadership style and the teachers' level of commitment to organizational change. It also aimed to determine if the extent of principals' implementation of good governance significantly correlates with teachers' commitment levels. Lastly, the study aspired to identify which specific indicators of principal leadership and good governance significantly predict teachers' commitment to organizational change.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to systematically gather, analyze, and interpret data on principal leadership, good governance practices, and teachers' commitment to organizational change in the educational context without manipulation. This approach aimed to provide a detailed account of these variables' current state, offering insights into prevailing leadership styles, governance practices, and commitment levels.

2.2. Study Site

The study encompassed a diverse array of public elementary schools in Caluya, Antique, Philippines, including Caluya Central School, Dawis Elementary School, Sabang Elementary School, Salamento Elementary School, Imba Elementary School, Hiningaan Elementary School, Banago Elementary School, Semirara Elementary School, Masanag Elementary School, and Sibato Elementary School. Aligned with the mandates of the Department of Education (DepEd), these schools adhere to various programs and policies aimed at addressing evolving educational demands and challenges, necessitating continuous adaptations in their processes and operations.

2.3. Sample

In order to achieve meaningful research insights, the study aimed to engage 100 respondents from a larger population of 134 teachers distributed across ten (10) public elementary schools in Caluya, Antique. The determination of the sample size followed a meticulous approach using Raosoft, an online sample size calculator, incorporating a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an assumed 50% response distribution. To ensure a balanced and unbiased representation across all schools, the researcher adopted a proportional random sampling method, meticulously allocating the sample size based on the proportion of teachers in each school.

2.4. Research Instrument

To gather data, the researcher designed a comprehensive survey questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, with items drawn from relevant literature to ensure content validity. The questionnaire was structured into three main sections to assess the perceived extent of principal leadership, good governance, and teachers' commitment to organizational change. The section on principal leadership evaluated transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership styles, totaling 21 items. Good governance indicators including accountability, transparency, participatory decision-making, and resource allocation comprised 28 items. The third section explored affective, continuance, and normative commitment, totaling 21 items. To ensure the reliability and clarity of the instrument, expert validation was conducted by professionals in educational management, followed by pilot testing with a representative sample. Based on the results of the pilot test, the instrument yielded high internal consistency: the Cronbach's alpha was 0.91 for the principal leadership section, 0.89 for good governance, and 0.93 for teachers' commitment to organizational change, indicating that the questionnaire was highly reliable for the purposes of this study.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

After obtaining necessary permissions, the researcher secured cooperation from School Principals and informed potential respondents about the study's purpose, overview, and ethical considerations. Teachers were provided with comprehensive information and gave informed consent for voluntary participation. The survey was administered, allowing thoughtful responses, and data underwent rigorous analysis to explore relationships between principal leadership, good governance, and teachers' commitment to organizational change. Findings were presented, conclusions drawn, and practical recommendations provided, all while adhering to ethical standards.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

In conducting this research, the highest ethical standards were upheld, with the researcher ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality for all participants, particularly the teachers in the selected public elementary schools in Caluya, Antique. Rigorous measures were implemented to protect personal information, and findings were reported in an anonymized manner. The researcher also committed to the responsible and ethical use of collected data, adhering strictly to outlined research objectives to maintain trust, integrity, and prioritize participants' well-being and rights throughout the study.

2.7. Data Analysis

The gathered data underwent comprehensive analysis using statistical software. Weighted mean was utilized to assess average perceptions of principal leadership, good governance, and teachers' commitment to organizational change, alongside a measure of data variability. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to explore interrelationships between these variables, offering robust measures of linear associations. Multiple linear regression analysis played a pivotal role in identifying specific dimensions of principal leadership and good governance influencing teachers' commitment.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Extent of Principal Leadership

The results indicate that the perception of principal leadership is high ($3.68 \pm .377$) among teachers responded in the study. It also shows high perception on other specific leadership dimensions [Table 1].

Table 1. Extent of principal leadership as perceived by the teachers.

Scale	Overall Mean	SD
Transformational leadership	3.69	.377
Instructional leadership	3.68	.411
Distributed leadership	3.67	.410
Overall result	3.68	.377

Scale: 1.00-2.00 Low; 2.01-3.00 Moderate; 3.01-4.00 High

3.2. Principals' Implementation of Good Governance

All governance factors rated high ($3.68 \pm .337$). Participatory decision-making ($3.73 \pm .340$), transparency and accountability ($3.68 \pm .400$), responsive public service ($3.65 \pm .406$), and sustainable resource allocation ($3.65 \pm .392$) were also rated as high [Table 2].

Table 2. Extent of principals' implementation of good governance as experienced by the teachers.

Factors	Mean	SD
Participatory decision-making	3.73	.340
Transparency and accountability	3.68	.400
Responsive public service	3.65	.406
Sustainable resource allocation	3.65	.392
Overall Result	3.68	.337

Scale: 1:00-2:00 Low; 2:01-3:00 Moderate; 3:01-4:00 High

3.3. Level of Teachers' Commitment to Organizational Change

Teachers participated in this study has high commitment to organizational change ($3.73 \pm .325$). Affective commitment ($3.77 \pm .359$) and normative commitment ($3.77 \pm .365$) received the highest ratings, followed by continuance commitment ($3.65 \pm .392$), which was also rated as high. [Table 3].

Table 3. Level of teachers' commitment to organizational change.

Factors	Mean	SD
Affective commitment	3.77	.359
Normative commitment	3.77	.365
Continuance commitment	3.65	.392
Overall Result	3.73	.325

Scale: 1:00-2:00 Low; 2:01-3:00 Moderate; 3:01-4:00 High

3.4. School Principal Leadership and the Level of Teachers' Commitment to Organizational Change

Results demonstrate significant relationships between the extent of school principal leadership and the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change. Across all leadership dimensions, including transformational, distributed, and instructional leadership, there are notable correlations with affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Specifically, transformational leadership shows significant correlations with affective ($r = .455$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .523$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .311$, $p = .002$). Similarly, distributed leadership exhibits significant correlations with affective ($r = .420$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .576$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .287$, $p = .004$). Instructional leadership also demonstrates significant correlations with affective ($r = .408$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .574$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .321$, $p = .001$). Moreover, the overall extent of principal leadership significantly correlates with teachers' commitment to organizational change ($r = .546$, $p < .001$), indicating a strong association between effective leadership and teachers' commitment to embracing organizational change [Table 4].

Table 4. Relationship between the extent of school principal leadership and the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Transformational leadership	Affective commitment	.455**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.523**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.311**	.002
Distributed leadership	Affective commitment	.420**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.576**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.287**	.004
Instructional leadership	Affective commitment	.408**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.574**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.321**	.001
Principal's leadership	Teachers' commitment to organizational change	.546**	< .001

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.5. Principals' Implementation of Good Governance and the Level of Teachers' Commitment to Organizational Change

Results show that across all indicators of good governance, including transparency and accountability, participatory decision-making, responsive public service, and sustainable resource allocation, significant correlations are observed with affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Specifically, transparency and accountability exhibit significant correlations with affective ($r = .408$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .585$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .287$, $p = .004$). Similarly, participatory decision-making shows significant correlations with affective ($r = .516$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .679$, $p < .001$), and

normative commitment ($r = .406$, $p = .004$). Responsive public service demonstrates significant correlations with affective ($r = .484$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .546$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .295$, $p = .003$). Additionally, sustainable resource allocation exhibits significant correlations with affective ($r = .435$, $p < .001$), continuance ($r = .505$, $p < .001$), and normative commitment ($r = .293$, $p = .003$). Moreover, the overall extent of principals' implementation of good governance significantly correlates with teachers' commitment to organizational change ($r = .626$, $p < .001$), underscoring the importance of effective governance practices in fostering teachers' commitment to embracing organizational change [Table 5].

Table 5. Relationship between the extent of principals' implementation of good governance and the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Transparency and accountability	Affective commitment	.408**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.585**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.287**	.004
Participatory decision-making	Affective commitment	.516**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.679**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.406**	.004
Responsive public service	Affective commitment	.484**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.546**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.295**	.003
Sustainable resource allocation	Affective commitment	.435**	< .001
	Continuance commitment	.505**	< .001
	Normative commitment	.293**	.003
Principals' implementation of good governance	Teachers' commitment to organizational change	.626**	.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.6. Indicators of Principals' Leadership Predicting the Level of Teachers' Commitment to Organizational Change

Analysis shows that none of the predictors, including transformational leadership, distributed leadership, and instructional leadership, are found to be statistically significant in predicting teachers' commitment to organizational change [Table 6].

Table 6. Indicators of principals' leadership predicting the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change.

Predictors	Estimates	Significance
Transformational leadership	.058	.706
Distributed leadership	.116	.539
Instructional leadership	.213	.170

$R^2 = .214$; $F = 8.70$; $Sig. = .000$

3.7. Indicators of Principals' Implementation of Good Governance Predicting the Level of Teachers' Commitment to Organizational Change

Analysis indicates the impact of various indicators of principals' implementation of good governance on teachers' commitment to organizational change. Among the predictors, participatory decision-making emerges as the only statistically significant predictor, with a positive estimate of .687 ($p = .000$), indicating a significant positive relationship with teachers' commitment to organizational change [Table 7].

Table 7. Indicators of principals' implementation of good governance predicting the level of teachers' commitment to organizational change.

Predictors	Estimates	p-value
Transparency and accountability	-.173	.102
Participatory decision-making	.687	< .001
Responsive public service	.072	.512
Sustainable resource allocation	.028	.799

$R^2 = .425$; $F = 17.55$; $Sig. = .000$

4. DISCUSSION

The assessment of leadership styles within the context of the study revealed consistently high mean scores across transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership dimensions. This indicates that leadership within the schools is perceived as effective, empowering, and aligned with principles known to

foster positive change. This suggests that when school leaders demonstrate a blend of transformational vision, instructional focus, and shared leadership, they create conditions that can enhance innovation, teamwork, and the collective pursuit of school goals. These findings support Aslamiah et al. (2022), who argue that transformational leaders inspire, mentor, and influence their staff toward excellence. Likewise, Nawab and Asad (2020) emphasize that distributed leadership enhances teacher capacity and collaboration, fostering a culture of shared ownership.

In terms of good governance, results showed high ratings across all dimensions, with participatory decision-making emerging as the highest. This indicates that teachers perceive their principals as inclusive, transparent, and responsive leaders. When teachers are actively involved in decision-making processes, it not only builds trust but also motivates them to align their efforts with organizational goals. This creates a school climate conducive to sustained and meaningful change. Changalima et al. (2021) highlight that governance systems characterized by participation and accountability improve institutional responsiveness and stakeholder engagement—key ingredients in successful change management.

The results on teachers' commitment to organizational change revealed high levels of affective and normative commitment, with continuance commitment slightly lower but still notable. This demonstrates that teachers in the study are emotionally invested in the school and feel a moral obligation to support its goals, rather than staying due to perceived costs of leaving. These forms of commitment are more enduring and intrinsically motivated, making them critical for long-term transformation. Samancioglu et al. (2020) found similar patterns, reinforcing the idea that teachers who strongly identify with their organization and its mission are more willing to go beyond basic responsibilities during change efforts.

The study also found a significant relationship between principal leadership styles and teachers' commitment to organizational change. This implies that effective leadership—particularly those styles that emphasize inspiration, collaboration, and instructional guidance—can nurture the psychological conditions needed for teachers to commit to and champion change. Uddin et al. (2020) confirm that leadership styles significantly influence how teachers respond to change initiatives, thereby reinforcing the need for leadership development in school systems.

A significant relationship was also found between the extent of good governance and teachers' commitment. Among the governance dimensions, participatory decision-making showed the strongest correlation with commitment. This underscores the strategic value of involving teachers in planning and policy decisions, which can foster a sense of agency and shared responsibility for change outcomes. Saleem et al. (2020) explain that good governance facilitates fairness and equitable practices, building the trust necessary for teacher engagement in reform efforts.

However, when analyzing the predictive power of leadership styles on teacher commitment, the study found no statistically significant influence. This suggests that while leadership styles are perceived positively and correlate with commitment, they may not directly cause it. Instead, teachers' intrinsic motivation, professional values, and internalized goals could play a more significant role. Tindowen (2019) supports this view, noting that teachers' high commitment levels often stem from personal investment in their profession rather than solely from external influences like principal behavior.

In contrast, participatory decision-making emerged as a significant predictor of teachers' commitment, while other governance factors did not show direct influence. This finding indicates that teachers' commitment is most influenced by their sense of voice and involvement in school affairs. While other governance practices like transparency and accountability are important, they may work indirectly or require further exploration to understand their impact fully. Brezicha et al. (2019) found that shared decision-making strengthens teacher commitment and fosters a sense of belonging and professional fulfillment.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teachers perceive their principals to demonstrate predominantly transformational leadership, which reflects strong visionary and motivational qualities conducive to fostering school improvement and positive change. Among the dimensions of good governance, participatory decision-making emerged as the most evident, indicating that inclusive leadership practices are actively present and appreciated within the school environment. Teachers exhibited high levels of affective and normative commitment to organizational change, reflecting their strong emotional attachment and moral obligation to support the school's goals and reform efforts. Significant relationships were observed between both principal leadership and good governance with teachers' commitment to organizational change, confirming the essential roles of leadership and governance in shaping commitment. However, regression analysis revealed that only participatory decision-making significantly predicted teachers' commitment, suggesting that inclusive leadership strategies are more impactful than leadership style alone. This indicates that teachers' commitment is influenced not solely by external leadership behaviors, but also by how much they feel

involved in shaping the direction of the institution. Thus, internal motivation and a sense of agency may play crucial roles in sustaining their dedication to change initiatives.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

Shaolin Ysug-Ladra completed her elementary and secondary education in Caluya and earned her Bachelor of Elementary Education from Occidental Mindoro National College in 2001, the same year she passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. She began her teaching career in 2002 at Sabang II Primary School and was later transferred to Caluya Central School in 2011. Balancing her roles as a teacher and student, she pursued her Master of Arts in Education at Occidental Mindoro State College. Her dedication led to her promotion as Master Teacher II in 2022 at Caluya Central School, where she currently teaches. Shaolin can be contacted through: shaolin.ladra@deped.gov.ph



Dr. Joanne D. Gorospe is an educator and researcher specializing in the field of Education. Holding the position of Associate Professor at Occidental Mindoro State College, she serves as the Dean of the College of Teacher Education, where she passionately guides the next generation of educators. With a Doctor of Education degree, majoring in Educational Management, Dr. Gorospe brings a wealth of expertise to her academic and administrative roles. Her commitment to advancing knowledge in education is evident through her extensive research contributions, which are reflected in her publications in reputable journals. Beyond her academic responsibilities, Dr. Gorospe actively engages in the scholarly community. Her dedication to continuous learning and professional development underscores her commitment to excellence in both teaching and research. For inquiries or collaboration opportunities, Dr. Joanne D. Gorospe can be reached via email at joannedgorospe@gmail.com