

The Role of Teacher Collaboration in School Improvement: Challenges and Solutions

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the problems and issues on the level of teachers' collaboration for school improvement in Caibiran District, Philippines. Employing the descriptive-correlational survey method with 68 elementary teachers served as the respondents of the study.

With regard to the problems and issues encountered by the respondents during teachers' collaboration, most of the respondents had problems and issues on lack of cooperation/teamwork, teachers have different ideas/opinions on a certain topic that makes the work more complicated, lack of time and lastly on creating unhealthy competition among teachers.

On the level of teachers' collaboration, most of the respondents have agreed on the following: shared beliefs, values and vision, shared and supportive leadership, collective learning, support conditions, shared personal practice, leadership characteristics, normalizing classroom practice and supporting teaching collaboration.

On the effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement, the number of enrolment has decreased for the last three years. Repetition rate has also decreased and promotion rate reveals an increasing rate for the school year 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 but most of the schools do not have the data for the school year 2017-2018.

KEYWORDS: Problems and Issues, Level of Teachers Collaboration, and School Improvement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Problems and issues on teachers' collaboration in school were inevitably happened as some of the teachers are not cooperative. They rely on the team leader decision and others are hard-headed when it comes to submission of reports. Lack of time and lack of interest and cooperation/teamwork. Teachers have clash of ideas in providing effective impact to learners.

Division of task were raised due to related seniority and ICT related issues because some of the teachers do not have know about computers. This makes the work more complicated.

Lack of planning and support from the team and attitude towards work while seniors teachers in the group were not cooperative. They just give the work/task to the new ones.

Collaboration is not always a concept that is greeted with open arms. Educators who have had success working in isolation may view this process as an invasion of their pedagogy and a waste of time. Harry K. Wong, a well-known educational author, studies that the trademark of effective schools is a culture where all teachers take responsibility for the learning of all students. The key to strong collaboration is recognizing that a student shouldn't be the responsibility of only one teacher but of all teachers. Thus, this study aims to help teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members reflect upon whether and how creating conditions for teachers to work more collaboratively might benefits students and teachers in their schools and districts.

When teachers collaborate, the interests, backgrounds and strengths of each teacher can contribute to a project. If teacher work in team, they can delegate tasks according to the personality and expertise of each team member. This type of teamwork contributes to a greater sense of trust and accountability, and it allows teachers to feel confident about contributing their most dynamic skill toward school improvement.

When educators work together, they form important professional and personal relationships. Teachers often draw support from each another and can delegate tasks that allow each teacher to feel effective. Collaboration between teachers contributes to school improvement and student success.

Isolation can be a side effect of becoming a teacher. It is very easy to get caught in the trap of walking into a classroom, shutting the door, and attending to your own students. This is how many schools function, with educators sharing nothing more than a parking lot. Some people like it this way, but an effective teacher is someone who wants to grow in the profession. An effective teacher wants collaboration.

This research work derives its motivation from the fact, that there are schools that cannot meet the division target of percentage of passing during quarterly test. Some schools have a higher rate of percentage when it

comes to enrolment, literacy level, stakeholders participation, continuous improvement project, number of completers compare to other schools. Thus, the researcher wants to find out if teacher's collaboration influences the school improvement and performance of elementary schools in the district of Caibiran. Through this study, the researcher can find some information regarding the answers to gaps in the current supportive research of collaborative groups.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to investigate the problems and issues and teacher collaboration for school improvement in Caibiran District. It has the following specific objectives:

1. Determine the problems and issues encountered pertaining to teachers' collaboration
2. Ascertain the level of teacher collaboration in terms of:
 - 1.1 shared beliefs, values, and vision
 - 1.2 shared and supportive leadership
 - 1.3 collective learning
 - 1.4 support conditions
 - 1.5 shared personal practice
 - 1.6 leadership characteristics
 - 1.7 normalizing classroom practice
 - 1.8 Supporting teaching collaboration
3. Determine the effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement in terms of:
 - 3.1 Enrolment
 - 3.2 Repetition Rate
 - 3.3 Number of dropouts
 - 3.4 Promotion Rate
4. Determine the significant relationship between the level of teachers' collaboration and effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement.

3. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study utilized theoretical and conceptual framework as its main foundation in the due course of its proceedings.

Theoretical framework. This study is anchored on the theory of Martin Fishbein and Icekajzen (1967) known as the Theory of Reasoned Action. This theory attitudes and behaviors within human action. It is mainly used to predict how individuals will behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioral intentions. An individual's decision to engage in a particular behavior is based on the outcomes the individual expects will come as a result of performing the behavior. Fisbein's theory suggested a relationship between attitude and behaviors. However, critics estimated that attitude theories were not proving to be good indicators of human behavior. Fisbein's theory is connected to Social Exchange Theory George Homans (1970), depicts that people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships. When the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship.

Conceptual framework. The conceptualization of this research basically evolved on the problems and issues on teacher's collaboration for school improvement in elementary schools in the Division of Biliran.

This was pursued by determining the level of teachers' collaboration in terms of shared beliefs, values and vision, shared and supportive leadership, collective learning, support conditions, shared personal practice, leadership characteristics, normalizing classroom practice and supporting teaching collaboration. It further determined the effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement in terms of enrolment, nutritional status, number and rates of dropouts, percentage of learners who completed the school year, and literacy level. Furthermore, it determined the significant relationship between the effects of teacher collaboration and problems and issues. Figure 1 presents the Conceptual framework of the study.

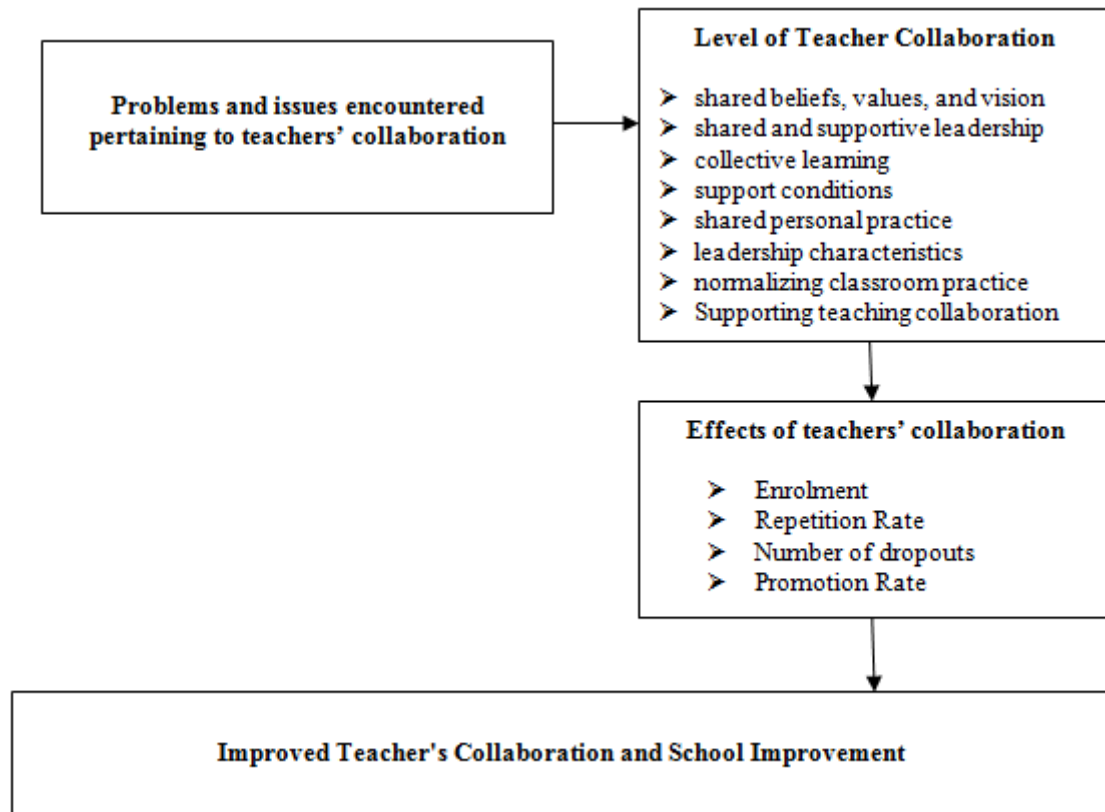


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study

4. METHODOLOGY

This study will utilize a descriptive-correlational design combining quantitative survey and qualitative method. The paucity of the available information about collaborative teaching combined with many unknowns about teams in school made the qualitative framework ideally suited to this study. Qualitative design provided opportunity for the researcher as instrument and for an open-ended and in-depth process with the natural setting and people’s experience as the source of data. Qualitative methodology utilizes human interaction to seek truth and inductive thinking to develop theory.

This study covered the seventeen elementary schools in the District of Caibiran, Division of Biliran. The research respondents of the study were taken from the seventeen elementary teachers of Caibiran District. A total of 68 respondents, consisting of teachers were given questionnaires of the study.

The instrument used in the data gathering was descriptive questionnaire survey. This study will utilize the survey questionnaire as the main instrument in data gathering.

Part I, determine the school improvement status in terms of enrolment, repetition rate, number of dropouts and promotion rate. Part II, is a questionnaire taken from <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/teacher> collaboration. This determine the Likert scale indicator on shared beliefs, values and vision, shared and supportive leadership, collective learning, support conditions, shared personal practice, normalizing classroom practice and supporting teaching collaboration.

The data gathering procedure essentially involved the following activities: construction, editing, and production of the adequate copies of the structured questionnaire; asking permission from the office of the Schools Division Superintendent and District Supervisors; distribution of the survey questionnaire to the respondents; retrieval of the questionnaire at the specified period of four weeks; grouping and tabulating the gathered data; treating the data statistically with analysis and interpretation; drawing out the implication, findings and conclusion.

The data gathered by means of survey questionnaire were interpreted and analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as Pearson R, and frequency as the most appropriate statistical measures. Similarly, means of scores

obtained using the 5-point Likert Scale were used to assess the perceptions about principal and teachers based on teachers' collaboration. To find the significant relationship, Pearson r and correlation analysis was used.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problems and Issues Encountered

During teachers' collaboration, some of the teachers are not cooperative. They rely on the team leader decision and lack of planning and support from the team and attitude towards work.

The results further shows that the problems and issues met by most teachers are on lack of interest, cooperation/teamwork and teachers have different ideas/opinions on a certain topic. This makes the work more complicated. This implies cooperation and collaboration need to intensify for the development and progress of the school.

Level of Teacher Collaboration

The Level of Teacher Collaboration in Shared Beliefs, Values, and Vision in Caibiran District has unified and cohesive since teachers agreed in their different activities. Teachers support other teachers and shared their responsibilities and collaborate themselves to their leaders in the school. The teachers have shared learning and agreed collaboration for the common goals of the school. The teachers respondents still have to work on support conditions. They also showed shared personal practice and experience make them progressive as well the development of the school. The teacher respondents should make more efforts to work together and utilized leadership characteristics for more cooperation in the work place. Further that teachers will cooperate with each other more in normalizing classroom practices and work more structure the needed change in their school. Lastly, collective goals need to incorporate for the school improvement plan and to master the teaching and learning in their profession.

Effects of Teachers' Collaboration to School Improvement

Table 1 School Improvement Status for the Last Three Years

Status	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Number of Enrolment	2275	2260	2100
Repetition Rate	10.07	4.15	2.84
No. of Drop-outs	6	4	10
Promotion Rate	85.0	96.22	9.54

Table 1, shows that the enrolment for the last three years is decreasing. The results revealed that the schools in Caibiran district have a decreasing repetition rate for the last three years which shows a good performance. The data shows that there is a sudden increase of drop-outs for the school year 2017-2018 compared to previous years. The data shows that most schools in Caibiran district do not have the data of promotion rate for the year 2017-2018 though it has an increasing rate for the school year of 2015-2016 to school year 2016-2017. School

heads need to maintain their improvement status particularly on repetition rate since it's a good indication for school improvements. However, they need to look up for their number of drop outs since its increasing from the last three years. This implies that teachers need to focus on intervention to eliminate the dropout rate of their student and increase more of their promotion rate so that pupils will take their next grade level on time.

Relationship of Variables

Table 2 Relationship between the Level of Teachers' Collaboration and Effects of Teachers' Collaboration to School Improvement

	r-value	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Enrolment	.172	.634	Accepted
Repetition Rate	-.189	.601	Accepted
Drop-out Rate	-.010	.977	Accepted
Promotion Rate	-.176	.628	Accepted

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

Table 2, shows that there is no significant relationship between the level of teachers' collaboration and effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement.

6. CONCLUSION

After thorough analysis of the results based on the findings gathered from the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

With regard to the problems and issues encountered by the respondents during teachers' collaboration, it was found out that most of the respondents had problems and issues on lack of cooperation/teamwork, teachers have different ideas/opinions on a certain topic that makes the work more complicated, lack of time and lastly on creating unhealthy competition among teachers.

On the level of teachers' collaboration, it was revealed that most of the respondents have agreed on the following: shared beliefs, values and vision, shared and supportive leadership, collective learning, support conditions, shared personal practice, leadership characteristics, normalizing classroom practice and supporting teaching collaboration. On the effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement, it was revealed that the number of enrolment has decreased for the last three years. Repetition rate has also decreased and promotion rate reveals an increasing rate for the school year 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 but most of the schools do not have the data for the school year 2017-2018. With regard to the school improvement status for the last three years, it was found out that the academic performance based on the MPS of each schools in Caibiran district are on the category of moving towards mastery. On the relationship between the level of teachers' collaboration and effects of teachers' collaboration to school improvement, it was found out that there is no significant relationship between the two.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby offered for consideration: First, Principals and administrators shall carefully plan the intensive programs for teachers' collaboration that may help improve the school performance. Second, Administrators should give time for the teachers to collaborate since one of the problems addressed during teachers' collaboration is lack of time. Third, Administrators should continuously work hand in hand to find new ways to communicate with students and use new strategies to increase the number of enrolment. Fourth, Administrators and teachers are encouraged actively participate in other teachers' collaboration program to increase the academic performance of the school. Fifth, Administrators and teachers should ask for community support and talk to them how you can partner together to ensure at-risk students have a place to be during the entire day in school to decrease the number of dropouts. Lastly, Administrators and head teachers should encourage their teachers to participate in teachers' collaboration program.

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