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THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL HEADS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON TEACHERS' RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN MALINAO DISTRICT, DIVISION OF ALBAY

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the impact of school heads' leadership styles on teachers' resilience and well-being in the public elementary schools of Malinao District, Division of Albay, Philippines, for School Year 2024–2025. A descriptive-evaluative design was used. Sixty teachers from 17 public elementary schools were selected through purposive sampling and answered a researcher-made questionnaire. The data were treated with weighted mean, rank order, Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) and chi-square at the 0.05 level of significance. Participative leadership was the most evident style (4.38), followed by autocratic and transformational leadership (4.37 each) and democratic leadership (4.35); all were interpreted as "Much Evident." Open communication and feedback had the highest impact on teachers' resilience and well-being (4.38), followed by emotional support and empowerment and autonomy (4.37 each), while recognition and reward ranked lowest (4.17). Agreement on the rank orders was significant only for participative leadership (W = 0.56) and for empowerment and autonomy (W = 0.75); the null hypotheses were accepted for all other aspects. The study concludes that school heads' leadership styles positively influence teachers' resilience and well-being, and recommends regular communication channels, emotional support initiatives, shared decision-making, a formal recognition program and continuous professional development.

KEYWORDS: School heads' leadership styles, teachers' resilience, teachers' well-being, public elementary schools.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Resilience, the ability to endure and recover from challenges, helps teachers manage stress, regulate their emotions and adapt to changing demands, and so sustains their job satisfaction and well-being. The concern is greatest in public schools, where overcrowded classrooms, limited resources and high expectations are common and where teacher stress and burnout are a growing worry. The Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) 2015 recognizes teachers as key agents of change whose well-being is essential to quality education [1].

ISSN: 2583-3006
Vol. 6, Issue 6, November-December 2026, pp 86-92

School heads strongly shape the school culture and climate that either support or weaken teachers' resilience. Studies show that empowering, collaborative and supportive leadership is positively related to teacher resilience and well-being; while controlling and micromanaging leadership is negatively related [2]. Transparent communication and teacher empowerment [3] and resilient leadership [4] likewise foster resilience, and school heads play an important part in sustaining teachers under heavy workloads [5]. Teachers' occupational well-being is also shaped by organizational, individual, interpersonal and emotional factors [6].

The study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory [7], Social Support Theory [8], Self-Determination Theory [9] and the Job Demands-Resources Model [10]. Together, they explain how leaders who inspire, support and empower teachers strengthen their resilience and well-being. Much of the existing research, however, was done at the national or international level and often treats leadership as a single construct. Little is known about how different leadership styles affect teachers in small rural districts.

This study therefore determined the impact of school heads' leadership styles on teachers' resilience and well-being in the public elementary schools of Malinao District, Division of Albay, for School Year 2024–2025. It sought to determine (1) the extent to which school heads employ participative, autocratic, democratic and transformational leadership; (2) the significance of agreement on the rank orders of these styles; (3) the extent of their impact on teachers' emotional support, empowerment and autonomy, recognition and reward, and open communication and feedback; (4) the significance of agreement on the rank orders of this impact among groups of respondents; and (5) the policy recommendations that can be drawn from the findings. It was hypothesized that there is no significant agreement on the rank orders of (a) the leadership styles employed and (b) their impact on teachers' resilience and well-being.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Design and respondents

A descriptive-evaluative design was used to describe the leadership styles of school heads and to evaluate their impact on teachers' resilience and well-being. Purposive sampling was used to select teachers with direct experience of their school heads' leadership. The 60 respondents came from 17 public elementary schools in the district: 13 teachers from four big schools, 29 from eight medium schools and 18 from five small schools (Table 1). The three school-size groups served as the groups of respondents ($K = 3$) in the tests of agreement.

Table 1: Respondents of the study

School size	Schools	Male	Female	Total	%
Big	4	4	9	13	22
Medium	8	10	19	29	48
Small	5	5	13	18	30
Total	**17**	**19**	**41**	**60**	**100**

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ISSN: 2583-3006
Vol. 6, Issue 6, November-December 2026, pp 86-92

2.2 Instrument

Data were gathered with a researcher-made, 101-item questionnaire. Part I (45 items) measured the extent of participative (12 items), autocratic (12), democratic (11) and transformational (10) leadership. Part II (45 items) measured the impact of these styles on emotional support (12), empowerment and autonomy (11), recognition and reward (12), and open communication and feedback (10). Part III (11 items) gathered policy recommendations. Items were rated on a five-point scale (Table 2). Experts in educational leadership and research validated the instrument, a pilot test was conducted, and its reliability was computed with the Kuder-Richardson formula and tested for significance [11].

Table 2: Rating scale and interpretation

Scale	Range	Interpretation
5	4.50–5.00	Very Much Evident (VME)
4	3.50–4.49	Much Evident (ME)
3	2.50–3.49	Evident (E)
2	1.50–2.49	Less/Fairly Evident (LE)
1	1.00–1.49	Not at All (NAA)

2.3 Data analysis

Weighted mean and rank order were used to determine the extent of the leadership styles and their impact. Agreement on the rank orders among the groups of respondents was tested with Kendall's coefficient of concordance [11]:

$$W = 12S / [K^2 (N^3 - N)] \quad (1)$$

Where S is the sum of the squared deviations from the mean of the rank sums, K is the number of groups and N is the number of indicators. Its significance was tested with at the 0.05 level of significance.

$$\chi^2 = K (N - 1) W \quad (2)$$

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Extent of the leadership styles employed by school heads

Table 3 shows that all four leadership styles were "Much Evident," with weighted means of 4.35 to 4.38. Participative leadership ranked first (4.38), followed by autocratic and transformational leadership (4.37 each) and democratic leadership (4.35). The differences are small, which suggests that school heads balance directive, collaborative and inspiring approaches according to the needs of the situation.

Table 3: Extent of the leadership styles employed by school heads

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ISSN: 2583-3006

Vol. 6, Issue 6, November-December 2026, pp 86-92

Leadership style	Big	Medium	Small	Mean	Rank
Participative	4.36	4.39	4.39	4.38	1
Autocratic	4.37	4.38	4.37	4.37	2.5
Democratic	4.34	4.34	4.35	4.35	4
Transformational	4.38	4.37	4.37	4.37	2.5

All weighted means are interpreted as Much Evident (ME).

Participative leadership was most evident in involving teachers in school decision-making (4.44) and valuing their opinions during policy revisions (4.42); the lowest-rated behavior, fostering mutual accountability and shared success (4.33), was still "Much Evident." This agrees with the finding that participative leadership improves teachers' performance, motivation and job satisfaction [12]. Autocratic leadership was also notable, mainly in making decisions without consulting teachers (4.43) and expecting strict compliance (4.42). A top-down approach can limit teacher autonomy and lower morale, so it should be tempered by inclusive practices [13]. Transformational leadership was strongest in communicating a compelling vision (4.43) and encouraging innovation (4.42), and democratic leadership in involving teachers in decisions and sharing leadership through committees (4.42).

3.2 Agreement on the rank orders of the leadership styles

As shown in Table 4, the groups of respondents agreed significantly on the rank order of participative leadership ($W = 0.56$, $\chi^2 = 18.48$, $p < 0.05$), so the null hypothesis was rejected for this style. Agreement on autocratic ($W = 0.55$), democratic ($W = 0.54$) and transformational leadership ($W = 0.52$) was not significant, and the null hypothesis was accepted. Participative leadership is therefore the style on which respondents agree most, while perceptions of the other styles vary, which points to the need for flexible leadership rather than reliance on a single style.

Table 4: Test of agreement on the rank orders of the leadership styles

	Partic.	Autoc.	Democ.	Transf.
Sum of squared deviations (S)	725	703	540	388.1
No. of indicators (N)	11	12	11	10
W	0.56	0.55	0.54	0.52
Computed χ^2	18.48	18.15	16.20	14.04
Degrees of freedom	10	11	10	9
Tabular χ^2 at 0.05	18.31	19.68	18.31	16.92
Decision on H_0	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted
Agreement	Significant	Not sig.	Not sig.	Not sig.

Partic. = participative; Autoc. = autocratic; Democ. = democratic; Transf. = transformational.

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ISSN: 2583-3006
Vol. 6, Issue 6, November-December 2026, pp 86-92

3.3 Impact of the leadership styles on teachers' resilience and well-being

Table 5 shows that the leadership styles of school heads had a "Much Evident" impact on all four dimensions. Open communication and feedback ranked first (4.38), followed by emotional support and empowerment and autonomy (4.37 each); recognition and reward ranked last (4.17). Teachers therefore seem to value consistent communication, emotional backing and autonomy even more than formal appreciation.

Table 5: Extent of the impact of the leadership styles on teachers' resilience and well-being

Dimension	Big	Medium	Small	Mean	Rank
Emotional support	4.36	4.36	4.39	4.37	2.5
Empowerment and autonomy	4.37	4.37	4.37	4.37	2.5
Recognition and reward	4.17	4.18	4.18	4.17	4
Open communication and feedback	4.38	4.37	4.37	4.38	1

All weighted means are interpreted as Much Evident (ME).

Open communication was driven by school heads encouraging teachers to voice concerns and suggestions and keeping communication regular and transparent (4.42 each). This is consistent with the positive effect of communicative leadership on school climate and teacher well-being [2]. Empowerment and autonomy were highest in encouraging teacher-led initiatives and allowing varied teaching strategies (4.44 each), but lowest in valuing teacher input in school planning (4.28). For emotional support, acknowledging teachers' efforts during school functions (4.43) and timely verbal praise (4.39) were rated highest. Recognition and reward had the lowest ratings (4.13–4.25); promoting peer recognition (4.13) was the weakest practice, so structured peer-to-peer recognition programs could strengthen this dimension.

3.4 Agreement on the rank orders of the impact

Table 6 shows significant agreement only on empowerment and autonomy ($W = 0.75$, $\chi^2 = 22.50$, $p < 0.025$), for which the null hypothesis was rejected. Agreement on emotional support ($W = 0.42$), recognition and reward ($W = 0.31$) and open communication and feedback ($W = 0.48$) was not significant, so the null hypothesis was accepted. Empowerment and autonomy is thus the area of strongest consensus, whereas teachers perceive emotional support, recognition and communication less uniformly. This suggests that these practices are implemented inconsistently across schools and calls for more uniform and intentional approaches.

Table 6: Test of agreement on the rank orders of the impact

	Emot.	Empow.	Recog.	Comm.
Sum of squared deviations (S)	308.5	740	403	356.5
No. of indicators (N)	10	11	11	10
W	0.42	0.75	0.31	0.48
Computed χ^2	11.34	22.50	10.23	12.96

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Vol. 6, Issue 6, November-December 2026, pp 86-92

	Emot.	Empow.	Recog.	Comm.
Degrees of freedom	9	10	10	9
Tabular χ^2 at 0.05	16.92	18.31	18.31	16.92
Decision on H_0	Accepted	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted
Agreement	Not sig.	Sig. (0.025)	Not sig.	Not sig.

Emot. = emotional support; Empow. = empowerment and autonomy; Recog. = recognition and reward; Comm. = open communication and feedback.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Participative leadership is the most frequently practiced style among school heads, reflecting a commitment to teamwork and shared decision-making, although autocratic, democratic and transformational styles are also "Much Evident." Agreement on the rank orders of the styles is significant only for participative leadership. School heads' leadership styles positively affect teachers' resilience and well-being, particularly through open communication, emotional support and empowerment. Respondents agree significantly only on the importance of empowerment and autonomy, while views on the other dimensions vary more widely.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that (1) every school head maintain regular communication channels so that teachers receive timely updates and can voice concerns and suggestions; (2) schools introduce emotional support initiatives such as peer mentoring and wellness activities; (3) teachers be involved in decision-making through committees and consultation sessions; (4) a formal recognition program regularly reward outstanding teacher performance; and (5) schools plan continuous professional development, including workshops, webinars and leadership training, for teachers and school heads.

At the policy level, the Department of Education and the National Educators Academy of the Philippines should provide training on school management during adversity and a professional development framework on inclusive leadership and emotional intelligence. Local government units should fund recognition programs and professional development, and partner agencies and non-governmental organizations should extend technical assistance and capacity-building. Future research may examine human resource practices, school-based mental health programs, work-life balance and teachers' financial well-being.

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Author Profile



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