



# **The Interplay of Educational Leadership Practices of School Heads on Academic Optimism of Public Elementary Teachers in Davao Del Norte Division**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Teacher academic optimism is believed to have been strengthened through educational leadership practices. However, these variables had never been explored specifically in the local setting. With this, the study determined the extent of educational leadership practices of school heads and the academic optimism of teachers in Davao Del Norte Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables and the domains of educational leadership practices that significantly influence academic optimism. With the use of probability sampling, 150 elementary 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 educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of teachers. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Moreover, all domains of educational leadership practices were found to have significantly influence academic optimism. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education may identify means on how to help teachers to further strengthen their academic optimism by highlighting school heads' educational leadership practices.

**Keywords:** Educational leadership practices; academic optimism; descriptive correlation; Davao Del Norte Division; Philippines

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Teachers' beliefs about instruction and management, their commitment to the profession in the form of their individual citizenship within the school, and the socioeconomic status of their students were tested as predictors of teacher academic optimism. Apparently, teachers, as the facilitators of learning, should be optimistic that everything is possible in delivering instructions regardless of scarcity of the needed facilities, materials, and support. More so, teachers have the drive to radiate their optimistic side to the students. Unfortunately, there are some circumstances that push teachers to the limits. Somehow, when these limits are beyond teachers' control and capacity, teachers decide to quit.

In the United States, teachers are exposed to varied challenges that made them decide to quit and leave their teaching profession. Teachers have long been underpaid compared with similarly educated workers in other professions, with a pay gap that has grown substantially in the past two decades. In high-poverty schools, teachers face a double disadvantage, as they are further underpaid relative to their peers in low-poverty schools. More so, student absenteeism, class-cutting, student apathy, lack of parental involvement, poor student health, poverty, and other factors are problems that affect the academic optimism of teachers. Furthermore, the lack of supports that are critical to succeeding in the classroom and the unsatisfactory continued training makes teaching less attractive and impedes its professionalization (Garcia & Weiss, 2019).

In the Philippines, teachers have pointed out three main problems in the implementation: administrative, teacher-related, and student-related. The teachers were discovered to struggle in delivering the content of class materials and possess poor teaching strategies and skills. Due to the lack of professional development opportunities, teachers were unprepared to teach the content based on the assigned schedule and have a more diversified teaching methodology (Magallanes et al., 2022). Moreover, the absence of proper support and materials led to lesser time for teachers to efficiently instruct the content. Dizon et al. (2019) further supported this claim stating that there is a lack of preparation for teaching development. It is necessary that teachers themselves must be well-equipped with proper teaching strategies that maximize teacher-student participation. These identified problems lead to decreased academic optimism.

## 2. METHOD

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

### 2.1 Research Design

This study was a quantitative research approach utilizing the descriptive correlational approach. Quantitative research is the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships, and [generalize](#) results to wider populations (Bhandari, 2022). The purpose of quantitative research is to generate knowledge and create understanding about the social world. Quantitative research is used by social scientists, including communication researchers, to observe phenomena or occurrences affecting individuals (Allen, 2017). Moreover, a descriptive correlation study is a study in which the researcher is primarily interested in describing the relationships between variables without attempting to establish a causal relationship (Noah, 2021).

Meanwhile, in descriptive research, it aims to adequately describe the event as they occurred in their natural settings (Siedlecki, 2020). On the other hand, a correlational study establishes a cause-effect relationship between variables as there might be other extraneous variables involved that might lead to the change in the other variables. (Curtis et al, 2016). Also, correlation investigates the strength and direction of the variables. This can be a positive direction or a negative direction, and a strong and a weak relationship.

This study was considered as quantitative since it depended on the numerical data when analyzing and interpreting the data. It was descriptive since its purpose was to determine the extent of educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of teachers. In addition, this academic pursuit was correlational since its purpose was to measure the connection between educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of teachers in Davao del Norte Division.

### 2.2 Research Respondents

This study catered the 150 public elementary teachers in Davao del Norte Division. It was claimed that 200 samples are enough when testing the Pearson Correlation analysis (Memon et al., 2020). Hence, the 150 respondents were enough to address the purpose of this study.

Probability sampling specifically two-staged cluster sampling was used to identify the sample of the study. It is a kind of sampling technique in which the likelihood or probability of each piece being included may be defined. In other words, every member of the population must have an equal and independent probability of being included in the sample (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Cluster sampling is a popular method in conducting researches wherein the population is being divided into different clusters. A cluster is a group of elements that are made up of individual units that represent mutually exclusive and exhaustive subsets (Thomas, 2020). It is two-staged cluster sampling since the sample of elements from each selected cluster or division is chosen randomly. In the context of the study, all elementary teachers from the public elementary schools in Davao del Norte Division were considered. In the inclusion and exclusion criteria, elementary teachers with 3 years teaching experience were chosen in this endeavour since their 3 years stay in the public school would help them to assess the educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of teachers. Respondents who felt awkward and uncomfortable in answering the survey questionnaire were free to withdraw from their participation. They were not forced to be part of the study. Their decision to withdraw was respected. Apparently, the respondents' welfare was given utmost importance in the conduct of the study.

### 2.3 Research Instruments

In gathering data, this study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that was employed in this undertaking was divided into two sets. The first set was focusing on the educational leadership practices of school heads while the second set was about the academic optimism of public elementary school teachers.

*Educational Leadership Practices.* The educational leadership practices questionnaire was adapted from Connecticut State Board of Education (2001). The instrument consists of 24 items. It has the following indicators, namely: the educated person (1-7); the learning process (1-5); the teaching process (1-6), and diverse perspective (1-6). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .74 suggesting that the items have relatively *high* internal consistency.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very Extensive	The educational leadership practices of school heads are always evident
3.40-4.19	Extensive	The educational leadership practices of school heads are oftentimes evident
2.60-3.39	Moderately Extensive	The educational leadership practices of school heads are occasionally evident
1.80-2.59	Less Extensive	The educational leadership practices of school heads are seldom evident
1.00-1.79	Not Extensive	The educational leadership practices of school heads are never evident

*Academic Optimism.* The academic optimism questionnaire was adapted from Nelson (2012). The tool has a total of 19 items. It has 3 variables, namely: teacher efficacy (1-5), teacher trust (1-9), and teacher academic emphasis (1-5). The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing having a result of .72 suggesting that the items have relatively *high* internal consistency. Below was the rating scale of academic optimism.

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very Extensive	The academic optimism of teachers is always evident
3.40-4.19	Extensive	The academic optimism of teachers is oftentimes evident
2.60-3.39	Moderately Extensive	The academic optimism of teachers is occasionally evident
1.80-2.59	Less Extensive	The academic optimism of teachers is seldom evident
1.00-1.79	Not Extensive	The academic optimism of teachers is never evident

The instrument in this study was contextualized to achieve the purpose of this study. The researcher integrated all the comments and suggestions of the adviser, panel members and expert validators for the refinement of the tools and to achieve construct validity.

#### 2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data, the researcher followed a strict procedure and protocol.

- 1) *Permission to conduct the study.* After seeking approval to the Dean of Graduate Studies, the researcher asked permission and endorsement from the Department of Education Region XI. After the approval, a request letter was submitted to the office of the Schools Division Superintendents. Upon approval, an endorsement letter was submitted to the School Head.
- 2) *Distribution and Retrieval of the Questionnaire.* After which, a schedule was made for the distribution of the survey questionnaire. In observance to health and safety protocols, the survey questionnaire was personally administered the survey questionnaire. The rationale was explained to the respondents. The respondents were given an hour to answer the survey. Retrieval of the respondents' responses was automatically recorded and generated in the form.
- 3) *Collation and Statistical Treatment of Data.* All the data gathered were tallied, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted confidentially and accordingly.

#### 2.5 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 educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of public elementary school teachers.

*Pearson r.* This was utilized to determine the relationships between educational leadership practices of school heads and academic optimism of public elementary school teachers.

*Regression Analysis* This was employed to determine the significant influence of educational leadership practices of school heads on academic optimism of public elementary school teachers.

### 3. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the study. These are the findings of the problems raised in the previous chapter. They are presented both in the textual and tabular forms.

#### *Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Educated Person*

Table 1 reflects the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of the educated person. It shows that the overall mean is 3.77, in an extensive level. This means that the educational leadership practices in terms of the educated person is oftentimes evident.

It can be gleaned from the data that the 7 statements reveal a varying result ranging from extensive to very extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: working with parents and staff to identify the connection between the school's image of the educated person and a knowledge of contemporary learning theory (4.20), modeling the school's image of the educated person and insist staff to do the same (4.19), ensuring that the school's vision of the educated person informs staff development and is incorporated into the criteria for evaluating teacher performance and school programs (4.18). These items prove that the educational leadership practices in terms of the educated person is oftentimes evident.

*Table 1. Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Educated Person*

No	The Educated Person	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	developing a vision of the educated person; share that vision with the school community and work with parents, community members, staff, and students to create a shared vision of the educated person.	3.45	Extensive
2	working with staff, parents, and students to translate the school's vision of the educated person into school goals and student standards.	3.40	Extensive
3	working with parents and staff to identify the connection between the school's image of the educated person and a knowledge of contemporary learning theory.	4.20	Very Extensive
4	working with staff, parents, and students to translate the school's vision of the educated person into a strategic plan of school improvement and program revision.	3.42	Extensive
5	ensuring that the school's vision of the educated person informs staff development and is incorporated into the criteria for evaluating teacher performance and school programs.	4.18	Extensive
6	demonstrating sensitivity to and respect for all cultural groups.	3.55	Extensive
7	modeling the school's image of the educated person and insist staff to do the same	4.19	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.77</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The data analysis of the seven statements pertaining to educational leadership practices in terms of the educated person reveals a notable variation in results, ranging from extensive to very extensive outcomes. This suggests that educational leaders are actively engaging stakeholders in understanding the alignment between their vision of an educated individual and modern pedagogical approaches. The results imply that educational leaders are modeling the school's image of the educated person and encouraging staff to follow suit. This result highlights that leaders are taking a proactive role in exemplifying the desired traits of an educated person, serving as role models for the entire school community.

The result is aligned to the statement of Fischer and De Jong (2017) citing that teachers who recognize that their principal exhibits great leadership behavior are intrinsically and extrinsically satisfied with their employment. "Empowerment" and "Humility" are two major characteristics that are usually associated with the overall contentment of teachers at their job. Principals who demonstrate these two attributes can effectively amplify the job satisfaction of teachers extrinsically. By displaying good supervision to teachers and continually encouraging them in their work, principals increase job satisfaction.

In addition, Fischer and De Jong (2017) further mentioned that there are lots of ways of how a teacher can perceive a principal as a competent leader. How they manage teachers, the manner how school policies are implemented, how good they are at making decisions for the school, how they handle salaries of teachers, the amount of work they designate to teachers, the condition of the working environment, how they are able to harmonize with their coworkers, and the praises given to teachers are some of the things that affect teacher job satisfaction.

Contrary to the results, Balyer (2017) revealed that when a principal or school leader does not have prior experience, teachers are less inclined to put their trust in them. When a principal or school leader does not have knowledge in school management, teachers are also less inclined to put their trust in them. Teachers perceive them as ineffective principals. They cannot see them as a person who can lead them. Even more so, they do not see them as someone who can manage an entire school. Teachers believe inexperienced principals cannot function effectively as their school leader because of their lack of necessary characteristics as a leader, educational qualifications, and expertise to govern an entire institute.

#### *Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Learning Process*

Table 2 reflects the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of the learning process. It shows that the overall mean is 3.85, in an extensive level. This means that the educational leadership practices in terms of the learning process is oftentimes evident.

As can be gleaned from the data, the 5 statements reveal a varying result ranging from moderately extensive to extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: ensuring that students are provided with opportunities for active engagement and testing of ideas (4.15), working with teachers to assess individual and group performance in order to design instruction that meets learners' current needs and that leads to higher levels of development (4.12), and working with teachers to create a variety of formal and informal opportunities for teachers to further develop their understanding of the learning process and to examine the implications of the learning process for teaching (4.10). These items prove that the educational leadership practices in terms of the learning process is oftentimes evident.

*Table 2. Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Learning Process*

No	The Learning Process	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	staying current with research and theory regarding learning and motivation.	3.33	Moderately Extensive

2	working with teachers to create a variety of formal and informal opportunities for teachers to further develop their understanding of the learning process and to examine the implications of the learning process for teaching.	4.10	Extensive
3	ensuring that students are provided with opportunities for active engagement and testing of ideas.	4.15	Extensive
4	encouraging students to assume responsibility for their learning.	3.55	Extensive
5	working with teachers to assess individual and group performance in order to design instruction that meets learners' current needs and that leads to higher levels of development	4.12	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.85</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The results signify that educational leaders are actively fostering an environment that encourages students to be actively involved in their learning, promoting critical thinking and creativity. It also highlights the dedication of

educational leaders in working closely with teachers to customize teaching approaches, thus optimizing the learning experience for each student based on their unique requirements and abilities. Collectively, the results signify that educational leadership places considerable emphasis on optimizing the learning process. The focus on active engagement, individualized instruction, and ongoing professional development for teachers suggests that leaders are attuned to the dynamic nature of education and are dedicated to refining teaching practices to meet the evolving needs of their students.

With the results, these conformed the notion of Kaso (2021) stating that good cooperation between the principal and the teachers is needed. Through their cooperation, they will be able to concoct school activities for their students. This will effectively enhance students in their academic pursuits. More so, establishing good communication between schools and the parents of the students is crucial. It plays a large role in determining the success of students and their achievements in carrying out learning pursuits.

More so, Sezgin and Er (2016) claimed that to build clear and meaningful contact with teachers, principals must learn to strengthen their interpersonal communication skills. This includes establishing open lines of communication between the principal and the school's shareholders. Constructing a healthy and candid communication between the school heads and school shareholders may also be part of developing such skills. The harsh behavior of the school head may deter teachers from expressing their views and participating in the making of decisions in school procedures.

Furthermore, Bafadal et al. (2019) pointed out that novice principals need competence about the concept of learning, elements of the learning culture, the learning environment, and the relationship between school and community. Beginner headmasters of schools must possess different values depending on the circumstances and conditions they are met with. They must develop their personality as leaders who are willing to learn. They still have a lot to learn as leaders. They need to have integrity, talent, and interest in administering, openness, responsibility, and confidence in oneself (Bafadal et al., 2019).

#### *Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Teaching Process*

Table 3 exhibits the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of the teaching process. It shows that the overall mean is 4.31, in a very extensive level. This means that the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of the teaching process is always evident.

*Table 3. Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of The Teaching Process*

No	The Teaching Process	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	using effective strategies to promote the continuous development of individual teacher abilities.	4.25	Very Extensive
2	working with staff to design professional development activities that improve teaching and learning.	4.30	Very Extensive
3	involving staff in the exploration of effective instructional strategies.	4.33	Very Extensive
4	using the evaluation process to promote teacher reflection and growth.	4.35	Very Extensive
5	establishing a climate of collegiality and cooperation where staff accept collective responsibility for improved teaching and learning.	4.28	Very Extensive
6	working with teachers to implement a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques to enhance teachers' knowledge of learners, evaluate student progress and performance, and modify teaching and learning strategies	4.38	Very Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>4.31</b>	<b>Very Extensive</b>

It is reflected in the data that all 6 statements reveal a very extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: working with teachers to implement a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques to enhance teachers' knowledge of learners, evaluate student progress and performance, and modify teaching and learning strategies (4.38), using the evaluation process to promote teacher reflection and growth (4.35), and involving staff in the exploration of effective instructional strategies. These items prove that the educational leadership practices in terms of the teaching process is always evident.

The consistent and very extensive results across all six statements demonstrate that educational leadership places a strong emphasis on the teaching process. The focus on collaboration, assessment, reflection, and innovation reveals a commitment to excellence in education and a dedication to continuously elevate teaching practices. By engaging in active partnerships with teachers, encouraging self-improvement and professional growth, and fostering a culture of exploration and experimentation, educational leaders ensure that the teaching process is continually refined to meet the evolving needs of students and the educational institution as a whole. These practices collectively exemplify the inherent dedication and effectiveness of educational leadership in optimizing the teaching process and ensuring a conducive and enriching learning environment for all stakeholders involved.

The results of the study affirmed the claim of Day et al. (2020) highlighting that school leaders significantly affect teaching and learning through influence. School leaders need to influence their staff with dedication, inspiration, and a healthy working environment. The way the leaders live impact the beliefs, principles, and objectives of their patrons because they see them as the sort of role model that all must need to emulate. Leaders validate the different views and moral principles of teachers. They stimulate them to think about issues in a shifted perspective, giving them an added drive.

As emphasized by Mehdinezhad and Mansouri (2016), implementing activities to increase instructors' efficiency and effectiveness would have an impact on student achievement which is the goal of education. By layering leadership methods and initiatives, school leaders can encourage and achieve success. Effective school leaders make decisions about implementation, scheduling, practice continuation, and selection that provide the best conditions for effective teaching, learning, and student achievement

#### *Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of Diverse Perspective*

Table 4 exhibits the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of diverse perspective. It shows that the overall mean is 3.78, in an extensive level. This means that the extent of educational leadership practices in terms of diverse perspective is oftentimes evident.

It is reflected in the data that all 6 statements reveal varying results ranging from moderately extensive to extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: working with staff to ensure that all groups of students achieve at high levels (4.18), working with staff, students, parents, and the community to provide experiences that promote sensitivity toward diverse perspectives (4.15), and involving the staff in creating, implementing, and assessing relevant programs for diverse groups (4.10). These items prove that extent of educational leadership practices in terms of diverse perspective is oftentimes evident.

The varying but significant results across all six statements suggest that educational leadership is attuned to the importance of diverse perspectives within the educational context. The emphasis on achieving high levels of success for all students, promoting sensitivity towards diverse perspectives, and actively involving staff in shaping inclusive programs demonstrates a commitment to fostering an equitable and enriching educational experience for every learner.

*Table 4. Extent of Educational Leadership Practices in terms of Diverse Perspective*

No	Diverse Perspective	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	providing professional development experiences that help staff understand diverse cultures in our world, community, and school.	3.35	Moderately Extensive
2	involving the staff in developing activities and curricula representative of diverse cultural groups.	3.38	Moderately Extensive
3	working with staff to incorporate multiple perspectives into the school curricula.	3.50	Extensive
4	involving the staff in creating, implementing, and assessing relevant programs for diverse groups.	4.10	Extensive
5	working with staff, students, parents, and the community to provide experiences that promote sensitivity toward diverse perspectives.	4.15	Extensive
6	working with staff to ensure that all groups of students achieve at high levels	4.18	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.78</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

These practices have significant implications, as they cultivate an inclusive educational environment where students feel valued, respected, and supported, leading to improved academic outcomes and overall well-being. Educational leaders, through their efforts in embracing diverse perspectives, play a crucial role in shaping the future of education, nurturing a generation of students who are not only academically successful but also compassionate, empathetic, and capable of engaging constructively with a diverse and interconnected world.

The findings of the study validated the contention of Szelei et al. (2020) emphasizing that school leaders need to consider the different students and different communities they belong to. Teachers are said to be enthusiastic to know more about their students, what their communities are and what culture they are practicing. That said, they are extremely open to different perspectives. Knowing diversity is different from reflecting about diversity. Resch (2023) stated that reflecting about diversity is the foundation of transformative learning and decision-making.

Furthermore, Szelei et al. (2020) believed that teachers need an environment in which they can properly and easily consume the cultural and linguistic diversity content that they are presented with. They need an appropriate setting to view various professional development contents surrounding diversity to avoid feeling confusion and being overwhelmed. To properly establish the professional developmental environment for the teachers, school leaders need to take actions and provide said environment. The said environment can help teachers to cope with the struggles under structural and societal pressures and exceed feeling empowered in their own educational space and having the capability to support and teach their students in the best way possible.

#### *Summary on the Extent of Educational Leadership Practices*

Table 5 provides the summary on the extent of educational leadership practices. It is exhibited that the overall mean of the educational leadership practices is 3.93, which is in an extensive level. This means that the educational leadership practices are oftentimes evident.

Data show that all four (4) indicators reveal a varying result ranging from extensive to very extensive result. As arranged chronologically, the teaching process has the highest mean score (4.31). This is followed by the learning process (3.85), diverse perspective (3.78), and the educated person (3.77).

*Table 5. Summary on the Extent of Educational Leadership Practices*

No	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	The Educated Person	3.77	Extensive
2	The Learning Process	3.85	Extensive
3	The Teaching Process	4.31	Very Extensive
4	Diverse Perspective	3.78	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.93</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The data analysis of all four indicators pertaining to educational leadership practices reveals a significant variation in results, ranging from extensive to very extensive outcomes. This notable result underscores the emphasis placed by educational leaders on optimizing the teaching process to create a dynamic and enriching learning environment. The implications of these results suggest that investing in and prioritizing the teaching process is pivotal to driving positive educational outcomes, as effective teaching lays the foundation for students' academic success, personal development, and future achievements. Educational leaders, by prioritizing the teaching process, play a central role in shaping the educational landscape and empowering teachers to inspire and nurture the next generation of learners.

With the extensive status of the educational leadership practices, this reaffirmed the widely held belief of Day et al. (2020) mentioning that school leaders have a significant part in creating a good school atmosphere. School leaders need to lead and establish a warm and welcoming school culture. A positive school culture includes careful school approach and developing motivation and commitment to the faculty and staff. The work of the principal needs to be hands-on. They need to focus on educating students with no interruptions or distractions. They need to make sure that the class sizes are even handed as well.

Added to that, Sterrett et al. (2018) emphasized that the principal plays an important role in this job by sensitive to the needs of the learning environment. A principal must act accordingly to whatever position or situation they are placed in. Putting emphasis on the specifics can help the schools' overarching vision. For example, increased student learning. This can also include posting times when learning should not be interrupted. All of these are needed to foster improvement and progress into success for schools in complex conditions.

#### *Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Efficacy*

Table 6 exhibits the extent of academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher efficacy. It shows that the overall mean is 4.19, in an extensive level. This means that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher efficacy is oftentimes evident.

As revealed from the data, 5 statements reveal a varying result ranging from extensive to very extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: feeling competent to teach these students (4.23), being able to convince these students that they will do well in school (4.20), and being able to motivate those students who show low interest in schoolwork to do their best (4.18). These items prove that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher efficacy is oftentimes evident.

This result highlights that teachers generally possess a strong sense of self-assurance in their abilities to effectively educate and support their students, instilling confidence in their instructional approaches. The prevalence of

Table 6. Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Efficacy

No	Teacher Efficacy	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	being able to motivate those students who show low interest in schoolwork to do their best.	4.18	Extensive
2	being able to convince these students that they will do well in school.	4.20	Very Extensive
3	being able to achieve good results with students with individual learning needs.	4.15	Extensive
4	being able to achieve good results with students with a difficult home situation.	4.17	Extensive
5	feeling competent to teach these students.	4.23	Very Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>4.19</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

academic optimism in terms of teacher efficacy has significant implications for education. Teachers who possess a strong sense of confidence in their abilities and exhibit optimism regarding their students' potential are more likely to create a positive and supportive learning environment. This positive outlook can lead to increased student engagement, higher levels of motivation, and improved academic performance. When teachers believe in their capacity to make a difference and foster a growth mindset among their students, they can play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes towards learning, ultimately influencing their long-term educational achievements. The presence of academic optimism among teachers is, therefore, a crucial aspect of effective teaching and has the potential to positively impact the overall educational experience of students, contributing to their overall academic success and well-being.

This confirmed the study of Jeon (2017) claiming that a teacher who has high self-esteem, even situated in an environment that has considerable obstacles, their efficacy beliefs will be strong. A high extent of efficacy strengthens performance. Teacher's professional development efforts have a beneficial effect on teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy has been recognized as a notable indicator in magnifying student attainment. Through procedures like sustained constant contact with students, a great influence on the determination of students, a good classroom atmosphere, unconventional classroom administration, and overall accommodating attitudes can increase student attainment.

Relevant to developing teacher efficacy, Yoo (2016) mentioned that more training designed to aid teaching experience leads to an overall favorable shift in teacher efficacy. Moler Jurado et al. (2019) claimed that educational institutions should provide specific training tailored to employees, as well as supervision, consulting, and extended support in student matters of interest, to increase autonomy and perceived efficacy.

Enhancing efficacy principles among educators is an imperative factor of legislators who handle the educational labor force and are interlinked with matters of educator maintenance.

#### *Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Trust*

Table 7 exhibits the extent of academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher trust. It shows that the overall mean is 3.92, in an extensive level. This means that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher trust is oftentimes evident.

Table 7. Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Trust

No	Teacher Trust	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	having established trust with students.	3.45	Extensive
2	having a good relationship with students.	3.50	Extensive
3	daring to be vulnerable towards these students.	3.35	Moderately Extensive
4	being generally firm in pursuing their side to the issue.	4.18	Extensive
5	sometimes uses their power to win a competitive situation.	4.17	Extensive
6	believing what these students' parents tell me.	4.15	Extensive
7	being able to count on the support of these students' parents.	4.20	Very Extensive
8	having a good rapport with these students' parents.	4.22	Very Extensive
9	daring to be vulnerable towards these students' parents.	4.10	Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>3.92</b>	<b>Extensive</b>



It can be gleaned from the data that all 9 statements reveal a varying result ranging from moderately extensive to very extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: having a good rapport with these students' parents (4.22), being able to count on the support of these students' parents (4.20), and being generally firm in pursuing their side to the issue (4.18). These items prove that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher trust is oftentimes evident.

These findings emphasize the significance of fostering an environment of trust and optimism among teachers, parents, and school leaders. Furthermore, recognizing and encouraging academic optimism in teacher trust can also contribute to increased job satisfaction among educators, leading to higher retention rates and a positive impact on the teaching profession as a whole. Educational leaders play a pivotal role in fostering this optimistic and trusting culture, recognizing its potential to create a thriving educational community focused on student well-being and achievement. Moreover, teachers who possess academic optimism in terms of teacher trust are more likely to feel empowered in their role and be more proactive in seeking solutions to challenges, thereby enhancing their overall effectiveness as educators.

This corroborated with the concept of Balyer (2017) specifying that trust in the school principal greatly influences the performance of teachers and the peace at work. Teachers feel more secure and put more effort in their goals in their profession when they have trusted their principal as an administrator. Teachers seek principals who can manage the school properly. They want a principal who acts equally among teachers, gives respect to the teachers, and be a competent role model. The less competent a principal is, the less trust teachers have in their principals, the more mistakes the teachers make.

In support to the findings, Cansoy (2019) clarified that when school principal's value employees, show interest in them, strengthen confidence through correspondence through educational operation, and form a strong vision around common objectives, and an unfeigned school ambiance, there is a positive effect in job satisfaction. A participative, adaptable, and facilitative system of management, fervent support from administrators, open communication, mutual understanding, and a school atmosphere where participation is encouraged are all crucial leadership conduct for enhancing contentment on employment.

On the other hand, Balyer (2017) cited that inexperienced principals make teachers not trust their administrative implementations routinely because of their lack of awareness about school administration. When teachers do not trust the principals, they develop a feeling that they are not valuable at their schools. With this, to stay effective at school, teachers and administrators must have a bond. They are considered team members, and team members generally should trust one another. This makes for a healthy and protected atmosphere.

#### *Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Academic Emphasis*

Table 8 exhibits the extent of academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher academic emphasis. It shows that the overall mean is 4.33, in a very extensive level. This means that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher academic emphasis is always evident.

It can be gleaned from the data that all 5 statements reveal a very extensive result. Of which, the three (3) items which have the highest mean score are as follows: emphasizing the importance of academic achievement to all students in this class (4.40), believing in the potential of every student in this class (4.36), and setting high, but attainable goals for all students in this class (4.35). These items prove that the academic optimism of teachers in terms of teacher academic emphasis is always evident.

The implications of these findings suggest that academic optimism in terms of teacher academic emphasis plays a pivotal role in shaping students' attitudes towards learning, fostering a growth mindset, and promoting a culture of achievement in the classroom. When teachers actively emphasize the importance of academic achievement, believe in the potential of every student, and set challenging yet achievable goals, they create an environment that encourages students to take ownership of their learning journey and strive for continuous improvement. Educational leaders must recognize the value of academic optimism in teacher academic emphasis and support teachers in fostering a positive and growth-oriented classroom environment.

*Table 8. Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers in terms of Teacher Academic Emphasis*

No	Teacher Academic Emphasis	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	encouraging all students in this class to perform well.	4.25	Very Extensive
2	giving all students in this class challenging exercises.	4.30	Very Extensive
3	setting high, but attainable goals for all students in this class.	4.35	Very Extensive
4	believing in the potential of every student in this class.	4.36	Very Extensive
5	emphasizing the importance of academic achievement to all students in this class.	4.40	Very Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>4.33</b>	<b>Very Extensive</b>

This authenticated the concept of Yüner (2022) highlighting that the ultimate purpose of education is to obtain the highest level of learning possible. Schools should place a strong emphasis on academics in order to achieve this goal. At this stage, the significance of implementing a participative policy in schools cannot be overstated. School principals are supposed to review their schools as a whole with teachers, students, and parents, and to encourage their participation. Teachers and parents who participate in the process will have a more positive outlook on school and education.

In addition, Warren (2021) cited that the quality of teachers in the classroom is a critical factor of students' progress throughout their schooling. Students who are taught by remarkable educators are more likely to realize their academic objectives than those who are taught by a less effective teacher. Teacher leadership is the key to effective and exceptional teaching and learning. Teacher leaders are driven to improve student educational attainment.

#### *Summary on the Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers*

Table 9 provides the summary on the extent of academic optimism of teachers. It is exhibited that the overall mean of academic optimism of teachers is 4.15, which is in an extensive level. This means that the academic optimism of teachers is oftentimes evident.

Data show that all three (3) indicators reveal a varying result ranging from extensive to very extensive level. As arranged chronologically, teacher academic trust has the highest mean score (4.33). This is followed by teacher efficacy (4.19), and teacher trust (3.92).

The overall results on academic optimism underscore the multifaceted nature of teacher-student relationships and their profound impact on the educational experience. The high mean scores in teacher academic trust and teacher efficacy indicate that when teachers exhibit trust in their students' academic abilities and have confidence in their own teaching effectiveness, students are more likely to feel supported, engaged, and motivated to excel academically. These elements contribute to a positive and empowering learning environment, fostering a culture of academic optimism and achievement. Moreover, the significant role of trust between teachers and students, as evident in the mean score for teacher trust, highlights the importance of building strong connections and open communication to enhance overall student well-being and success.

*Table 9. Summary on the Extent of Academic Optimism of Teachers*

No	Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1	Teacher Efficacy	4.19	Extensive
2	Teacher Trust	3.92	Extensive
3	Teacher Academic Trust	4.33	Very Extensive
<b>Overall</b>		<b>4.15</b>	<b>Extensive</b>

The favorable findings of this study supported the notion of Ates and Unal (2021) conceptualizing that there is a good and significant influence when academic optimism of teachers is high. Teachers invest in their self-efficacy, boost student accomplishment and involve students in learning activities. They also establish a connection with both the students and parents based on their academic optimism. In the relationship between the teacher academic optimism and student achievement, the behaviors of school heads who have explicit contact with the educators are equally significant. Teacher academic enthusiasm must be promoted within schools.

Simonova et al. (2019) stated that educators might be anticipated to be academically optimistic in academic institutes where school heads accommodate instructors, see them as experts in their disciplines, facilitate their work, and demonstrate that they value their abilities, comprehension, and expertise. Because the school administrator serves as a role model for children and parents, instructors' trust in parents and students is affected. Teachers with great pedagogical optimism establish high academic goals for their students, strive to develop effective teaching strategies within their educational space, help students attain those goals, and feel that every student can succeed

#### *Significance of the Relationship Between Educational Leadership Practices and Academic Optimism of Teachers*

Presented in Table 10 are the data on the significance of the relationship between educational leadership practices of teachers and academic optimism of teachers. Reflected in the hypothesis, the relationship was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The overall r-value of .528 with a p-value of <0.05 signified the rejection of the null hypothesis. It means that there is a significant relationship between educational leadership practices of teachers and academic optimism of teachers. This shows that educational leadership practices are correlated with academic optimism.

Doing a pairwise correlation among the measures of both variables, it can be gleaned that the educated person, the learning process, the teaching process and the diverse perspective revealed computed r-values of 0.518, 0.525, 0.555, and 0.513 respectively with p-values which are less than 0.05 in the level of significance. This implies that as the educated person, the learning process, the teaching process and the diverse perspective increases, the academic optimism also increases.

The result is in consonance to the study conducted by Yuner (2022) revealing that school principals' attempts to ensure participation were related to the academic emphasis of their schools.

It was established that school principals' views on teacher and stakeholder participation were near to high, and that their views on academic emphasis were high. There were substantial positive associations between the involvement of teachers, shareholder association, and emphasis on academics, and school heads' perspectives on involvement were important predictors of academic emphasis. These findings highlight the significance of school principals' participation policies.

*Table 10. Significance of the Relationship Between Educational Leadership Practices and Academic Optimism of Teachers*

<b>Educational Practices</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>
The Educated Person			0.518	0.000	Rejected
The Learning Process			0.525	0.000	Rejected
The Teaching Process		<b>Academic Optimism of Teachers</b>	0.555	0.000	Rejected
Diverse Perspective			0.513	0.000	Rejected
<b>Overall</b>			<b>0.528*</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

\*Significant at 0.05 significance level.

Moreover, Shuke (2021) revealed that the school principal's leadership efforts are the cause of increased academic optimism outcomes, punctuated by the strongest regard for the schools' goals. It is thus apparent that effective school academic optimism cannot be realized without authentic contributions from the school's principals and all stakeholders because they are the backbone of the school system. The main task of the principal in creating a positive atmosphere is to contribute to the creation of a strong academic optimism and school culture.

Relevant to teachers' academic optimism, Baporikar (2018) added that education leadership is the act of enlisting and managing the talents and energies of educators, students, and parents in order to realize shared educational objectives. School administrators are accountable and responsible in ensuring that education in their region is at its finest. Any company may benefit from effective leadership, and educational institutions are no exception. It enhances teaching and student learning. Additionally, the primary focus of education, teaching and learning, is dynamic, which complicates education leadership and requires an understanding of its goal and vision.

The findings further substantiated the study conducted by Luce (2017) revealing that principal leadership, consisting of both capacities and practices, advanced a climate of academic optimism among faculty to improve the achievement of all students. Findings revealed that peer observations helped build collective efficacy among teachers and required principal leadership to occur in a systemic manner. Interpretive analysis further demonstrated that principal leadership was valuable in developing academic emphasis within the school. Moreover, the principal was a powerful role model for cultivating trust between teachers and parents. It was determined that the principals' leadership capacities and practices influenced the climate of academic optimism.

#### *Regression Analysis on the Influence of Educational Leadership Practices on the Academic Optimism of Teachers*

Shown in table 11 is the regression analysis on the influence of educational leadership practices on the academic optimism of teacher. The overall p-value ( $p < 0.05$ ) denotes that educational leadership practices is a predictor of academic optimism. The B values of the independent variable, the educated person, the learning process, the teaching process, and the diverse perspective is 0.472, 0.477, 0.480, and 0.465 respectively.

Table 11. Regression Analysis on the Influence of Educational Leadership Practices on the Academic Optimism of Teachers

<b>Academic Optimism of Teachers</b>					
<b>Educational Practices</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>B (Standardized Coefficients)</b>	<b>B (Unstandardized Coefficients)</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Constant</b>		0.645	0.121	6.255	0.000
<b>The Educated Person</b>		0.472	0.430	12.472	0.000
<b>The Learning Process</b>		0.477	0.437	12.485	0.000

<b>The Teaching Process</b>	0.480	0.440	12.510	0.000
<b>Diverse Perspective</b>	0.465	0.432	12.445	0.000
<b>R</b>	0.657			
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.567			
<b>F</b>	325.115			
<b>P</b>	0.000			

One unit change in the educated person will lead to .472 unit change in academic optimism if the other predictor is at “0”. Also, one unit change in the learning process will lead to .477 unit change in academic optimism if the other predictor is at “0”. Similarly, one unit change in the teaching process will lead to .480 unit change in academic optimism if the other predictor is at “0”. Lastly, one unit change in diverse perspective will lead to .465 unit change in academic

optimism if the other predictor is at “0”.

Among the four, the teaching process indicates a higher influence on academic optimism compared to other indicators. Lastly, the coefficient of determination of r-squared value is also shown in the table which was 0.567 or 56.7% of the academic optimism is explained by the domains of educational leadership practices which are the educated person, the learning process, the teaching process, and the diverse perspective. Hence, the hypothesis that there is no domain in educational leadership practices significantly influences academic optimism is rejected.

The result of the study conforms to the concept of Hoy et al. (2006) theorizing that the three properties of teachers trust in clients, collective efficacy, and academic emphasis combine to create a latent variable known as academic optimism. They stated that these three variables collectively create a positive academic environment named academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006). These properties are characterized by the collective perceptions of the group, in this case teachers, rather than those of individual faculty members (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Hoy et al., 2006). All three are similar in their purpose, development, and character, as well as positive influence on school improvement and student achievement (Hoy, et al. 2006; Mitchell et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) stressed that teachers who trust their principal were more likely to trust their colleagues, students, and parents. While some might argue that teacher trust in parents and teacher trust in students should be considered separately, several factor analyses have demonstrated that when teachers trust their students they also trust the parents and vice versa; leading to this variable being combined into one variable representing ‘teacher trust in clients’. Finally, Hoy et al. (2006) claimed that strong teacher trust in clients leads to greater school improvement and academic achievement.

## CONCLUSION

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

The extent of educational leadership practices implies that it is oftentimes evident among school heads. Specifically, the teaching process is perceived to be always evident. Meanwhile, the educated person, the learning process, and the diverse perspective are oftentimes evident.

The extent of academic optimism of teachers is oftentimes evident in the schools. In particular, teacher academic emphasis is always evident among teachers. On the other hand, teacher efficacy and teacher trust are oftentimes evident.

Based on the findings, educational leadership practices and academic optimism of teachers are correlated. Also, educational leadership practices significantly influence the academic optimism of teachers. In fact, all domains of educational leadership practices, namely, the educated person, the learning process, the teaching process, and diverse perspective significantly influence the academic optimism of teachers 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 four domains of educational leadership practices, the academic optimism of teachers will increase.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The higher officials in the Department of Education may craft effective policies, programs, projects, interventions and activities which may further guide school heads to strengthen their educational leadership practices leading to a sound academic optimism among teachers.

Meanwhile, school principals may find means in reinforcing their leadership practices. They may keep on assessing their leadership practices which have impact on teacher academic optimism. School heads may also double their effort in gaining the trust of their teachers which is found to have the lowest mean among the dimensions of academic optimism.

More so, teachers may take an effort further strengthening their academic optimism. They may attend various seminars, webinars, or any undertaking that would help them to heighten their efficacy. They may also assess themselves on how to increase their trust to their school heads.

Lastly, future researchers may explore relevant information about the educational leadership practices of school heads and the academic optimism of teachers. They may consider using other research approaches such as qualitative research and mixed methods further explore the involved variables in this study.

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**Appendix A. Letter of Endorsement to Conduct the Study**

**Appendix B. Letter of Approval from the Schools Division Superintendent**

**Appendix C. Letter of Request to the School Principal**

**Appendix D. Questionnaire**

**Appendix E. Validation Sheets**