

# Crisis Management and Emerging Leadership Practices in Promoting Work Motivation and Work Commitment Among Public Elementary Teachers

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## Abstract

School leaders must motivate their teachers to take action to achieve common goals. Teachers who are motivated and productive in their endeavors ensure that they contribute to society's betterment. As a result, this study aimed to determine the impact of school leaders' communication and mental health support on teacher work performance and motivation. The study sought to ascertain the perceived manifestation of crisis management practices and emerging school leadership. It also sought to ascertain the extent of the teachers' work motivation and commitment. The study's participants were teachers from the San Francisco District, Division of San Pablo. It included 180 teacher-respondents from the district's seven (1) schools. A descriptive correlational design was used in the study. The researcher-created online survey questionnaire was used to collect the necessary data. Mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients were used to analyze the data.

The findings revealed a positive significant relationship between crisis management and teacher-respondent work motivation. The findings revealed a positive relationship between crisis management and teacher-respondent work motivation. It is also suggested that there is a significant positive relationship between emerging leadership and work motivation among teacher-respondents. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between emerging leadership and work commitment among teacher-respondents.

According to the study, school leaders' crisis management and leadership may motivate teachers to perform better. School administrators may discover the factors that most motivate teachers at work. They may foster motivation and commitment to teachers by identifying and utilizing these factors.

*Keywords:* Crisis Management, Emerging Leadership, Work Commitment, Motivation

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## 1. Introduction

As COVID-19 spreads across countries worldwide, many sectors are significantly affected and must adjust. One of those is the educational sector, which has changed unimaginably. Because of the current situation, it is preventing the educational sector from performing its primary role of educating children. Recovery plans are formulated to ensure learners can catch up and continue learning. School principals play a vital role in recovering from the pandemic. Leadership and management are the core responsibilities of school heads. They need to pay attention and concentrate on the immediate challenges.

School leadership is not as easy as it is. It is a complex and demanding role. They need to navigate uncertain and challenging times. Establishing a strong relationship with colleagues, learners, and stakeholders is an attribute

of a good principal. The covid-19 crisis has changed the school leaders' role unexpectedly. That means they are starting from scratch because this is new. Only a few school leaders have training on crisis management and disaster response expectations like this. Despite these unforeseen circumstances, school leaders still manage to ensure the safety of the learners and provide quality education. They decide on the necessary learning continuity programs that should take place. Their needs assessments also clearly indicate equal access to technology and connectivity, prioritizing the education budget and the readiness of the students, parents, and teachers.

1.6 billion students have been affected by school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although schools started to reopen in 2020 and 2021, too many have remained closed for too long. Even short school disruptions can impact children's learning and well-being.

The evidence is clear that there is no replacement for in-person learning, and schools should reopen as soon as possible. This global school closure crisis has highlighted the need for resilient education systems with remote learning options that are accessible and effective for all learners when schools are forced to close.

The Philippines' Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary, Leonor Briones, quipped, "Education must continue even in times of crisis whether it may be a calamity, disaster, emergency, quarantine, or even war" (DepEd, 2020). In the school context, teachers' work motivation and commitment are essential during the COVID-19 crisis. Teachers had to use other learning platforms to sustain learning amidst the crisis. Though it is a big challenge to them, teachers remain committed to attending to the needs of pupils. They still exert enormous effort to deliver learning to the students.

Furthermore, evidence-backed strategies are needed to help ensure teachers' well-being and maintain their commitment to work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers must develop adaptability to adjust their thoughts, actions, and emotions to navigate new, changing, or uncertain situations effectively.

Collie, R. J., & Martin, A. J. (2016) stated that since the teaching profession amid crisis involves many unexpected situations and events, teachers must respond to the changing needs of students throughout a lesson, adapt to manage unexpected situations relating to student behavior and make adjustments to their teaching plans when timetable changes occur.

Besides, during a crisis like this, teachers must demonstrate greater commitment to their job and consequently increase their engagement at work. Commitment is essential to successful teaching with or without a pandemic crisis. Showing commitment to student learning, especially during this pandemic, can motivate students to continue school.

Mart, C. T. (2013) expressed that committed teachers recognize and endeavour to fulfill their responsibilities to their students. The degree of loyalty of committed teachers have toward their profession is one of their distinguished characteristics. Teachers who are engaged in their profession and committed to students and their learning play a crucial role in the development of students.

## **2. Background of the Study**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world. Due to the nature of the virus, specifically how it is transmitted, it has altered human behaviors, family members and lifestyles and

profoundly affected the economy, politics, society and schooling worldwide. Everyone from the operations and support units to administrators and teachers adjusted and adopted different learning modalities. Teachers and administrators were tasked with revising and adopting learning competencies and requirements. With today's pandemic, school leaders should respond to this crisis with great management and emerging insights about leadership within the COVID-19 educational processes.

One of the greatest challenges confronting elementary schools today is that the management capabilities of principals were inclined to the challenges of COVID-19 in the educational system. Dynamic crisis life cycle and strategic planning emerged from today's school crisis response to understand crisis management. Successful school crisis management is rooted in the one assigned to lead his workforce, perhaps most extensively, a well-defined interagency settlement with teachers and the community. Developing a doable and meaningful disaster plan is now not surely a venture for a school. As a result, the need for such an approach is wished to focus on prevention and preparation.

On the other hand, to face this rapid change in education, school leaders plan and exhibit different leadership practices for effective learning to happen despite the circumstances. As we face today's new normal education, two leadership practices have been utilized: transformational and transactional leadership. These two practices guide the school head to better communicate with those they lead. According to Elizabeth (2015), as they say, leadership is the key to success. Because when you know your leadership style, you can have a clear idea of your strengths and weaknesses.

As part of the school management and leadership program, teachers were also affected by how it was executed. Regardless of the nature of a crisis, the principal must consider their teachers in any act they will do to face the new normal. Olurotimi, O. J., Asad, K. W., & Abdulrauf, A. (2015) guaranteed that the overall success of an educational institution depends on teachers' commitment that is directly related to the level of motivation they have within the institution. Teacher commitment and motivation are closely connected to teachers' work performance.

This study sought to determine the impact of principal management and leadership during the crisis on teacher work motivation and commitment in public schools since the principal-teacher relationship strongly contributes to school success.

### 3. Methodology

A descriptive correlation research design will be used to determine if crisis management and emerging leadership of the principal affects work motivation and commitment in public school teacher. According to Kerlinger (1986), "Research design is the plan and structure of investigations conceived to obtain answers to research questions. The plan is the overall program of the research. It includes an outline of what the investigator will do from writing the hypothesis and their operational implications for the final data analysis. The researcher used a descriptive research design in collecting the data from respondents. The design is preferred because it answers questions about who, how, what, which, when and how much (Cooper and Schindler, 2003).

This study was conducted among public elementary schools of San Francisco District, situated in the municipality of San Pablo, province of Laguna. The respondents were one hundred eighty (180) Grade 1 to Grade 6 public elementary school teachers who were chosen randomly, presently active in the service and currently associated with the eleven (11) public elementary schools in San Francisco District in 2022-2023. This study employed a random sampling technique to choose the required respondents. It guarantees that everyone in the eleven selected elementary school teachers in San Francisco District had an equal chance of being chosen and selected as the study's respondent.

The researchers used a survey questionnaire to collect the data. The researcher chose the self-administered questionnaire method for all correspondents as it is inexpensive and allows the respondents to complete the questionnaire conveniently. The researchers used a Likert scale and mainly a closed-ended questionnaire. Each respondent received the same set of questionnaires in the same way. The researchers assumed that all the respondents were literate and thus able to read and write since they were DepEd teachers.

**4. Result and Discussion**

This chapter presents the gathered data and the results of the study as well as the interpretation of the data as a result of the statistical treatment used.

Table 1. Correlation between Crisis Management and Work Motivation

Crisis Management	Human Relations	Reward / Recognition	Respect for Peers/Head	Benefits
Dynamic Response	0.777**	0.714**	0.692**	0.691**
Strategic Management Process	0.825**	0.752**	0.725**	0.730**

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

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

Table 1 shows the correlation between Crisis Management and Work Motivation. As indicated in the table, crisis management and work motivation have a positive significant relationship. This signifies that the manifested crisis management among school heads would give work motivation to the teachers.

The school heads exhibit good crisis management practices, such as being flexible in adapting the crisis plan to fit dynamic situations, anticipating changes, and managing necessary adjustments, which motivates the teachers to be more productive and inspired to achieve their goals.

Motivation during crises represents a special function within motivation studies. During crises, employees face challenging situations that demand special consideration from normal case situations. As a result, school heads' strategies to cope with the crisis must also consider the teachers' work motivation. In any crisis, teachers can feel unsettled and demotivated. Still, if the school heads have good crisis management, teachers are more likely to view their work positively, be more engaged, and show high productivity levels.

Table 2. Correlation between Crisis Management and Work Commitment

Crisis Management	Professional / Career Commitment	Organizational / School Commitment
Dynamic Response	0.676**	0.736**
Strategic Management Process	0.722**	0.759*

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

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

As indicated in Table 2, crisis management and work commitment have a positive significant relationship. It means that work commitment during a crisis is important. School heads must demonstrate crisis management practices that sustain the work commitment of the teachers. As the school head manifests strong crisis management skills, the teachers are more committed to their work as they wish to lessen the impacts of the crisis on the organization. The committed teachers felt fulfilled during their regular work activities and invested more effort to contribute to organizational success. Moreover, the teachers perceive their work as integral to achieving the school objectives.

Mart (2013) states that during a crisis, teachers must demonstrate greater commitment to their job and consequently increase their engagement at work. Commitment is essential to successful teaching with or without a pandemic crisis. Showing commitment to achieving organizational goals, especially during this pandemic, can be an important factor in coping with the crisis.

Table 3. Correlation between Emerging Leadership and Work Motivation

Emerging Leadership	Human Relations	Reward / Recognition	Respect for Peers/Head	Benefits
Transformational Leadership	0.81*	0.743*	0.725**	0.740*
Transactional Leadership	0.911**	0.736**	0.699*	0.704**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows a significant positive relationship between school leaders' emerging leadership and teachers' work motivation. This implies that teachers' motivation improves when school leaders demonstrate strong leadership abilities. These leaders were concerned not only with the performance of their members but also with everyone's ability to reach their full potential. Leaders must believe they are contributing to something greater than themselves. For example, they could achieve this goal by carrying out the organization's mission, vision, and values. Leaders increase motivation by communicating their goals to their teams.

Bass and Avolio (1995) state that transformational leadership encourages, inspires, and motivates employees to innovate and create the change required to shape the company's future success. Leaders motivate their followers by accepting challenges and serving as role models for them, and they inspire them to achieve their goals effectively. Transformational leadership enables leaders to explain the meanings of the challenges they must face and motivate them to overcome them. They inspire their followers to achieve the best results possible. Leader informs followers about future events and makes them aware of the organization's goals and vision, which is a commitment to goals. Leaders create a symbol of courage and a model for stimulating subordinates' efforts at work and encouraging them to get more than they want for their benefit. When leaders encourage their followers to express new ideas, they can express their internal feelings and unique ideas because they believe leaders will support them.

Meanwhile, according to L. Zhang et al. (2018), transactional leadership is a leadership style that encourages subordinates to be more interested in their work. Leadership behavior focuses on the task's outcome and the relationship of good workers in exchange for desired rewards. Transactional leadership encourages the leader to modify his style and behavior to understand the expectations of his followers.

Table 4. Correlation between Emerging Leadership and Work Commitment

Emerging Leadership	Professional / Career Commitment	Organizational / School Commitment
Transformational Leadership	0.705**	0.750**
Transactional Leadership	0.732**	0.752**

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

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

The relationship between emerging leadership and work commitment is shown in Table 17. It reveals a positive significant relationship between the emerging leadership of school heads and the work commitment of teachers.

Transformational leadership has been identified as a key factor in developing effective organizational commitment. When transformational leaders use individual consideration to meet the needs of followers, transcend economic transactions, and contribute to long organizational tenure and strong commitment, the relationship between leader and follower develops.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

1. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between crisis management and teachers' work motivation and commitment is not sustained.
2. The hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between emerging leadership and teachers' work motivation and commitment is not sustained.

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Administrators in the Department of Education are recommended to design a program or training that will enhance the crisis management and leadership skills of the school heads, especially in this time of new normal.
2. Teachers may join school-level activities that will fortify their commitment to the teaching profession and maintain motivation in fulfilling the mission of their job despite the challenging changes in the teaching paradigm due to the crisis.
3. School heads' management and leadership may inspire and make the teachers perform better. School heads may determine the factors that stimulate the teachers most at work. Identifying and utilizing these factors may foster motivation and commitment to the teachers.
4. Future researchers may conduct a similar study to strengthen or deny the findings of this study. This study may also be used to explore topics related to crisis management in the local setting, which is indeed important nowadays.

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