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Transforming educational leadership through mediation: Uniting teachers and parents

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ABSTRACT

The quality of leadership in educational institutions is critical for creating effective schools and enhancing student achievement. This study examined leadership in decision-making and the role of principals as mediators between teachers and parents. A quantitative research method was employed, utilizing systematic sampling to gather data from primary schools in Western Macedonia. The sample consisted of 222 teachers, aged 20 to over 50, including permanent and substitute teachers, principals, deputy principals, and non-executive teachers. This diverse representation allowed for a comprehensive analysis of perspectives from various roles within the school system. The survey instrument was a specially designed questionnaire based on previous studies with similar themes. Data entry, processing and analysis were carried out using the statistical program IBM statistics SPSS version 21. Two key characteristics emerged as essential for principals to be effective mediators: involving both parents and teachers in problem-solving and being proactive in mending relationships. Factor analysis identified important traits for effective mediation, including collaboration, organization, body language, practical skills, strong character, ethics, and proper training. Principals who acted as mediators reported their interventions were generally well-received and effective while deputy principals and teachers, viewing the process from the recipient's perspective, felt that the principal's interventions did not always achieve the desired results. The practical implication of this study is that for principals to be effective mediators in educational settings, they must actively engage both teachers and parents in decision-making processes and develop key mediation skills such as collaboration, organization and ethical leadership.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the critical role of principals as mediators in the school environment, emphasizing the importance of their mediation skills in fostering collaboration between teachers and parents. Its originality lies in the identification of specific traits—such as body language, ethics, and proactive relationship management that enhance the effectiveness of school leadership in conflict resolution.

1. INTRODUCTION

The smooth running of a school depends on clear communication and cooperation among all members, institutions, and groups within the school and with outside systems connected to the school. Good leadership in a school is key to its success and to improve student performance. Teamwork and communication between parents

and teachers are important for student achievement. These relationships must be built on mutual respect and understanding (Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014). When parents and teachers disagree on teaching methods, expectations, or the child's progress, even simple discussions can conflict (Gurr, 2017).

Some teachers prefer to keep their duties separate from those of parents, viewing parents as supporters rather than partners in education (Marsakha, Hariri, & Sowiyah, 2021). However, this approach often overlooks that parents care about more than just academic success. They are also interested in their child's personal growth and social development. At the same time, some parents may not fully appreciate the work of teachers, and when they criticize teachers in front of their children, it can lead to a lack of respect and behavior problems both at school and at home.

Conflicts within schools can take many forms, such as disagreements between teachers or between teachers and the principal as well as issues between groups within the school or even the whole school community (Henkin & Holliman, 2009). School leaders, especially principals play a key role in handling these conflicts and in creating a positive school environment (Goddard, Bailes, & Kim, 2021). School leaders ensure that the school's goals align with the community's, which helps promote a shared focus on quality education by balancing their duties within the school and maintaining ties with the broader community (Knight Abowitz, 2019).

One of the most important relationships in this setting is the communication between the principal and parents. Parents trust schools with their children's education and growth, expecting the school to provide knowledge and values that will prepare them for the future. For this reason, the principal's ability to communicate clearly and respectfully with parents is essential for solving student issues and finding solutions (building trust: reflections of school principals working with students, parents, and teachers in an intensive language training centre in Beijing, 2021). Miscommunication or different interpretations of messages between parents and staff often lead to misunderstandings and conflicts .

In today's multicultural societies, teachers face extra challenges because of conflicting demands and expectations from the government, parents, students, and other social groups. These pressures can lead to role conflicts for teachers, making them feel uncertain (Yulianti, Denessen, Droop, & Veerman, 2022). Studies show that these challenges can make it harder for teachers to balance the needs of all groups involved.

The principal plays the role of a leader and a mediator in the school which helps to foster a better and cooperative school environment (Krüger & Michalek, 2023; Sani, 2015; Sheridan et al., 2017). As a mediator, the principal can assist in conflict solving and in enhancing the communication and cooperation between parents, teachers, and students. This approach leads to the development of a school climate where conflicts are addressed properly and everyone works towards the achievement of common educational goals (Reppa, Botsari, Kounenou, & Psycharis, 2010). It is important to train principals in communication and conflict resolution to meet these challenges. Thus, providing skills to manage relationships and solve conflicts to school administrators can lead to the development of learning environments and personal development for students (Davies, 2021; Kenneth Leithwood, Sun, & Schumacker, 2020; Povey et al., 2016). This study aims to stress the need for such training, especially during periods of economic and social stress, and to contribute to a clearer understanding of what makes leadership effective in schools (Quezada, 2016). The findings of this study can be used as a reference for future studies and can be used to provide practical implications to enhance the leadership and mediation role of the principal. For this reason, one can help to create a better and more positive school environment and solve conflicts effectively to enable schools to work more effectively to support the learning and development of their students (Kim, Allen, & Jimerson, 2024; Stroetinga, Leeman, & Veugelers, 2019).

A major contribution of this study is the development of an "ethical mediation code" for school principals to enhance ethical leadership in conflict solving. This code would set a basis of ethical practices that would help school administrators to navigate the process of resolving conflicts among teachers, parents, and students. It would stress values like equity, clarity, comprehension of various viewpoints, and students' safety. This paper presents an ethical

framework that when adopted would guarantee that principals are of integrity and that they enjoy the trust of all the stakeholders while also promoting accountability. Through the integration of ethical thinking into the decision-making process, the code would assist the principals to handle conflicts better and also to be role models to students on ethical matters. This approach could also be strengthened by ethics training and reflection sessions for school leaders so that ethical leadership becomes a central part of school leadership.

There is a missing link in the understanding of how ethical leadership specifically affects the performance of principals as mediators between teachers, parents, and students while a number of studies have previously provided a detailed analysis of the role of school administrators in the management of conflicts and as mediators in the school environment. The review of the literature reveals that principals' interventions are relevant in the management of conflicts but the examination of the relationship between the ethical guidelines and leadership principles that should inform these interventions has not been adequately addressed.

This leaves a gap that this study seeks to fill by focusing on the ethical aspects of leadership in mediation. It examines how principals can apply ethical standards to frame their decision- making and mediation practices, and the consequences of complying with these standards on teachers and parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of the actions taken. This research also seeks to explore the challenges that principals face in balancing their educational leadership responsibilities with their mediation roles and how ethical leadership can help in building trust and strong bonds within the school community. In this way, this study helps to build more formal and ethical leadership approaches in school leadership through the lens of ethical leadership and conflict resolution.

2. METHOD

The methodological standpoint in this research is informed by an a priori literature review. The overall objective of this study is to explore the leadership function with regards to decision-making processes and mediation of relationships between teachers and parents. Specifically, the research seeks to obtain the perceptions of primary school teachers on school leadership.

The research questions have close connections to the dominant international literature on school leadership, communication, and conflict resolution. Existing research highlights the importance of effective communication among school principals, teachers, and parents in ensuring a good school climate and optimizing student outcomes. Research has continued to highlight the principal's mediating role in conflict management and teacher-parent relationship facilitation (e.g., (Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016; Leithwood & Louis, 2012)). The inquiries about demographic measures and principal responsibilities are guided by evidence from international studies that demonstrate how the leadership style and number of years of experience of a principal can impact their communication style and conflict resolution skills (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). Additionally, the emphasis placed on ombudsmen competencies and ethical communication is informed by scholarship that examines the ethical aspects of leadership and that calls for school principals to manage authority with fairness in situations of conflict (Fullan, 2014; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). The research hopes to enrich the understanding of how the communication strategies of principals and conflict management practices can be enhanced, referencing international perspectives and experiences through an understanding of these issues.

Research questions hope to investigate the role of principals in promoting effective communication and resolve disputes in the school setting, notably between parents and teachers. The research questions asked attempt to examine the extent to which leadership qualities, communication abilities, and strategic approaches of principals influence the general school environment, particularly in areas such as mediation, conflict resolution, and the ethical frameworks they use. We may gain insight into how principals can facilitate good relationships within the school community and allow smooth operational processes by examining these elements.

2.1. Research Questions

1. What are the key demographic factors that influence principals' communication and mediation strategies with parents and teachers?
2. How do principals' communication skills and strategies affect their ability to manage conflicts between teachers and parents in the school environment?
3. What is the perceived significance of the principal's role in facilitating effective teacher-parent communication and how does this vary according to school type and leadership experience?
4. How do principals' skills as ombudsmen contribute to the resolution of conflicts and improve overall communication within the school community?
5. How do parents and teachers perceive the effectiveness of the principals' conflict resolution strategies, and what are the differences in their perceptions?
6. What are the key differences in the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the conflict resolution strategies employed by principals?
7. What role do principals' communication skills and styles play in preventing conflicts between teachers and parents, and how can these be improved to foster a more favorable school environment?

These questions investigate various main dimensions of the principal's communication and conflict management role. The first question seeks to examine how the demographic attributes of principals shape their communication styles and mediation strategies with teachers and parents. The second question examines the effect of principals' communication competencies on their effectiveness at managing disputes between teachers and parents. The third question examines the self-assessed importance of the principal's role in facilitating teacher-parent communication and variation in this regard by school type and leadership experience. The fourth question examines principals' application of ethical communication and conflict resolution strategies and how these influence intervention outcomes. The fifth question investigates the contribution of principals' ombudsman abilities to conflict resolution and enhanced communication within the education community. The sixth question investigates the varied perceptions of teachers and parents on the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies adopted by principals, with emphasis on the determinants of these variations. Finally, the seventh question focuses on the role of principals' communication skills in preventing conflicts and finding ways to improve them to foster a more favourable school environment. What role do principals' communication styles play in preventing conflicts between teachers and parents, and how can these styles be improved to enhance the school environment?

In addition, the research will examine the extent to which school principals' leadership is characterized as well as the traits and characteristics required for effective mediation of parent-teacher disputes. The main purpose of the research is to capture the key characteristics that a school unit should possess, such as positive thinking, good judgment and good management by its teachers and principals through the analysis of the results.

2.2. Sample

The sample collection process was carried out using systematic sampling, combining random sampling with restrictions on demographic distribution. In particular, a sample from Western Macedonia was selected. A systematic sampling was deemed appropriate for the study as it allows for the generalisation of the results and makes the findings more representative of the population.

Teachers of all employment statuses (permanent and substitute) from primary schools in Western Macedonia participated in the survey. 222 teachers with an age range from 20 to more than 50 years old participated. The study also included principals, deputy principals and teachers who do not hold an executive position. This feature of the survey allows for the study of views from all levels and job positions in school units. The majority of the participants were of Greek origin.

2.3. Measures and Instruments

A quantitative methodology was followed. Sampling techniques were adopted for gathering related data. A formal questionnaire was developed for the sake of serving as the main research tool in a way that enabled the gathering of systematic data from the research participants. The structure of questionnaires was derived from existing literature and previous research on similar topics (Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2005; Bryk et al., 2010; Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Stravakou & Lozgka, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020). The researcher could gather quantitative data by adopting the structured questionnaire.

The data is relevant to fundamental variables, such as principals' communication skills, their effectiveness in conflict resolution, and the perceptions of teachers and parents. The investigation facilitates objective quantification and assessment of school administrators' communication approaches and skills while, concurrently, revealing teachers' attitudes concerning the value of leadership and mediation within schools. This instrument provides a useful schema for response analysis and investigation of experience and attitude in diverse groups within the educational community. Here, the quantitative method was favoured to promote objectivity, consistency, and organized gathering of data for statistical analysis and interpretation of trends and relationships in the responses (Fullan, 2014).

The survey had four sections, each based on a multiple-choice format. They were a) Demographic Information: Eleven items that pertained to the personal backgrounds of the research participants. b) Director's Communication Skills and Strategies: Five items that pertained to communication skills and strategies of directors while conducting interventions. The items were based on a Likert scale format, in which (1 = not at all, 5 = very much). c) The Role of Principal Importance: Four items were used to evaluate how much importance is attached to the role of the principal in communication patterns between parents and teachers. They were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very much), and three additional multiple-choice questions (no, yes, and I don't know). d) Communication Orientation and Ombudsman Competencies: There were four questions concerning the director's communicative orientation and competence as an Ombudsman for the school. These questions were also framed in the same five-point Likert scale and multiple-choice format with the same basic alternatives.

This method facilitates the objective observation and examination of school principals' communication skills and competencies that they utilize, and also understanding teachers' perspectives regarding the role and significance of leadership and mediation within learning organizations.

2.4. Procedure

The questionnaire was carefully crafted by the researcher to make sure that it aligned with the study objectives and addressed the unique needs of the population targeted. During its formation, the process was overseen by experienced teachers who were trained and had extensive experience in the subject matter, ensuring that it remained current and understandable. Upon completion, the questionnaire was computerized on the Google Forms™ platform, an easy-to-use program that facilitated distribution to participants and gathering. The questionnaire underwent an intensive pilot-testing phase with a sample population of teachers prior to actual distribution. This phase played a crucial role in determining and addressing any possible misinterpretations, vagueness of terms, or ambiguity of the questions, thus making the instrument totally clear and able to produce credible data. The responses obtained from the pilot study were examined and integrated into the final draft of the questionnaire, making it a better and more effective instrument overall.

The researcher prepared the questionnaire based on the goals of the study and the needs of the selected respondents. The processes of developing involved relevant experienced teachers who guided the process and helped ensure that the questionnaire was well constructed. The finalized version of the questionnaire was then converted into the Google Forms™ application, which simplified both sending out the forms and harvesting the results. A few teachers were targeted to carry out a pilot study prior to the wide distribution of the questionnaire.

In this instance, the goal was to determine whether obtained data had potential gaps, misunderstandings or phrasing issues that could raise concerns regarding the clarity of the questions, and therefore the obtained data. The pilot study results were analyzed and it was assumed that the data was clear enough to produce relevant responses, adjustments or improvements in the design of the questionnaire were made to improve the quality.

2.5. Ethics

The personal details of the participants are unknown as the participation process was anonymous in strict compliance with the code of conduct and data protection legislation. Participation was voluntary and participants can stop the completion process at any time if they wish. The results of the survey remain in the possession of the researcher and are available to anyone who is interested, upon personal contact with her.

2.6. Data Analysis

Two main parts were followed in the analysis of the survey data: 1) Descriptive analysis: a) Frequency tables were used to present the key demographic characteristics of the sample. This analysis provided an overview of the sample and important information about the participants, which was used for individual analysis. b) Summary Tables: Teachers' views on individual control characteristics such as interpersonal relationships in intervention situations, the role of the principal in teacher-parent communication relationships, and communication orientation with mediation resources were presented. 2) Inductive analysis: a) Non-parametric Analysis: Kruskal-Wallis statistical test was used to compare variables with more than two categories, at a significance level of α = 5%. This analysis helps to correlate variables and understand the relationships between them. b) Non-parametric Discriminant Analysis: Applied to create categories in the characteristics of the manager as required for the last research question, c) Factor Analysis: Applied (factor analysis) to categorize the key characteristics a principal should have in the role of a mediator in parent-teacher communication.

The data entry, processing and analysis of the data were carried out using the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21. Cronbach's alpha statistical test was applied for the reliability of the results. The value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.902 (90.2%) which is higher than the acceptable value of 0.8, indicating high reliability of the sample and results. The study was found to be reliable and the results are considered suitable for further analysis and inference. All data was collected and analyzed gradually during the school year 2021-2022.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following presents the demographic profile of the participants in the survey. Table 1 indicates that regarding gender, the majority of participants were females (62.3%) and the largest percentage belonged to the age group of 50 years and above (50.9%). About the employment status, almost all the participants were permanent teachers (86.9%). The majority of them were of Greek origin (99.5%). Most of them work in large school units (60.8%). The largest percentage have more than five years of work experience (61.7%) and a significant proportion does not hold a managerial position in the school unit (70.3%).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics.

Category	Sub-category	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Female	139	62.3%
	Male	84	37.7%
Age	20-25	2	0.9%
	26-30	12	5.4%
	31-40	37	16.7%
	41-50	58	26.1%
	50+	113	50.9%
Employment status	Permanent	193	86.9%
	Deputy	27	12.2%
	Hourly employee	1	0.5%

Category	Sub-category	Frequencies	Percentages
	Unemployed	1	0.5%
Origin	Hellenic	221	99.5%
	Not Hellenic	1	0.5%
Do you belong to a big or small school unit?	Big	135	60.8%
	Small	87	39.2%
Work history at your current school	1 year	32	14.4%
	1-5 years	53	23.9%
	>5 years	137	61.7%
Executive position	Principal	48	21.6%
	Deputy principal	18	8.1%
	Non-executive	156	70.3%

Note: Values represent absolute frequencies (N) and percentages (%).

The strategies that school principals follow to manage interventions in the school environment are crucial for effective leadership and communication based on the survey findings as showed to Table 2. The key activities identified by the majority of teachers as essential include: a) Planning Responsibilities and Meetings: Principals emphasize the importance of organizing and planning responsibilities related to both students and teachers. This involves scheduling and conducting regular meetings to address ongoing issues and ensure that both students' needs and teachers' concerns are effectively managed. b) Organizing Teacher-Parent Meetings: A significant focus is placed on organizing and structuring meetings between teachers and parents. Effective management of these meetings ensures that the content is relevant and productive, fostering better communication and collaboration between home and school. c) Monitoring Teacher-Parent Relationships: Principals are also responsible for overseeing and monitoring the dynamics of teacher-parent relationships. This includes addressing any conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise and ensuring that these relationships remain constructive and supportive of students' educational experiences.

Table 2. Strategies followed by principals to manage interventions.

Strategies						
Planning responsibilities and meetings between student and teachers	N	0	8	7	4	3
	%	%	2.6%	0.2%	8.8%	9.4%
Organizing the content of teacher-parent meetings	N	4	8	7	3	0
	%	0.8%	7.1%	0.2%	3.9%	8%
Monitoring teacher-parent relationships	N	1	5	0	6	0
	%	9.5%	4.8%	1.5%	0.7%	3.5%

Note: Values represent absolute frequencies (N) and percentages (%)

Table 3. Frequency table of use of different means of communication accompanied by speech in the direct assessment of the consultants.

Means of communication	Not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite much	A lot
Using hand signs	7	20	108	69	18
	3.2%	9%	48.6%	31.1%	8.1%
Voice tone	4	15	73	95	35
	1.8%	6.8%	32.9%	42.8%	15.8%
Eye communication	7	16	55	99	45
	3.2%	7.2%	24.8%	44.6%	20.3%
Facial expressions	16	37	93	62	14
	7.2%	16.7%	41.9%	27.9%	6.3%

Note: 'Values represent absolute frequencies (N) and percentages (%).

Table 3 demonstrates that the school principal uses hand signals to improve his communication in addition to verbal communication. Regarding tone of voice, most respondents consider it very important as well as communication through eye contact. Regarding facial expressions, the majority responded that they are important to a moderate degree. Teachers expressed a positive attitude towards the use of non-verbal behaviour by the principal considering it to be an important contributor to the development of a positive emotional climate in the school.

After completing the analysis of the questions related to the manager's mediation abilities, it became clear from Table 4 that respondents consider these abilities should be well-developed. The same applies to ongoing training and participation in appropriate training programmes, dealing with problems in a prompt and timely manner, and creating a positive school culture. Moreover, regarding the implementation of actions involving the participation of both teachers and parents, the majority of respondents answered positively, indicating that they consider this cooperation very important for the achievement of educational objectives.

Table 4. Frequency table of school principal's skills regarding the role of mediator.

School principal's skills	To a minimum extent	To a little extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent	To a great extent
Developed collaboration skills	1	0	11	81	129
	0.5%	0%	5%	36.5%	58.1%
Continuous training and participation in appropriate training programmes	0	4	31	91	96
	0%	1.8%	14%	41%	43.2%
Direct and timely problem tackling	0	0	6	73	143
	0%	0%	2.7%	32.9%	64.4%
Collaborative leadership model	0	2	15	90	115
	0%	0.9%	6.8%	40.5%	51.8%
Promotion of culture	1	3	26	94	98
	0.5%	1.4%	11.7%	42.3%	44.1%
Implementation of actions involving teachers and parents	1	5	56	88	72
	0.5%	2.3%	25.2%	39.6%	32.4%

Note: Values represent absolute frequencies (N) and percentages (%).

As shown in Table 5, determination in taking initiatives was highlighted as particularly important by all respondents with deputy directors valuing it more than others. The ability to create a positive climate and culture in the school was also identified as essential communication skill by all with principals and vice-principals rating it equally highly. Innovation was considered essential by vice-principals, with principals following with slightly lower scores. Non-managers rated it even lower. In contrast, non-executives placed more emphasis on good knowledge of educational legislation, followed by directors and vice-managers by a small margin. Finally, diligence and coordination of responsibilities were mostly reported by non-executives with vice-principals following and principals placing the least emphasis on these characteristics.

Table 5. Relevance table and independence test on school principals', vice principals' and non-principals' views on the school principal's key communication skills and strategies during the interventions.

Strategy / Skill		Principal	Deputy principal	Non-executive	R	P
Ability to foster positive relationships between teachers and parents	Moderately	0	0	10	0.104	0.308
		0.00%	0.00%	6.40%		
	Quite much	17	5	50		
		35.40%	27.80%	32.10%		
	A lot	31	13	96		
		64.60%	72.20%	61.50%		
Decisiveness in taking initiatives	A little	0	0	1	0.128	0.301
		0.00%	0.00%	0.60%		
	Moderately	0	2	6		
		0.00%	11.10%	3.80%		
	Quite much	15	2	40		
		31.30%	11.10%	25.60%		
	A lot	33	14	109		
		68.80%	77.80%	69.90%		
Ability to create a positive climate and culture in the school	Moderately	0	0	5	0.091	0.456
		0.00%	0.00%	3.20%		
	Quite much	13	5	30		
		27.10%	27.80%	19.20%		

Strategy / Skill		Principal	Deputy principal	Non-executive	R	P
	A lot	35	13	121		
		72.90%	72.20%	77.60%		
Innovation	Moderately	3	1	21	0.174	0.009*
		6.30%	5.60%	13.50%		
	Quite much	15	5	77		
		31.30%	27.80%	49.40%		
	A lot	30	12	58		
		62.50%	66.70%	37.20%		
Good knowledge of educational legislation	Moderately	4	1	3	0.127	0.128
		8.30%	5.60%	1.90%		
	Quite much	14	6	34		
		29.20%	33.30%	21.80%		
	A lot	30	11	119		
		62.50%	61.10%	76.30%		
Organizational skills and coordination of responsibilities	Moderately	1	0	2	0.122	0.158
		2.10%	0.00%	1.30%		
	Quite much	18	3	33		
		37.50%	16.70%	21.20%		
	A lot	29	15	121		
		60.40%	83.30%	77.60%		

Note: * (p < 0.05).

Principals' beliefs in their effectiveness have a profound impact on the overall educational environment, particularly in influencing teachers' collective efficacy beliefs which are closely tied to student achievement. According to Goddard et al. (2021) this relationship highlights the pivotal role of school leadership in shaping not only teachers' perceptions of their capabilities but also the learning outcomes of their students. When principals maintain a strong belief in their ability to lead effectively, they inspire confidence and motivation in teachers, fostering a positive cycle of improvement that benefits the entire school community.

Maintaining relationships with parents calls for school leaders to demonstrate objectivity, honesty, and fairness at all times. These aspects are crucial as Zhang, Bowers, and Mao (2021) and Krüger and Michalek (2023) claim. Fairness is important in conflict resolution, as it allows concerns to be addressed in a manner that is acceptable to all parties. Not only does honest communication build trust, it also guarantees that parents and teachers will have their full commitment towards shared goals. Carpenter (2015) points out that this partnership gains in effectiveness when both parents and teachers participate in school activities. Their participation creates a culture of shared responsibility and commitment towards the students, underscoring the collaborative spirit that education needs.

Lasater (2016) identifies the communication between teachers and parents as the one that the principal must help establish. This communication goes beyond scheduling issues as it aims at providing people with the opportunity to exchange constructive ideas concerning students' academic performance and their general wellbeing. In this case, according to Buonomo, Farnese, Vecina, and Benevene (2021) communication is appreciated because it helps movement toward collaboration which stands out in a coordinated school culture.

Fostering a conducive and effective working space is one of the many key responsibilities of school leaders. Casinillo and Suarez (2022) place emphasis on highlighting one's attitude, behavior, and respect for colleagues as an important prerequisite for accomplishing this goal. A workplace that is respectful, ethical, and legal enhances teachers' morale and facilitates greater professional cooperation while decreasing unnecessary stress levels. Meyer-Looze and Vandermolen (2021) argue that positive school collaboration climate routines enable leaders to build strong working relationships with the teachers, students, and parents leading to a supportive school culture. This kind of trusting and supporting atmosphere increases the employee's morale, and in turn improves the quality of education provided in schools.

Trust in the leadership provided to the school is especially important when encouraging teachers to put more effort into teaching. Çoban, Özdemir, and Bellibaş (2020) state that principals' instructional leadership by itself is

sufficient to improve teachers' self-efficacy, increase their confidence and effectiveness. The findings by Lleo, Ruiz-Palomino, Guillen, and Marrades-Pastor (2022) suggest that teachers feel more invested in their schools and roles when principals demonstrate ethical trustworthiness through benevolence and integrity. Such trust fosters a professional climate in which teachers are willing to experiment and take risks.

Last but not least, emotional intelligence stands out as one of the most important characteristics of effective school leaders. Blaik Hourani, Litz, and Parkman (2020) provides evidence that emotional intelligence positively affects empathetic decision-making and staff relations. Within public educational institutions of Abu Dhabi, the use of professional standards practices illustrates that emotional intelligence has the potential for improving leadership effectiveness through increased collaboration, constructive conflict resolution, and cohesive team building. Emotionally intelligent leaders better cater to the needs of their teachers, parents, and students thus creating an environment that facilitates positive outcomes.

This evidence together point to the necessary attributes of leadership, effective communication, and teamwork as factors necessary for advancement in education. These principals are the ones who earn the much deserved confidence of teachers, parents, and students and are able to create an environment in which all these groups work together.

School leaders and policymakers will gain practical benefits from this research. The findings clearly show that interpersonal relationships in a school setting have to be cultivated. School leaders can devise plans to exercise emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and self-discipline as they tend to foster teacher-parent collaboration, which, in turn, creates a more positive school climate. These interpersonal skills can be targeted in training programs for principals and other educational leaders geared toward communication, trust, conflict resolution, and other areas of social interaction. In addition, encouraging an empathetic and collaborative spirit in the school and the staff can improve performance among the students. School leaders who seek to cultivate genuine relationships and open channels of communication also make it easier for the members of the community and the parents to get engaged in school activities. In these ways, concrete leadership aimed at the emotional and empathic relationships involves administrators in more orderly school relationships, which benefits teachers and students.

4. CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the gaps filled by school leaders as they pertain to collaboration and interaction between the schools and parents emphasizes on genuine human relationships. It differed from previous studies that sought information from administrative perspectives only as this focused on the interactions of the leaders with the teachers and their parents and how it affected school life.

The results indicate that school leaders' interpersonal attributes like self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and self-discipline are important elements in successful teacher-parent collaboration. There is a positive correlation between self-discipline and self-efficacy of leaders and having a supportive and fairer school climate, such discipline enables honest support to the workers in self-efficacy. These results are consistent with Goddard et al.'s (2021) studies where it was found that a principal's self-efficacy has a direct effect on a teacher's collective efficacy for students' achievement.

The limitation of the research lies in the information that is self-reported which was sought from teachers. While such method is easy, it is also rather susceptible to bias affecting the reliability of the results. Further longitudinal studies do need to be conducted to address the changes that happen as a result of interpersonal leadership in relations to school and parent interactions. Such a leadership focus will limit the school through insights over the long run.

In a nutshell, it looks like leaders that prioritize genuine relationships have greater success in cultivating positive school climate in comparison to those that focus on administrative tasks. The study advocates for more

research to be conducted on the impact of different leadership styles due to their significance in student performance and community participation within the context of education systems.

4.1. New Directions and Possibilities of the Study

Future studies can explore the especially relevant theme of the impact of interpersonal leadership skills on parents' cooperation with teachers and students' performance over a longer duration based on the findings of this study. One potential area of study is longitudinal research that looks at the effects of interpersonal leadership on the climate and educational performance of the institution over a long period. This would provide more convincing proof about the long-term impacts of maternal emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and self-discipline on the entire educational climate. Similarly, researchers can examine the effects of leadership parental multi-sidedness on the school and student's overall performance and other non-multi-sided styles of leadership. A question of a comparative study of different leadership styles with the school and students should be equally important and could help understand collaboration.

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