

**The Behaviours of Principals and Teachers in Selected Top
Performing Secondary Schools in the National Capital Region of the Philippines**

by

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to develop a model of principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours for secondary schools, based on the data gathered from top performing schools in the National Capital Region of the Philippines. Twelve of these schools were covered in the study: three *Chinese*, three *government (non-science)*, three *private*, and three *science* secondary schools.

The study covered all the principals and a random sample of permanent teachers (n=224) in the participant schools. Data were gathered through interviews and the use of five standardized instruments.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Every successful private or public organization has one major attribute that sets it apart from unsuccessful ones: a dynamic and effective leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). In the field of education, particularly at the secondary level, research findings have generally supported that effective schools have effective principals (Wendel & Hoke, 1996). Thus, recognition of the importance of the principal's role in effective schools has been on the rise. Furthermore, there exists a great need for principals with strong leadership skills because their absence could undermine needed educational reforms (Hipp, 1997; "Leadership Attitudes," 2000). As leaders, they are accountable for the continuous growth of students and for increased school performance as measured over time (Barker, 2000).

In a convention of school principals held in 1999, former Philippine Undersecretary Nilo Rosas of the Department of Education emphasised that principals are the energetic motivators of human resources. Through their gift of words and examples, they should be able to demand action and performance, strive for excellence, and productivity ("Principal is the Most Important," 1999). They can either unite people toward institutional goals or cause factions, based on the way they lead.

The distinction between effective and ineffective leaders varies. It often depends on the way they diagnose and resolve a problem under a specific circumstance, while taking the role of a responder, a manager, or an initiator (Schmitt, 1990). In other words, the difference between

effective and ineffective principals in any private or public schools is manifested in their way of leading, that is in their leadership style. Hersey (2001) commented that it is not enough for leaders to describe their leadership styles or to indicate their intentions: What is more important is for them to be situational leaders. "A situational leader assesses the performance of others and takes the responsibility for making things happen" (p. 1). Moreover, a situational leader is one who can adapt different leadership styles depending on the situation ("Famous Models," 1999).

Research has revealed that leaders generally have a primary leadership style (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996). A primary leadership style is defined as the behavior pattern used most often when attempting to influence the activities of others. It has two components: leadership style flexibility and leadership style effectiveness (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996). Leadership style flexibility is "the extent to which a leader *is able to vary his/her leadership style* [italics added] in different situations" (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996, p. 299). According to the same source, flexible leaders have the potential to be effective in a number of situations. On the other hand, the same authors define leadership style effectiveness as "the degree to which the leaders are able to choose their leadership styles appropriately *to meet the demands* [italics added] of a given situation" (p. 234). Thus, style effectiveness refers to a leaders' ability to decide on their leadership style to best match a given situation.

People who have narrow style flexibility can be effective over a long period of time if they remain in situations in which their style has a high probability of success, but they cannot be said to have style effectiveness. Conversely, people who have a wide range of styles may be ineffective if they use a style that is not appropriate for the demands of the situation. These people do not possess style adaptability. Thus, a wide range of styles will not guarantee effectiveness, because style range is not as relevant to effectiveness as style adaptability (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996).

Pangilinan, a local author (1999, p.1), observed that "good educational programs are spoiled and futile because of leadership inefficiency and ineffectiveness". Hence, research on leadership style, leadership style flexibility, and leadership style effectiveness is both interesting and significant.

Another aspect of principals' interpersonal relations in school is the way they relate with the members of the academic community, particularly with the teachers whom they supervise. Kremer-Hayon and Wubbels (1993) refer to this as principals' interpersonal behaviors, the other variable covered by the present study.

Establishing effective schools has been the nation's primary goal in education since the 1980s (Pangilinan, 1999). Indeed, the current educational crisis has intensified the need for school effectiveness (Arnold, 1999). An effective school, by its very nature, yields higher student achievement, and there is a probability that principals' leadership behaviors and students' academic performance may be interrelated (Caldas & Bankson, 1997; Griffith, & Moss, 1990; Haller, Monk, Bear,). More emphatically, Kremer-Hayon and Wubbels (2000) assert that effectiveness of schools is related to principals' leadership styles. These ideas will be validated in the local setting. Specifically, the present study was designed to determine the leadership and interpersonal behaviors of principals in top performing secondary schools in the National Capital Region (NCR) of the Philippines. The primary research interest is to determine whether there are commonalities in the principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviors across participant schools from which implications for school leadership may be drawn.

Another focus of interest in the present study was the teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviors. Based on their fifteen years of research with more than 50,000 students and teachers in the Netherlands, the United States, and Australia, Wubbels, Levy, and Brekelmans (1997) concluded that teachers' interpersonal skills are crucial to creating and maintaining a positive classroom climate. They explained that while instructional methodology is an important consideration, exceptional teaching could also be described in terms of teacher-student relationships. For them, effective teaching involves not only the shaping of learning, but the promotion of a suitable ethos for learning. This was affirmed in the Flexible Learning in Schools Report (cited in Harkin & Turner, 1997) which acknowledged that the quality of the relationship between a teacher and a young person is a vital factor in encouraging learning and growth. This relationship, based on the same report, should be neither fear nor contempt which used to stalk school corridors nor, the casualness which implies that there is no distinction in role between teachers and students.

In the same vein, den Brok, Brekelmans, and Wubbels (2001) believe that students' learning is influenced by a variety of interpersonal factors, in addition to the cognitive factors associated

with it. Moreover, Arnold (1999) found out that teacher's interpersonal behaviours in the classroom and students' academic achievement are related. This finding is substantiated in a report of the American Educational Research Association (2001) which disclosed that a positive and productive learning environment relies, to a large extent, upon the relationships between students and teachers.

Earlier local researches on primary leadership styles did not delve into leadership style flexibility and leadership style effectiveness, and with principals' interpersonal behaviours in relation to teachers' interpersonal behaviours in the classroom. These research gaps prompted the present researcher to analyze the relationship between principals' leadership behaviors (i.e., primary leadership styles, leadership style flexibility, and leadership style effectiveness) and interpersonal behaviours, on the one hand, and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours on the other hand.

In-depth analyses of the similarity or difference between principals' self-assessments of their leadership and interpersonal behaviours, and their teachers' assessments of those behaviours were another focal points of the present study. Moreover, the relationship between the perceived and the preferred primary leadership styles and interpersonal behaviours of the principals, based on their teachers' assessments were investigated. Furthermore, the relationship between the teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours and their assessments of their principals' interpersonal behaviours was analyzed. Lastly, whether school governance, Chinese/ government [non-science]/ private/ science, has a mediating effect on the following: principals' primary leadership style, principals' interpersonal behaviors, and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours. These interests prompted the search for commonalities, if any, in the indicated variables across top performing secondary schools in the NCR and by type of school. The presence or absence of a mediating effect, which may be brought about by type of governance, yielded findings that will have policy implications for principals' and teachers' development.

Hopefully, the model developed in the present study can contribute to the current body of knowledge in the field of educational leadership concerning the given variables of interest. Furthermore, the outcomes of this study will be beneficial to principals and teachers insofar as interpersonal behaviors and relationships in secondary schools are concerned. The study gains

added significance considering that the participant schools consisted of top performing secondary educational institutions in selected localities.

The study of leadership theory has evolved from time to time, but the fundamental purpose and ultimate goal remains unchanged: to understand leaders' behaviours (Blanchard, 2000). In educational organizations, rigid structures have intrinsic limitations and constraints for making systematic behavior changes (Blanchard, 2000). It will be interesting to understand how educational leaders in top performing schools exercise their leadership to influence, to guide, to support, or to delegate in order to accomplish organizational goals. This was another focus of the present study.

Furthermore, any commonalities in the participant principals' and teachers' interpersonal behaviors may be indicative of effective schools in the area of human relations. This information will be beneficial to schools, especially to those experiencing problems in this particular area of interpersonal relations.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study was anchored on the concepts and principles, regarding model building, as propounded by George Beauchamp (1981) and John Keeves (1997).

Model building is defined by Keeves (1997) as a step in the research process that is conducted, after variables have been identified as influencing a particular outcome. In a similar vein, Beauchamp (1981) explains that functionally, models are used to represent events and event interactions in a highly compact and illustrative manner. So employed, they help to explain facts or events that are puzzling. Thus, they are an aid in theory building. Similarly, in order to formulate a theory, models have been used.

To develop an effective model, Keeves (1997) gives the following requirements that need to be met. First, there is a need to define or to provide meaning and consistency to the terms or variables to be used in the model. Second, relationships among the variables of interest need to be verified and described. Third, the model should predict results that can be validated. Fourth, the model should not only predict but also explain a given phenomenon. Fifth, the explanation brought by the model must help in the creation of other concepts of related research. Moreover, Keeves asserts that effective modeling requires some understanding of what is important for an

institution and its constituents. He further explains that although a form such as a diagram or an illustration serves to manifest clearly the aspects of the model, it should not be magnified to hide the essential relationships that could be tested and validated. Models should be realistic, according to him, for it to be subjected to testing.

Operationalization of Keeves' Model

The application of Keeve's procedural model-building paradigm in the present study is explained in the next sections.

Defining or Providing Meaning and Consistency to the Terms or Variables Used in the Model

In consonance with this first requirement for model building of Keeves (1997), the variables of interest in the present study are defined in the next sections. These definitions were consistently used during the data-gathering and the interpretation phases of the study.

Principals' Leadership Behavior

As used in the study, principals' leadership behavior was viewed in terms of their primary leadership styles, leadership style flexibility, and leadership style effectiveness, based on Blanchard and Zigarmi's Situational Leadership Model (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993).

Primary Leadership Style. Primary leadership style is defined as the leader's behavior pattern used most often when attempting to influence the activities of others. It is somewhat like a favorite leadership style.

There are four leadership styles under the Situational Leadership model. These are: (a) the Directing style, characterized by high directive, low supportive behavior, (b) the Coaching style which is a highly directive and highly supportive behavior, (c) the Supporting style which is highly supportive, but low in directive behavior, and (d) the Delegating style which is low in both supportive and directive behaviors.

Leadership Style Flexibility. Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson define leadership style flexibility as "the extent to which a leader is able to vary his/her leadership style" (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson 1996, p. 299). Leaders differ in their ability to change their leadership styles. However, according to the same authors, flexible leaders have a greater potential to be effective in various different situations.

Leadership Style Effectiveness. This is the third element of leadership behaviors analyzed in the study. Style effectiveness or style adaptability is defined as “the degree to which the leaders are able to vary their styles appropriately to meet the demands of a given situation” (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson 1996, p. 300). It refers to the leaders' ability to vary their leadership styles to best match the changing situation. Hence, based on the model, to be effective leaders, they must not only show a high level of flexibility in style selection, they must also choose the leadership style that is most appropriate for each situation.

Blanchard and his associates developed the Leader Behavior Analysis II (LBA II, 1985, 1991) to assess those three aspects of leader behavior: leadership style, leadership style flexibility, and leadership style effectiveness. The 1991 version of this instrument was used in the present study.

The next section defines the other variable of interest in this model building research, the interpersonal behaviors of the principals and of the teachers covered by the study.

Interpersonal Behaviours

Leary (cited in Fisher & Cresswell, 1998) defines interpersonal behaviour as that with which a person relates overtly, consciously, ethically, or symbolically to another human being (real, collective, or imagined). The analysis of interpersonal behaviour in the present study was guided by the conceptualization of the construct by Fisher and Cresswell (1998). The two authors describe interpersonal behaviour in terms of two dimensions: the Proximity Dimension (Cooperation versus Opposition) and the Influence Dimension (Dominance versus Submission). As explained by the two authors, these dimensions can be schematically presented in a coordinate system divided into eight equal sectors; with each sector describing a particular type of behavior. One of these is *leadership behaviour*, which is the extent to which a person leads, organizes, gives orders, determines procedure, and adheres to structures. The second is *helpful friendly behaviour*, which is the extent to which a person shows interest, behaves in a friendly or considerate manner, and inspires confidence and trust among the people he/she relates with. The third type is *understanding behaviour*, which is the extent to which a person listens with interest, empathizes, shows confidence and understanding, and is open to other's ideas and opinions. *Responsibility/freedom behaviour* is the fourth type of behaviour. This is the extent to which a person provides the persons he/she associates with, opportunities to experience

responsibility and freedom in their spheres of responsibility. The fifth type is *uncertain behaviour*, which is the extent to which a person keeps a low profile and behaves in an uncertain manner. The sixth type is *dissatisfied behaviour*, which is manifested when a person openly expresses dissatisfaction, looks unhappy, and criticizes others. The seventh type is *admonishing behaviour*, which is manifested in the form of anger, irritation, looking down on people, and being punitive. Lastly, the eighth or last type of behavior is *strict behaviour*, which the two authors define as the extent to which a person keeps reins tight, judges, exact norms, and strictly enforces rules.

The principals' interpersonal behaviors were determined in the present study with the use of the Questionnaire on Principal Interaction (QPI), which was patterned after the aforementioned eight types of behaviour, and which was developed by Kremer-Hayon and Wubbels (1993). On the other hand, the teachers' interpersonal behaviour in the classroom was analysed with the use of the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) developed by Fisher, Fraser, and Wubbels (1993).

Verifying the Descriptions and Relationships Among the Variables of Interest

It was hypothesised in the study that there would be similarity between principals' assessments of their interpersonal behaviours and their teachers' assessments of their principals on the same construct. This is based on the premise of Fisher and Cresswell (1998) that in secondary schools, there are many opportunities for principals and for teachers to interact with each other (e.g., classroom observations, post observation conferences, regular meetings). Due to those interactions, secondary school teachers are likely to personally observe their principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviors, which may possibly result in similarity between the principals' assessment and teachers' assessment of the leadership and interpersonal behaviors of the former.

The next hypothesis was that because the participant schools were all top performing schools, there would be similarity in the perceived and preferred leadership and interpersonal behaviours of principals from the viewpoint of teachers. This has reference to a study conducted by Fisher and Cresswell (1998) which showed similar views between perceived and preferred principal leadership and interpersonal behaviours from both the perspectives of the teachers and the principals in top schools in Australia.

Because the participant schools were all top performers, it was further hypothesised that teachers would tend to demonstrate the positive classroom interpersonal behaviors: leadership, being helpful/friendly and understanding, and providing for student responsibility/freedom, rather than the negative behaviours: admonishing and being uncertain, dissatisfied and strict. This hypothesis has an empirical basis, considering the study of Wubbels (1993) of the top schools in Western Australia and Tasmania which revealed that the students perceived the best teachers as stronger leaders, more friendly and understanding, and less uncertain, dissatisfied, and admonishing than the average teachers.

Following the same trend of reasoning, it was also hypothesised in the study that the principals of top performing secondary schools would tend to demonstrate the positive types of interpersonal behaviors in relating with their teachers. The formulation of this hypothesis was prompted by a study conducted in top secondary schools in Australia by Fisher and Cresswell (1998) which showed principals' high scores in the cooperative areas of leading, being helpful/friendly, understanding, and giving freedom behaviours and low measures in the oppositional areas of being uncertain, dissatisfied, objecting, and strict behaviours.

It was further hypothesised that the manner with which principals related with their teachers would in turn influence teachers' behaviours in relating with their students. In other words, they would tend to mirror in the classroom, how their principals treated them. This hypothesis was based on the contention of Tartwijk, Brekelmans, Wubbels, Fisher, and Fraser (1998) that the way an individual behaves towards others is greatly influenced by how others behave towards him or her.

Finally, whether type of school governance would influence or mediate the possible relationships between principals' interpersonal behaviours and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours, was also verified in this study. Principals throughout the nation are redefining their profession and recreating their roles and responsibilities within it (NAESP, 2000). Regardless of location, racial, or socio-economic demographics, communities demand that principals lead in improving their schools' academic performance (NAESP, 2000). Top performing schools are organised around student learning. Schools that support these expectations set priorities for what teachers teach and what students learn (NAESP, 2000). Based on these considerations, it was particularly hypothesized that type of school governance

would have no mediating effect on the principals' interpersonal behaviors and on the teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours.

Coming Up with Predictive Verifiable Results

The third requirement in Keeves' (1997) model building process is coming up with predictive results that can be validated. This was operationalized in the present study by finding out *commonalities* concerning the variables of interest, as well as determining possible relationships among them. Commonalities were operationally defined in the study as referring to similar findings in the majority of the participant schools. "Majority," in turn, was defined as 50 percent plus one, adopting the definition employed by Reyes (2002) in her model building research. Principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours that were observed in the majority of the participant schools were hypothesised as predictive of principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and of teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours in top performing secondary schools. Furthermore, similarities between principals' and teachers' interpersonal behaviours, when found to exist in the majority of the participant schools were taken as an indicator of a possible relationship between those two variables. The same qualitative analysis was made as regards observed similarities between teachers' observations and preferences of their principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and as regards principals and teachers' assessments of the leadership behaviours of the former.

Providing Explanations Aside from Predictions

Based on this requirement, the present researcher offered possible explanations of how the variables of interest and their relationships (if any) could partly explain the factors behind top performing schools. This was done by relating the findings with the relevant concepts derived from the related literature concerning effective schools.

Helping Create Other Concepts of Related Research

Following the procedural paradigm of Kievee, a model of principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviors and teachers' interpersonal behaviors can be developed. This model, as intended in the present study, has three components, descriptive, relational, and predictive propositions based on Beauchamp's theory-building model. According to Beauchamp (1981, cited in Reyes,

2002), a theory or model in its highest form “provides prediction or inference going beyond what is observed”. These predictions, in effect, can direct future research that may either result in supporting those which are proposed in the model or, in other concepts concerning the variables of interest.

THE PROBLEM

The study sought to develop a model of principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours for secondary schools, based on the results gathered from twelve top performing schools in the National Capital Region (NCR) of the Philippines.

Specifically, the study was designed to answer problems, which have been grouped according to Keeve's model-building research process.

METHOD

The study made use of the descriptive model building research. It was concerned with the classification, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours in twelve top performing secondary schools in the NCR (of which three are Chinese schools, three are government (non-science) schools, three are private schools, and three are science schools) as a basis for developing a model of leadership and interpersonal behaviours for the target population of schools.

These schools were selected based on the Department of Education's ranking of secondary schools relative to students' performance in National Secondary Assessment Test (NSAT) in 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1999. These schools consistently belonged to the top twenty percent of passers during that period.

The study covered the population of twelve principals in the selected schools. The other group of participants consisted of teachers who were selected through random sampling from the population of teachers (N=582) who have served in those schools for at least three years. The three-year length of service on the part of the teachers was assumed to be sufficient enough for the teachers to assess knowingly their principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviors. Teacher sample size of 224 was determined with the use of Moortgat's Table of Sample Sizes

(de Jesus, Moortgat, Buzar, & Brawner, 1984) based on the .05 level of significance and an error margin of .10 standard deviation. In schools where populations of permanent teachers were very small, the sample size went beyond what is required based on Moortgat's table of sample sizes. This was done to have comprehensive information regarding teachers' perception of their principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours.

INSTRUMENTS

Five data-gathering instruments were used in the study. These were the Leader Behaviour Analysis II-Self (LBAII-Self), the Leader Behavior Analysis II-Other (LBAII-Other), the Questionnaire on Principal Interaction (QPI-principal's perception), the Questionnaire on Principal Interaction (QPI-teacher's perception), and the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI).

The instruments were pilot tested to a group of fifteen school principals and five basic education teachers not included in the actual study to determine the clarity of the items. Results of the pilot testing revealed that the instruments possess clarity.

Modifications were done in LBAII-Self and LBAII-Other to make the items appropriate for the use of the respondent principals and teachers. In both instruments, the word "employee" was changed to "teachers".

To analyze the teachers' classroom interpersonal behaviours, the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) by Fisher, Fraser, and Wubbels (1993) was used with some modifications to improve item clarity. As an example, the item, "I hold their attention" was changed to "I hold students' attention when I conduct a class discussion." Modifications were also done to adapt the items to the culture of Filipino students. For example, the original item, "It is easy for students to pick a fight with me" was modified to "It is easy for students to make me angry". The change was based on the nature of teacher-student relationships in Philippine classrooms. Filipino students do not usually pick a fight with their teachers but, they can make their teachers angry through inattentiveness, misbehaviour, among others.

FINDINGS

A Model of Principals' Leadership and Interpersonal Behaviours and Teachers' Classroom Interpersonal Behaviours

The proposed model covers three major components. The first component is the descriptive propositions concerning principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and teachers' interpersonal behaviours in the classroom. They are in the form of propositions because they need to be verified or tested through replications in other geographical areas and time frames. According to Beauchamp (1981), a theory or model in its highest form "provides prediction or inference going beyond what is observed" (cited in Reyes, 2002). Hence, the two other components of the proposed model focused on relationships and predictions concerning the variables of interest based on the results of the study.

Top performing secondary schools in the National Capital Region of the Philippines are likely to be led by principals who are inclined towards the use of the Coaching and the Supporting leadership styles. As such, they are likely to direct and supervise task accomplishments, solicit suggestions, explain decisions, and support progress which are characteristics of Coaching leaders. In addition, as Supporting leaders, they facilitate and support teachers' efforts towards task accomplishment and share responsibility for decision-making with them.

These principals are neither Directing nor Delegating. More often than not, they are likely to refrain from providing specific instructions and from closely supervising task accomplishments which are characteristics of Directing leaders. Neither may they be expected to comfortably turn over full responsibility for decision-making and problem-solving to teachers, which characterize the practices of Delegating leaders.

On the other hand, teachers of said schools prefer principals who are Supporting and who share with them the responsibility for decision-making. They do not wish to be supervised too closely, nor to be left on their own to assume full responsibility for decision-making and problem-solving regarding work-related tasks. In effect, principals and teachers in top performing schools prefer joint responsibility and shared decision-making in their work environments.

Principals in top performing secondary schools may be generally low in leadership style effectiveness with moderate to high leadership style flexibility. Thus, these principals may vary

their leadership styles, based on their assessments of the given situations, but their choices of leadership style may not be the most appropriate for the given situation. Nevertheless, because their primary leadership style, Supporting (aside from the Coaching style) is preferred by their teachers, their working relationships are likely to be positive, instead of adversarial. This is substantiated by another predominant characteristic of these schools, that pertaining to interpersonal behaviours. Principals in said schools tend to manifest “leadership” behaviours in relating with their teachers, which agree with the teachers’ expectations of their principals.

Because principals in these schools employ the “leadership” behaviour in interacting with their teachers, they see to it that their involvement in school activities is evident. They provide directions that are clear and simple. They notice what is happening, set tasks, and determine procedures. Leadership interpersonal behaviors among these principals do not include uncertainty, but rather confidence in decision-making. They lead, but their teachers do not feel uncomfortable. This is because they foster congenial relationship through the provision of a pleasant working environment while at the same time encourage their teachers to learn from them. These are the interpersonal behaviours that principals in top performing schools manifest in relating with their teachers. These are also the teachers’ preference as regards the interpersonal behaviours of their principals.

Teachers’ classroom interpersonal interactions with their students in top performing schools are likely to be characterized by the “leadership” behaviour. Thus, they may be expected to possess thorough mastery of subject matter, (which gives them confidence in teaching) and the ability to know everything that goes on in their classrooms. In the class, they are able to hold students’ attention when conducting class discussions. During seatwork/cooperative learning activities, they vary seating arrangements as required by the lesson. They approach the different groups of students to check whether they are able to follow directions or not.

Because the teachers in top performing secondary schools also tend to exhibit the “understanding” interpersonal behaviour in their classrooms, they are good listeners who are open to their students’ viewpoints and opinions. They are sensitive to students’ problems, and are patient in guiding slow learners. While teaching, they pause and ask if students understand what is being discussed. They do not mind explaining the lesson again and giving additional examples until their students understand. Moreover, there is mutual trust between them and their students.

Because teachers of top performing schools exhibit “leadership” and “understanding” interpersonal behaviours in their classrooms, they may be described as educators who are well-organized and firm in the class, but they are trusting, patient, and empathic.

In sum, top performing secondary schools are working environments characterized by Coaching and Supporting leadership and by “Leadership and Understanding” interpersonal behaviours. There is congruence between the actual and preferred leadership and interpersonal behaviours of the principals from the teachers’ viewpoints.

The model proposed in the study was based only on the participant schools, hence its generalizability cannot be established at this point. Nevertheless, the findings upon which the model was based, are supported by conceptual and by empirical literature from earlier related studies. For instance, Kremer-Hayon, Wubbels, (2000) and Russel (cited in *Characteristics of Leaders of Change*, 2000) point out that effectiveness of schools is related to principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours as well as to teachers' interpersonal behaviours in the classroom. Moreover, Williams (1999) revealed, based on his study, that the primary leadership style used by most principals in excellent schools was Supporting style, regardless of school type. The same study revealed that these leaders provided encouragement, promoted discussion, and asked for feedback from the teachers, practices which characterize the Supporting leadership style. These findings lend additional credence to the model proposed in the present study.

The study of Kremer-Hayon and Wubbels (2000) revealed that excellent teachers clearly prefer their excellent principals to show more of the “leadership” behaviours. The same study showed that congruence between principals' self-assessments and their teachers' assessments, and between the actual and the ideal behaviours of the principals, are indicative of school excellence. Moreover, Fisher and Cresswell (1998), after comparing teachers' actual and ideal perceptions of their principals' interpersonal behaviours inferred that good teachers perceive an ideal principal as one who exhibits more of positive interpersonal behaviours rather than of negative behaviours. These findings provide additional explanation of the applicability of the model albeit conceptually. In addition, effective principals are reportedly supportive of their teaching faculty, which results in a positive learning environment, positive teacher behaviour, (Patrick, 1995; Renchler, 1992; Thomas, 1997) and a positive school achievement (Bulach, 1994; Patrick, 1995; Peterson & Deal, 1998; Stolp, 1994). Hence, one possible explanation of

the top performance of the participant schools of the present study in the government examinations for students is the Supporting leadership style of the principals.

From another dimension, Wubbels', Levy's, and Brekelmans' (1997) fifteen years of research with more than 50,000 students and teachers in the Netherlands, the United States, and Australia, revealed that positive teachers' interpersonal behaviours in the classroom were crucial to creating and maintaining top performing schools. A related study conducted in the Netherlands yielded similar results (Wubbels, 1993; Wubbels, Brekelmans, & Hooymayers, 1991). In the local setting, a research conducted by the Department of Education (2000) in the Philippines, affirmed that effective teachers create a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom. They exhibit positive interpersonal behaviours by listening sensitively to their students and treating them with trust. These were the characteristics of the participant teachers in the present study, which could be another explanation why their schools are among the top performing in the NCR.

Moreover, the students of good schools will not engage in learning activities if their teachers do not monitor their work (Wubbels, 1993). The teachers in the present study manifested the "leadership" interpersonal behaviour in the classroom. One characteristic of this behaviour is monitoring of students' activities.

In sum, a number of studies suggest that principals' leadership and interpersonal behaviours and impact on teacher behaviour are related to student achievement (Hughes, cited in Martin, 2000). The general assertion is that if schools have a strong leadership characterised by supportive and conducive working environments for teachers, better student achievement will result (Hughes, cited in Martin, 2000). These lend support to the model proposed in the study which was aimed at providing an explanation for top performing secondary schools. However, notwithstanding the literature supportive of the model proposed in the study, the said model should be understood and interpreted in the light of its limitation, in terms of sample size. Lastly, it needs to be verified among other top performing schools in the NCR to test its generalisability.

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