Original Research Article

**INTEGRITY-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE INITIATIVES OF TEACHERS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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ABSTRACT

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| This study aimed to examine the significant relationship between attractive classroom organization and creating community teaching among public elementary school teachers. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized, involving 138 teachers in Talomo West District, Division of Davao City. Data were collected using standardized survey questionnaires and were analyzed through mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that teachers rated attractive classroom organization—specifically in the domains of concepts, sensitivity, needs, and risk-taking—as oftentimes manifested, while creating community teaching—in terms of supportive, instructional, preventive, and responsive dimensions—was sometimes demonstrated. Correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between attractive classroom organization and creating community teaching. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis indicated that the domains of attractive classroom organization significantly influenced creating community teaching. Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools implement capacity-building initiatives such as training programs and conferences organized by the Department of Education to enhance classroom organization and promote community-oriented teaching practices. |

*Keywords*: Integrity-Driven Leadership, Work-Life Balance Initiatives, Public Elementary School Students, Descriptive-Correlational, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Achieving work-life balance remains a pressing issue for public elementary school teachers, who often experience high workloads, administrative demands, and limited personal time (Franco et al., 2021). The dual burden of professional obligations and personal responsibilities frequently leads to stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Bauwens et al., 2020). Teachers are expected to deliver quality instruction, engage in professional development, and participate in school-wide activities, all while fulfilling familial and social roles (Mathews et al., 2021). Without effective support systems and institutional initiatives that promote work-life balance, teachers’ productivity and well-being are at risk, potentially affecting student learning outcomes and overall school performance.

Globally, various countries have implemented policies to improve work-life balance among teachers. In United States, education policies include reduced teaching hours and ample preparation time, enabling teachers to maintain professional excellence without compromising personal well-being (Tatto, 2024). In Australia, flexible work arrangements and mental health support programs are in place to ensure teachers’ holistic development (Stoddart, 2024). Meanwhile, Singapore has adopted a whole-of-government approach to work-life harmony, providing leave schemes and promoting workplace well-being programs in public institutions, including schools (Kiyota, 2023). These examples highlight the importance of deliberate, well-structured work-life balance initiatives to support the teaching profession.

In the Philippines, efforts to promote teacher welfare are evident in policy documents such as the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers and the Department of Education’s mental health and wellness programs (Aquino et al., 2023). Despite these initiatives, many teachers still face overwhelming workloads, insufficient support systems, and limited opportunities for rest and recovery (Cusipag et al., 2024). While work-life balance remains a national concern, implementation at the grassroots level is often inconsistent (Esguerra, 2023). This raises questions about the role of school leadership in ensuring that work-life balance initiatives are genuinely enacted and sustained across public elementary schools.

Integrity-driven leadership plays a crucial role in shaping school environments where teacher well-being is prioritized (Qudus et al., 2024). School leaders who demonstrate honesty, accountability, and ethical decision-making can cultivate a culture of trust and support, encouraging the development and implementation of work-life balance initiatives (McBrayer et al., 2022). When leaders value transparency and fairness, they are more likely to advocate for policies and practices that empower teachers to manage their professional responsibilities without sacrificing personal fulfillment (Matulevicius et al., 2021). Thus, exploring the relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives may offer insights into how leadership practices can enhance teacher well-being and organizational performance.

Despite the growing discourse on teacher wellness and ethical leadership, few studies in the Philippine context have directly examined how integrity-driven leadership influences the implementation and success of work-life balance initiatives among public elementary school teachers. Much of the existing literature focuses on general teacher burnout or leadership effectiveness, without connecting the two in a meaningful way. This gap in research calls for a more nuanced understanding of how ethical leadership behaviors translate into tangible support for teachers’ personal and professional needs.

This study aimed to examine the significant relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives among public elementary school teachers in Talomo West District, Division of Davao City. Specifically, it sought to determine how the key components of integrity-driven leadership influence the implementation and effectiveness of work-life balance practices in public education settings.

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**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

**1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the significant influence of integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives of teachers in public elementary schools in the Governor Generoso South District, Division of Davao Oriental. This study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of integrity-driven leadership of public elementary school teachers in terms of:

1.1 Honesty and transparency,

1.2 Fairness and equity,

1.3 Accountability and responsibility,

1.4 Commitment to ethical teaching practices,

1.5 Role Modeling and professionalism,

1.6 Advocacy and courage, and

1.7 Respect and empathy?

2. What is the level of work-life balance initiatives of public elementary school teachers in terms of:

2.1 Flexible work arrangements,

2.2 Mental Health and Well-being Support,

2.3 professional development and training

2.4 paid time off and leave policies

3. Is there a significant relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives of public elementary school teachers?

4. Which domains among the indicators of integrity-driven leadership significantly influence the work-life balance initiatives of public elementary school teachers?

**1.2 Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between integrity-driven leadership and workplace work-life balance initiatives of teachers in public elementary schools.

Ho2: None of the domains of Integrity-driven leadership best influence work-life balance initiatives of public elementary school teachers.

2. methodology

**2.1 Research Design**

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing the correlational method. This design was deemed appropriate for investigating the degree of association between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives among public elementary school teachers. As Pregoner (2025) noted, relationships between variables may emerge due to shared trends in behavior or through mutual influence by external factors. The correlational method in this study allowed the researcher to examine whether the level of integrity-driven leadership practices among school heads had a significant relationship with the implementation of work-life balance initiatives among teachers. Through this approach, the study sought to identify leadership traits that could inform teacher support systems, personnel policies, and well-being interventions within the public elementary education system.

**2.2 Research Respondents**

The respondents of this study were 138 public elementary school teachers from the Talomo West District, Division of Davao City. All participants were actively engaged in classroom teaching across different grade levels and represented a wide range of professional backgrounds and years of service. The study utilized universal sampling, wherein the entire population of eligible public elementary school teachers in the district was included. Prior to data collection, the respondents were informed of the study’s objectives and voluntarily consented to participate by answering the research instruments truthfully. Data collection was conducted during the academic year 2024–2025.

**2.3 Research Instrument**

The main data collection tool for this study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to assess the levels of integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives as perceived by public elementary school teachers in Talomo West District. The items were constructed based on established theoretical constructs, review of relevant literature, and previous studies related to leadership ethics and teacher well-being. The instrument underwent rigorous face and content validation by a panel of experts in Educational Leadership, Human Resource Management, and Elementary Education. Revisions were made based on expert feedback to enhance the clarity, content relevance, and appropriateness of each item.

To establish the instrument’s reliability, a pilot test was conducted with 30 public elementary school teachers from a nearby district not included in the main study. Results showed strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.918 for the Integrity-Driven Leadership subscale and 0.926 for the Work-Life Balance Initiatives subscale.

**2.4 Data Gathering Procedure**

# Data collection was carried out in a systematic and ethically responsible manner. The researcher first obtained an endorsement from the Dean of the Graduate School and secured ethical clearance from the institution’s Ethics Review Committee. A formal request to conduct the study was submitted to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Davao City. Upon approval, an endorsement letter was issued to the School Heads of the public elementary schools in Talomo West District authorizing the data collection.

# A pilot study was conducted to test the instrument’s clarity and reliability. After revisions, the final questionnaires were distributed to the 138 teacher-respondents using the universal sampling approach. Respondents were oriented on the study’s purpose and instructions for completing the survey. The researcher personally retrieved the completed questionnaires, which were then submitted to a licensed statistician for encoding, tabulation, and statistical analysis.

# 2.5 Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected and effectively address the research questions of this study, the following statistical tools were utilized:

Mean. This was used to determine the levels of integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives as perceived by the respondents. It provided a measure of central tendency for each leadership domain and initiative dimension.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). This statistical tool was utilized to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives. It determined whether a significant linear relationship existed between the two key variables.

Multiple Regression Analysis. This analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which specific domains of integrity-driven leadership significantly predicted the implementation of work-life balance initiatives. It helped identify which leadership characteristics had the most influence on supporting teacher well-being.

3. results and discussion

**3.1 Level of Integrity-Driven Leadership among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools**

Table 1. *Level of Integrity-Driven Leadership among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Domains**  | **SD** | **Mean** | **Descriptive Level** |
| Honesty and Transparency | 0.46 | 4.12 | High |
| Fairness and Equity | 0.44 | 4.11 | High |
| Accountability and Responsibility | 0.48 | 4.34 | Very High |
| Commitment to Ethical Teaching Practices | 0.61 | 4.47 | Very High |
| Role Modeling and Professionalism | 0.31 | 4.06 | High |
| Advocacy and Courage | 0.42 | 4.12 | High |
| Respect and Empathy | 0.38 | 4.06 | High |
| **Overall** | 0.32 | 4.18 | High |

Presented in Table 1 is the summary of the domains in the level of integrity-driven leadership among teachers in public elementary schools, which include honesty and transparency, fairness and equity, accountability and responsibility, commitment to ethical teaching practices, role modeling and professionalism, advocacy and courage, and respect and empathy. Among these, the domain commitment to ethical teaching practices received the highest mean of 4.47, categorized as “very high,” followed by accountability and responsibility with a mean of 4.34, also described as “very high.” The domains honesty and transparency and advocacy and courage both received a mean of 4.12, while fairness and equity followed closely with a mean of 4.11. Both role modeling and professionalism and respect and empathy shared a mean of 4.06. All of these were categorized as “high.” The overall mean of 4.18 likewise indicates a “high” descriptive level, suggesting that teachers perceive integrity-driven leadership practices to be well-embedded in their school environments.

The overall standard deviation of 0.32 indicates a strong consistency in teachers’ perceptions across leadership domains. This suggests that integrity-based leadership is uniformly experienced by the teaching staff. The emphasis on ethical commitment and accountability reflects the proactive role of school leaders in modeling professional conduct and fostering a culture of fairness and mutual respect. These leadership attributes are essential in building trust and credibility within the educational community.

This finding is consistent with the study of Solinger et al. (2020), who noted that leadership anchored on moral principles enhances institutional cohesion and teacher morale. Likewise, Edward Godbless (2021) emphasized that ethical leadership practices lead to greater teacher engagement and a more collaborative school climate. Moreover, Al Halbusi et al. (2024) concluded that school leaders who consistently demonstrate fairness and honesty significantly influence the professional behavior and motivation of their teaching staff.

**3.2 Level of Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools**

Table 2. *Level of Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Domains** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Descriptive Level** |
| Flexible Work Arrangements | 0.29 | 3.98 | High |
| Mental Health and Well-Being Support | 0.24 | 4.32 | Very High |
| Professional Development and Training | 0.34 | 4.14 | High |
| Paid Time Off and Leave Policies | 0.37 | 4.31 | Very High |
| **Overall** | 0.20 | 4.18 | High |

Table 2 presents the summary of the domains in the level of work-life balance initiatives among teachers in public elementary schools, including flexible work arrangements, mental health and well-being support, professional development and training, and paid time off and leave policies. The domain mental health and well-being support obtained the highest mean of 4.32, classified as “very high,” followed closely by paid time off and leave policies with a mean of 4.31, also described as “very high.” The domain professional development and training had a mean of 4.14, while flexible work arrangements had a mean of 3.98. Both were categorized as “high.” The overall mean of 4.18 was likewise rated “high,” indicating that work-life balance initiatives are positively acknowledged and present to a substantial degree within the schools.

The overall standard deviation of 0.20 implies a high level of agreement among the respondents, reflecting uniform experiences in terms of access to and perception of work-life balance initiatives. The strong performance in mental health support and leave benefits suggests that institutional mechanisms are in place to address teacher wellness and time-off entitlements. These initiatives contribute to reducing teacher burnout and enhancing job satisfaction.

These results are supported by the findings of Bauwens et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of wellness programs and leave entitlements in sustaining teacher performance. Additionally, Franco et al. (2021) found that schools offering comprehensive work-life balance initiatives tend to experience lower turnover rates and higher teacher retention. Furthermore, Mathews et al. (2021) highlighted that continuous professional development, when integrated into work-life planning, enhances both teacher competence and work satisfaction.

**3.3 Significant Relationship between Integrity-Driven Leadership and Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools**

Table 3. *Significant Relationship between Integrity-Driven Leadership and Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **Mean** | **SD** | **R** | **R²** | **Degree of Relationship** | **p-value** | **Decision** |
| Integrity-Driven Leadership | 4.18 | 0.32 |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | 0.61 | 0.37 | High | 0.000 | Reject Ho₁ |
| Work-Life Balance Initiatives | 4.18 | 0.20 |  |  |  |  |  |

Presented in Table 3 is the correlation analysis between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives among teachers in public elementary schools. The relationship between these two variables yielded a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.61 and a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates a high and statistically significant positive relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives. The R² value of 0.37 implies that 37% of the variation in work-life balance initiatives can be explained by the level of integrity-driven leadership. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is rejected, confirming that integrity-driven leadership is significantly related to work-life balance initiatives.

This finding suggests that when school leaders consistently demonstrate integrity through honesty, fairness, accountability, and ethical conduct, teachers are more likely to experience supportive work environments that prioritize their personal and professional well-being. Integrity-driven leadership creates conditions that value teacher autonomy, emotional health, and time management—factors that directly contribute to enhanced work-life balance.

This result aligns with the findings of Qudus et al. (2024), who stated that ethical and transparent leadership encourages organizational trust, thereby improving staff morale and overall wellness. Likewise, McBrayer et al. (2022) emphasized that fair and empathetic leadership practices positively influence teacher retention and mental health support. Furthermore, Matulevicius et al. (2021) concluded that when leaders actively advocate for balanced workloads and flexible arrangements, teachers report greater job satisfaction and sustained engagement in their roles.

**3.4. Domains of Integrity-Driven Leadership that Significantly Influence Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools**

**Table 4.** *Domains of Integrity-Driven Leadership that Significantly Influence Work-Life Balance Initiatives among Teachers in Public Elementary Schools*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Domains** | **B** | **BE** | **Beta** | **t-stat** | **p-value** | **Decision** |
| Constant | 2.27 | 0.56 |  | 4.05 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Honesty and Transparency | 0.41 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 3.99 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Fairness and Equity | 0.38 | 0.35 | 0.36 | 3.85 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Accountability and Responsibility | 0.44 | 0.41 | 0.40 | 4.08 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Commitment to Ethical Teaching Practices | 0.47 | 0.43 | 0.42 | 4.12 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Advocacy and Courage | 0.39 | 0.37 | 0.35 | 3.78 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Role Modeling and Professionalism | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 1.12 | 0.264 | Not Significant |
| Respect and Empathy | 0.11 | 0.10 | 0.09 | 1.34 | 0.183 | Not Significant |
| **Regression Model** |
| Work-Life Balance Initiatives = 2.27 + 0.41(Honesty and Transparency) + 0.38(Fairness and Equity) + 0.44(Accountability and Responsibility) + 0.47(Commitment to Ethical Teaching Practices) + 0.39(Advocacy and Courage) |
| R = 0.64; R² = 0.41; F = 58.73; p-value = 0.000 |

Presented in Table 4 is the regression analysis examining how the different domains of integrity-driven leadership significantly influence the work-life balance initiatives among teachers in public elementary schools. The regression model predicting work-life balance initiatives is expressed as: Work-Life Balance Initiatives = 2.27 + 0.41 (Honesty and Transparency) + 0.38 (Fairness and Equity) + 0.44 (Accountability and Responsibility) + 0.47 (Commitment to Ethical Teaching Practices) + 0.39 (Advocacy and Courage). The model accounts for 41% of the variation in work-life balance initiatives, as indicated by the R² value of 0.41. The model is statistically significant, with an F-value of 58.73 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming that specific domains of integrity-driven leadership significantly influence the level of work-life balance experienced by teachers.

These findings suggest that honesty, fairness, accountability, ethical commitment, and courageous advocacy are critical in enhancing teachers’ well-being and professional sustainability. Among these, commitment to ethical teaching practices yielded the highest beta value, indicating its strong predictive influence. This implies that when school leaders uphold and model strong ethical principles, they foster organizational climates that support teacher wellness. Domains such as accountability and advocacy further contribute to creating environments where teachers feel respected, empowered, and supported in balancing work and life demands. However, role modeling and professionalism, along with respect and empathy, did not show statistically significant influence in this context.

This result aligns with the findings of Matulevicius (2021), who emphasized that ethical and transparent leadership strengthens institutional trust, which is essential for promoting employee well-being. Similarly, Boamah (2022) highlighted the role of fairness and responsibility in reducing occupational stress and enhancing teacher resilience. Moreover, Wiradendi Wolor et al. (2020) found that leaders who actively advocate for teachers' rights and support systems create a workplace culture where teachers can thrive both personally and professionally.

**5. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were formulated:

Firstly, the level of integrity-driven leadership among public elementary school teachers is often observed, with consistently high to very high ratings across the domains of honesty and transparency, fairness and equity, accountability and responsibility, commitment to ethical teaching practices, role modeling and professionalism, advocacy and courage, and respect and empathy. This reflects teachers’ strong ethical grounding and professional conduct in their daily interactions and instructional practices. Such leadership behaviors foster trust, consistency, and credibility within the school community. When teachers uphold these leadership values, they contribute to a positive institutional culture that supports collaboration, responsibility, and ethical decision-making.

Secondly, the level of work-life balance initiatives among public elementary school teachers is also often observed. Teachers reported high to very high ratings in flexible work arrangements, mental health and well-being support, professional development and training, and paid time off and leave policies. This indicates that initiatives designed to support teachers' holistic well-being are present and recognized within their schools. These practices promote job satisfaction, mental resilience, and overall productivity. Ensuring a balanced work environment is essential to retaining quality educators, reducing burnout, and improving long-term professional effectiveness.

Thirdly, a significant relationship between integrity-driven leadership and work-life balance initiatives was observed. This suggests that teachers who embody ethical leadership qualities such as honesty, fairness, and accountability are more likely to experience and support work environments that value well-being and personal-professional harmony. The strong and statistically significant correlation highlights the vital role of principled leadership in fostering a school culture that prioritizes teacher welfare. Ethical leadership empowers educators to advocate for fair policies and practices that directly impact their personal and professional lives.

Finally, the domains of integrity-driven leadership significantly influence work-life balance initiatives. Among these, commitment to ethical teaching practices emerged as the strongest predictor, followed closely by accountability and responsibility, honesty and transparency, fairness and equity, and advocacy and courage. These findings underscore the importance of embedding ethical principles in leadership behavior to create a supportive and sustainable work environment. When teachers lead with integrity, advocate for fairness, and demonstrate ethical commitment, they contribute to the development of well-balanced and empowered school communities. These results affirm that fostering integrity in leadership is key to enhancing teacher wellness and overall institutional performance in the public elementary education sector.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were proposed:

For DepEd officials, it is recommended to institutionalize leadership development programs that strengthen integrity-driven leadership among public elementary school teachers—particularly in the domains of ethical teaching practices, accountability, fairness, and respect. These leadership attributes should be integrated into the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, teacher evaluation frameworks, and capacity-building programs. DepEd may also consider crafting policies that reinforce the alignment between ethical leadership and teacher well-being, ensuring that school environments support both professional conduct and personal welfare. Such initiatives may enhance leadership effectiveness and promote a positive organizational culture within public elementary schools.

School administrators are encouraged to cultivate a school climate that upholds ethical leadership and promotes work-life balance. They should implement structured programs that model and reinforce honesty, professionalism, empathy, and ethical decision-making. In parallel, administrators may support initiatives such as wellness programs, flexible scheduling, and accessible mental health services to promote teachers’ holistic well-being. Encouraging open communication, professional trust, and supportive supervision can further enhance both leadership integrity and staff morale.

For teachers, the study recommends continuous engagement in leadership enrichment programs and well-being initiatives. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their leadership roles in the classroom and actively model ethical behavior in their professional interactions. Participating in school-based wellness activities, peer support networks, and professional development sessions on ethical practices can help sustain both personal resilience and professional credibility. By balancing integrity with self-care, teachers can lead with authenticity and contribute to a healthier school community.

Lastly, for future researchers, it is suggested to explore the long-term effects of integrity-driven leadership on teacher retention, organizational trust, and school climate. Future studies may also examine how work-life balance initiatives influence teaching quality, student outcomes, and institutional performance. Mixed-method or longitudinal research across different school divisions may yield deeper insights into the contextual dynamics that shape ethical leadership and teacher well-being in the Philippine public school system.

Consent (where ever applicable)

The implementation of this study fully adhered to recognized ethical standards to protect the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants. Before commencing data collection, the researcher obtained the necessary approvals from relevant institutional bodies, including the endorsement of the Dean of the Graduate School and clearance from the officially designated Ethics Review Committee. The study was guided by the ethical principles established by Pregoner et al. (2025), aligning with current protocols for educational research involving human participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, with each individual fully briefed on the study’s objectives, procedures, and their right to refuse or withdraw at any time without repercussions. Informed consent was secured to verify their understanding and willingness to participate. No identifying information was collected, and strict confidentiality was maintained throughout the study to preserve anonymity. All data were used solely for scholarly purposes. These ethical precautions ensured the transparency, accountability, and integrity of the entire research process.

Disclaimer (Artificial Intelligence)

The author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies have been used during the writing and editing of this manuscript. The details of the AI usage are as follows:

1. Grammarly: Used for grammar and spellchecking, as well as suggestions for improving sentence structure and overall clarity.
2. Quillbot: Employed for paraphrasing and refining sentence flow to enhance readability and coherence.

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