

Determining role of administrators' situational leadership styles in organizational happiness of public elementary schools in Dupax del Norte I District

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of situational leadership styles of school administrators on the organizational happiness of teachers in the Dupax del Norte I District during the academic year 2024-2025. A quantitative descriptive–correlational research design was employed, utilizing validated instruments to measure four situational leadership styles—directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating—and five organizational happiness dimensions: supportive relationships, meaningful work, inclusive environment, learning and development, and engagement and empowerment. Data were gathered from 82 teachers across ten public elementary schools and analyzed using mean, Pearson r , and Coefficient of Determination at 0.05 significance level. Results indicated a high level of leadership, with coaching rated highest, followed by supporting, directing, and delegating. Organizational happiness was likewise rated high, with engagement and empowerment emerging as the top dimension. A strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between situational leadership styles and organizational happiness, with leadership styles accounting at 81.54% determination degree. All individual leadership styles demonstrated significant positive correlations with the happiness dimensions. Based on the findings, two training programs were developed: Leading with Purpose for school administrators to enhance adaptive leadership, and Empowering Educators through Organizational Happiness for teachers to promote well-being and engagement. The study concludes that adaptive leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a thriving school culture and recommends integrating leadership and well-being initiatives into institutional professional development plans, with further validation in diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: educational management intervention, organizational happiness, situational leadership styles

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1. Introduction

Effective leadership is not just about guiding an organization toward its goals. It is also about ensuring that employees feel valued and motivated in the process. In the context of situational leadership, it means adapting leadership styles based on employees' needs, competencies, and levels of commitment. A leader who understands when to be directive, supportive, or delegative creates an environment where individuals not only achieve objectives but also experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose. This balance between direction and emotional well-being fosters a positive workplace culture, enhancing both productivity and employee satisfaction. Situational leadership further reinforces the idea that different situations call for different leadership approaches to maintain both momentum and morale. For instance, when employees face uncertainty, a leader using a coaching or supporting style can provide reassurance and guidance, ensuring that change is embraced rather than resisted. Conversely, in times of stability, a delegating approach can empower employees, boosting their confidence and sense of autonomy. By facilitating movement in the right direction while ensuring people "feel good about it," leaders build trust and commitment, ultimately strengthening organizational happiness. A workplace where employees are both aligned with the company's vision and emotionally engaged leads to higher retention, innovation, and long-term success.

Organizational happiness refers to the overall well-being, satisfaction, and positive emotional state of employees within a workplace, influenced by leadership, work environment, and company culture. According to Fisher (2018), organizational happiness is a key factor in employee engagement, motivation, and productivity, as happy employees tend to be more committed and perform better. It encompasses elements such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, recognition, and a sense of purpose within the organization. Leaders play a crucial role in fostering organizational happiness by creating a supportive and empowering environment where employees feel valued and motivated. Happiness in the workplace is not just an individual experience but a collective phenomenon that contributes to organizational success. Research suggests that organizations with high levels of employee happiness benefit from lower turnover rates, improved teamwork, and increased innovation (Diener et al., 2017). Situational leadership, which involves adapting leadership styles based on employees' needs and circumstances, can enhance organizational happiness by ensuring employees receive the right level of support and guidance. When leaders create a culture of trust, open communication, and meaningful work, employees experience greater well-being, leading to a thriving and high-performing organization.

Organizational happiness is a vital factor in workplace success, as it directly influences employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance. According to Fisher (2020), happiness at work is not merely the absence of dissatisfaction but the presence of positive emotions, engagement, and a sense of purpose. A happy work environment fosters creativity, productivity, and lower turnover rates, making it a key driver of organizational success. When employees feel valued, supported, and aligned with the mission of the organization, they are more likely to contribute positively to the workplace. Organizational happiness is shaped by factors such as meaningful work, work-life balance, recognition, and a culture of trust and open communication (Diener et al., 2017). These elements create an environment where employees thrive, leading to a more resilient and high-performing organization.

Leaders play a critical role in fostering organizational happiness by shaping workplace culture, setting the tone for engagement, and ensuring employees feel valued. The situational leadership model suggests that leaders should adapt their style based on employees' needs, providing the right balance of guidance and autonomy (Hersey et al., 2022). Supportive leadership, characterized by empathy, recognition, and clear communication, helps employees feel secure and motivated in their roles. Leaders who actively promote well-being initiatives, encourage

work-life balance, and foster a culture of collaboration contribute significantly to employee happiness (Kurtessis et al., 2017). When leadership prioritizes happiness, organizations experience increased employee loyalty, innovation, and long-term success. Thus, leaders who recognize and cultivate organizational happiness create not only a positive work environment but also a sustainable and competitive organization.

The presence of a research gap on organizational happiness and situational leadership at Dupax del Norte I District highlights the need for deeper exploration into how leadership styles influence employee well-being and workplace satisfaction in this specific educational setting. While existing studies emphasize the importance of leadership adaptability in fostering a positive work environment (Hersey et al., 2022), there is limited research examining how situational leadership directly impacts organizational happiness among educators and staff in Dupax del Norte I District. Given the unique challenges faced by school administrators and teachers such as workload pressures, policy changes, and resource constraints, it is important to investigate whether the application of situational leadership strategies effectively enhances job satisfaction and motivation in this context. Addressing this gap would provide valuable insights into leadership practices that promote a more supportive and productive educational environment.

Furthermore, the lack of localized studies on organizational happiness within the district creates an opportunity for research that considers cultural, structural, and socio-economic factors influencing workplace well-being. Most existing literature focuses on corporate or urban school settings, which may not fully capture the experiences of educators in rural districts like Dupax del Norte I. Researching this gap can help determine whether leaders in the district adjust their leadership styles based on employees' readiness and needs, as suggested by the situational leadership model. Additionally, it can shed light on whether these adaptive leadership approaches contribute to overall organizational happiness, retention rates, and teaching effectiveness. By addressing this research gap, policymakers and educational leaders can develop targeted strategies to enhance leadership effectiveness and employee satisfaction within the district.

Addressing these issues aligns directly with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (Quality Education) by promoting teacher well-being, professional growth, and instructional effectiveness. It also supports SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) through equitable policies, transparent communication, and inclusive decision-making processes that build trust within educational institutions. At the same time, it resonates with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by underscoring the importance of collaboration among school leaders, educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders in co-creating solutions that enhance school culture and performance. In this context, the research on organizational happiness and situational leadership practices in the Dupax del Norte I District reflects a strong alignment with these three interconnected goals, highlighting their relevance in shaping effective and sustainable educational systems.

Anchored on SDG 4, which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, this study underscores the role of teacher well-being in achieving meaningful learning outcomes. A supportive and positive work environment motivates educators, enhances job satisfaction, and directly impacts student engagement and academic performance. As emphasized by UNESCO (2017), improving the professional fulfillment of educators strengthens teaching effectiveness, creating better learning experiences for students. By exploring how situational leadership practices influence organizational happiness, this research identifies leadership strategies that can cultivate a motivated, committed, and high-performing teaching workforce.

In line with SDG 16, which advocates for effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions, the study highlights the importance of adaptive leadership in building trust, fostering open communication, and ensuring fair, supportive workplace policies in educational settings. Situational leadership can help school leaders create an inclusive, responsive, and equitable institutional culture that promotes peace and stability within the organization (Hersey et al., 2022). Also consistent with SDG 17, which emphasizes multi-stakeholder partnerships, this research recognizes that achieving educational excellence and institutional harmony requires collaboration among school

heads, teachers, local education authorities, and community stakeholders. The findings can inform joint initiatives aimed at enhancing teacher support systems, developing leadership training programs, and fostering shared responsibility for school improvement.

By addressing gaps in leadership effectiveness and workplace happiness, this study contributes to the creation of a thriving, collaborative, and equitable school environment—strengthening the local education system’s capacity to meet SDG 4, SDG 16, and SDG 17 in an integrated and sustainable manner. This research is also aligning with the National Research Agenda for Teacher Education (NRATE) as it explores key factors that influence teacher motivation, well-being, and leadership effectiveness within the educational system. One of the priority areas of NRATE is the improvement of teacher quality and well-being, recognizing that teachers' work environments and job satisfaction directly impact their effectiveness in the classroom. According to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2017), research on teacher well-being and leadership is essential for creating policies and programs that enhance the professional growth and retention of educators. By examining how situational leadership influences organizational happiness, this study provides evidence-based insights into leadership practices that support teachers' job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to the broader goal of strengthening teacher education and professional development.

Furthermore, NRATE emphasizes leadership and governance in education as a critical research priority, particularly in understanding how different leadership styles affect teacher performance and institutional success. Situational leadership, which involves adapting leadership approaches based on the needs and competencies of teachers, is a key factor in ensuring that educators receive the necessary guidance and support at different stages of their careers (Hersey et al., 2022). By addressing the research gap on leadership adaptability and organizational happiness in the Dupax del Norte I District, this study aligns with NRATE objective of promoting effective educational leadership that fosters a supportive and thriving teaching environment. The findings of this research can serve as a basis for leadership training programs, policy recommendations, and institutional reforms aimed at enhancing teacher well-being, professional fulfillment, and overall school performance. Moreover, this research on organizational happiness and situational leadership practices at Dupax del Norte I District is strongly aligned with the research agenda of the Department of Education (DepEd), particularly its focus on human development. DepEd emphasizes the well-being, motivation, and professional growth of educators as essential components of quality education, recognizing that teachers’ work environments and leadership support directly impact their performance and job satisfaction (DepEd, 2016).

By examining how situational leadership affects organizational happiness, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how adaptive leadership styles influence teacher well-being. When educators experience high levels of job satisfaction and emotional support, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and effective in delivering quality instruction. This research, therefore, supports DepEd goal of improving teacher welfare and ensuring that schools provide a positive and empowering work environment. This research on organizational happiness and situational leadership practices at Dupax del Norte I District is also aligned with the research agenda of Nueva Vizcaya State University (NVSU) and the College of Teacher Education (CTE), particularly in advancing educational leadership, teacher well-being, and institutional development. NVSU research priorities emphasize the need for studies that contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning experiences, professional development, and effective school governance. Since organizational happiness directly impacts teacher performance and retention, this study provides essential insights into how school leaders can foster a positive and supportive work environment. By investigating the relationship between situational leadership and teacher well-being, the research supports commitment to improving the overall quality of education in Nueva Vizcaya through evidence-based policies and practices.

Additionally, the CTE prioritizes research on teacher development, school leadership, and instructional effectiveness, recognizing that leadership styles influence educators' job satisfaction and motivation. Situational leadership, which involves adapting leadership strategies based on the needs and competencies of teachers, is a crucial factor in sustaining a motivated and high-performing teaching workforce. By exploring this leadership

approach in the context of Dupax del Norte I District, the study aligns with the mission to produce research that enhances educational leadership and governance. The findings can contribute to the development of professional training programs, leadership frameworks, and institutional policies that strengthen school management and teacher support systems, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes in the province.

Teachers in Dupax del Norte I District may encounter challenges affecting both organizational happiness and the effectiveness of situational leadership practices. These challenges include perceived inequities in workload distribution, limited opportunities for professional development in areas such as emotional intelligence, and leadership styles that may not fully align with teachers' needs. Additional concerns such as communication gaps, resistance to change, and insufficient resources can further diminish job satisfaction and overall teaching effectiveness. When leadership approaches fail to match the professional readiness and personal needs of teachers, motivation often declines, leading to lower morale and reduced organizational harmony. The observed concerns among teachers, the existing research gap, and the alignment with these three SDGs collectively provided a strong rationale and motivation for undertaking this research. By identifying and addressing leadership and workplace factors that impact teacher happiness, the study seeks to contribute to a more positive, equitable, and productive school environment in the district.

2. Related Literature

This research investigation is grounded in two prominent theoretical frameworks: the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership (LCTL), developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969), and the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). These theories provide the foundational basis for the study, guiding its conceptual framework and analytical approach. A detailed discussion of their relevance and application to the present research will be presented in the following pages. The Life Cycle Theory of Leadership (LCTL), developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard in 1969, serves as a foundational framework for understanding leadership effectiveness in relation to the maturity level of followers. This theory, later refined into the Situational Leadership Model, emphasizes that there is no single "best" leadership style. Instead, effective leadership depends on a leader's ability to adapt their approach based on the readiness and competence of their subordinates.

The Life Cycle Theory posits that leadership is a dynamic process influenced by two primary behavioral dimensions: task behavior, which refers to the extent to which a leader provides direction, structure, and guidance to their followers, and relationship behavior, which focuses on the degree of emotional support, encouragement, and interaction a leader provides. Based on the combination of these dimensions, Hersey and Blanchard identify four distinct leadership styles: Directing (High Task, Low Relationship), which is most effective when followers have low competence and confidence, requiring leaders to provide clear directives and structured guidance; Coaching (High Task, High Relationship), which is used when followers have some competence but still need motivation and encouragement, with leaders offering both direction and emotional support to develop abilities and confidence; Supporting (Low Task, High Relationship), which is suitable for employees who have the necessary skills but may lack confidence or need additional motivation, with leaders focusing on building relationships and encouraging participation in decision-making; and Delegating (Low Task, Low Relationship), appropriate for highly skilled and self-motivated employees, where leaders adopt a hands-off approach, offering minimal supervision and trusting employees to perform tasks independently.

In the present investigation, the situational leadership style is explored as a key research variable, drawing upon the principles of LCTL. The study examined how leaders adapt their behavior based on employees' competence, motivation, and autonomy, factors that significantly impact workplace dynamics, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. By integrating LCTL, the research aims to assess how leaders modify their leadership style to match their subordinates' development levels, determine the effectiveness of adaptive leadership styles in different organizational settings, and investigate the correlation between leadership adaptability and employee performance, motivation, and job satisfaction. LCTL supports the situational leadership style by reinforcing the idea that leadership is not a fixed trait but an adaptive process that evolves based on the needs of the workforce.

This adaptability is crucial in today's complex and rapidly changing work environments, making situational leadership a valuable research focus.

The Life Cycle Theory of Leadership provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding how situational leadership operates in diverse organizational contexts. By examining leaders' ability to assess and respond to employee readiness, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of leadership effectiveness and its role in enhancing workplace outcomes. Effective leadership is contingent upon the leader's ability to adapt their style to the readiness and competence of their followers. This adaptability involves adjusting leadership behaviors—such as task-oriented and relationship-oriented actions—to align with the developmental levels of team members. The theory mentioned earlier emphasizes that no single leadership style is universally effective; instead, leaders must assess the situation and the needs of their followers to determine the most appropriate approach.

As considered in this study, situational leadership involves four styles to include directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. Directing as a situational leadership style is characterized by high directive and low supportive behavior, where the leader provides clear guidance and instructions on what, when, where, and how tasks should be completed. The leader is responsible for problem-solving and decision-making, and communication tends to be one-way, with a high degree of control and monitoring over the follower's actions. According to Graeff (2015), the directing style is most effective when followers are inexperienced or lack the necessary skills, necessitating a more structured approach to leadership. The leader's focus remains on ensuring that tasks are completed efficiently and correctly, as emphasized by Northouse (2018), who highlights that this style works best in environments where precise tasks are needed to be completed quickly.

Coaching as a leadership style combines both high directive and high supportive behavior. The leader still provides direction and clear guidance but encourages active participation from followers, allowing them to contribute ideas and voice concerns. While decision-making remains largely the leader's responsibility, communication is two-way, and the leader offers emotional and practical support. Research by Avolio and Walumbwa (2018) shows that coaching is most effective when followers are motivated but lack confidence or experience, as it balances guidance with developmental support. This style has been linked to fostering follower growth and improving team morale (Yukl, 2017). Leaders adopting this style can build stronger relationships with their followers, which can, in turn, increase motivation and engagement (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 2020).

On the other hand, in supporting as a situational leadership style, leaders shift toward high supportive and low directive behavior, providing recognition and encouragement while giving followers more autonomy in decision-making. The leader's role is primarily to facilitate and provide emotional support rather than direct tasks. As suggested by Blanchard (2019), this style is effective when followers possess the necessary skills and knowledge but may require support to maintain motivation and overcome challenges. The leader's main objective is to enhance followers' self-confidence by providing feedback and offering assistance when necessary. A study by Riggio (2016) found that supportive leaders help cultivate an environment of trust and empowerment, which increases employee satisfaction and performance in knowledgeable and skilled teams.

Delegating as a situational leadership style is characterized by low directive and low supportive behavior, where leaders hand over responsibility for decision-making to the followers, allowing them to manage tasks independently. Once mutual agreement on the approach is made, the leader relinquishes control, trusting the followers' competence and ability to deliver results. Research by Hackman and Wageman (2017) shows that delegating is particularly effective when followers are highly competent and self-motivated, capable of managing their work with minimal oversight. Leaders who employ this style contribute to the development of autonomy in their followers, encouraging innovation and self-reliance (Northouse, 2018). This approach is linked to a higher level of trust between leaders and followers and can significantly boost organizational productivity and morale.

Recent studies have explored the application of situational leadership in various contexts not only in the education sector. For instance, Thompson and Glasø (2018) examined the theory from a leader-follower

congruence perspective, highlighting the importance of alignment between leaders' styles and followers' expectations. Their research underscores that effective leadership requires understanding and responding to the unique needs of team members.

In the healthcare sector, situational leadership has been applied to enhance management practices. A study by Hinojosa et al. (2021) discusses how the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the adoption of situational leadership to address rapid changes in the workplace. The research suggests that cultivating situational leadership can mitigate employee exhaustion and improve motivation and job satisfaction during challenging times. Additionally, research by Mansour and Elziny (2020) assessed the impact of situational leadership on employee performance in quick-service restaurants. Their findings indicate that managers who effectively apply situational leadership behaviors can enhance job fit and motivation among employees, leading to improved performance. These studies collectively demonstrate the versatility and applicability of situational leadership styles across diverse fields, emphasizing the need for leaders to adapt their styles to the specific needs of their followers and organizational contexts.

Another theory considered in this present study is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) where organizational happiness as research construct is anchored. This is a psychological theory that explains human motivation based on three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these needs are satisfied, individuals experience higher levels of motivation, well-being, and engagement, leading to greater organizational happiness. Conversely, when these needs are thwarted, employees may experience dissatisfaction, stress, and disengagement (Ryan & Deci, 2018). Autonomy refers to the sense of control and volition in one's actions. In organizational settings, employees who feel they have the freedom to make decisions and contribute meaningfully to their work are more likely to experience job satisfaction and happiness (Slemp et al., 2018). Research suggests that workplaces that promote autonomy, such as those encouraging flexible work arrangements and participatory decision-making, tend to have more engaged and satisfied employees (Deci et al., 2017).

Competence relates to the need to feel effective in one's work and capable of achieving goals. Employees who perceive their skills are valued and continuously developed experience higher levels of happiness and job fulfillment (Gagné et al., 2018). Organizations that invest in employee training, skill development, and constructive feedback help fulfill this psychological need, leading to improved performance and workplace satisfaction (Van den Broeck et al., 2019). Relatedness pertains to the need to feel connected and valued in a social environment. Employees who experience strong workplace relationships, support from colleagues, and recognition from leadership tend to be more engaged and satisfied (Olafsen et al., 2020). Studies indicate that fostering a culture of collaboration and positive interpersonal interactions enhances well-being and overall organizational happiness (Deci & Ryan, 2018).

Organizations that integrate SDT principles into their leadership and HR practices create a work environment where employees thrive. Research has shown that workplaces that prioritize autonomy, competence, and relatedness experience lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and improved overall well-being (Van den Broeck et al., 2018). Additionally, SDT-based interventions, such as employee recognition programs and participative leadership, have been linked to greater job satisfaction and psychological well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2020). However, in this present investigation, organizational happiness will be based from the SMILE Model or research framework developed by Salvosa et al. (2024). In recent years, organizational happiness has emerged as a pivotal factor influencing both employee well-being and organizational success. Beyond merely enhancing job satisfaction and retention rates, a positive work environment fosters heightened levels of productivity and innovation. At the core of this phenomenon lies the imperative to develop a strong research framework capable of effectively measuring and analyzing its foundational components. The SMILE model represents a comprehensive framework for conceptualizing organizational happiness across diverse sectors. This model identifies five fundamental dimensions—Supportive Relationships, Meaningful Work, Inclusive Environment, Learning and Development, and Engagement and Empowerment. Each plays a role in shaping employees' overall happiness and satisfaction within an organization.

As organizations strive to optimize their human capital, understanding and enhancing organizational happiness through the SMILE model becomes imperative. By employing this framework, organizations can systematically assess and address the factors that contribute to employee happiness, thereby creating environments that are not only conducive to personal well-being but also conducive to achieving organizational goals. This integrated approach not only aligns with theoretical underpinnings but also provides practical insights into cultivating a positive workplace culture that promotes sustained success and growth (Salvosa et al., 2024). Supportive relationship is the first dimension of organizational happiness based on the SMILE Model. Supportive workplace relationships are foundational to organizational happiness, as they cultivate a sense of belonging, trust, and collaboration among employees. When employees feel connected and valued, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and resilience in the face of challenges (Colbert et al., 2016). Research by Bakker and Demerouti (2017) highlights that positive social interactions in the workplace not only enhance morale but also act as a buffer against job-related stress. Organizations can promote supportive relationships through team-building activities, mentorship programs, and transparent communication channels, ensuring employees feel appreciated and motivated (Eby et al., 2019).

Another dimension is meaningful work that refers to the alignment between an employee's values and the goals of the organization, allowing individuals to derive purpose from their roles. According to Allan et al. (2019), employees who find meaning in their work exhibit higher levels of engagement, motivation, and job commitment. Meaningful work is not merely about completing tasks but understanding how one's contributions positively impact the organization and society (Bailey & Madden, 2017). Organizations can enhance meaningful work by clearly articulating purpose, offering skill development opportunities, and recognizing employee contributions (Rosso et al., 2020). When employees find fulfillment in their roles, their job satisfaction increases, leading to greater organizational performance. Inclusive environment as a dimension of organizational happiness is essential for fostering diversity, equity, and belonging in the workplace. When organizations embrace diverse perspectives and experiences, they enhance creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving (Nishii, 2018). Research by Shore et al. (2018) emphasizes that inclusion promotes employee well-being and engagement by ensuring all individuals feel respected and valued. Organizations can foster inclusivity through fair policies, diversity training, and open dialogue on workplace equity (Mor Barak, 2020). Companies that actively cultivate inclusivity are not only more innovative but also develop a reputation as socially responsible employers committed to fairness and equality.

Another dimension of organizational happiness is learning and development. Continuous learning and skill enhancement are critical to employee motivation and long-term organizational success. Employees who perceive growth opportunities within their organization demonstrate greater job satisfaction, adaptability, and commitment (Noe et al., 2017). According to Bell et al. (2018), organizations that invest in professional development, mentoring, and career advancement programs cultivate a workforce that is both skilled and highly engaged. Providing these opportunities signals that the organization values its employees' professional success, which in turn boosts loyalty and productivity (Tannenbaum, 2021). The last dimension of organizational happiness based on the SMILE Model is engagement and empowerment. Empowering employees by granting them autonomy and decision-making authority enhances motivation, innovation, and ownership of their work (Spreitzer et al., 2017). When employees feel trusted and supported, they are more likely to take initiative and contribute meaningfully to organizational objectives (Seibert et al., 2019). Organizations can foster engagement and empowerment by implementing participatory decision-making processes, recognizing performance, and supporting leadership development initiatives (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016). A culture of empowerment reduces turnover, enhances productivity, and fosters high levels of job satisfaction (Maynard et al., 2021).

Employee well-being is a critical determinant of organizational happiness, influencing productivity, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. Bakker and Demerouti (2017) examined the relationship between psychological well-being, workplace culture, and employee performance. Using the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, the research highlights how supportive leadership, work-life balance, and intrinsic motivation contribute to a positive organizational climate. Findings suggest that organizations prioritizing employee well-being experience lower turnover rates and higher productivity levels. The study emphasizes the need for organizations

to implement well-being programs to sustain long-term happiness and success.

Leadership styles play a fundamental role in shaping organizational happiness, influencing employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction. Kelloway et al. (2020) explored the impact of transformational, servant, and authentic leadership on workplace happiness using a cross-sectional study design. Findings indicate that transformational leadership fosters a sense of purpose, collaboration, and employee empowerment, resulting in higher levels of workplace happiness. Additionally, organizations with leaders who emphasize trust, fairness, and open communication report increased employee well-being. The study suggests that leadership development programs focusing on emotional intelligence and participative decision-making can significantly enhance organizational happiness.

A positive workplace culture is a crucial factor in maintaining long-term organizational happiness. Salas-Vallina et al. (2021) investigated how workplace culture, employee recognition, and social support contribute to job satisfaction and commitment. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, the research identifies that inclusive policies, team collaboration, and ethical leadership significantly enhance employee morale. Results suggest that fostering a culture of appreciation and inclusivity not only improves employee happiness but also strengthens organizational resilience and adaptability. The study recommends that organizations develop proactive well-being strategies, including flexible work arrangements and continuous professional development, to sustain high levels of workplace happiness.

Leadership style is a key determinant of organizational happiness, influencing job satisfaction, employee engagement, and workplace well-being. Wang et al. (2020) explored the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and organizational happiness, particularly in educational institutions. Using a quantitative approach, the research assesses how transformational, transactional, and situational leadership styles impact teachers' motivation, collaboration, and overall job satisfaction. Findings reveal that transformational and participative leadership approaches significantly enhance workplace happiness by fostering trust, professional growth, and a sense of purpose. In contrast, rigid and highly autocratic leadership styles are linked to higher stress levels and decreased job satisfaction. The study underscores the importance of adaptive leadership in creating a positive organizational culture that prioritizes employee well-being and institutional success.

3. Methodology

Research Design. This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design to examine the relationship between the situational leadership styles of school administrators and organizational happiness in the public elementary schools of Dupax del Norte I District, Nueva Vizcaya. The design allowed for objective measurement and statistical analysis of variables, focusing on four leadership styles—directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating—and their relationship with teachers' perceived organizational happiness. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of relationships.

Research Environment. The study was conducted in Dupax del Norte I District, composed of ten public elementary schools with 108 teachers serving 2,591 students under the supervision of a district supervisor. Each school provides a unique learning context and leadership environment, making the district an ideal setting for exploring how leadership adaptability influences organizational well-being. The district emphasizes collaborative leadership, teacher empowerment, and professional development—factors aligned with the study's focus on organizational happiness.

Respondents and Sampling Procedure. A total of 82 teachers (75.92% of the population) were selected through stratified random sampling, ensuring representation across schools. Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample size at a 5% margin of error. Each school served as a stratum, and respondents were randomly selected within each. Ethical standards were strictly observed—participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained, and confidentiality maintained throughout the research.

Research Instruments - Two validated instruments were utilized:

- **Situational Leadership Style Questionnaire** (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, 2019) – a 24-item tool measuring four leadership dimensions: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating ($\alpha = 0.875$).
- **SMILE Model Organizational Happiness Questionnaire** (Salvosa et al., 2024) – a 30-item instrument assessing supportive relationships, meaningful work, inclusive environment, learning and development, and engagement and empowerment ($\alpha = 0.916$).
Both used a **5-point Likert scale** and underwent validation and pilot testing to ensure reliability in the Philippine educational context.

Data Gathering Procedure. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the District Supervisor, endorsed by the Dean of the College of Teacher Education. The researcher coordinated with school heads for the distribution of questionnaires and oriented participants regarding the purpose and confidentiality of the study. Completed responses were collected, organized, and subjected to statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data. Data were analyzed using:

- **Mean** – to determine levels of leadership styles and organizational happiness;
- **Pearson’s r** – to test the relationship between the two variables, with significance set at **0.05**.

Interpretation of correlation coefficients followed LaMorte’s (2021) guidelines.

4. Results and Discussion

Problem 1. What is the perception of the teacher-respondents of the situational leadership styles of their school administrators along directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating styles?

Table 1 below shows the mean and qualitative description of the perception of the teacher-respondents of the situational leadership styles of their school administrators along directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating styles.

Table 1

Mean and Qualitative Description of the Perception of the Teacher-Respondents of the Situational Leadership Styles of Their School Administrators (n=82)

Situational Leadership Styles	Area Mean	Qualitative Description
Directing	4.47	Very Good
Coaching	4.62	Excellent
Supporting	4.49	Very Good
Delegating	4.47	Very Good
Grand Mean	4.51	Excellent

The data presented reflect the perceptions of teacher-respondents regarding the situational leadership styles exhibited by their school administrators. The grand mean of 4.51, interpreted as "Excellent," indicates that, overall, school administrators demonstrate a high level of situational leadership effectiveness. This suggests that the leadership practices employed are perceived as highly supportive of organizational objectives, teacher development, and instructional quality. Among the four leadership dimensions, coaching received the highest mean score of 4.62, qualitatively described as "Excellent." This reflects the administrators’ consistent efforts to guide, mentor, and support teachers through regular dialogue, recognition of achievements, and motivation-focused

leadership practices. The strong emphasis on coaching denotes an environment where professional growth is prioritized, and continuous feedback is actively promoted.

The supporting leadership style follows with a mean of 4.49 and a qualitative rating of "Very Good." This dimension is characterized by consultative practices, shared responsibility, and the creation of a psychologically safe and collegial school climate. Teachers perceived their administrators as accessible, empathetic, and facilitative, fostering strong interpersonal relationships and promoting mutual trust. The directing and delegating styles both obtained a mean of 4.47, also interpreted as "Very Good." The directing style suggests that administrators are effective in providing clear instructions, setting performance standards, and monitoring tasks. Meanwhile, the delegating style reflects administrators' trust in teachers' capabilities by granting autonomy, encouraging initiative, and facilitating participation in strategic planning. The slight difference between the highest (coaching) and lowest (directing and delegating) mean scores indicates a generally balanced application of situational leadership styles, with an emphasis on developmental and supportive approaches. This alignment with Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory implies that school leaders adapt their styles based on the readiness and professional needs of their staff, which in turn enhances teacher morale, engagement, and instructional effectiveness. It is noted by the researcher that the findings suggest that school administrators are perceived as competent and responsive leaders who integrate various situational strategies to meet the diverse needs of their educational teams. This has positive implications for school culture, teacher retention, and the achievement of institutional goals.

The above results are supported by the principles of situational leadership, which emphasize the importance of adapting leadership styles based on the needs, competence, and readiness of teachers and staff. This flexible approach allows school leaders to address diverse challenges more effectively within educational settings (Hersey et al., 2018). For instance, novice teachers may require directive guidance, while experienced educators benefit more from autonomy through a delegative style. Situational leadership has been shown to enhance motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness by fostering a responsive and supportive environment (Blanchard, 2020). When leaders adjust their strategies based on the commitment and capabilities of their team, it promotes collaboration, performance, and school success (Goleman, 2021). This affirms the findings, with coaching and supporting styles being most evident, indicating that administrators are effectively nurturing teacher development and engagement.

Problem 2. What is the perception of the teacher-respondents of their organizational happiness along the dimension of supportive relationships, meaningful work, inclusive environment, learning and development, and engagement and empowerment?

Table 2

Mean and Qualitative Description of the Perception of the Teacher-Respondents of Their Organizational Happiness (n=82)

Organizational Happiness	Area Mean	Qualitative Description
Supportive relationships	4.56	Very high
Meaningful work	4.39	High
Inclusive environment	4.62	Very High
Learning and development	4.48	High
Engagement and empowerment	4.70	Very high
Grand Mean	4.55	Very High

The data in table 2 reveal that teacher-respondents perceived a high level of organizational happiness within their institutions, as evidenced by the grand mean of 4.55, interpreted as "Very High." This suggests that the school environment fosters conditions that significantly contribute to the well-being and satisfaction of teachers. Among

the dimensions evaluated, *Engagement and Empowerment* received the highest mean score of 4.70, categorized as “Very High.” This indicates that teachers feel actively involved in institutional decision-making, trusted in their professional roles, and empowered to innovate and contribute meaningfully.

Inclusive Environment followed closely with a mean of 4.62, also interpreted as “Very High.” This reflects a school culture that values diversity, equity, and mutual respect, reinforcing a sense of belonging among staff. *Supportive Relationships* scored 4.56, likewise under the “Very High” description, highlighting the presence of collegial collaboration, mutual trust, and strong interpersonal dynamics among educators and administrators. Meanwhile, *Learning and Development* earned a mean score of 4.48, indicating a “High” perception of opportunities for professional growth and continuous capacity-building. Finally, *Meaningful Work* received a mean of 4.39, still within the “High” range, suggesting that while teachers generally find purpose and relevance in their roles, there remains room to further strengthen alignment between personal values and institutional missions. The results suggest that the educational environment supports teacher happiness through empowerment, inclusion, and collegial relationships, though continued emphasis on personal meaning and professional development could enhance these outcomes further.

The above results are supported by literature emphasizing that organizational happiness plays a pivotal role in enhancing employee well-being, engagement, and institutional performance. A positive and fulfilling work environment fosters motivation, resilience, and job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to improved productivity and reduced turnover (Diener et al., 2021). When teachers feel empowered, included, and supported—as reflected in the high mean scores across all dimensions—they are more likely to remain committed and perform at their best. Leadership is a key driver of workplace happiness. Transformational and servant leadership styles, which prioritize employee empowerment and recognition, are positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Ryan & Deci, 2022). Leaders who demonstrate emotional intelligence and value employee contributions help cultivate a culture of trust and belonging. Additionally, organizational policies that promote work-life balance, professional growth, and wellness contribute significantly to happiness at work (Fisher, 2023). Institutions that invest in these areas often report higher employee morale and loyalty. The findings affirm that supportive leadership, meaningful engagement, and inclusive culture are central to fostering organizational happiness in academic settings.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the situational leadership styles and organizational happiness as perceived by the teacher-respondents?

Table 3
Correlation Coefficient between the Situational Leadership Styles and Organizational Happiness of the Respondents (n=82)

Situational Leadership Styles	Computed r-value	Coefficient Determination	of p-value	Remarks
Directing	0.726 <i>(strong correlation)</i>	52.71%	0.000	Significant
Coaching	0.778 <i>(strong correlation)</i>	60.51%	0.000	Significant
Supporting	0.856 <i>(very strong correlation)</i>	73.27%	0.000	Significant
Delegating	0.844 <i>(very strong correlation)</i>	71.23%	0.000	Significant
Overall Correlations	0.903 <i>(very strong correlation)</i>	81.54%	0.000	Significant

Critical r-value: 0.217

Level of Significance: 0.05

The data in table 3 indicate that there is a significant and positive relationship between situational leadership styles and organizational happiness among the respondents. The overall computed correlation coefficient is 0.903,

which reflects a very strong correlation, while the coefficient of determination is 81.54%. This means that approximately 81.54% of the variance in organizational happiness can be explained by the combined influence of the four situational leadership styles. The computed r-value is far above the critical value of 0.217, and the corresponding p-value of 0.000 confirms that the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. These results underscore the substantial impact of situational leadership on fostering a positive and satisfied organizational climate.

When examined individually, each leadership style also shows significant and meaningful correlations. The directing style has a strong correlation of 0.726 with organizational happiness and explains 52.71% of its variance. This suggests that clear task direction and close supervision contribute positively to employee satisfaction. The coaching style shows a strong correlation of 0.778, with a coefficient of determination of 60.51%, indicating that leaders who provide support, guidance, and opportunities for growth enhance employee morale. The supporting style demonstrates the highest correlation at 0.856, accounting for 73.27% of the variance, highlighting the strong influence of emotional support and trust in building organizational happiness. Meanwhile, the delegating style also shows a very strong correlation of 0.844, with 71.23% of the variance explained, suggesting that empowering employees through autonomy and shared responsibility significantly boosts happiness in the workplace. Overall, these findings confirm that all four situational leadership styles contribute significantly to the happiness and well-being of employees. The high correlation values and coefficients of determination demonstrate that adaptive leadership behaviors are critical drivers of a positive organizational environment.

Problem 4. Based on the significant findings of this study, what educational management intervention can be developed to enhance or sustain the organizational happiness of the district and the situational leadership styles of the school administrators?

Based on the analysis of the SMILE Model Organizational Happiness and Situational Leadership Styles Questionnaires, several benchmark statements received the lowest mean scores, typically ranging from "sometimes" to "often". These suggest areas that require targeted development through a capacity-building training design for teachers and school leaders. In the Supportive Relationships dimension, the statement, "*Employees feel a strong sense of belonging and camaraderie within the organization*" indicates a moderate gap in interpersonal cohesion and collegial support. This suggests that team-building and relationship-strengthening activities are necessary to foster trust, collaboration, and a shared sense of purpose among faculty members. For Meaningful Work, the relatively low score on, "*Employees feel a sense of fulfillment and pride in their daily responsibilities*" reflects a potential disconnect between assigned tasks and personal or professional values. Teachers may benefit from training that focuses on purpose-driven teaching, reflective practice, and goal alignment to reignite motivation and job satisfaction.

In the Inclusive Environment dimension, the statement, "*Leadership actively promotes a culture of respect and fairness for all employees*" scored lower than desired. This highlights a need to enhance equity-centered leadership, emphasizing diversity, fairness, and inclusive communication in the workplace. From the Learning and Development aspect, "*The organization fosters a culture of learning, adaptability, and knowledge-sharing*" also showed low engagement. This warrants initiatives in professional learning communities (PLCs) and continuous teacher development to promote collaboration and innovation. Regarding Engagement and Empowerment, the benchmark, "*Leadership encourages participatory decision-making and values employee input*" scored low, pointing to a leadership gap in promoting teacher voice. Training modules on shared governance and democratic school leadership can address this. On the leadership styles side, the Directing dimension revealed that the benchmark "*Demonstrates each task involved in performing teachers' responsibilities*" was not frequently practiced, indicating a lack of clarity or modeling for less experienced educators. Instructional leadership training may help supervisors provide better task guidance.

Within the Coaching domain, the statement, "*Recognizes and encourages teachers' achievements*" received low ratings. This signals the importance of training school leaders on recognition and motivational strategies that

inspire excellence. For the Supporting style, the low mean on, “*Engages teachers in discussions about organizational and policy changes before making decisions*” reveals a shortfall in inclusive dialogue. A training component on consultative leadership and collaborative decision-making is recommended. Lastly, under Delegating, the item, “*Provides teachers with clear responsibilities and allows them autonomy in how they achieve their tasks*” was also among the lowest, reflecting inadequate empowerment. Leaders should be trained on how to delegate effectively while preserving teacher autonomy and accountability. Together, these insights offer a clear foundation for a training design that responds to specific leadership and organizational climate needs, aiming to improve both teacher morale and institutional performance.

5. Conclusions

Based on the significant findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The situational leadership styles of the school heads are excellent as perceived by the teacher-respondents demonstrating their ability to adapt leadership approaches based on the needs and readiness of their staff.
- The organizational happiness of the respondents is excellent, suggesting that their work environments are characterized by supportive relationships, meaningful engagement, and a strong sense of well-being and professional fulfillment.
- There is a significant and strong positive relationship between situational leadership styles and organizational happiness, highlighting the critical role that adaptive and responsive leadership plays in cultivating a positive and thriving school culture.
- In light of these findings, the researcher developed comprehensive training designs tailored for school heads and teachers. These programs aim to enhance leadership capabilities and promote organizational happiness by fostering professional growth, empowerment, and collaboration within the school community.

Recommendations - Based on the significant findings and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are offered:

- District-level educational institutions may consider implementing sustained leadership development programs that strengthen competencies in the four situational leadership styles—directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. These could be complemented by mentoring, peer-learning communities, and performance-based evaluations to help school heads respond more adaptively to diverse teacher and school needs.
- The high level of organizational happiness reported by teachers suggests the value of cultivating positive school climates. School leadership teams may consider integrating well-being indicators into their School Improvement Plans (SIPs), including professional development, recognition systems, inclusive decision-making, and mental health initiatives. District supervisors could also monitor these efforts to help sustain positive workplace cultures that foster teacher engagement, satisfaction, and productivity.
- School heads may be guided to consciously align their leadership behaviors with practices that enhance teacher well-being. This includes fostering emotional support, trust, autonomy, and professional growth. Regular feedback mechanisms and teacher satisfaction surveys should be conducted to evaluate the impact of leadership on school culture and to adjust leadership strategies accordingly.
- To address the findings more holistically, the crafted training programs, “Leading with Purpose: Enhancing School Culture through Situational Leadership” for school heads, and “Empowering Educators through Organizational Happiness” for teachers, may be considered for adoption at the district

level. These could be integrated into in-service training schedules and professional development plans to ensure broader application, contextual relevance, and long-term impact on leadership effectiveness and organizational well-being.

- To validate and broaden the generalizability of the study's findings, similar research may be conducted in other districts within and beyond the Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. Replicating the study across diverse contexts, teacher demographics, and institutional cultures could help confirm whether the strong positive link between situational leadership styles and organizational happiness holds true, while also uncovering unique challenges and success factors in different settings.
- Future researchers may consider employing a qualitative or mixed-methods approach to gain deeper insights into the lived experiences of teachers and school heads on leadership practices and workplace well-being. Methods such as interviews, focus group discussions, or narrative inquiry could yield rich, contextualized data beyond numerical trends. It may also be worthwhile to include additional variables such as teacher motivation, job stress, organizational commitment, or psychological safety to better capture the broader determinants and outcomes of leadership and organizational happiness in schools.
- Future research may explore the relationship of additional variables such as teacher motivation, organizational commitment, psychological well-being, or job satisfaction with situational leadership styles and organizational happiness through a mixed-methods approach. Integrating quantitative data for correlations and patterns with qualitative data for lived experiences and contextual insights could provide a more nuanced understanding of how these factors interact to shape positive school culture.

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