

Insiders' Voices: The Case of Informal Teacher Leaders in Lanao del Sur, Philippines

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Abstract. As part of the continuing efforts to contribute to the literature and studies on informal teacher leadership, this study aimed to explore and investigate the case of informal teacher leaders in Lanao del Sur and proposed an informal teacher leadership model generated from the findings. This study utilized a qualitative approach and employed a case study design. To holistically understand the case, twenty-four informal teacher leaders from different secondary schools were purposively identified and recommended to participate in the study. The data were gathered through focused-group interviews, personal narratives, and observations and were analyzed through Thematic Analysis. The findings unveiled that leadership and informal teacher leadership are defined as a skill or a process of mobilizing people toward attaining goals. The findings also discovered developed leadership attitudes and skills essential for effective and successful leadership. Besides, these informal teacher leaders encountered conditions that encouraged or discouraged them from taking leadership roles and accepting additional duties and responsibilities. From these findings, an informal teacher leadership model was generated. This model could be adopted and properly implemented to formally recognize and increase informal teacher leaders, nurture and harness their potential, and motivate them to take leadership roles because they foster a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous teaching and learning improvement in schools.

Keywords: Case study; Informal teacher leaders; Teacher leadership; Philippines.

1.0 Introduction

The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 states that principals are expected to be instructional leaders and administrative managers. They are responsible for administrative and instructional supervision of the schools. Republic Act 9155 specifies that the duties and responsibilities of the principals are creating an environment within the school that is conducive to teaching and learning, implementing the school curriculum, being accountable for higher learning outcomes, and encouraging staff development (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 2001). Republic Act 9155 further explains that principals are accountable for the outcomes of the school operations, programs, and projects. They have the authority, responsibility, and accountability to manage all school affairs (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 2001). With this, school principals are overwhelmed by work demands and challenged to engage in planning to find innovative solutions to school problems. Hence, they need assistance to balance and fulfill all their work and teachers are the untapped sources of leadership who can assist and help them.

Consequently, various studies (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012; Oracion, 2017) on teacher leadership were conducted to help principals in their daily work and to develop the leadership potential of teachers. Teacher leadership is viewed as a powerful position in the educational system for its immense influence on improving school, teaching, and learning. Several studies (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Sabatini, 2002; Crowther & Olsen, 1997) attested to it. Barth (2001) argued that the students, teachers, and principals immensely benefit from teacher leadership when it is practiced and supported in the school. This means teacher leadership is a position that makes change happen (Lieberman & Miller, 2004), and this kind of leadership is associated with the improvements of the school, school democracy, teacher learning, and the development of collaborative culture (Mujis & Harris, 2006, York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

However, teacher leadership is not totally recognized and acknowledged in the Philippines because of the three critical problems. First, the phrase "I am only a teacher" is why teachers refuse to accept leadership roles and assume duties and responsibilities (Helterbran, 2010). Second, school leadership is centered on principals. Schools are run by hierarchical leadership structures that leave teachers out of the decision-making process and fail to provide adequate instructional leadership (Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 2001). Lastly, teacher leadership is limited to formal titles or positions. Thus, there is a need to understand that teacher leadership consists of two kinds: formal and informal teacher leadership. Formal teacher leaders are teachers who have forgone all or part of their teaching loads to take leadership roles (Ross, 2019). They are designated by the school and receive time and monetary compensation. In contrast, informal teacher leaders are full-time classroom teachers who engage in leadership work (Wenner & Campbell, 2017) even without formal leadership titles to designate their roles or time and money compensation (Oracion, 2017).

Both formal and informal teacher leaders have an impact on school improvement and teaching-learning. However, informal teacher leaders might be even more influential (Berg et al., 2019). Likewise, numerous studies (Dami, 2021; Ross, 2019; Martin, 2018; and DeMore-Palmer, 2011) supported that informal teacher leaders have a more significant impact or influence on teaching and learning than formal leadership (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012; Lieberman & Friedrich, 2007; Mangin, 2005). Though it may be less visible, informal teacher leadership is indispensable as a force for change. These premises open the door to exploring informal teacher leaders due to their impact and influence (Ross, 2019). However, there appear to be few published international and local studies on informal teacher leadership. Though many studies advocate for teacher leadership, they were focused on formal teacher leaders (Cruz, 2018; Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Fitzgerald & Gunther, 2008; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Only a few studies were engrossed in informal teacher leaders. Informal teacher leaders are undefined, and more needs to be written from the perspectives of the informal teacher leaders.

In the Philippines, specifically in Lanao del Sur, few studies on informal teacher leadership have been published. Therefore, this study aimed to explore and investigate informal teacher leadership as part of the continuing efforts to contribute to the literature and studies. Besides, it gathered rich, detailed, and in-depth data from the viewpoints of informal teacher leaders who accept leadership roles, duties, and responsibilities to generate an informal teacher leadership model contextualized to the Bangsamoro community. This serves as guide for the principals and administrators to This serves as one of the bases to challenge educational policy-makers to review and reform school leadership policies that recognize informal teacher leadership roles and promote the inclusion of teachers in leadership.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This research study utilized a qualitative approach. Creswell (2014) stressed that a qualitative approach is best suited for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Specifically, it employed a case study design. Creswell (2007) stated that a case study is the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are asked, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context. The use of a case study is deemed appropriate to the aim of this study and to gain a concrete, contextual, and in-depth understanding or insight of the knowledge and experiences of the informal teacher leaders as they practice or perform leadership in their school contexts.

2.2 Research Locale

This study was conducted in selected secondary schools in Lanao del Sur (Lanao del Sur 1, Lanao del Sur 2, and Marawi City). Lanao del Sur was chosen as the locale of the study because there are few existing studies about informal teacher leadership that have been conducted or published and studies that aim to design an informal teacher leadership model anchored in the context of Lanao del Sur.

2.3 Research Participants

As applicable in most qualitative study designs, the number of participants in a case study is typically small (Hammarberg et al., 2016; Vasileiou et al., 2018). Bernard (2000) suggested that between ten and twenty knowledgeable participants are sufficient to uncover and understand issues. Hence, the participants of this study were 24 informal teacher leaders from different secondary schools in Lanao del Sur. They were identified and recommended by the school principals to participate in focused-group interviews, write personal narratives, and undergo observations. These participants were purposively selected because of their knowledge and experiences in informal teacher leadership. Thus, the detailed and varied perspectives of these 24 participants were sufficient to uncover rich and in-depth insights about the case of informal teacher leaders in Lanao del Sur.

2.4 Research Instruments

The researcher used focused-group interviews, personal narratives, and observations to gather data. Focused-group interview was chosen to collect a variety of knowledge and experiences from the participants. The guide questions are aligned with the research questions as well as the central framework of the study. Data were also gathered through written personal narratives to gain a deeper understanding of the case of informal teacher leaders through their knowledge, experiences, and perspectives. Personal narratives were used to substantiate the data gathered from FGI. Data were also collected through observations and field notes as they practiced leadership. The researcher conducted observations with some of the participants to verify and supplement other sources of data to enhance the credibility and validity of the research findings.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained the approval of individuals in authority (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Seeking permission from the Ministry of Basic Higher and Technical Education and the School Divisions Superintendents of Lanao del Sur 1, Lanao del Sur 2, and Marawi City Division were commenced through personal visits and giving formal letters that specified the extent of time, the potential impact, and the research outcomes.

After approval, the researcher went to the target secondary schools and personally talked and handed letters to the principals. During these visits, the researcher gave brief information about the research, asked permission, and requested them to identify and recommend informal teacher leaders who could participate in the study. Then, the researcher talked and asked permission to the recommended informal teacher leaders to participate in the study. They were given an information sheet that explained the research, its objectives, and its contribution to education. They were also asked to sign the consent form before the data collection. Those willing to participate were approached or contacted for the focused-group interview, personal narrative, and observation schedules.

The collected data were analyzed through thematic analysis. This involved transcribing and bracketing the data, developing codes, forming categories, creating themes, writing analysis, validating the findings with the participants, generating table presentation and explaining the findings.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to and safeguarded the sanctity of research ethics. Thus, all measures to protect the participant's identity and the ways to govern confidentiality, integrity, and objectivity were strictly followed and observed throughout the research process.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Concepts of Leadership

The findings (see Table 1) exposed six (6) major themes on the concept of leadership. These are leadership as a skill, leadership as a process, leadership involves mobilizing people, leadership involves attainment of goals, leadership as a vision, and leadership as an obligation.

Table 1. Themes, Frequency, and some responses on the concept of leadership

Themes	Frequency	Participants	Some Responses
Leadership as a Skill	15	(P2) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P7) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P16) (P19) (P22) (P23)	Leadership is a practical skill that includes an individual's ability to lead, influence, or guide others. (P16) The concept of leadership means the ability of a person to motivate, inspire, and influence others to attain a certain goal or vision. (P10)
Leadership as a Process	9	(P1) (P3) (P4) (P6) (P7) (P12) (P14) (P19) (P24)	Leadership is the process of how a leader performs his role, duties, and responsibilities to achieve goals. (P4) Leadership is the act or work of a leader who possesses leadership qualities and skills to lead towards attaining a successful plan and achieving the goal. (P1)
Leadership involves Mobilizing People	22	(P1) (P2) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P16) (P17) (P18) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P22) (P23) (24)	Leadership is to influence, conform, and inspire others to work and to guide others to succeed, and a leader possesses these. (P20) It involves the ability of influencing and motivating others, making decisions, and effectively communicating and collaborating with team members. (P12)
Leadership Involves Attainment of Goals	17	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P14) (18) (P21) (P22) (P23) (P24)	Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of leaders. The leader is the person who successfully guides his colleagues to achieve particular ends or goals. (P18) Leadership is the act of leading people or groups of people to achieve organizational goals. (P24)
Leadership as a Vision	2	(P11) (P23)	It involves setting a vision, communicating it clearly, and creating an environment that motivates others to work towards that vision. (P11) It is the capacity to translate vision into reality to achieve common goals. (P23)
Leadership as an Obligation	2	(P15) (P17)	Leadership can be a skill that needs to be developed in a matter of time. It is a sense of responsibility. (P15) Leadership, for me, is not just about leading your people. It is also about having a sense of responsibility and accountability. A sense of responsibility means to guide, protect, motivate, and give your people room to grow. Then, accountability means accepting responsibility when things go wrong and giving credit where it is due. (P17)

The findings conceptualized leadership as a skill or a process of mobilizing individuals or groups of individuals to attain the common goals of an organization. This complemented the definition of Yukl (2006) that leadership is a process of influencing others to have a unified understanding and agreement about what needs to be done and how to do it. He added that it is a process of facilitating individuals to have collective efforts to accomplish common objectives. Northouse (2010) also intellectualized leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals. Likewise, Leithwood (2012) stressed that leadership is the exercise of influence on the members of an organization and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of goals. The findings also defined leadership as a vision and an obligation to make goals tangible and possible by directing people toward the achievement of goals. Handy (1992) also insisted on the importance of setting a vision and sharing it with others, which gives a point to the work of others. This means that leadership is ability to create a compelling vision and translate it into realities. Furthermore, Molinaro (2016) emphasized that when an individual is aware of his obligations as a leader and always keeps sight of the people he leads while leading, he can effectively and efficiently manage tensions that will arise.

The findings imply that informal teacher leaders' concept of leadership forms how they perceive themselves as leaders which contributes to the development of a leadership identity that aligns with the personal values and needs of the organization. It also affects the way they practice leadership and lead others which in turn affects morale, motivation, and productivity. It shapes not only their actions but also the cultures within which leadership occurs. This suggests that conceptualizing leadership encourages informal teacher leaders to explore various leadership theories, styles, and models to be adopted and practiced.

3.2 Concepts of Informal Teacher Leadership

The findings (see Table 2) revealed nine (9) significant themes on the concept of informal teacher leadership. These are leadership as a skill, leadership as a process, leadership involves mobilizing stakeholders, leadership involves attainment of educational goals, voluntarily undertaking of additional tasks, ancillary duties, and responsibilities, duties beyond the teaching description, informally designated to teachers, and practiced by recognized teachers.

The findings conceptualized informal teacher leadership as a skill or a process of mobilizing stakeholders towards the attainment of educational goals such as increasing students' learning and achievements and school improvement through providing quality and inclusive education. According to Fullan (2007), leadership mobilizes people's commitment to implement plans. It is an individual commitment, but above all, it is collective mobilization. York-Barr and Duke (2004) complemented this when they described teacher leadership as a process wherein teachers individually or collectively influence their colleagues, principals, and stakeholders to improve teaching and learning practices to increase students learning and achievement. Danielson (2006) eloquently demarcated teacher leadership as a set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students but also have influence on others and extend duties and responsibilities beyond their classrooms.

Table 2. Themes, frequency, and some responses on the concept of informal teacher leadership

Themes	Frequency	Participants	Some Responses
Leadership as Skill	7	(P1) (P3) (P4) (P9) (P15) (P16) (P23)	Informal teacher leadership is a skill of making change possible by influencing people to attain the school's objectives or goals. (P16) Informal teacher leadership is the ability to lead the people in the school to reach school objectives like providing standard education. (P23)
Leadership as Process	7	(P5) (P6) (P7) (P9) (P10) (P18) (P20)	Informal teacher leadership, for me, is a process done by a teacher through leading students and colleagues, even without designations. (P6) It is a voluntary act of a teacher who wants to contribute and help the school shape students' minds. (P10)
Leadership as Mobilizing People	11	(P2) (P3) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P7) (P9) (P16) (P17) (P18) (P23)	It is a kind of leadership where an informal teacher leader guides and influences people in the school, the stakeholders, even without designation. (P17) Informal teacher leadership is the skill of influencing others to achieve the goal. (P4)
Leadership Involves Attainment of Educational Goals	5	(P4) (P7) (P16) (P18) (P23)	Informal teacher leadership is a voluntary action of a teacher like us. We are accepting additional tasks aside from teaching to achieve the school's aims of providing quality education to the students. (P18) Informal teacher leadership is a skill of making change possible by influencing people to attain the school's objectives or goals. (P16)
Voluntary Undertaking Additional Task	14	(P1) (P4) (P5) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P15) (P18) (P20) (P21) (P22) (P24)	This kind of leadership is not compensated. It is for the good of the school. I know it is another responsibility to benefit the students and the school. That will be enough reason to do the job. (P1) Informal teacher leadership is a voluntary action of leading people in the school. Informal teacher leaders have no formal designations but are willing to help. They are willing to lead. (P9)
Ancillary Duties and Responsibilities	12	(P1) (P3) (P5) (P8) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P17) (P18) (P19) (P22)	Informal teacher leadership is an additional responsibility to the teacher yet fulfilling duty. That is how I define informal teacher leadership. (P8) You must be committed to your work as an informal teacher leader because you are doing additional tasks besides teaching. (P10)
Duties Beyond Teaching Description	12	(P4) (P6) (P7) (P9) (P12) (P13) (P16) (P18) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P22)	My concept of informal teacher leadership is an activity outside of teaching. For example, those activities that were given to us as coordinators. It is an extension of our work wherein we are not obliged to do it, but with our passion for teaching, we accept it and exert extra effort. (P12) It has something to do with what teachers do outside the four corners of the classroom. It is beyond the teaching and learning process. So, just like what you have mentioned, it involves other school activities and programs as long as it is not the everyday routine in the four corners of the classroom. So, we teachers are involved in that. (P19)
Informally Designated to Teachers	8	(P11) (P6) (P9) (P15) (P16) (P20) (P21) (P22)	When you talk about informality, it means there is no black-and-white document to show, but the fact that the person who appointed you is the right person to give you the designation means you must feel confident. (P21) My concept of informal teacher leadership is a voluntary action by a teacher designated by the principal. It is informally designated because formality still matters to BARM. (P20).
Taken by Recognized Teachers	23	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P16) (P17) (P18) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P22) (P23)	I am glad that we are informal teacher leaders. We are recognized based on our expertise and abilities. (P6) She knows that I have the potential to lead, so she always assigns me tasks and designated me as coordinator field. She can trust me. Those became the pathway for my principal to choose me as an informal teacher leader. (P7)

It also defined informal teacher leadership as voluntarily accepting additional tasks beyond job descriptions and informally taking extra duties and responsibilities even without time and money compensation and even without formal designation. These accounts are supported by Ross (2019) who stressed that informal teacher leaders are willing to extend their duties and responsibilities beyond their classrooms or their job descriptions to engage in professional learning. Equally, Muijs and Harris (2007) argued that informal teacher leaders voluntarily engage in additional tasks, duties, and responsibilities without expecting compensation. Hence, teacher leaders are praised for their confidence in extending their expertise beyond their classrooms (Lieberman & Miller, 2005).

Furthermore, informal teacher leadership is taken or practiced by teachers who are perceived to have well-regarded ability and expertise, experience, credibility, and honor and possess leadership attitudes and skills. Martin (2018) specified in his study that experience and credibility are essential elements to be perceived as a legitimate leader among colleagues; informal teacher leaders are expected to have several years in teaching and are described as successful teachers in their classrooms both in mastering their expertise and reaching their students. Correspondingly, Oracion (2007) detailed that teacher leaders are excellent and highly effective teachers who are recognized by principals, colleagues, and students by showing trust in them. In connection, these teachers possessed leadership attitudes, which are greatly important for them to thrive in practicing leadership in their school contexts.

The findings imply that informal teacher leaders should have a clear concept of informal teacher leadership. It affects how they lead, how followers respond, and how leadership is approached. It also forms how they see themselves as leaders. These suggest informal teacher leaders to explore and adopt numerous leadership theories, styles, and models that contribute to the development of their leadership identity so that they can be effective and efficient. In addition, conceptualizing and understanding informal teacher leadership acknowledges that leadership can come from teachers, regardless of title or rank. With this, informal teacher leaders are empowered to take initiative, share their expertise, and lead in their schools. It allows them to make significant contributions

to students' performance and school development. Hence, it promotes an inclusive, collaborative, and innovative school environment, where leadership is a shared responsibility.

3.3 Developed Leadership Attitudes

The results (see Table 3) discovered fourteen (14) themes on developed leadership attitudes among informal teacher leaders as they practiced leadership in their schools. These are increased sense of obligation, honor opinions and value support from others, developed sense of autonomy, demonstrated emotional intelligence, amplified positive and constructive attitudes and mindsets, augmented boldness to face adversity, increased enthusiasm in teaching and imparting knowledge, developed steadfastness in facing trials, conform and follow orders, amplified willpower despite deterrents, lead by example, advocate change, adhered moral principles, and aspired goal achievement.

Table 3. Themes, frequency, and some responses on developed leadership attitudes

Themes	Frequency	Participants	Some Responses
Increased Sense of Obligation	9	(P1) (P2) (P6) (P7) (P9) (P10) (P17) (P18) (P23)	My commitment to teaching has increased despite many hindrances. I give extra time, effort, and money to achieve my goals for my students. (P9) I have become more motivated and inspired to teach my students because I want to give them the standard education they deserve. (P18)
Honor Opinions and Value Support from Others	9	(P2) (P3) (P4) (P6) (P9) (P13) (P16) (P21) (P22)	Another is being open-minded. We accept ideas and suggestions. We are open to suggestions from students and parents. We honor the opinions of others. (P9) In terms of leadership, I become more open to others. I encourage everyone to participate in the process. I get their opinions and hear them out for better output. (P16)
Developed Sense of Autonomy	9	(P1) (P3) (P4) (P5) (P7) (P8) (P10) (P15) (P19)	I organized and conducted Career Guidance. My initiative is to motivate the students by identifying careers that match their skills, interests, and personalities. Alhamdulillah! It was successful even without the presence of the principal. (P4) One of the things I learned and am practicing now is to be responsible when you do your job or whatever task is given to you. (P4)
Demonstrated Emotional Intelligence	9	(P6) (P8) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P17) (P20) (P21) (P24)	Your concerns for the students develop as you become a teacher leader. You are not the kind of teacher who does not care if they understand the lesson or not. (P9) I have learned to consider how they express themselves. I allow them to express who they are, which they could not do at home. I have realized that it is better to listen to them, but sometimes you must be strict when it is too much. (P6)
Amplified Positive and Constructive Attitudes and Mindsets	8	(P1) (P6) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P18) (P19)	You must have a positive attitude to think you can do it. "Okay, I can do it! I must try this to become an effective teacher and leader". (P19) I developed positive attitude despite criticisms from colleagues. It is inevitable to commit mistakes because you are only human. (P11)
Augmented Boldness to Face Adversity	8	(P3) (P4) (P11) (P14) (P15) (P18) (P19) (P23)	I am a shy type. I do not usually mingle or converse with my co-teachers if it is unimportant. When they saw my potential, they assigned me to organize and conduct school activities and attend seminars. Since then, I have started to build my confidence to accomplish tasks assigned to me. I am no longer scared to commit mistakes. (P3) You have to think that you can do it. You have to try. You are not afraid to try new things to further develop your skills. You can use these skills not only as a teacher but also as a leader. (P19)
Increased Enthusiasm in Teaching and Imparting Knowledge	7	(P1) (P7) (P9) (P10) (P12) (P13) (P16)	As an informal teacher leader, I become more passionate because I am dedicated to provide the standard education to my students. (P1) I love to work with people around me. If there is no love, you will feel that you are struggling. Being sincere in your work is the most important. Sincere love for the students is the most beautiful. (P10)
Developed Steadfastness in Facing Trials	7	(P2) (P9) (P17) (P18) (P20) (P21) (P23)	I am resilient. When you have that resiliency, you bounce back from any difficulties. That is an essential characteristic you should have as an informal teacher leader. (P4) You are resilient in dealing with the stakeholders, especially the parents because they are difficult to deal with when it comes to the status and problems of their children. (P18)
Conform and Follow Orders	7	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P11) (P13) (P14)	I never complain to my principal. When he is giving me tasks, I always say yes. (P14) I have learned and developed to be a good follower. If you want to be a leader, you must learn to follow. Learn to be a follower. You have to follow the rules. You will go through with those things. You need to be a good follower to become a good leader. (P1)
Amplified Willpower Despite Deterrents	5	(P1) (P3) (P4) (P9) (P12)	I have strong willpower. I have the mentality that I am going to finish this work whether others will help or not or whether it will rain or not (P1) There may not be any support from the principal. There are many competitions in the division, and sometimes, we cannot participate. But in Math department, we really find ways to have our representative. Looking for finances and everything else is all up to you. (P5)
Lead By Example	4	(P1) (P8) (P9) (P20)	It is also essential that we become role models so that we can have an impact and influence to our students. (P9) So, the impact is that you become the school head's benchmark or role model in inspiring other teachers to do well. (P20)
Advocate Change	4	(P1) (P4) (P5) (P10)	I am very innovative because we are catalysts of change. We adapt to change for progress. (P1) We are catalysts of change. Change starts with us. Who will make the change if change does not start with us? Let us accept that there are problems in our educational system. It is not only you who change it, collaboration. You collaborate with your colleagues and your superiors to make change possible. (P4)
Adhered Moral Principles	3	(P1) (P3) (P10)	We also have personal integrity. Integrity matters to us, and we value it. We are truthful to ourselves and to others to gain respect and understanding. (P1) As a teacher leader, I told the students to go to school, prepare for examinations, and be on time. I always come on time. When another teacher wanted to switch schedules, I refused because I had already announced it, and the students had studied for the exam. It will be frustrating for them if I will tell them next time. It will leave an impression that I am a liar. So, when I say it, I mean it. (P10)
Aspired Goal Achievement	2	(P4) (P13)	A good leader leads the way and lights the way. Right? You always begin with an end. (P4) As an SSG adviser, I aim to help my students implement their platforms. I want them to accomplish their platforms and implement them at the end of the school year. I make sure that by the end of the school year, whatever their plans are implemented. (P13)

Wenner and Campbell (2017) supported these findings. The findings explained that informal teacher leaders have a great sense of obligation by showing accountability and responsibility in all tasks and designations assigned to them (Oracion, 2007). This is depicted by their enthusiasm for teaching and imparting knowledge to stakeholders to achieve their aspired educational goals. Informal teacher leaders also have a great sense of autonomy through establishing goals, initiating actions, and solving problems (Martin, 2018). They persist and do not permit setbacks to derail the important initiative they are pursuing (Danielson, 2007). They develop steadfastness, boldness and strong will to face adversity to reach their goals. Additionally, they adhere to moral principles and lead by example to make change in their schools. They are agent of change.

Besides, Danielson (2007) stressed that influential teacher leaders possess necessary attitudes such as open-mindedness and respect for other's views and ideas. They are open to exploring options to gather the necessary resources to improve learning and develop the school (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Additionally, Goleman et al, (2002) emphasized that teacher leaders possess emotional intelligence, which encompasses personal and social competence and demonstrates the ability to manage oneself and one's relationships with others. Crowther et al. (2009) also postulated that teacher leaders exuded optimism and are capable of transforming negativities into positivity. In connection, they positively conform and follow orders of the principals and others to build and maintain good relationships.

The findings indicate that informal teacher leaders should possess and develop leadership attitudes that are indispensable to engage in leadership. These leadership attitudes influence them how to approach and interact with stakeholders, make decisions, and drive change which directly impact their schools. These equip them to handle complex challenges, make better decisions, inspire stakeholders, and drive positive change. These propose that informal teacher leaders should consistently develop and augment leadership attitudes to inspire, influence, and guide stakeholders to achieve common goals. Thus, informal teacher leaders should engage in an ongoing process that involves self-awareness, empathy, adaptability, and commitment to personal and professional growth. Additionally, school principals should empower teachers, foster collaboration, offer personal and professional development, model positive leadership attitudes, and create an environment where teachers can naturally develop their leadership attitudes.

3.4 Developed Leadership Skills

The results (see Table 4) discovered ten (10) main themes on developed leadership skills among informal teacher leaders such as effective communication and connection skills, improved technical skills, build authentic relationships and teamwork, developed organization and time management skills, augmented problem-solving skills, amplified adaptability, increased critical-thinking skills, heightened ability to influence, enhanced ability to coach and mentor, and improved decision-making skills.

Kasapoğlu and Karaca (2021) found that teacher leaders are excellent communicators. They prioritize listening over speaking and seek to understand different perspectives. They clarify, probe, and synthesize ideas and questions to understand the concerns and leverage the expertise of others. They also establish open communication, where all ideas are heard and all possibilities are explored. In connection, Lieberman and Miller (2005) accentuated that teacher leaders relate to their colleagues by speaking their minds about what is best for students, bringing innovation to schools, and acting as stewards for change to shape the profession positively.

Also, teacher leaders influence colleagues by cultivating collegial relationships and fostering a culture of trust and collaboration (Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Martin, 2007). Angelle and DeHart (2011) mentioned that teacher leadership involves sharing knowledge on pedagogy and classroom management with colleagues, accepting leadership opportunities when asked, and routinely stepping beyond required detaching duties to serve students and the school. Besides, they are problem solvers or solution-driven leaders who sometimes solve problems themselves but usually encourage colleagues towards solutions suited to the school community (Oracion, 2007). connection, their skill in decision-making enables them to act intuitively and take advantage of the opportunities to do tasks and solve problems.

Table 4. Themes, frequency, and some responses on developed leadership skills

Themes	Frequencies	Participants	Some Responses
Effective Communication and Connection Skills	21	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P15) (P16) (P17) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P23) (P24)	The way you communicate always defines you. You should know whom you are talking with, whom you are talking to, and when, where, and how. An informal teacher leader knows what to talk about and how to talk about it. When you are talking to your co-teachers, you know how to say it. (P9) We need communication skills because we cannot avoid talking to stakeholders. We must know how to communicate to them and consider our differences to avoid misunderstandings. (P11)
Improved Technical Skills	16	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P5) (P10) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P16) (P17) (P18) (P19) (P20) (P22) (P24)	Regarding technical competence, you should have sufficient knowledge about your tasks or designations. (P1) In campus journalism and research, you should be good in English, grammar, and writing...You must be capable in writing English and Filipino articles, use correct grammar, and write research paper. (P20)
Build Authentic Relationship and Teamwork	13	(P1) (P2) (P4) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P10) (P12) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P16) (P24)	The other one is building relationships. This is a crucial skill of a leader because having a good relationship with co-teachers and learners will manifest good results. (P1) When you are a leader, you are willing to work collaboratively with your colleagues and your school head to achieve goals in a united manner. (P6)
Amplified Adaptability	13	(P4) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P12) (P14) (P15) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P22) (P23) (P24)	I learned from being an informal teacher leader is adjustment. Although I graduated from that school, the set-up of generations then and now is very different. If we had been diverse before, they would have been more diverse because of this technological breakthrough. (P15) Through informal leadership, I began to understand the different personalities of the people I am dealing with, such as my students and co-teachers. (P19)
Developed Organization and Time Management Skills	11	(P1) (P4) (P8) (P10) (P11) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P20) (P21) (P24)	Time management skills: Knowing this, you can properly organize your tasks and allocate time to each task to attain your goals. (P1) Time management: As a guidance counselor, adviser, and given other tasks, you must know how to manage time because conflicts will happen. I need to prioritize those that need to be prioritized. (P8)
Augmented Problem-Solving Skills	10	(P3) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P13) (P15) (P16) (P17) (P20) (P21)	You can do something to solve the problems encountered in school by exchanging ideas with colleagues to come up with solutions to the problem. (P3) Accepting designations and tasks given by our principal is a real challenge. It is sometimes difficult to do tasks, especially when they need to be accomplished simultaneously. So, I have to organize tasks and prioritize the important ones. (P8)
Increased Critical Thinking	7	(P8) (P9) (P11) (P15) (P18) (P20) (P24)	In research, I am the president of the association. I am dealing with teachers and division officials. In journalism, culture, and arts, I am dealing with students. Then, as G11 chairperson, I am dealing with teachers, parents, guardians, students, social officials, and everybody. I always use different skills in each designation. (P19) I have developed my critical thinking skills because I needed to conceptualize how I can comprehensively deliver the topic to the participants. (P15)
Heightened Ability to Influence Others	7	(P1) (P3) (P8) (P10) (P13) (P14) (P19)	To our students, we become their inspirations. We inspire them to be involved in learning for their future. (P1) We are influencers. We specifically influence our students because they are our number one priority. To our students, we are given the chance to become good leaders in the future. (P6)
Enhanced Ability Coach and Mentor Others	5	(P5) (P10) (P18) (P20) (P23)	My training is all about math and teaching techniques. Then, I cascade this learning to my co-teachers. (P5) I developed my communication and listening skills and was able to manage and provide guidance and assistance to colleagues. (P10)
Improved Decision-Making	3	(P6) (P8) (P10)	It is not because you are the leader; it is not right that only your decision matters and should be followed. Some might disagree with it. What is okay for you might not be okay for them, and you do not realize it. So, you need to listen to other people, not just yourself. (P10) I agree with ma'am that when you are a leader, you are willing to work collaboratively with colleagues and the school head to achieve goals in a united manner. When you are a leader, you must stand firm on your decision. There are times when you will hurt someone. That is where your good communication skills come in. How will you explain the advantages of your decision to your colleagues? How will you explain to them that the decision is objective, fair, and beneficial to many? (P6)

Furthermore, Meyer (2019) commended that teacher leaders are trailblazers. They are adopter, try new things, and discover the unseen. They pursue professional development opportunities to learn more to improve their practice, share experiences, and collaborate with others to reach goals. Wenner and Campbell (2017) stated that teacher leaders are engaged in tasks beyond their classrooms, support professional learning in their schools, involve in policy and decision-making and focus on learning, achievement, and development of their students. York-Barr and Duke (2004) and Leithwood (2012) stressed that teacher leaders influence stakeholders towards identification and achievement of the organizational visions and goals.

These findings infer that informal teacher leadership is for those teachers who possess and develop leadership skills important to organizational success, driving performance, fostering innovation, and cultivating positive culture. These skills are vital and must be possessed by informal teacher leaders to execute leadership. These mean that engaging in leadership roles covers a range of skills such as communication, decision-making, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, adaptability, team building, and influence. Hence, informal teacher leaders should involve in professional development programs to enhance and develop their leadership skills. Moreover, school principals should create opportunities for informal teacher leaders to develop their leadership skills by including them in instructional practices, curriculum development, and school improvement plans.

3.5 Conditions that Encourage Informal Teacher Leaders

The findings (see Table 5) exposed twelve (12) main themes on the conditions that encourage informal teacher leaders to engage in leadership. These are receiving acknowledgments, support from principal and colleagues, strong personal beliefs and values in work, enthusiasm in teaching and value students' growth and development,

positive work climate, trust and confidence of principal and colleagues, support and encouragement from family, opportunity for career growth and development, self-gratification, prospect for career advancement, way to instigate change to others, and showing gratitude to Allah.

Table 5. Themes, frequency, and some responses on the conditions the encourage informal teacher leaders

Themes	Frequency	Participants	Some Responses
Receiving Acknowledgments	16	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P5) (P6) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P13) (P15) (P17) (P20) (P21) (P22)	I am grateful to have a principal who has entrusted me with leadership opportunities, recognized my potential, and provided valuable experiences. Their belief in my abilities has been a constant source of encouragement, empowering me to grow and develop as a leader. (P11) Recognition is one because when we are recognized, we feel fulfilled. When we are recognized, we do more. We want to attain something that, if possible, exceeds our expectations. (P1)
Support From the Principal and Colleagues	14	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P4) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P10) (P12) (P16) (P18) (P19) (P22) (P24)	My principal is supportive of all activities I have organized and conducted. I explained it to her, and she helped and supported me. (P3) As for my colleagues, they are all active. We are encouraging one another. We are helping one another. Then, if they have questions related to your expertise, they will ask your opinions, suggestions, and advice. We are like that in school. (P8)
Strong Personal Beliefs and Values in Work	12	(P1) (P4) (P5) (P7) (P9) (P10) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P17) (P19) (P20)	I took oath as a teacher. I was inspired and encouraged to work hard because I applied to DepEd. I promised that if I became part of the DepEd, I would be a catalyst for change. Whatever it takes to deliver quality education, I will do it. (P20) It is a calling. When you enter the job, it is expected that there will be tasks like those. So, it is a call. (P14)
Enthusiasm in Teaching and Value Students' Growth	11	(P1) (P5) (P6) (P9) (P13) (P15) (P17) (P18) (P20) (P22) (P23)	I do my best to help the students learn. I always thought that those students were my children. They have to learn. So, I am teaching them all the Math techniques. (P4) As a leader, the most motivating factor is my passion for teaching. We are accepting those tasks and designations for our students. (P1)
Positive Work Climate	10	(P1) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P8) (P9) (P11) (P16) (P23) (P24)	My principal and co-teachers work harmoniously, agreeing on all my suggested plans. (P15) My principal and colleagues are supportive. We support each other. We encourage and cheer up each other. Moreover, we always show love and care to each other. No crab mentality occurs between my colleagues because we accept and acknowledge the potential and capabilities of every one of us. (P8)
Trust and Confidence of Principal and Colleagues	10	(P1) (P2) (P3) (P11) (P12) (P15) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P23)	The principal assigned me to all the work. That is my encouragement. The trust and confidence that my school head gave me. (P15) Although I needed to be more competent, my colleagues pushed me to do it because they believed in my capabilities as an informal teacher leader. (P3)
Support and Encouragement from Family	9	(P2) (P4) (P5) (P6) (P9) (P14) (P15) (P22) (P3)	My inspiration is my mother. When she was alive, she was pushing me. She pushed me to be the best. Until now, I still carry her teachings. (P3) They are the great forces that encouraged me to do my best, whether seen, unseen, or promoted. (P9)
Opportunity for Career Growth and Development	8	(P7) (P8) (P11) (P12) (P14) (P16) (P20) (P23)	My motivation, I guess, is that I could become the best version of myself by taking a task and, at the same time, accomplishing it. (P16) My main motivations are learning and experience. Your knowledge increases when you engage in leadership. You gain ideas on how to handle tasks and designations. You will learn new knowledge. (P11)
Self-Gratification	7	(P1) (P6) (P7) (P8) (P9) (P16) (P21)	One of the biggest motivations is self-fulfillment, which is to see our students succeed. (P9) Most of my designations are aligned with my passion, like community engagements where I can immediately see the impacts of my leadership, which makes me fulfilled. (P21)
Prospect for Career Advancement	7	(P1) (P6) (P7) (P9) (P14) (P20) (P21)	Promotion is part of it. We want to be promoted not because we want a position but because we will have a great opportunity to help our students. It is not the position but a great opportunity to extend our help. (P6) We want to be promoted. We always have the battle cry of promotion. Why are we doing this? We do not want to be Teacher 1 until we retire. We want to be promoted. (P20)
Way to Instigate Change to Others	6	(P8) (P9) (P15) (P20) (P21) (P22)	To my co-teachers, I inspire them to excel more, do good, be innovative, and be resourceful. When I entered the school, I introduced a proper way of doing variety shows because what they know is a simple fashion show. (P15) I also have a student who has become my best friend and advisee. She has become my best friend because I have touched her life. I see changes, good changes, gradually. Their characters and attitudes have changed; you can see their development and improvement. It is one of my encouragements. (P8)
Showing Gratitude to Allah	5	(P5) (P9) (P15) (P20) (P23)	I love my job. I have to do it because I am paid for it. Then, I should be reciprocating it. Moreover, Allah has given this work to me, so I have to commit to it. (P23) When I feel unmotivated to go to work, I think that Allah gave me this kind of work for a reason. It is His plan. (P9)

Crowther et al. (2002) emphasized that informal teacher leadership can only be realized if the environment where it is practiced allows it. The findings argued that informal teacher leaders take leadership roles when their efforts are recognized and acknowledged (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012). Giving special recognition and positive feedback improves self-efficacy and commitment (Daniel et al., 2019). Hence, principals and administrators should deliberately provide morale support and orchestrate opportunities for teacher leaders to take risks and lead (Mujis & Harris, 2007; Johnson & Donaldson, 2007). Pineda-Baez et al. (2019) specified that support from principal matters for teacher leaders to engage in leadership.

Additionally, principals and administrators should promote a positive school culture of shared leadership and professional learning (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012). Hence, principals and administrators must trust teachers with leadership duties and responsibilities. They should expect teachers to lead, relinquish some of their power and authority to their teachers, and trust and empower them (Blegen & Kennedy, 2000; Murphy, 2005) by including and involving them in a collaborative culture, protect and recognize them, share responsibility, and give credit

for their success (Frost, 2012; Barth, 2001)). Harris (2010) stressed that the successful distribution of leaders depends upon the firm establishment of trust. Aside from establishing trust, autonomy is the prerogative to control one's work (Pink, 2011). When autonomy exists in schools, principals treat teachers as professionals by showing trust in their professional judgment and giving them autonomy to identify, generate, and implement solutions to problems (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). With this, informal teacher leaders maintain a sense of purpose (Lambert, 2003), which helps them to focus on their goals of giving standard and quality education to their students which compels them to act despite disincentives (Ross, 2019).

Subsequently, providing rich and diverse opportunities for continuous personal and professional development is a must for informal teacher leaders (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Teacher leaders, especially informal ones, need ongoing personal and professional growth. Therefore, administrators can support and help informal teacher leaders by engaging them in professional development so that they can define and describe their roles, set their goals, learn how to lead, and condition them to think like leaders (Harris, 2002).

The findings indicate that if these conditions occurred or existed in schools, teachers would be encouraged to practice leadership and informal teacher leadership would flourish. These conditions are vital for creating dynamic, collaborative, and effective learning where all teachers are empowered to contribute to the collective mission of educating students and improving schools. In support, Gronn (2000) names four factors that determine the extent to which teacher take up leadership functions. These are features of the school's structure and culture, opportunities for capacity building, nature of relationship between the principals and the teachers, and active encouragement and support for distributed forms of leadership by the principal.

Thus, these recommendations could help principals and administrators to foster informal teacher leadership such as (a) administrators should recognize and value the contributions of teachers, (b) administrators should involve teachers in decision-making processes and provide the time and resources necessary to support, (c) administrators must develop strong and trusting relationships with their teachers, (d) teachers should take a more proactive role, be willing to take risks and speak up with authority when they have opinions to share, and (e) post-graduate schools should include teacher leadership in their graduate programs (Beauchum & Dentith, 2004).

3.6 Conditions that Discourage Informal Teacher Leaders

In contrast, the findings (see Table 6) disclose fifteen (15) substantial themes on the conditions that discouraged informal teacher leaders from engaging in leadership. These are stereotypical and negative perceptions, lack of support from the principal, lack of support and involvement of colleagues, insufficient time and conflict of tasks due to numerous tasks, negative work climate, absence of recognition, stress and overwork making one reluctant to take more tasks, bad leadership qualities, lack of career advancement, scarce school facilities and amenities, perception of insufficient expertise for leadership role, lack of career growth and development, informality of designation, extraneous teaching and task assignment, and people of unrealistic standards.

The findings explained that informal teacher leaders feel demotivated to practice leadership because of stereotypical and negative feedback from colleagues and principals. Danielson (2007) elucidated that some principals or administrators are jealous and guard their turf, fearing that ambitious teacher leaders will somehow undermine their authority. Also, Hart (1994) learned in her study the growing consensus of "animosity and jealousy" toward teacher leaders resulted in opposition groups working to undermine teacher leaders. Johnson and Donaldson (2007) gleaned that the professional, egalitarian norms of teaching, reinforced by colleagues, present a daunting challenge to informal teacher leaders who strive to improve educational practices beyond their own and were frequently rebuffed when they are offered to observe colleagues' classrooms or make suggestions about instructional practices.

Besides, imperious administrators who refuse to relinquish some of their authority and responsibilities to teacher leaders or who do not help informal teacher leaders define their roles act as barriers to teacher leadership (Barth, 2001; Goldstein, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2007). These views from the participants concluded that informal teacher leaders felt frustrated and discouraged. Lack of support from principals and colleagues posed the biggest obstacles for teacher leaders. In many cases, some colleagues resist leadership among their ranks (Blegen & Kennedy, 2000). DeMore-Palmer (2011) believed that resistant colleagues hinder the growth of informal teacher leaders more than

any other aspect of school culture. Teachers who take on more leadership responsibilities “go against the grain” and can find themselves at odds with their colleagues (Harris, 2005; Barth, 2001). Muijs & Harris (2003) accentuated those teachers who took leadership roles felt a loss of connection with their colleagues and a feeling of isolation.

Table 6. Themes, frequency, and some responses on the conditions the discourage informal teacher leaders

Themes	Frequency	Participants	Some Responses
Stereotypical and Negative Perceptions	15	(P1) (P2) (P4) (P6) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P15) (P17) (P19) (P20) (P21) (P22) (P23)	At first, my principal was not supportive because she felt I was a threat. (P6) One of the discouragements is other teachers. They inevitably think that you are showing off. (P11)
Lack of support from Principal	13	(P4) (P5) (P6) (P8) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P13) (P14) (P15) (P18) (P21) (P23)	The only factor that discourages me from leading is the lack of support from the principal and colleagues. Even if you are competent, if your principal and colleagues do not support you. You are like a threat to them. (P4) The finances, such as registration, transportation, food, and everything, are yours. It is up to you whether you will attend or not. The principal has no contribution because he occasionally goes to school. (P5)
Lack of Support and Involvement of Colleagues	11	(P1) (P2) (P4) (P10) (P11) (P13) (P14) (P16) (P17) (P18) (P23)	There are lots of times I used to be discouraged or demotivated in doing the assigned tasks. Because there is a lack of support from colleagues, they let you do the tasks alone without even lending a hand. (P14) My co-teachers because they do not want to grow. They lack motivation. They do not want additional tasks. They do not want to accept responsibility. They do not have interest, though they can do it. (P14)
Insufficient Time and Conflict of Tasks Due to Numerous Tasks	7	(P11) (P12) (P13) (P19) (P10) (P20) (P24)	I think there is a lack of time. When you have many tasks, it's hard to manage your time. So, that discourages me. So, what happens is that you tend to neglect some of your tasks or reject other tasks to have extra time. (P19) I have to accept the fact that no matter how best I try to manage time. You can steal time for your priority positions. For example, I sometimes tend to neglect my function as a class adviser. For example, there is a deadline for the submission of grades. There is a deadline for these, but you cannot manage your work because you are busy with research, journalism, sports, culture, arts, etc. (P20)
Negative Work Climate	8	(P1) (P7) (P9) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P20) (P23)	In our school, we are divided into groups who are competing with each other. When a new (teacher) influences others, it creates divisions. (P23) I do not stay in the office during my vacant time because they gossip. If one is not around, they gossip about her. (P10)
Absence of Recognition	6	(P1) (P10) (P12) (P16) (P20) (P23)	Sometimes, I feel less appreciated for my work. A simple announcement or even acknowledgment would somehow motivate me to do more, but I feel there are circumstances where I am not appreciated. (P16) When your principal does not appreciate you, no matter how good you are, your skills, and the devotion you give, you will be tired if you do not receive appreciation from the principal. Even thank you, simple thank, nothing, you will be discouraged. (P10)
Stress and Overwork	6	(P8) (P10) (P11) (P12) (P19) (P23)	The feeling of being burnt out or overworked because your school head bombarded you with many additional works. I think that there was an unfair distribution of workloads since there are teachers in our school who can also do it. (P10) All the coordinator positions in the division are given to me. Sometimes, I ask the principal, aren't there other teachers? All tasks are given to me. (P11)
Bad Leadership Qualities	4	(P1) (P3) (P5) (P9)	When I reported in our school...they have this culture that you are not allowed to talk against the opinion of the principal...If you have an opinion, you cannot say it because once you speak, the principal will react negatively. (P9)
Lack of Career Advancement	4	(P1) (P20) (P21) (P23)	Although you deal with all the tasks in school, you still have no assurance of being promoted. (P20) There are some challenges in life that sometimes discourage me. For example, I have served for several years but have not been promoted. I received many awards, such as twice as an outstanding secondary teacher in the division. I attended regional and national seminars for the Division of Lanao del Sur 1. I was a regional and a division trainer, among many others. Other awards are already forgotten. Promotion never finds my way. (P1)
Scarce School Facilities and Amenities	4	(P2) (P4) (P6) (P9)	Our school also has limited land; we cannot expand...Without those facilities and equipment, it is not easy because it will depend on theories. (P6)
Perception of Insufficient Expertise for Leadership Role	3	(P13) (P14) (P24)	Lack of experience because I am not an education graduate. So, I will admit that during my first time, I fumbled. (P13) It is discouraging that we do not have leadership training and the assistant principal does not have a place. It seems that your role is not identified. You are just there, but what are you worth in school? (P24)
Lack of Career Growth and Development	2	(P4) (P9)	We cannot always go to seminars, although we want to. You can't go there if the principal does not recommend you. Each one of us is craving for knowledge. Other teachers want to be sent to seminars. (P9) When there is a seminar for field teachers, the division takes it. Right? That is not good; they are not the ones who will benefit from it; it is us. If it is really for field teachers, they should be the ones to be sent. When there are seminars, they send staff from the division.” (P4)
Informality of Designation	2	(P20) (P24)	Another discouragement is the position being informal. The school head is just designating you, and there is a big possibility that you will be lifted out...Anytime will come, and you are no longer designated to be in your position. (P20) Since we don't have the black and white paper or a memo or a designation from the region, sometimes I am hesitant to implement or impose some rules on my colleagues. (P24)
Extraneous Teaching and Task Assignment	1	(P20)	Last is you cannot pursue your expertise. For example, I am an expert in history and teaching creative writing and research. It is because of the mismatch in teaching in the Department of Education. It is a huge discouragement. (P20)
Unrealistic Expectations	1	(P15)	Those people who have high expectations of you. Because you are good, you must be good. Hello! We are humans, too; we commit mistakes. Even the four-legged horse stumbles; how much more us? We are just humans. (P15)

Moreover, due to their multiple designations and numerous tasks, they experienced difficulties in organizing tasks and managing time. This resulted in stress and overwork. Teachers are often forced to make sacrifices that compromise their ability to be effective in both roles. Lieberman et al. (1988) reported that teacher leaders experienced time constraints that significantly limited their ability to succeed in the dual roles of both teacher and leader. Mujis and Harris (2006) pointed to time as an additional impediment to teachers' capacity to do extra work because of the numerous responsibilities. However, despite accepting multiples designations and tasks, informal teacher leaders have no clear paths for promotion and are stuck in their present position. Thus, when informal

teacher leaders see limited opportunities for career advancement, it negatively impacts their moral and job satisfaction. They feel undervalued which results in decreased involvement and commitment to their roles.

Additionally, the findings explicated that informal teacher leaders are discouraged due to a negative work climate and the presence of factions. According to Deal and Peterson (2002), a toxic culture manifests when the school community focuses on negative values so different groups of stakeholders become fragmented. Also, they explained that inadequate facilities such as wrecked classrooms and lack of facilities hinder their abilities to implement innovative teaching methods. This limitation frustrates and impede their efforts to drive positive change in the school.

When teacher leaders are expected to take on responsibilities, effectiveness is constrained because they may not feel secure about their roles (Little, 1995). As Danielson (2007) enlightened, informal teacher leaders usually do not have training on the personal and interpersonal skills required to lead effectively. Although opening doors to peers and possible ridicule is unnerving to some teachers (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000), with appropriate professional development, even anxious teachers can gain the confidence necessary to be role models to their colleagues. Participating in professional development might help teacher leaders learn their roles and establish their values (Fullan, 1993).

The findings contend that if these conditions existed and happened in schools, teachers will be demotivated to engage in leadership and informal teacher leadership will languish. These conditions block informal teacher leaders from taking leadership roles and can have far-reaching consequences for students, teachers, and school contexts. Consequently, overcoming these hurdles is essential for creating a collaborative, innovative, and supportive learning environment where all teachers can thrive. Hence, the school principals and administrators could remove these hurdles by fostering a supportive, collaborative, and inclusive environment, offering leadership development, recognizing their contributions, and addressing workload challenges.

3.7 Contextualized Model on Informal Teacher Leadership

The findings of the study proposed a contextualized model on informal teacher leadership, as shown in Figure 1.

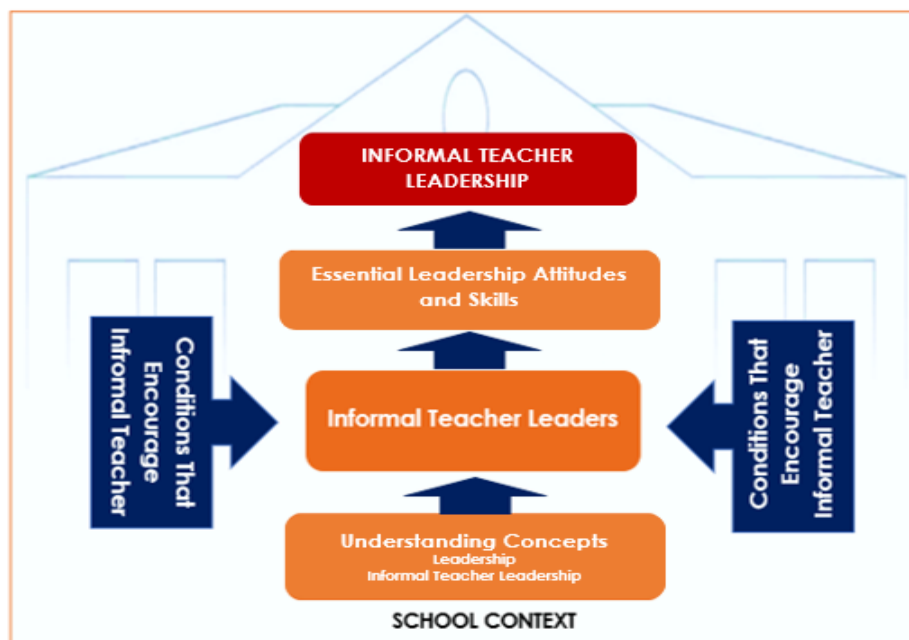


Figure 1. Contextualized Model on Informal Teacher Leadership

It is contextualized because it is generated from the knowledge and experiences of informal teacher leaders in Lanao del Sur, as they practiced leadership in their school contexts. This model serves as a guide for school stakeholders in recognizing and increasing informal teacher leadership in their school context. It depicts how

informal teacher leadership exists and is practiced in Lanao del Sur and presents variables such as the concepts of leadership and informal teacher leadership, the essential leadership attitudes and skills, and the conditions that encourage or discourage informal teacher leaders from taking leadership.

As displayed in the model, conceptualizing and understanding leadership and informal teacher leadership serve as a solid foundation for informal teacher leaders to take leadership roles and accept duties and responsibilities beyond their classrooms and job descriptions. These concepts serve as the grounds for informal teacher leaders on how they practice leadership and approach leading others. It shapes how informal teacher leaders perceive themselves as leaders which contributes to the development of leadership identity. With this, it helps them articulate their goals and inspire others to work towards common goals. They can also embody these concepts in their behaviors and skills, reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, seek feedback, and engage in ongoing development to enhance their leadership skills.

However, the leadership enactment of informal teacher leaders is subjected to various conditions that encourage or discourage them from leading in their school contexts. Informal teacher leaders are encouraged to pursue and practice leadership when people around them motivate and support their leadership and when conditions that motivate them exist in their school. This contends that encouraging informal teacher leaders to take leadership roles requires a strategic approach such as creating a culture of appreciation, providing leadership development opportunities, offering coaching and mentoring, encouraging collaboration and teamwork, providing resources and support, empowering teacher initiatives, giving career advancement opportunities, and lead by example are some of the strategies that school administrators can use to motivate informal teacher leaders.

On the contrary, it is difficult for informal teacher leaders to engage in leadership due to discouraging conditions that hinder them. Thus, removing conditions that discourage informal teacher leaders requires a proactive approach to address barriers and create an environment that fosters leadership development and empowerment. These strategies are (a) addressing administrative barriers; (b) promoting a culture of collaboration and shared decision-making through open communication, trust, and mutual respect among stakeholders; (c) providing professional development; (d) encouraging risk-taking and innovations by encouraging teachers to propose new ideas and innovations; (e) promoting inclusivity and diversity through ensuring leadership opportunities accessible to all; (f) providing mentorship and support to build confidence, develop skills, and overcome challenges, and (g) creating opportunities for recognition and advancement by giving rewards or awards and creating pathways for advancement and career development.

Given these conditions, informal teacher leaders must develop their attitudes and skills to successfully practice leadership. The combination of some, if not all, leadership attitudes and skills is essential to inspiring, influencing, and leading change effectively in their school contexts. By cultivating positive attitudes and honing leadership skills, informal teacher leaders can significantly impact teaching practices, students' learning experiences, and school improvement.

In a nutshell, informal teacher leadership is a kind of educational leadership taken by teachers who conceptualize and understand the concept of leadership and informal teacher leadership and develop leadership attitudes and skills in facing those encouraging and discouraging conditions created by the school stakeholders and environment. This leadership either flourishes or languishes in school contexts depending on how informal teacher leaders apply their concept of leadership and informal teacher leadership and use their leadership attitudes and skills in dealing with the conditions that encourage or discourage them from leading.

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, informal teacher leadership refers to the capacity of teachers to influence stakeholders and contribute to students' learning and school improvement through informal means such as collaboration, mentorship, and support. Informal teacher leaders may not hold formal positions or official authority. Hence, it is essential to conceptualize and understand the concepts of leadership and informal teacher leadership to help them define and clarify their roles and responsibilities and ensure that their contributions are acknowledged and valued. Additionally, understanding and developing leadership attitudes and skills are essential to maximize their potential contributions to students' performances, school improvements, professional growth, collaboration,

and school culture. Furthermore, it is also important to identify and address those conditions that encourage or discourage them from taking leadership. Encouraging informal teacher leaders to take leadership roles requires a strategic approach. On the other hand, removing conditions that discourage informal teacher leaders requires a proactive approach.

Meanwhile, the generated informal teacher leadership model suggests that the concepts of teacher leadership and informal teacher leadership serve as their foundation for taking leadership roles. It also displays that informal teacher leaders develop leadership attitudes and skills to face conditions that may support or hinder their leadership. These elements contribute to the flourishing or languishment of informal teacher leadership in schools.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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