

EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF PROACTIVE COLLEGIAL LEADERSHIP: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION PATTERNS

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ABSTRACT

Existing research on educational leadership has extensively examined instructional and transformational models, yet limited studies have focused on how proactive collegial leadership operates through communication and collaboration to sustain inclusivity and quality education. This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of school leaders in enacting collegial communication, identify challenges in sustaining collaborative practices, and determine their recommendations for strengthening proactive collegial leadership in public secondary schools. Using a qualitative-descriptive design, data were gathered from seventeen school leaders through ten in-depth interviews and seven focus group discussions. Thematic analysis revealed six themes on lived experiences, including proactive communication, shared transparency, inclusivity, collaboration, trust building, and conflict resolution. Five themes emerged as challenges: practical and psychological barriers, hierarchical dynamics, resource constraints, communication breakdowns, and engagement issues. Six themes were identified as recommendations, highlighting leadership development through communication, technology-supported collaboration, inclusive leadership practices, evidence-based improvement, a culture of collegiality, and empowerment. The findings underscored that proactive collegial leadership thrives when communication is transparent, inclusive, and developmental, and when collaboration is institutionalized within the school culture. The study concludes that sustained collegial leadership requires consistent mentoring, adaptive communication, and supportive policies that integrate inclusivity and shared governance. These insights provide a framework for improving leadership practices that promote collaboration, equity, and professional trust in educational institutions.

Keywords: *Proactive Collegial Leadership, Communication, Collaboration, Inclusivity, Quality Education*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in educational institutions has increasingly shifted from hierarchical and authority-driven models toward more collaborative and participatory approaches. Collegial leadership, characterized by shared

decision-making, open communication, and mutual professional respect, has been recognized as a critical factor in fostering positive school cultures and improving organizational effectiveness. Within this framework, proactive collegial leadership emphasizes anticipatory actions, inclusive dialogue, and collaborative engagement among school leaders and teachers.

Globally, studies highlight that effective school leadership is no longer confined to administrative control but is embedded in relational processes that promote trust, cooperation, and collective responsibility. In the Philippine educational context, particularly in public secondary schools, leadership practices are influenced by systemic challenges such as centralized governance, limited resources, and diverse stakeholder expectations. While national policies advocate shared governance and collaborative leadership, actual implementation varies across school contexts.

In Cotabato City, school leaders navigate complex organizational environments marked by cultural diversity, staffing constraints, and communication barriers. Although collegial leadership is encouraged, limited empirical studies explore how school leaders experience and practice proactive collegial leadership through communication and collaboration. Existing literature often focuses on leadership styles or outcomes, leaving a gap in understanding the lived experiences of leaders who enact collegiality in their daily professional interactions.

This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the lived experiences of school leaders in practicing proactive collegial leadership, with specific emphasis on communication and collaboration patterns within their schools.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design, guided by Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method. This approach was appropriate for capturing the essence of school leaders lived experiences related to proactive collegial leadership, communication, and collaboration.

Participants of the Study

Seventeen (17) school leaders participated in the study, consisting of ten (10) participants for in-depth interviews (IDIs) and seven (7) participants for a focus group discussion (FGD). Participants included principals, head teachers, and school administrators from selected public secondary schools in Cotabato City. Purposive and criterion-based sampling, supplemented by snowball sampling, ensured that participants had direct experience in leadership roles involving collaborative decision-making.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in selected public secondary schools in Cotabato City, an urbanized educational setting within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The locale was chosen due to its diverse school environments and leadership contexts.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using researcher-developed semi-structured interview guides for both IDIs and FGDs. The instruments focused on leadership practices, communication strategies, collaboration experiences, challenges encountered, and recommendations for strengthening collegial leadership. The instruments were validated by experts and pilot-tested prior to actual data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

Ethical clearance was secured prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted at participants' preferred times and venues, audio-recorded with permission, and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step method, which involved extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, developing an exhaustive description, and validating findings through member checking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the data gathered from school leaders' lived experiences through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study explored how proactive collegial leadership is enacted through communication and collaboration within school settings. It examined how school leaders communicate with their teams, foster collaboration, address challenges, and strengthen relationships that promote inclusive and effective educational practices.

Lived Experiences of School Leaders In Enacting Proactive Collegial Leadership through Communication and Collaboration

This section discusses the lived experiences of school leaders in practicing proactive collegial leadership through communication and collaboration. The data, drawn from ten in-depth interviews (IDI) and seven focus group discussions (FGD), revealed **six major themes** that describe how school leaders promote collegiality through intentional communication and collective action. The identified themes are: (1) *Proactive Collegial Leadership*,

(2) *Shared Leadership and Transparency*, (3) *Inclusive Communication*, (4) *Collaboration for Shared Goals*, (5) *Trust and Relationship Building*, and (6) *Conflict Management and Resolution*. These themes capture how leaders cultivate trust, inclusivity, and teamwork within their schools, demonstrating that effective leadership depends on communication that is deliberate, transparent, and empathetic.

Proactive Communication Practices. This theme highlighted that deliberate, structured, and informal communication practices help school leaders build trust, inclusivity, and shared decision-making. Leaders emphasized that proactive communication involves both planned and spontaneous interactions where teachers feel heard and valued. These consistent efforts foster collaboration, minimize miscommunication, and encourage teachers to engage in leadership processes. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I make time for structured meetings and informal conversations to ensure open channels where teachers feel safe voicing ideas.”
(IDI_P1).

“I appreciate when school leaders openly consult teachers about challenges. This proactive communication ensures leadership feels collegial.”

(FGD_P1)

“Collegial leadership shows when leaders communicate intentions early, sharing drafts for feedback.” (FGD_P2).

The statements revealed that school leaders intentionally create opportunities for open dialogue, which promotes mutual respect and shared accountability. They believe that communication should not only deliver information but also nurture relationships that strengthen collaboration. These experiences show that proactive communication is essential in transforming leadership from directive management to participatory engagement.

According to Cruz (2022), consistent and proactive communication strengthens organizational trust and unity. When leaders communicate regularly and clearly, teachers feel informed and respected, which reduces uncertainty and builds confidence in leadership. Luna (2023) found that leaders who maintain open and respectful dialogue create a positive working atmosphere where teachers feel valued and motivated to participate in collaborative efforts. Open channels of communication help reduce barriers between administrators and teachers, encouraging shared understanding and teamwork.

Similarly, Dela Peña (2021) emphasized that leaders who communicate early and transparently establish stronger alignment between staff and

institutional goals. Transparency allows teachers to anticipate decisions, prepare responses, and contribute meaningfully to discussions. This shared sense of purpose enhances organizational coherence and accountability. Proactive collegial leadership therefore fosters trust, strengthens cooperation, and promotes collective responsibility across the school community.

Shared Leadership and Transparency. This theme highlighted that early and transparent communication enables teachers to engage meaningfully in decision-making. Leaders emphasized that sharing drafts, conducting consultations, and maintaining consistent dialogue prevent misunderstandings and strengthen accountability. They viewed transparency as a deliberate act of trust-building that fosters ownership among teachers and aligns everyone with institutional goals. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I proactively share drafts of initiatives, allowing feedback before decisions are finalized.” (IDI_P2).

“Leaders’ effort to keep dialogue consistent prevents escalation of issues.” (FGD_P3).

“Inclusive communication through assemblies allows every voice to be valued.” (FGD_P4).

The statements revealed that school leaders practice transparency by involving teachers at the early stages of planning and decision-making. This process not only strengthens collegiality but also ensures that leadership decisions reflect the collective voice of the teaching community. By communicating intentions and seeking feedback early, leaders minimize confusion, foster trust, and promote a sense of shared responsibility.

According to Ramos (2022), transparent communication in educational settings reinforces mutual respect and accountability. When teachers are informed about plans before they are implemented, they become active contributors rather than passive recipients. This approach empowers teachers and improves institutional cohesion. Similarly, Navarro (2023) found that consistent dialogue between leaders and staff reduces organizational tension and enhances commitment to shared objectives.

In support the findings, De la Cruz (2021) emphasized that early involvement in decision-making leads to better policy outcomes because it integrates diverse perspectives. Transparency in leadership bridges information gaps and builds a climate of openness that strengthens professional relationships. Shared leadership and transparency therefore cultivate trust, enhance participation, and sustain organizational integrity within the school community.

Inclusive Communication. This theme highlighted that inclusive communication ensures that every teacher, regardless of personality or position, has a voice in school leadership processes. Leaders recognized that

creating diverse communication channels encourages participation from both outspoken and quiet members. They deliberately used tools such as anonymous suggestion boxes, mentoring systems, and open forums to guarantee balanced engagement. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“We use anonymous suggestion boxes to ensure quieter voices are heard.” (IDI_P3).

“Mentoring structures help quieter teachers share ideas safely.” (FGD_P5).

“Transparent sharing of plans builds collegial trust and reduces information gaps.” (FGD_P6).

The statements revealed that inclusive communication helps leaders reach all staff members, ensuring that no voice is excluded. Leaders perceive inclusivity as essential to creating fairness and mutual respect in decision-making. By acknowledging diverse viewpoints, they prevent isolation and foster a culture of belonging and empowerment.

In support the findings, Santos (2022), inclusive communication strengthens social cohesion and improves team performance by giving equal space for expression. When teachers feel heard, they are more likely to collaborate and support institutional goals. Garcia (2023) observed that inclusive leadership environments foster innovation because diverse ideas are integrated into collective planning.

Correspondingly, Villanueva (2021) further noted that anonymity and mentorship in feedback systems help mitigate fear of criticism, which encourages honest participation. Inclusive communication therefore transforms hierarchical structures into cooperative relationships where mutual respect, openness, and shared purpose thrive.

Collaboration for Shared Goals. This theme highlighted that collaboration is a central feature of proactive collegial leadership. Leaders emphasized the importance of joint planning, peer mentoring, and cross-grade teamwork as strategies to achieve shared objectives. They framed collaboration not as task distribution but as a shared process of reflection, learning, and collective improvement. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I initiate collaborative workshops where communication is framed as problem-solving.” (IDI_P5).

“Peer mentoring demonstrates proactive collegial leadership.” (FGD_P5).

“Cross-grade collaborations reflect leadership promoting communication across levels.” (FGD_P6).

The statements revealed that collaborative efforts encourage a sense of unity and shared accountability. Leaders use structured teamwork to build professional competence and strengthen organizational cohesion. By promoting open discussion and mutual support, collaboration turns leadership into a community effort rather than a top-down structure.

Similarly, Mendoza (2022) emphasized that schools that institutionalize collaborative practices develop stronger professional cultures. Shared problem-solving promotes reflective practice and continuous improvement. Perez (2023) found that peer mentoring encourages teachers to exchange expertise and sustain motivation.

Furthermore, Rivera (2021) also emphasized that cross-level collaboration bridges curriculum and pedagogy gaps, fostering alignment and innovation. Collaboration for shared goals therefore enhances communication, trust, and productivity within the school community.

Trust and Relationship Building. This theme highlighted that empathy, recognition, and consistent appreciation strengthen collegial trust between leaders and teachers. Leaders saw emotional connection as a foundation of professional collaboration. They balanced formal communication with personal engagement to sustain rapport and morale. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I adopt an empathetic tone addressing both professional and personal needs to establish solidarity.” (IDI_P10).

“Leaders who communicate appreciation consistently strengthen collegiality.” (FGD_P7).

“Rapport develops when leaders balance formal announcements with informal interactions.” (FGD_P4).

The statements revealed that building trust requires leaders to communicate with sincerity and emotional intelligence. Acts of appreciation and empathy create a safe and supportive work environment where teachers feel valued and understood. Trust emerges not from authority but from genuine care and availability.

According to Bautista (2022), relational trust is the strongest predictor of teacher engagement and retention. When leaders express consistent empathy, staff develop confidence in leadership decisions. Flores (2023) found that recognition of effort enhances professional satisfaction and teamwork.

Meanwhile, Santos (2021) noted that informal interactions humanize leadership, making communication more authentic and responsive. Trust and relationship building therefore form the emotional infrastructure of collegial leadership that sustains collaboration and collective commitment.

Conflict Management and Resolution. This theme highlighted that proactive communication is critical in managing and resolving conflicts. Leaders viewed communication breakdowns as opportunities for clarification and learning rather than sources of division. Immediate, transparent, and respectful dialogue helped restore trust and maintain professionalism. Thus, the significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“When communication breaks down, I call immediate clarifying meetings.” (IDI_P1).

“Leaders address breakdowns by initiating clarifying meetings.” (FGD_P1).

“Private conversations prevent embarrassment and build trust.” (FGD_P2).

The statements revealed that leaders handle conflict by confronting issues promptly and privately. This approach minimizes tension, prevents misinformation, and reinforces respect among colleagues. Leaders treat conflict resolution as part of maintaining organizational health and professional integrity.

According to Reyes (2022), early intervention in communication breakdowns prevents escalation and maintains a positive work climate. Open dialogue ensures that misunderstandings are addressed before they affect team dynamics. Torres (2023) observed that private resolution of disputes maintains dignity and preserves collegial trust.

Similarly, Dizon (2021) emphasized that transparent problem-solving practices create a culture of accountability and resilience. Conflict management and resolution therefore sustain harmony, protect relationships, and reinforce the professional values essential to collegial leadership.

Challenges Do School Leaders Encounter In Sustaining Collegial Communication and Collaborative Practices In Their Schools

This section discusses the challenges faced by school leaders in sustaining collegial communication and collaboration in their schools. The data, drawn from ten in-depth interviews (IDI) and seven focus group discussions (FGD), revealed five major themes that describe the difficulties and adaptive strategies of leaders in maintaining open communication, inclusivity, and teamwork. The identified themes are: (1) Overcoming Practical and Psychological Barriers, (2) Addressing Power Dynamics, (3) Resource and Structural Constraints, (4) Conflict Management and Resolution, and (5) Sustaining Collegial Engagement. These themes capture the complexity of maintaining collegial practices, showing that school leaders must balance logistical limitations, interpersonal challenges, and motivational concerns while preserving trust and collaboration across their institutions.

Overcoming Practical and Psychological Barriers. This theme highlighted that school leaders face both logistical and psychological challenges in sustaining collaboration. The meaning derived from the data shows that leaders counter scheduling conflicts, resistance, and unequal participation through flexibility, dialogue, and the use of adaptive digital tools to sustain teamwork and inclusivity. The significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“Conflicting schedules make collaboration difficult. I addressed this by adjusting timetables and using digital platforms.” (IDI_P1)

“Scheduling conflicts hindered collaboration, but flexible meetings sustained teamwork.” (FGD_P1)

“Resistance was addressed through proactive communication encouraging inclusivity.” (FGD_P2)

The statements revealed that conflicting schedules and attitudinal resistance are major challenges to sustained collaboration. Leaders who create flexible arrangements, integrate technology, and encourage dialogue manage to maintain engagement despite these barriers. They treat logistical and psychological obstacles as opportunities to innovate communication and strengthen participation.

According to Herrera (2023), the integration of flexible scheduling and online collaboration tools enhances staff involvement by accommodating time and workload diversity. Leaders who utilize technology to facilitate meetings foster inclusivity across departments. Morales (2024) added that proactive and empathetic communication reduces resistance and strengthens organizational trust, particularly when changes demand teacher adaptability.

Precisely, Paredes (2023) supported this by emphasizing that adaptive leaders who blend structure and flexibility maintain better staff cooperation during disruptions. He found that using hybrid meeting formats and clear communication strategies ensures continuous collaboration. Overcoming practical and psychological barriers therefore depends on leadership adaptability, empathy, and consistent communication strategies.

Addressing Power Dynamics. This theme highlighted that hierarchical structures in schools hinder equal participation in decision-making. The meaning derived from the data shows that flattening hierarchies and rotating facilitation roles promote fairness, inclusivity, and shared responsibility among teachers.

Significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I address power imbalances by rotating leadership roles in meetings.” (IDI_P1)

“Leaders rotate facilitation roles to flatten hierarchy.” (FGD_P1)

“Mixed committees ensure collegial equality in decision-making.” (FGD_P3)

The statements revealed that school leaders intentionally balance authority to prevent dominance in discussions. By rotating leadership responsibilities, they allow teachers to take active roles, strengthening ownership and equal participation in decision-making. This practice fosters openness and builds trust across ranks.

According to Lim (2023), distributed leadership minimizes authority gaps and promotes shared accountability among teachers. When teachers are empowered to lead, they develop stronger commitment to institutional goals. Ramos (2024) found that shared decision-making enhances transparency and collective ownership, which improve morale and professional collaboration.

Moreover, Cruzado (2023) emphasized that flattening organizational hierarchies through shared facilitation increases participation and psychological safety. Teachers are more likely to voice concerns and contribute when leadership roles are shared. Addressing power dynamics therefore nurtures equity and respect, essential for sustaining collegial collaboration.

Resource and Structural Constraints. This theme highlighted that limited resources, funding issues, and structural inefficiencies challenge sustained collegial collaboration. The meaning derived from the data shows that leaders overcome these limitations by promoting resource-sharing, creativity, and interdepartmental cooperation. The significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“Limited resources made collaboration difficult. I encouraged pooling materials and shared strategies.” (IDI_P5)

“Resource limitations were handled through sharing and creativity.” (FGD_P5)

“Cross-department collaboration restored collegial trust despite constraints.” (FGD_P6)

The statements revealed that resource shortages restrict collaboration but also create opportunities for innovation. Leaders promote collective problem-solving and sharing of resources to maintain teamwork and morale. Collaboration becomes a strategy to build resilience amid scarcity.

According to Bautista (2023), collaborative resource management strengthens institutional resilience, as shared materials and strategies reduce the effects of budget limitations. Estrada (2024) added that interdepartmental partnerships foster creative solutions that sustain engagement and promote fairness in resource distribution.

Correspondingly, Reyes (2023) also observed that schools with strong collaborative cultures sustain performance despite limited funding. Effective leaders transform resource constraints into opportunities for cooperation, reinforcing solidarity and innovation. Resource and structural constraints therefore highlight the value of creativity and teamwork in sustaining collegial collaboration.

Conflict Management and Resolution. This theme highlighted that miscommunication and interpersonal tensions disrupt collegial communication. The meaning derived from the data shows that timely clarifications, open dialogue, and empathy transform conflicts into opportunities for learning and professional growth.

Significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“Miscommunication caused misunderstandings; proactive clarifications improved collaboration.” (IDI_P4)

“Proactive clarifications reduced misunderstandings.” (FGD_P4)

“Active listening transformed conflicts into understanding.” (FGD_P5)

The statements revealed that communication breakdowns can damage collegial trust if not addressed promptly. Leaders emphasize the importance of immediate clarifications, active listening, and private discussions to prevent escalation and preserve professional respect.

According to Dizon (2023), open and empathetic communication strengthens collegial trust during conflict situations by ensuring that all parties feel heard and valued. Santiago (2024) found that restorative dialogue promotes accountability and helps rebuild professional relationships after disputes.

Gonzales (2023) confirmed that leaders who manage conflicts transparently improve teacher confidence and organizational cohesion. By using dialogue to resolve misunderstandings, leaders sustain collegial communication and foster a culture of continuous learning and cooperation.

Sustaining Collegial Engagement. This theme highlighted that maintaining motivation and equal participation is a recurring challenge in collaborative leadership. The meaning derived from the data shows that recognition, appreciation, and equal participation sustain engagement and collective accountability among teachers. The significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“Low morale challenged collaboration. Recognition motivated renewed participation.” (IDI_P10)

“Recognition and appreciation motivated teachers.” (FGD_P7)

“Rotating roles improved participation and fairness.” (FGD_P3)

The statements revealed that low morale and uneven involvement weaken collaboration. Leaders use recognition, appreciation, and equitable role rotation to maintain motivation and ensure fairness in participation. These actions build trust, encourage ownership, and sustain collegial energy.

According to Alvarez (2023), consistent recognition of teacher contributions strengthens engagement and commitment to shared goals. Appreciation builds confidence and a sense of belonging. Marquez (2024) found that equitable participation in leadership tasks reduces burnout and improves collaboration by giving each teacher a voice.

Lopez (2023) further stated that leaders who cultivate belonging and fairness sustain long-term motivation and institutional loyalty. Sustaining collegial engagement therefore requires continuous reinforcement through recognition, shared responsibility, and inclusivity to preserve collaboration and trust within the school community.

School Leaders’ Recommendations for Strengthening Proactive Collegial Leadership to Promote Inclusive and Quality Education through Improved Communication and Collaboration

This section presents the recommendations of school leaders on how to strengthen proactive collegial leadership to support inclusive and quality education. Data from ten in-depth interviews (IDI) and seven focus group discussions (FGD) revealed six major themes describing effective strategies that enhance communication, collaboration, and shared accountability in schools. The identified themes are: (1) *Leadership Development Through Communication*, (2) *Technology-Supported Collaboration*, (3) *Inclusive Leadership Practices*, (4) *Evidence-Based Improvement*, (5) *Culture of Collegiality*, and (6) *Empowered Collegial Leadership*. These themes highlight how leaders integrate mentoring, digital tools, inclusivity, reflection, and empowerment to create environments where communication and collaboration foster trust, equality, and sustained improvement.

Leadership Development Through Communication. This theme highlighted that continuous feedback, coaching, and mentoring strengthen inclusivity and professional growth. The meaning derived from the data shows that open communication in mentoring builds mutual trust, promotes reflective dialogue, and encourages shared learning among teachers and leaders.

Significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I use coaching conversations and peer mentoring to model openness.” (IDI_P6)

“Workshops allow teachers to co-create and learn collaboratively.” (FGD_P5)

“Informal check-ins foster trust and mutual learning.” (FGD_P7)

The statements revealed that school leaders perceive coaching and mentoring as dynamic processes that develop both personal and professional growth. Through consistent feedback loops and reflective discussions, they model transparency and openness, fostering a culture of learning and collegial support.

According to Ramirez (2023), effective coaching structures improve communication and professional identity by reinforcing continuous dialogue between leaders and teachers. Feedback mechanisms enhance reflective practice and mutual respect. De Vera (2024) emphasized that mentoring promotes distributed leadership, where teachers feel empowered to innovate and share insights within their teams.

Moreover, Gonzalez (2023) added that ongoing coaching conversations strengthen collaboration by linking individual growth with collective goals. This alignment creates an environment where communication becomes developmental, sustaining inclusivity and collective responsibility within the school community.

Technology-Supported Collaboration. This theme highlighted that digital tools and rotational leadership sustain inclusivity, consistency, and shared ownership. The meaning derived from the data shows that integrating technology supports real-time communication, transparency, and collaborative planning among staff. The significant remarks of the participants reflected below:

“I use digital platforms for collaboration and real-time communication.” (IDI_P7)

“Group chats foster collaboration beyond meetings.” (FGD_P4)

“Workshops with proactive facilitation enhance communication flow.” (FGD_P5)

The statements revealed that digital tools extend collaboration beyond physical meetings. They provide continuous communication spaces that connect teachers, strengthen coordination, and promote inclusivity in planning and decision-making.

According to Bautista (2023), integrating digital communication platforms increases teacher engagement and reduces information gaps. Digital collaboration tools create transparency and enable continuous feedback. Santos (2024) added that real-time communication enhances teamwork by allowing teachers to exchange insights immediately and address challenges promptly.

Also, Cruz (2023) emphasized that technology-driven collaboration builds a participatory culture where all members can contribute regardless of schedule or location. Technology-supported collaboration therefore reinforces inclusivity, efficiency, and shared accountability across the school.

Inclusive Leadership Practices. This theme highlighted that rotational and anonymous methods institutionalize equality and fairness in leadership. The meaning derived from the data shows that inclusivity in communication ensures balanced participation, transparency, and representation across the organization.

Significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“Rotating facilitators ensure fairness in participation.” (IDI_P9)
“Leaders encourage equal speaking time during meetings.” (FGD_P1)
“Anonymous feedback ensures inclusivity and transparency.” (FGD_P2)

The statements revealed that school leaders promote equality by rotating facilitators and creating safe feedback mechanisms. These practices empower teachers to express ideas without fear of bias or hierarchy. Inclusivity becomes an operational norm rather than an abstract principle.

According to Lim (2023), inclusive leadership strengthens participation and morale by recognizing all voices in the decision-making process. Equal speaking opportunities ensure fairness and engagement. Herrera (2024) added that anonymity in feedback enhances authenticity and helps leaders identify institutional issues objectively.

Meanwhile, Ramos (2023) found that inclusive practices improve organizational trust and cohesion, as every teacher perceives their contribution as valued. Inclusive leadership practices therefore establish fairness and foster empowerment that sustains collaboration and communication.

Evidence-Based Improvement. This theme highlighted that progress in collegial leadership is measured through participation, innovation, morale, and goal achievement. The meaning derived from the data shows that evidence-based reflection helps leaders track effectiveness and improve collaboration. The remarks of the participants reflected below:

“I measure success by evaluating shared goals achieved.” (IDI_P1)
“We measure success through achievement of shared goals.” (FGD_P1)
“Teacher feedback sessions indicate collective ownership.” (FGD_P2)

The statements implied that leaders evaluate improvement not only through outputs but through shared processes and collective morale. Feedback

and goal tracking guide future planning and maintain alignment between leadership initiatives and educational outcomes.

According to Navarro (2023), evidence-based reflection builds institutional accountability and ensures continuous improvement. Measuring progress through collaboration indicators ensures that success is collective, not individual. Morales (2024) noted that consistent evaluation fosters learning cultures where data informs leadership decisions and strengthens transparency.

Similarly, Garcia (2023) also found that feedback-driven reflection enhances inclusivity and helps identify barriers to teamwork. Evidence-based improvement therefore sustains a responsive leadership culture that links communication with measurable outcomes.

Culture of Collegiality. This theme highlighted that collegial communication and collaboration form the foundation of an inclusive school culture. The meaning derived from the data shows that consistent communication patterns strengthen trust, belonging, and shared purpose across the institution.

Significant remarks of the participants reflected below:

“Communication and collaboration define school culture, fostering trust and belonging.” (IDI_P2)

“School culture mirrors communication styles.” (FGD_P3)
“Patterns of collaboration create inclusivity and shared belonging.” (FGD_P6)

The statements revealed that the tone and frequency of communication shape the entire organizational atmosphere. When leaders model openness and teamwork, it establishes a culture of trust and unity that permeates the school’s operations and relationships.

According to Villanueva (2023), school culture is directly shaped by leaders’ communication behaviors, which influence teacher morale and collaboration quality. A culture built on transparency and empathy strengthens organizational coherence. Estrada (2024) added that patterns of collaboration reinforce inclusion, ensuring that all members feel valued and integral to the institution’s success.

In like manner, Reyes (2023) emphasized that collegial cultures sustain long-term innovation by creating psychological safety and shared identity. A culture of collegiality therefore acts as the foundation for inclusive and quality education supported by effective communication and collaboration.

Empowered Collegial Leadership. This theme highlighted that flattening hierarchies and encouraging teacher-led initiatives promote empowerment, shared trust, and inclusivity. The meaning derived from the data

shows that when authority is shared and teacher voices are amplified, leadership becomes participatory and empowering. The significant statements of the participants reflected below:

“I flatten hierarchies by encouraging teacher-led initiatives.”

(IDI_P2)

“Teacher-led initiatives address power gaps and build trust.”

(FGD_P2)

“Consensus-building ensures authority is shared.” (FGD_P6)

The statements revealed that empowered collegial leadership relies on distributing decision-making power and fostering collective ownership. Leaders encourage teachers to lead projects, fostering innovation and trust through shared responsibility.

According to Santiago (2023), empowering teachers to lead initiatives enhances engagement and ownership of institutional goals. Shared authority promotes creativity and accountability. Paredes (2024) found that participatory leadership builds professional confidence and strengthens team cohesion, ensuring that collaboration remains sustainable.

Additionally, Bautista (2023) also emphasized that empowerment-driven leadership nurtures a sense of purpose and autonomy among teachers, leading to improved morale and innovation. Empowered collegial leadership therefore advances inclusivity and quality education by aligning authority with collaboration and shared vision.

Conclusions

Based on the results and findings of this study, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The study concluded that the lived experiences of school leaders revealed that proactive collegial leadership thrives through transparent communication and participatory collaboration. When leaders communicate intentionally, share decision-making, and build trust through empathy, they create inclusive environments where teachers feel respected and motivated. This implies that effective leadership in schools depends on communication that fosters openness, shared accountability, and professional relationships grounded in mutual respect.
2. It was concluded that school leaders encounter persistent challenges that test the sustainability of collegial communication and collaboration. Scheduling conflicts, hierarchical gaps, limited resources, and motivational issues hinder teamwork. Despite these barriers, leaders' adaptability, empathy, and inclusive practices enable them to sustain professional harmony. Institutions must therefore provide supportive systems and resources that reinforce transparency, equal participation, and sustained engagement among teachers.

3. The study further concluded that strengthening proactive collegial leadership requires intentional strategies that integrate communication, technology, inclusivity, and empowerment. Continuous mentoring, digital collaboration tools, evidence-based reflection, and a culture of trust are essential for sustaining inclusive and quality education. Leaders must institutionalize fairness, shared authority, and reflective dialogue to promote an environment that values every teacher's voice and contribution.

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