

Collaborative Teachers and Effective School Leadership with Result of State Regents Exam of Selected Public High Schools from one City in the US

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Abstract - *The study aims to determine the correlation between the assessment level for collaborative teachers and effective school leadership with the result of State Regents Exams for Math and English, Language and Arts (ELA) of the selected public high schools from one City in the US. Quantitative descriptive type of research was utilized in the study with 42 public high schools as subjects of the study. Result showed that there is a high level of assessment for collaborative teachers and effective school leadership which is not translated to public high school performance in State Regent Exams. It means that schools with low performance in State Regents Exams have also high level of assessments on the two major elements of school learning environment. Moreover, those schools with high level on collaborative teachers have also high level of assessment on effective school leadership. Findings of the study served as the basis in the formulation of strategies on how collaboration among teachers can influence the teaching and learning process and how school leadership can be strengthened to become effective in enhancing the result of state regent exams.*

Keywords: *collaborative teachers, educational management, quality education, quantitative descriptive, school leadership, sustainable development*

INTRODUCTION

School performance has always been part of important measure to determine how the management achieves its mandate in providing quality education from collaborative teachers and effective school leadership through the delivery of instruction with co-curricular activities relevant to the needs of the learners. Meanwhile, there are some schools which really performs better than the other and it takes a lot of factors to determine which influence their performance. The teaching and learning process provides meaningful experience inside and outside the classroom settings. However, there are some issues on collaboration among teachers and school leadership that might affect in the implementation of school development programs.

School leadership has been an essential component for the success of all educational programs to become responsive to the needs of the learners. The achievement of student outcomes as measured through performance in national or state regent exam served as the measure in continuous improvement [1] and development of teachers and learning processes.

School principals have a vital role to play in shaping the organizational capacity to improve and sustain high levels of student achievement [2] and academic outcomes [3]. Leadership competencies are nurtured overtime to adapt in the changing environment of education through having diverse student backgrounds and individual differences of both teachers and students. Principals lead by example and nurture the professional growth of teachers and staff, developing and delivering the instructional and social-emotional support that drives student achievement. School leadership requires commitment, experience, understanding, and planning to achieve improved performance.

Effective school leadership is about teamwork where principals served as role models and servant leaders [4]. It can also shape and transform learning environments that can be productive and meaningful for teachers and students with a culture that is hospitable to learning. Witziers *et al.* [5] noted that educational leadership is related to the organization and culture of the school, which is related in turn to student achievement. The effective leader denotes an

embodiment for the external contingency of the group, which in this case is the school and community members [6]. According to Notman and Henry [7], effective principals use multiple leadership strategies for leading teachers to raise levels of student achievement. School principals today face several challenges and many dysfunctional schools are plagued by low teacher morale, drug abuse by learners and violence. While many critics argue that it is necessary to bring back morality and ethics in “messy workplaces”, others do not agree [8]. Schools that have successfully turned around have typically been guided by school principals who demonstrate high levels of turnaround leadership competencies. Garza et al. [9] emphasized that effective school leadership has something to do with the preparation of principals for higher responsibility and understanding of their duties and responsibilities as part of commitment to the achievement of the vision and mission of the learning institution.

Effective leadership also promotes collaboration among teachers and other stakeholders. Collaboration builds an atmosphere of trust and confidence among the teachers and academic community. The camaraderie and support for one another helps in bringing positive outcomes in learning new strategies and techniques on how to deliver quality instruction and educational services to the students.

The study of Sammons et al. [3] highlighted the importance of a model of leadership practice that promotes an orderly and favourable behavioural climate, positive learner motivation and a learning culture that predicts positive changes in pupil behaviour and attendance as intermediate outcomes that promote improvement and attainment of educational goals. Having a supportive environment across all stakeholders like students, teachers, administrators and parents is an essential element of success in achieving the goal of quality education. Thus, the results of this study could be used as a tool to improve observation technique and feed backing for faculty members and staff.

This study attempted to examine performance of low performing high schools for two years from SY 2016-2017 to SY 2017-2018 from one City in the US in terms of collaborative teachers, and effective school leadership based on the perspective of students and teachers. It specifically aimed to determine the assessment level for having collaborative teachers in terms of cultural awareness and inclusive classroom instruction, innovation and collective responsibility,

peer collaboration, quality of professional development and school commitment; and assessment for effective school leadership in terms of inclusive leadership, instructional leadership, program coherence and teacher influence; and test the significant relationship between collaborative teachers and effective school leadership. The study also investigated the result of English, Language and Arts (ELA) and Math State Regents Exam and their relationship with the collaborative teachers and effective school leadership. Findings of the study were utilized as insights to formulate strategies in enhancing the student performance in ELA and Math.

METHODS

Research design

The researcher used descriptive research method in this study. Descriptive research is a quantitative research method that attempts to collect quantifiable information for statistical analysis of the population sample. The information collected were the survey results from 42 low performing public high schools from one City in the US.

Participants

The researcher selected 42 low performing public high schools from one City in the US for SY 2016-2017 and SY 2017-2018 based on the US Failing Schools-2015 Reports. The respondents of the annual School Survey were the students, teachers and parents of these schools.

Instrument

The Collaborative Teachers element is made up of six measures: Peer Collaboration, Cultural Awareness, Inclusive Classroom Instruction, Innovation and Collective Responsibility, School Commitment, and Quality Professional Development. The element draws from each respondent group (i.e., teachers, parents and students). All of these were from previously validated measures. All measures had high reliability, with an alpha over .70. Many measures had at least a moderate level of within-school agreement. However, the Cultural Awareness, Inclusive Classroom Practice, and Reflective Dialogue measures had low levels of within-school agreement. School Commitment and Focus on Student Learning had high within-school agreement, and the rest had a moderate amount; had face and content validity, all measures except Cultural Awareness (student and parent) and Quality

Professional Development (high school) had concurrent validity, as indicated by positive correlations with academic achievement.

The Effective Leadership element consists of three measures: Teacher Influence, Instructional Leadership, and Program Coherence. All three measures were included on the teacher and parent versions of the survey. All measures had high reliability, as indicated by an alpha over 0.70 within-school agreement were high for all of the measures and content had concurrent validity (i.e., had positive correlations with student academic achievement).

Procedure

This research used quantitative documentary analysis. The data were retrieved from the website of the State School Survey and were tabulated and analyzed to find patterns and relationships among variables. Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic [10]. Analyzing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus group or interview transcripts are analyzed [10]. A rubric can also be used to grade or score document. There are three primary types of documents. One of them is public record. It is the official, ongoing records of an organization’s activities. The documents in this study were survey results from all respondents of the 42 low performing public high schools from one City in the US during the last two school years. For ethical consideration, names of schools were not mentioned in the study.

Data Analysis

Weighted Mean, Percentage and Rank were the descriptive statistical tools used to describe the result of survey. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to test the significant relationship between collaborative teachers and effective school leadership with ELA and Math State Regents Exams. The given scale was used to interpret the result of the data gathered: 3.50-4.00: Strongly Agree/All; 2.50-3.49: Agree/A Lot; 1.50-2.49: Disagree/Some; 1.00-1.49: Strongly Disagree/None.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Cultural Awareness. Result revealed that the overall mean score of 3.14 implies that there is a high level of cultural awareness among the students. They

agreed that they feel that their teachers respect their culture/background (3.30); and in general, their teachers treat the students from different cultures or backgrounds equally (3.25). There is a diversity of culture in the classroom setting and respecting cultural diversity is considered a practice that everyone shared in the community. Teachers are aware of the cultural background of the students and have high regards of the cultural differences. They respect the different practices of each culture. The study of Gay [11] gives emphasis on “teaching to” cultural diversity which helps students acquire more accurate knowledge about the lives, cultures, contributions, experiences, and challenges of different ethnic and racial groups in U.S. society. This knowledge is often unrecognized or denigrated in conventional schooling.

Table 1. Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Cultural awareness

Rank	Cultural awareness: Students	WM	VI
1	I feel that my teachers respect my culture/background.	3.30	Agree
2	In general, my teachers treat students from different cultures or backgrounds equally.	3.25	Agree
3	I see people of many races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds represented in the curriculum.	3.20	Agree
4	In general, my teachers present positive images of people from a variety of races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds. My teachers use examples of student’s different	3.16	Agree
5	cultures/backgrounds/families in their lesson to make learning more meaningful for me.	3.02	Agree
6	In general, my teachers make their lessons relevant to my everyday life experiences.	2.89	Agree
Overall Mean		3.14	Agree

They also agreed that they see people of many races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds represented in the curriculum (3.20) and their teachers present positive images of people from a variety of races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds (3.16). They avoid imposing their own values and they resist stereotyping. They relate the lessons and curriculum from different background and ethnicities where real life examples are being considered for discussion.

The respondents also agreed that their teachers use examples of student’s different cultures/backgrounds/families in their lesson to make learning more meaningful for me (3.02) and their teachers make their lessons relevant to their everyday life experiences (2.89).

Grady et al. [12] believed that cultural awareness and sensitivity are impacted through classroom instruction. Belli’s [13] research indicated that participants were found to learn culture mainly to develop their cultural awareness and maintain better communication with people from different cultures. In the light of findings, necessary implications were provided for teachers and teacher educators regarding raising cultural awareness of students and developing positive attitudes towards incorporation of target culture into language instruction.

Table 2. Collaborative Teachers in terms of Inclusive Classroom Instruction

R	Inclusive Classroom Instruction: Teacher	WM	VI
1	modify instructional activities and materials to meet the developmental needs and learning interests of all my students.	3.48	Agree
2	use my students' prior knowledge to make my lessons relevant to their everyday life.	3.47	Agree
3	adapt instruction to ensure it represents all cultures/backgrounds positively.	3.35	Agree
4	design appropriate instruction that is matched to students' need (e.g. English language learners (ELL) proficiency and students with disabilities)	3.32	Agree
5	distinguish linguistic/cultural differences from learning difficulties.	3.19	Agree
6	develop appropriate Individual Education Programs for my students with disabilities.	3.09	Agree
7	apply my knowledge of parents' various cultural backgrounds when collaborating with them regarding their child's educational progress.	3.06	Agree
8	receive support around how to incorporate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in my practice	3.00	Agree
Overall Mean		3.25	Agree

Table 2 shows collaborative teacher element in terms of Inclusive Classroom Instruction with overall mean score of 3.25 which signifies a high level of assessment the teachers. They agreed that teachers modify instructional activities and materials to meet the developmental needs and learning interests of all the students (3.48) and use their students' prior knowledge to make their lessons relevant to the everyday life (3.47). It is good to note that teachers are aware of the individual differences of the students where they need to adjust to whatever activities that the students would be interested and enthusiastic to learn from the materials. Assimilation of students’ prior knowledge to the lesson and finding the relation of the topic to the real-life situation provides active involvement of the students during discussion because they could be able to connect with the examples of the teachers. Davis [14] emphasized that classroom teachers are required to help their students to effectively make the transition from teaching theory to using culturally relevant instructional. This is through their instructional practice which determines the relevance of what is being taught and how their teaching connects to their lives.

They agreed that they adapt instruction to ensure it represents all cultures/backgrounds positively (3.35); and design appropriate instruction that is matched to students’ need like English Language learners (ELL) proficiency and students with disabilities (3.32). They also distinguish linguistic/cultural differences from learning difficulties (3.19) and develop appropriate Individual Education Programs for students with disabilities (WM = 3.09) as well as apply knowledge of parents’ cultural backgrounds when collaborating with them regarding their child’s educational progress (3.06). However, teachers agreed that they also receive support around on how to incorporate students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds in their practice (3.00) with the least weighted mean score.

Hall et al. [15] said that differentiated instruction is a process to teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student’s growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is and assisting in the learning process”. Thakur (2014) noted that when teachers consider students’ interest, they give students the opportunity to develop skills and concepts through the topics which students enjoy studying. When teachers consider learning styles, they plan learning activities taking into account visual, auditory, and kinesthetic preferences. Furthermore, teaching and

learning are influenced by data collection, interpretation and usage. Conducting relevant professional faculty development activities to improve the quality and type of instructional services needed to meet the individual needs of the students follows extensive data gathering.

Table 3. Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Innovation and Collective responsibility

R	Innovation and Collective responsibility: Teacher	WM	VI
1	feel responsible that all students learn?	3.20	A Lot
2	are actively trying to improve their teaching?	3.17	A Lot
3	take responsibility for improving the school?	2.95	A Lot
4	are eager to try new ideas?	2.91	A Lot
5	help maintain discipline in the entire school, not just their classroom?	2.75	A Lot
Overall Mean		3.00	A Lot

Table 3 shows Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Innovation and Collective responsibility. Result showed that there is a high level of innovation and collective responsibility among teachers as denoted by the computed over all mean score of 3.00. A lot of teachers feel responsible that all students learn (3.20) and they are actively trying to improve their teaching (3.17). They take a lot of responsibility for improving the school (2.95) and they are eager to try new ideas (2.91) and they help maintain discipline in the entire school, not just their classroom (2.75).

They believe that it is their great responsibility to make the students learn from the way they deliver quality instruction, from the way they motivate the students and the way they provide proper guidance to the immediate concerns and challenges of the students. They also believe that teaching the students with the right kind of discipline provides deeper understanding of other attributes of positive behaviour and attitude towards teaching and learning process in the classroom. They are aware of their responsibility to enhance their reaching methodologies that would give different perspectives on how they deliver instruction.

Ajowi and Simatwa [16] believed that society itself could not function without the exercise of discipline. The use of guidance and counseling to promote discipline must continually be practiced and people must work harmoniously for the achievement of common purpose.

Table 4. Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Peer collaboration

R	Peer collaboration: Teacher	WM	VI
1	teachers talk with one another about instruction	3.38	Agree
2	teachers design instructional programs (e.g. lessons, units) together.	3.05	Agree
3	teachers make a conscious effort to coordinate their teaching with instruction at other grade levels	3.02	Agree
4	the principal/school leader, teachers, and staff collaborate to make this school run effectively	2.97	Agree
Overall Mean		3.10	Agree

Table 4 shows Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Peer collaboration. Result showed that there is a high level of peer collaboration among teachers as denoted by the computed overall mean score of 3.10. Moolenaar [17] found out that the pattern of social relationships among teachers may significantly enhance the understanding of the ways in which teacher collaboration takes place and contributes to student learning, teachers' instructional practice, and the implementation of reform.

Teachers agreed that they talk with one another about instruction (3.38) and they design instructional programs (e.g. lessons, units) together (3.05), teachers make a conscious effort to coordinate their teaching with instruction at other grade levels (3.02), the principal/school leader, teachers, and staff collaborate to make this school run effectively (2.97). Teachers learn how to share their knowledge and resources to make the delivery of instruction more extensive and coordinated.

Sharing was further specified in the study of Meirink, Imants, Meijer, and Verloop [18] with regard to differences in the content and aims of sharing. Different types of sharing were related to teacher learning. The results give cause to rethink the nature of interdependence in collaboration, and the nature of the relationship between collaboration and learning.

Table 5 shows Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of Quality of Professional development. Result showed that there is a high level of quality professional development among teachers as indicated by the computed overall mean score of 2.82.

Teachers agree that their professional development experiences this year have included opportunities to work productively with colleagues in the school (3.02); and have been sustained and coherently focused, rather than short-term and unrelated (2.92) as well included

enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas (2.86).

Table 5. Collaborative Teachers in terms of Quality of Professional Development

Quality of professional development: Teacher			
R	Overall, my professional development experiences this year have...	WM	VI
1	included opportunities to work productively with colleagues in my school.	3.02	Agree
2	been sustained and coherently focused, rather than short-term and unrelated	2.92	Agree
3	included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas.	2.86	Agree
4	included opportunities to work productively with teachers from other schools	2.48	Disagree
Overall Mean		2.82	Agree

However, teachers disagree that the professional development this year included opportunities to work productively with teachers from other schools (2.48). Continuing professional development is always an important aspect of growth on how teachers can still improve and develop their collaborative learning skills and competencies in terms of classroom management and leadership practices. Schmidt [19] noted that members of the education community have often argued for the use of professional development to provide teachers the means to reflect upon and make shifts in their practice based on the recommendations for reforming mathematics education.

Table 6. Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of School commitment

School commitment: Teacher			
R	School commitment: Teacher	WM	VI
1	I usually look forward to each working day at this school.	3.00	Agree
2	I would recommend this school to other teachers as a place to work.	2.83	Agree
3	I would recommend this school to parents/guardians seeking a place for their child.	2.76	Agree
Overall Mean		2.86	Agree

Table 3 shows Collaborative Teachers Element in terms of School commitment. Result showed that there is a high level of school commitment among teachers

as indicated by the computed overall mean score of 2.86. Teachers have high level of school commitment when they usually look forward to each working day at school (3.00). They also have high level of commitment in recommending this school to other teachers as a place to work (2.83) as well as making recommendation of the school to parents/guardians seeking a place for their child (2.76). School teachers believed in the capacity of their respective school to offer quality education to the community. Therefore, they are committed to recommend their schools to parents and guardians which help promote the school activities and gain support from them. It is part of the leadership style of the administrators on how to get the commitment of the teachers by proper handling and dealing with the concerns of everyone in the academic community. Aydin, Sarier and Uysal [20] affirmed that transformational leadership style affected job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers in a positive way. It was concluded that as the leadership style of administrator changes from transactional to transformational, the level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers rose.

Table 7. Effective School Leadership Element in terms of Instructional leadership

R Instructional leadership: Teachers			
	The principal/school leader at this school...	WM	VI
1	makes clear to the staff his or her expectations for meeting instructional goals.	3.13	A
2	sets high standards for student learning.	3.12	A
3	communicates a clear vision for this school.	3.08	A
4	carefully tracks student academic/lead progress.	3.08	A
5	sets clear expectations for teachers about implementing what they have learned in professional development.	3.02	A
6	understands how children learn.	2.99	A
7	knows what's going on in my classroom.	2.94	A
8	participates in instructional planning with teams of teachers.	2.8	A
Mean		3.02	A

Table 7 shows Effective School Leadership Element in terms of Instructional Leadership. Results reveal that there is a high level of instructional leadership among schools under study as indicated by the computed composite mean score of 3.02. Teachers agree that the principal/school leader at the school makes clear to the staff his or her expectations for

meeting instructional goals (3.13), sets high standards for higher learning (3.12), communicates a clear vision for this school (3.08), and carefully tracks student academic progress (3.08).

School leaders who really value the vision, mission and goals of the institution make them visionary, futuristic and innovative. They see better views on the direction of the institutions through achieving excellence from the quality of their students.

Yoeli and Berkovich [21] believed that successful visionary educational leaders promote a shared vision with great commitment and manage to connect other organizational members to it. Findings of their study suggest that educational leaders should engage in a process of self-reflection in order to form a significant personal vision to which they can fully commit. Furthermore, the insights of leaders about what is important to them can create an open dialogue with other organizational members as well as the development of a shared vision.

They understand how children learn (2.99), set clear expectations for teachers about implementing what they have learned in professional development(3.02), and participate in instructional planning with teams of teachers (2.80). Teachers agree that the principal/school leader at their school makes clear to the staff his or her expectations for meeting instructional goals. The table also shows that teachers agree that the principal/school leader participates in instructional planning with teams of teachers which has the lowest rank.

Robinson [22] affirmed that building instructional leadership capabilities involves more, than educating individual leaders or leadership teams. It also involves creating the appropriate institutional and external conditions so that relevant capabilities can be exercised and developed. Preston et al. [4] emphasized the importance of teamwork which focuses on promoting and using the dominant skills of people, and community well-being in effective leadership. Meanwhile, Horng and Loeb [23] also emphasized that strong instructional leadership is essential for a school to be successful. However, defined narrowly only in terms of curriculum and classroom instruction, instructional leadership is unlikely to result in increased student learning or other desirable outcomes.

Table 8 shows effective school leadership element in terms of Program coherence. There is a high level of program coherence among the schools under study as indicated by the computed composite mean score of 2.85 for two consecutive years. Teachers agree that in

these schools, it is clear how all of the programs offered are connected to the school’s instructional vision (2.90), and once they started a new program, they follow up to make sure it is working (2.82).

Table 8. Effective School Leadership Element in terms of Program coherence

R	Program coherence: Teachers	WM	V
	In this school...		I
1	it is clear how all of the programs offered are connected to our school's instructional vision.	2.90	A
2	curriculum, instruction, and learning materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at this school.	2.85	A
3	once we start a new program, we follow up to make sure it is working.	2.82	A
Mean		2.85	A

The respondents also agreed that the materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at the school (2.85). Teachers agree that in their school it is clear how all of the programs offered are connected to their school’s instructional vision. Ercetin and Maya [24] emphasized that it is well known that leadership plays a key role in school improvement and school effectiveness. Strategic leadership is a critical component in the effective development of schools. The key foci for those who led schools in the last two decades, in many countries, have been school effectiveness and school improvement. The emphasis now is shifting to focus on how short-term improvements can become sustainable.

Table 9. Effective School Leadership Element in terms of Teacher influence

R	Teacher influence: Teachers	WM	VI
	In this school...		
2	the principal/school leader encourages feedback through regular meetings with parent and teacher leaders.	3.07	Moderate
How much influence do teachers have over school policy in each of the areas below?			
1	Developing instructional materials.	3.19	Moderate
3	Selecting instructional materials used in classrooms.	3.02	Moderate
4	Setting standards for student behavior.	2.92	Moderate
Mean		3.05	Moderate

Table 9 shows effective school leadership element in terms of teacher influence. There is a moderate level of teacher influence over school policy as indicated by the computed composite mean score of 3.05. Teachers rated moderate on encouraging principal/school leader feedback through regular meetings with parent and teacher leaders (3.07), and on influencing teachers over school policy in selecting instructional materials (3.02), as well as in developing instructional materials (3.19).

Having regular feedback mechanism to clients provides constant communication with the school leaders and the stakeholders. Making everyone aware of the school performance and how satisfied the students and parents on the educational services provided entail insights for continuous improvement [25]. Principals have the power of persuasion to promote ongoing school improvement [26]. The feedback being communicated properly through the right channel provides first-hand information to the concerned teachers and stakeholders.

Parents are considered important clients of the academic institution and getting their views and thoughts about the outcomes in terms of acquired knowledge, skills and values of their children brings information for developing more effective school plans and educational programs. Wirtz, Tambyah and Mattila [27] believed that customer feedback helps in identifying problem areas and strengths, and generates ideas for service improvements where most feedback is given to frontline employees directly rather than submitted through formal channels.

However, setting standards for student behavior (2.92) obtained the least mean score. Teachers in their schools have moderate influence over school policy in developing instructional materials. This table also shows that teachers have moderate influence over school policy in setting standards for student behavior. This item ranks the lowest in the survey.

Table 10 presents the summary of Composite Mean Scores of Collaborative Teachers and Effective School Leadership. Result showed that Inclusive Classroom instruction (CM=3.25) is considered the highest indicator under collaborative teachers followed by cultural awareness (CM=3.14) and peer collaboration (CM=3.10). Meanwhile, Teacher Influence (3.05) is considered the highest indicator under effective school leadership. Overall, both variables obtained a high level of assessment from the respondents.

Table 10. Summary of Composite Mean Scores of Collaborative Teachers and Effective School Leadership

Collaborative Teachers	CM	Interpretation	Level
Cultural awareness	3.14	Agree	High
Inclusive Classroom Instruction	3.25	Agree	High
Innovation and Collective Responsibility	3.00	A Lot	High
Peer collaboration	3.10	Agree	High
Quality of professional development	2.82	Agree	High
School commitment	2.86	Agree	High
Cluster Mean	3.03		High
Effective School Leadership			
Instructional leadership	3.02	Agree	High
Program coherence	2.99	Agree	High
Teacher influence	3.05	Moderate	High
Cluster Mean	3.02		High

Table 11. Result of English, Language and Arts (ELA) State Regents Exam

Description	Score	2017		2018	
		f	%	f	%
Very Poor	<50	0	0	3	7.1
Poor	51-60	10	24.4	16	38.1
Fair	61-70	22	53.7	20	47.6
Satisfactory	71-75	9	22.0	3	7.1
	Total	41	100	42	100.0

Table 11 shows the Result of English, Language and Arts State Regents Exam for SY 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. Out of 41 low performing schools, 22 schools (53.7%) scored between 61-70, nine (9) schools (22%) scored 71-75 and 10 schools (24.4%) scored 51-60 for SY 2016-2017. The passing score for ELA Regents Exam is 65. For SY 2017-2018, only three (3) out of 42 schools (7.1%) scored 71-75, 20 schools (47.6%) scored 61-70 and 16 schools (38.1%) scored 51-60. The number of schools that scored below passing mark of 65 increased.

Levine [28] emphasized that in the United States, those interested in English education have long debated the role and value of literature in high school students' education and lives. Over time, different groups have advocated for a range of sometimes overlapping and sometimes conflicting approaches to teaching literary reading and interpretation, including an emphasis on

historical context and authorial biography; a New Critical turn away from biography and toward the self-contained stylistic coherence of a text; a “reader response” model that argued for the importance of individual readers’ experiences of—and active contributions to—literary meaning-making; and the application of critical theories about race, class, gender, and power to examine a text’s potential complicity in silencing minoritized voices.

Table 12. Result of Math State Regents Exam

Description	Score	2017		2018	
		F	%	f	%
Very Poor	<50	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Poor	51-60	11	28.2	27.0	69.2
Fair	61-70	28	71.8	12.0	30.8
Satisfactory	71-75	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total		39	100	39	100

Table 12 shows the Result of Math State Regents Exam for 39 Low Performing High Schools in New York City. For SY 2016-2017 28 out of 39 schools (71.8%) scored 61-70 and 11 schools (28.2%) scored 51-60. The passing mark for Math Regents Exam is 65. Further, SY 2017-2018 reveals that 27 out of 39 schools scored 51-60. The number of schools that scored below 65 is more than doubled while the remaining 12 schools (30.8%) scored 61-70. For two consecutive years no school scored an average above 70 in the Math Regents Exam.

Kang [29] noted that the New York State English Regents is a mandated standardized exam that students in New York State must pass in order to graduate from high school. Many students across the state struggle to meet these minimum qualifications. The state and the city use the scores on this exam as a method for evaluating school performance, principal performance, and teacher performance.

Table 13. Significant Relationship Between Collaborative Teachers and effective School Leadership

	r-value	p-value
Collaborative Teachers and Effective School Leadership	.952**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 13 presents the significant relationship across four selected essential elements for school learning environment. Result showed that there are significant relationships among the four essential elements as denoted by the computed p-values of less than 0.01 alpha level. This signifies that the higher response in one element could also obtain higher response on

another element. It implies that these elements are correlated with one another. Blömeke and Klein [30] found out that a climate of trust plays an important role for the extent of autonomy perceived. Administrative leadership was significantly related to the amount of appraisal the teachers reported. It is good to note that rigorous instruction has something to do with collaborative teachers, supportive environment and effective school leadership. It gives a better view of how the respondents, both teachers and students, assessed objectively the performance of their respective institutions. Those respondents who answered higher in one element are also those respondents who answered high on another element.

Table 14. Significant Relationship Between Collaborative Teachers and the Result of ELA and Math State Regents Exam

Collaborative Teachers	ELA		Math	
	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value
Cultural awareness	.246	.117	.528**	.001
inclusive classroom instruction	.059	.710	.243	.135
Innovation and collective responsibility	.023	.887	.194	.236
Peer collaboration	.156	.325	.168	.306
Quality of professional development	.155	.328	.057	.730
School commitment	.072	.648	-.016	.924

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Teachers must first come to understand their identity as member of a cultural community so that they are capable of teaching their students to identify their own place, position and purpose as a cultural member. Lin and Bates [31] found out that teachers who do not consider their cultural identities run the risk of not accepting and respecting the diversity in cultures displayed by the students. Culturally responsive and competent educators can foster a climate of inclusion, respect, connection and caring classroom. Interpersonal relationships are built and a caring learning climate is achieved.

Table 15 reveals the significant relationship between effective school leadership and the result of ELA and Math State Regents Exam. Results showed that there is no significant relationship between the result of ELA and the school performance in terms of effective school leadership as well as the result of Math State Regents Exam.

Table 15. Significant Relationship Between Effective School Leadership and the Result of ELA and Math State Regents Exam

Effective School Leadership	ELA		Math	
	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value
Instructional leadership	.243	.121	.120	.467
Program coherence	.223	.155	.171	.299
Teacher influence	.042	.791	-.005	.975

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Result of the study of Seashore Louis, Dretzke and Wahlstrom [32] showed that leadership variables are positively related to student learning and also suggested that both shared and instructionally focused leadership are complementary approaches for improving schools. Although the result of the present study does not show any relationship, on the positive note, it shows that the respondents have strong belief on the leadership of school principals. Meanwhile, the result of the study of Sun and Leithwood [33] also suggests that Transformational School Leadership (TSL) has small but significant effects on student achievement. Some TSL practices are especially powerful explanations of these effects, and a large handful of variables both moderate and mediate.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The selected public high schools under study have higher level of assessment on collaborative teachers in terms of inclusive classroom instruction as compared to quality of professional development. Likewise, they have higher level of assessment on effective school leadership in terms of teacher influence as compared to program coherence. Significant positive relationship exists between collaborative teachers and effective school leadership.

Majority of the schools have poor to fair performance in English, Language and Arts as well as in Math State Regents Exam where it increases the number of poor performances in 2018. Meanwhile, no significant relationship exists between the result of State Regents Exams and collaborative teachers except between Math State Regents Exam and cultural awareness with moderate positive relationship. Furthermore, no significant relationship exists between State Regents Exams and Effective School Leadership.

There are results in this study that are interesting and hard to reconcile. It is surprising that the low performing high schools generally performed well on the two elements of Framework for Great Schools. The

researcher also realized that the annual survey cannot be used for needs assessment of struggling schools. This is why, the researcher adopted the recommendations of the Turnaround Challenge prepared by the grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Researching the nature of underperformance in schools serving disadvantaged, high-poverty enrollments (which represent the bulk of failing schools); examining the well-documented practices of individual high-performing schools serving these enrollments and distilling the strategies they use to achieve their results; analyzing a wide spectrum of scaled-up school intervention, from those simply providing guidance and added capacity to more extensive initiatives involving staff or principal replacement, closure/reopening, and the establishment of special turnaround “zones” with altered operating conditions; isolating the key elements, intensity, duration, resources, and funding required for turnaround of under-performing schools to take root; and developing a framework for state policymakers and school district leaders to use in developing the systems, approaches, expanded capacity, and resource levels required to bring about dramatic transformation in struggling schools.

Several strategies were proposed to enhance the State Regents Exams based on the school learning environment as to effective school leadership and collaborative teachers especially on cultural awareness which might have influenced the performance of the students. The proposed strategies may be implemented and evaluated to determine its effectiveness as part of the intervention measures of the low performing public schools in the US.

The study is only limited to the 42 identified public schools in the US with low performance in the State Regents Exams and the number does not generally represent the entire public schools in the city under study. Comparative analysis on the evaluation of school learning environment based on the six elements of the framework between low performing and high performing public high schools may be considered for future investigation.

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Table 16. Proposed Strategies in Enhancing Student Performance in ELA and Math for Collaborative Teachers

KRA/ Objectives	Strategies	Expected Outcomes	Persons Responsible
Cultural awareness To make lessons relevant to everyday life experiences.	a. Designing activities that are engaging the students emotionally and requiring them to connect the new information with previously-acquired knowledge. b. Showing how the theory discussed can be applied in practice and how it relates to everyday applications thru field trips, inviting resource speakers and doing investigatory projects. c. Providing opportunities for students to discuss why the topic is worth learning and how the content fits into their plans for the future.	The lesson provided students some opportunity to present personal experiences and observations that are relevant to the lesson. The learning tasks required students to meaningfully connect the subject matter to real life. The students became engaged, motivated and self-regulated learners.	a. Vice Principal for Supervision in all subject areas, Subject Teachers and Special Education Teachers b. Vice principal for Supervision in all subject areas, Vice Principal for Administration, Subject Teachers and Special Education Teachers c. Subject and Special Education Teachers
Inclusive Classroom Instruction To receive support on how to incorporate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the practice	Implementing culturally and linguistically responsive curricula and pedagogy that honor and reflect students' diversity, social and cultural backgrounds, language and disabilities with ongoing professional development and support for teachers.	Teachers developed classrooms that meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners. They also modeled culturally responsive and socially responsible practices for students.	School Principal, Vice Principal for Administration, Vice Principals for Supervision in all subject areas, Guidance Counselors, Social worker, all Faculty members
Innovation and Collective responsibility To help maintain discipline in the entire school, not just in the classroom	a. Training teachers on the implementation of the school-wide Discipline Plan with periodic reviews and support. b. Requiring teachers to contact parents periodically throughout the year.	a. School became safer and students' academic performance improved. b. Students and teachers used respectful language and active listening.	a. Principal, Dean of Discipline b. School Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision
Peer collaboration To strengthen collaboration among the principal/school leader, teachers, and staff to make the school run effectively	Creating Professional Learning Communities(PLC) or teams in order to provide opportunities for teachers to share insights and work collaboratively with school leaders/principal.	Teachers and staff are involved in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies toward school improvement.	School Principal, Vice Principals for Administration, all Faculty members

Quality of professional development To provide opportunities to work productively with teachers from other schools	Providing funds, time or school schedule and continuing education units for teachers who attend institutes, workshops and seminars on collaboration, mentoring and coaching.	a. Teachers worked productively with peers from other schools who share the same learning goals with them. b. They collaborated virtually and online by exchanging emails, sharing instructional videos or documents and helping to edit worksheets.	School Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision
School commitment To get the commitment of the parents to recommend this school for those who seek a place for their child.	a. Establishing a regular and meaningful communication between home and school b. Collaborating with parents to ensure that children have a supportive learning environment at home and in school.	a. Parent Teacher Association took steps to help parents who seek a place for their child and to get to know the school better. b. Families and school staff collaborated with community members to connect families, students and would be parents of the school to expand learning opportunities and services offered by the school.	a. School Principal, Guidance Counselors, Deans of Discipline, all Faculty members and Parent Representatives of the school b. School Principal, School Counselors, Deans of Discipline, all Teachers, Parent Representatives

Table 17. Proposed Strategies in Enhancing Student Performance in ELA and Math for Effective School Leadership

KRA/ Objectives	Strategies	Expected Outcomes	Persons Responsible
Instructional leadership To participate in instructional planning with teams of teachers	a. Strengthening school leader's responsibility in curricular design - making to adapt the teaching programs to the needs of the students and to ensure coherence across courses and grade levels. b. Building collaborative cultures among teachers by sharing and disseminating best practices.	There is clarity of purpose, accountability, team structure, and trust among teams of teachers and the principal in the delivery of instruction.	a. Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision and Administration b. Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision, Subject and Special Education Teachers
Program coherence To ensure the effectiveness of school programs	Selecting research-proven programs that answer the needs of the students, developing in-depth understanding of the programs by school leaders to ensure fidelity of implementation by everyone involved and teachers avail of the training and professional development resources provided to them.	A set of interrelated programs for students and staff are pursued consistently over a specific time frame.	School Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision in all Subject areas
Teacher influence To set standards for student behavior.	a. Providing teachers with clear guidelines and strategies for effective teaching and setting acceptable standards for student behavior. This is accompanied by written performance feedback plus collected data from observations. Consultative meetings and informed decisions for improvement follow the cycle.	Student engagement is enhanced in a positive learning environment because there are more opportunities for student collaborative exchanges. Teachers experienced reduced stress level and increased enjoyment in their teaching. Students felt safe and secure in the classroom.	School Principal, Vice Principals for Supervision, Dean of Discipline