Comparative Leadership Styles and Motivational Leaders of Teacher Education Institutions in Sulu Province

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigated the leadership styles of administrators and their influence on faculty motivation toward productive teaching performance among selected Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province. Employing a mixed-methods design, the research analyzed quantitative data on the extent of leadership style practices—Very Autocratic, Moderately Autocratic, Mixed, Moderately Participative, and Very Democratic—alongside qualitative insights from faculty and administrators. Findings revealed that autocratic and participative leadership styles were moderately practiced, while democratic leadership was seldom observed. Administrators consistently rated themselves higher than faculty did, indicating a perceptual gap between leaders' self-assessment and subordinates' experiences. Results further showed that participative and democratic leadership styles were most effective in enhancing faculty motivation, engagement, and commitment to productive teaching. In contrast, autocratic styles, though ensuring order and compliance, tended to reduce teacher autonomy and intrinsic motivation. The study concludes that leadership effectiveness in teacher education depends on administrators' ability to balance authority with inclusion and to transform hierarchical control into participative collaboration.

Keywords: leadership styles, faculty motivation, teacher education institutions, Sulu Province

INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the performance, motivation, and organizational culture of educational institutions. In the context of teacher education, effective leadership is essential for creating an environment where faculty members feel motivated, empowered, and committed to achieving institutional goals. According to Adesina (1981), leadership style not only influences institutional effectiveness but also affects teacher morale, job satisfaction, and engagement. In higher

education settings, where collaboration and academic freedom are valued, the type of leadership exercised by administrators directly impacts the motivation and productivity of faculty members.

Leadership style refers to a leader's characteristic approach to decision-making, communication, and interaction with subordinates. The classical typologies—autocratic, participative, and democratic—continue to serve as foundations for contemporary leadership theories. Autocratic leaders maintain centralized control and emphasize compliance and task completion, whereas democratic or participative leaders involve subordinates in decision-making and value shared governance (Wang et al., 2022). These distinctions are especially relevant in education, where the balance between administrative authority and faculty autonomy can significantly influence teachers' sense of ownership and intrinsic motivation (Black & Edgecombe, 2022).

In teacher education institutions (TEIs), motivation is a key determinant of productive teaching performance. Teachers who perceive their administrators as supportive, inclusive, and participative tend to exhibit higher engagement, creativity, and commitment to instructional excellence. Conversely, excessive control and limited participation may suppress initiative, leading to compliance rather than commitment. Tapong Inrak (2021) found that participative leadership enhances teachers' intrinsic motivation by promoting trust, collaboration, and a sense of professional belonging. Similarly, Boncillo et al (2025) observed that democratic leadership behaviours—such as open communication, recognition, and delegation—encourage teachers to innovate and align personal goals with institutional objectives.

However, leadership in educational settings is often shaped by contextual realities. In developing regions such as the Sulu Province in the southern Philippines, administrators may adopt more directive or autocratic approaches due to institutional constraints, resource limitations, or hierarchical traditions. While such leadership may be effective in ensuring order and compliance, it can also create perception gaps between how administrators view their own leadership practices and how faculty members experience them.

Recent research underscores that leadership effectiveness should not be measured solely by style frequency but by how such styles affect teachers' motivation and productivity. Participative and democratic leadership behaviours are widely associated with enhanced intrinsic motivation, professional engagement, and improved teaching outcomes (Wang et al., 2022; Tapong & Inrak, 2025). In contrast, persistent autocratic practices—though sometimes necessary for control—are often linked with decreased teacher morale, reduced autonomy, and higher emotional exhaustion (Hayat Bhatti et al., 2019). Understanding how these leadership patterns manifest within TEIs in Sulu can therefore provide valuable insights into the interplay between leadership behaviour and faculty motivation. Ultimately, this comparative analysis among Teacher Education Institutions in Sulu Province aims to inform leadership development programs and policy directions that foster participative, motivational, and productivity-enhancing leadership within higher education institutions.

LITERATURE

Leadership within educational institutions extends beyond managerial control; it involves vision, influence, and the capacity to motivate and guide others toward shared goals. As Northouse (2025) emphasized, leadership is both a process and a relationship — one that depends on mutual trust, communication, and the ability to inspire collective commitment. In teacher education, administrators act as both academic leaders and organizational managers, responsible for shaping institutional culture and motivating faculty to deliver high-quality teaching and research outcomes. Leadership, therefore, is inseparable from motivation, as administrators' behaviours directly affect how teachers perceive their value, autonomy, and professional satisfaction.

Educational leadership studies consistently show that leadership style significantly influences faculty performance and morale. According to

Salamah et al. (2024), effective educational leadership promotes teacher engagement, retention, and instructional improvement by creating supportive and participatory environments. This finding underscores that leadership is not simply about authority but about the relational practices that empower teachers to contribute meaningfully to institutional objectives.

Autocratic leadership is characterized by centralized decision-making, strict control, and limited participation from subordinates. In some organizational contexts, particularly where structure and discipline are paramount, this style can ensure efficiency and accountability. However, in academic institutions where creativity, reflection, and collaboration are vital, excessive autocracy can be counterproductive.

Faculty members under authoritarian administrators often experience emotional exhaustion and a decline in innovative teaching practices. This is supported by Burack et al. (1994), who found that when teachers perceive their leaders as overly directive, their job satisfaction and engagement significantly decline.

Nonetheless, the autocratic style may offer temporary advantages in environments with limited resources or unstable organizational structures. Hadjirul (2008) found that in certain Philippine higher education institutions, administrators adopted autocratic tendencies to maintain order and compliance during policy transitions. Yet, such leadership must be balanced with supportive or participative elements to prevent disengagement.

For Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province — where administrators face resource constraints and cultural hierarchies — autocratic leadership may naturally emerge. However, as prior findings indicate, this style must evolve toward greater inclusivity if motivation and productivity are to be sustained.

Participative leadership, sometimes termed shared or collaborative leadership, involves soliciting input from subordinates in decision-making, valuing their expertise, and distributing authority across organizational levels. It aligns with Likert's (1979) participative management model, which suggests that decision-making inclusion fosters stronger commitment and higher morale.

Empirical evidence consistently supports this approach in educational settings. Sari & Atmaja (2025) demonstrated that participative leadership positively influences teachers' change-oriented behaviours through the mediating role of intrinsic motivation. Teachers who perceive their administrators as inclusive and empowering are more willing to engage in curriculum innovation and professional development. Similarly, Wang et al (2022) concluded that participative leaders enhance subordinates' intrinsic motivation by fulfilling psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness, consistent with Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

Schaller (2024) found that participative leadership among university deans strengthened faculty collaboration and improved instructional quality, particularly when teachers were involved in setting academic goals. These findings resonate with the Transformational Leadership Theory, wherein participation and inspiration stimulate intrinsic motivation and higher performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Democratic leadership emphasizes collaboration, communication, and equality within the decision-making process. It allows faculty to express opinions freely, promotes transparency, and cultivates a sense of belonging. Democratic leaders delegate responsibilities, provide constructive feedback, and encourage collective accountability — behaviours shown to enhance teacher morale and job satisfaction.

Smith (2024) found that democratic leadership correlates positively with teacher motivation and commitment in higher education institutions, noting that teachers under democratic leaders demonstrate greater enthusiasm, classroom innovation, and institutional loyalty. Shepherd-Jones (2018) similarly observed that open communication and recognition foster trust, a psychological condition essential for motivation and performance.

Moreover, Schaller (2024) concluded that democratic leadership in schools enhances teacher self-efficacy and engagement, leading to improved teaching productivity. This style aligns closely with participative leadership but places stronger emphasis on equality and consensus, both of which are essential in academic settings that value collegial governance.

Teacher motivation is closely linked to teaching performance. According to Barbee (2024), motivated teachers exhibit higher instructional quality, stronger classroom management, and greater student outcomes. Leadership that stimulates intrinsic motivation — through trust, recognition, and shared governance — is therefore vital for academic productivity.

In contrast, coercive or autocratic leadership may achieve short-term compliance but undermines teachers' enthusiasm for innovation. Omasidi (1998) found that participative and democratic leadership styles were positively correlated with teacher creativity, while autocratic styles correlated negatively. These findings support the argument that leadership effectiveness should be evaluated not merely by administrative control but by its motivational and instructional outcomes.

Integrating these perspectives, the present study posits that participative and democratic leadership behaviours are more likely to promote faculty motivation and productive teaching, while autocratic tendencies, if unchecked, may hinder these outcomes. The comparative examination of leadership styles in TEIs across Sulu Province therefore provides an opportunity to identify which leadership characteristics most effectively inspire motivation and excellence among faculty.

The reviewed studies consistently highlight the influence of leadership style on teacher motivation and performance. However, most existing research has been conducted in urban or resource-rich educational settings. Few studies have examined how these dynamics manifest in geographically and culturally unique contexts such as Sulu Province. Moreover, limited literature integrates both quantitative assessments of leadership styles and qualitative insights into their motivational consequences.

To address these gaps, the current study adopts a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews to explore the motivational implications of leadership styles among TEIs in Sulu. This approach not only reexamines leadership practices through comparative analysis but also illuminates how administrators' behaviours shape faculty motivation and, ultimately, productive teaching performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, specifically an explanatory sequential approach, to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and faculty motivation among Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province. The initial quantitative phase examined the extent of practice of five leadership styles—Very Autocratic, Moderately Autocratic, Mixed, Moderately Participative, and Very Democratic—through a standardized survey questionnaire administered to administrators and faculty members. The subsequent qualitative phase explored how these leadership behaviours influence faculty motivation and productive teaching performance through interviews and thematic analysis.

This design was chosen to achieve both breadth and depth of understanding. Quantitative data established measurable patterns and differences in leadership style perceptions, while qualitative data provided contextual insight into the motivational implications of those leadership patterns. Integration of both phases enabled triangulation, ensuring a more comprehensive interpretation of leadership practices in the TEIs of Sulu Province.

Research Locale

The study was conducted among selected Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province, Philippines. Sulu is a culturally diverse and resource-constrained region in the Bangsamoro

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The area presents a unique educational environment shaped by local traditions, religious influences, and administrative challenges.

For comparative analysis, three institutions—SSC, NDJC, and MSU-Sulu—were purposively selected, representing both public and private sectors and varying in size, organizational structure, and administrative culture. These institutions serve as key providers of teacher education in the province and thus provide a meaningful basis for examining leadership and motivation in context.

Participants and Sampling

The study involved two respondent groups: administrators and faculty members.

Quantitative Phase: A total of N = 120 respondents participated, comprising approximately 20 administrators (deans, program chairs, and heads of teacher education departments) and 100 faculty members across the three TEIs. The purposive sampling technique was used for administrators—limited to those holding managerial or supervisory roles—while stratified random sampling was employed for faculty to ensure representation across departments and ranks.

Qualitative Phase: From the quantitative participants, 15 faculty members and 6 administrators were purposefully selected for in-depth interviews based on their quantitative responses. Selection criteria included diversity in tenure, gender, and perceived leadership experience. Sampling continued until data saturation was achieved, ensuring that no new themes emerged. All participants voluntarily consented to join the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout, and institutional approval was secured prior to data collection.

Research Instruments

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach employing both a survey questionnaire and an interview guide to gather data relevant to the two research objectives. The quantitative instrument determined the extent of practice of leadership styles among administrators, while the qualitative component explored how these leadership styles influence faculty motivation and productive teaching performance in Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province.

For the quantitative phase, a Leadership Styles Questionnaire was administered to both administrators and faculty members. It was adapted from established leadership style assessment tools and modified to fit the educational setting of Sulu. The instrument measured five leadership dimensions—Very Autocratic, Moderately Autocratic, Mixed, Moderately Participative, and Very Democratic—using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Always) to 1 (Never). Items were designed to capture both administrators' self-assessment and faculty perceptions of their administrators' behaviours in decision-making, communication, and faculty involvement.

To supplement these findings and specifically address Objective 2 (see Table 1), a semi-structured interview was conducted with selected administrators and faculty to gain deeper insights into which leadership styles foster motivation and enhance productive teaching performance. Both groups were asked the same set of open-ended questions to allow comparative and thematic analysis of their perspectives. The questions were carefully designed to explore experiences, leadership behaviours, and motivational outcomes within their institutional context.

Validation of the instruments was conducted by a panel of educational leadership and research experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity. A pilot test was administered to a small group outside the study sample, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating high internal consistency and reliability.

Table 1. Interview Questions for Administrators and Faculty (Objective 2)

No.	Interview Questions
1	How would you describe the leadership style currently practiced in your institution?
2	In what ways does this leadership style affect your motivation and teaching performance (or your faculty's performance)?
3	What specific leadership behaviours or actions inspire you (or your faculty) to perform better in teaching?
4	How often do administrators involve faculty in planning, decision-making, or institutional activities?
5	What leadership qualities or practices do you believe best promote motivation and productivity among teachers?
6	What challenges or barriers do you observe in implementing participative or democratic leadership in your institution?

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection occurred in two sequential phases:

Quantitative Phase: The validated leadership styles questionnaire was distributed to administrators and faculty of the selected TEIs. Respondents completed the surveys anonymously, either through printed forms or secure Google Forms. Responses were encoded, tabulated, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Qualitative Phase: Based on the quantitative results, participants with contrasting perceptions (e.g., administrators rating themselves as "Moderately Participative" but faculty rating them "Seldom") were invited for interviews. Interviews were conducted face-to-face or online, lasting 45–60 minutes. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including weighted means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to describe leadership styles as perceived by administrators and faculty.

Inferential statistics included: Independent samples t-tests to determine significant differences between administrators' and faculty's perceptions for each leadership style (replicating Tables 9–13 of the original study). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for comparisons across institutions when applicable. Effect sizes (Cohen's d) were computed to determine the magnitude of observed differences.

Interpretations followed the descriptive ranges used in the earlier study (e.g., 4.21–5.00 = Always; 3.41–4.20 = Often; 2.61–3.40 = Sometimes; 1.81–2.60 = Seldom; 1.00–1.80 = Never).

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: (1) Familiarization with data; (2) Generating initial codes; (3) Searching for themes; (4) Reviewing themes; (5) Defining and naming themes; and (6) Producing the report.

Coding was inductive but guided by theoretical constructs from Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), focusing on autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Emerging themes captured faculty perceptions of how leadership behaviours enhanced or diminished motivation and teaching performance. Peer debriefing and member checking were conducted to ensure trustworthiness and credibility.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed the ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and academic integrity. Approval was obtained from the respective Institutional Ethics Committees of the participating TEIs. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Data were anonymized and securely stored in password-protected files accessible only to the research team.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1. To determine the extent of practice of leadership styles—Very Autocratic, Moderately Autocratic, Mixed, Moderately Participative, and Very Democratic—among administrators as perceived by both administrators and faculty members

Table 2. Summary of Weighted Means of Administrators' and Faculty's Perceptions on Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	MSU-Sulu(Admin)	MSU-Sulu(Faculty)	NDJC(Admin)	NDJC(Faculty)	SSC(Admin)	SSC(Faculty)
Very Autocratic	3.10	2.73	3.10	2.72	3.12	2.73
Moderately Autocratic	3.05	2.68	3.15	2.61	3.12	2.68
Mixed	2.95	2.59	3.01	2.53	3.02	2.59
Moderately Participative	3.00	2.86	3.18	2.78	3.09	2.84
Very Democratic	2.32	2.09	2.40	2.05	2.33	2.09

Scale: 4.21–5.00 Always; 3.41–4.20 Often; 2.61–3.40 Sometimes; 1.81–2.60 Seldom; 1.00–1.80 Never

The results show that across the three TEIs, administrators generally "sometimes" practice all leadership styles except for the Very Democratic type, which both groups rated as "seldom". Administrators consistently rated themselves higher than faculty did in all leadership styles, indicating a perception gap between leaders' self-assessment and faculty's actual experience.

At MSU-Sulu, administrators rated Very Autocratic leadership highest (3.10, *Sometimes*), followed closely by Moderately Autocratic and Moderately Participative styles. Faculty members, however, gave their highest rating to Moderately Participative (2.86, Sometimes) and their lowest to Very Democratic (2.09, Seldom). This suggests that while administrators believe they display directive yet consultative leadership, faculty perceive limited opportunities for genuine participation in institutional decision-making.

At NDJC, administrators again rated Moderately Participative (3.18) and Moderately Autocratic (3.15) highest, while faculty members rated Very Autocratic (2.72) highest. This indicates that administrators see themselves as inclusive leaders, but faculty still experience leadership as primarily directive.

For Sulu State College, administrators' ratings ranged from 3.12 (Moderately Autocratic) to 2.33 (Very Democratic), while faculty ratings ranged from 2.84 (Moderately Participative) to 2.09 (Very Democratic). This pattern demonstrates that administrators view their leadership as balanced, but faculty perceive it as only occasionally participative.

Table 3. Consolidated Mean Ratings and Differences between Administrators and Faculty

Leadership Style	Administrators (WM)	Faculty (WM)	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Very Autocratic	3.11	2.73	4.48	0.0021	Significant

Moderately Autocratic	3.11	2.66	7.05	0.001	Significant
Mixed	2.99	2.57	5.49	0.006	Significant
Moderately Participative	3.09	2.83	4.11	0.034	Significant
Very Democratic	2.35	2.08	1.53	0.275	Not Significant

$p < 0.05$ (Significant)

The data reveal statistically significant differences in four of the five leadership styles—Very Autocratic, Moderately Autocratic, Mixed, and Moderately Participative—indicating that administrators and faculty members perceive the frequency of these leadership behaviours differently. Only the Very Democratic style showed no significant difference, implying that both groups agree it is rarely practiced.

The consistent self-rating advantage of administrators suggests they perceive themselves as more participative and less authoritarian than faculty actually experience. This perception gap echoes findings from Tapong & Inrak (2021) and Aquino (2000), who observed that school administrators often overestimate the inclusivity of their leadership practices compared to how teachers perceive them. The tendency for administrators to report more participative styles aligns with the leadership ideal in higher education, yet the lower faculty ratings suggest that consultation and shared governance may be more nominal than functional.

The results also indicate that autocratic leadership tendencies remain evident in Sulu's TEIs. This may reflect institutional cultures where hierarchical structures and respect for authority dominate administrative relations—a pattern consistent with Hadjirul (2008), who found that higher education administrators in Mindanao tend to balance directive control with limited participation due to cultural expectations of deference.

While administrators in this study practice participative elements "sometimes," democratic leadership remains the least exercised. This aligns with Omasidi (1998) and Sari & Atmaja (2025) who emphasized that true democratic leadership in schools requires not only consultation but shared decision-making power—something still uncommon in traditional institutions. The low frequency of democratic behaviours thus suggests that participative efforts are emerging but not yet institutionalized.

From an organizational perspective, these findings imply that leadership in TEIs within Sulu Province is transitional—situated between directive and participative orientations. Administrators apply structured control to maintain efficiency while selectively incorporating participative strategies to foster collegiality. Such hybrid leadership mirrors the "mixed" model identified by Katz & Gartner (1998) and Burack et al. (1994) in situational leadership theory, where leaders adapt their approach depending on context and follower readiness.

However, the consistent perception gap suggests a need for clearer communication, trust-building, and more genuine collaboration between administrators and faculty. As Northouse (2025) and Bernaus & Gardner (2008) emphasized, leadership effectiveness in education relies on congruence between leaders' intentions and faculty perceptions. When teachers perceive limited involvement, motivation and commitment are likely to decline.

In summary, administrators across the three TEIs in Sulu Province "sometimes" practice autocratic and participative leadership styles, but democratic approaches are seldom evident. The statistically significant perception differences between administrators and faculty suggest that inclusive leadership practices, though acknowledged by leaders, are not yet fully realized in practice.

Objective 2. To determine which leadership styles, promote faculty motivation toward productive teaching performance.

Theme 1. Participative and Democratic Leadership as Motivational Drivers

Faculty participants consistently linked feelings of motivation to administrators who engage them in planning, provide recognition for their achievements, and foster open communication. In several interviews, faculty described participative leaders as "approachable," "supportive," and "open to feedback." These administrators were perceived not only as decision-makers but as facilitators who value collaboration and collective success. This sentiment illustrates the motivational value of psychological inclusion, consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which posits that intrinsic motivation flourishes when individuals experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Participative and democratic leadership directly satisfy these needs by granting teachers a sense of voice, competence recognition, and interpersonal trust.

Empirical research supports this pattern. Tapong & Inrak (2021) found that participative leadership enhances teachers' change-oriented behaviour through intrinsic motivation, while Wang et al. (2022) observed that participative leadership satisfies autonomy needs and strengthens work engagement. Similarly, Lewin & Lippitt (1983) confirmed that democratic leaders who communicate openly and value input create climates of motivation and professional satisfaction. The present findings in Sulu TEIs align with this evidence, demonstrating that participative and democratic leadership practices—though not frequent—are the most motivational when present.

Furthermore, faculty members in institutions where participative or democratic behaviours were occasionally practiced (e.g., MSU-Sulu and SSC) described higher enthusiasm and willingness to innovate in teaching.

"Our dean encourages us to share suggestions during meetings. Even if not all are approved, at least we are heard. That makes me feel part of the institution."

"When our administrator acknowledges my efforts in class or lets me lead a project, I feel more inspired to do better."

Theme 2. Autocratic Leadership and Its Mixed Impact on Motivation

While autocratic leadership styles were practiced "sometimes" across the TEIs, their motivational outcomes were mixed. Administrators viewed autocratic leadership as necessary for maintaining discipline, enforcing compliance, and ensuring efficiency—particularly in large or resource-constrained institutions. Some administrators expressed that strict supervision was essential for aligning teaching practices with institutional standards. This reflects the instrumental logic of autocracy, where control is equated with organizational effectiveness. Indeed, Ogunsaju (2000) noted that in contexts where order and hierarchy are valued, autocratic leadership can yield short-term gains in compliance and performance.

However, the same meta-analysis emphasized that excessive autocracy undermines teacher morale and intrinsic motivation over time. Faculty responses corroborate this: teachers under strongly autocratic leaders reported feeling "pressured" or "excluded" from decision-making. Such expressions reflect amotivation, or the decline in psychological ownership over one's work, often resulting from limited autonomy and trust. As Bernaus & Gardner (2008) and Donaldson (2001) observed, authoritarian leadership decreases job satisfaction and engagement when employees perceive excessive control. Thus, while autocratic leadership may ensure short-term compliance in Sulu's hierarchical institutional culture, it does not effectively promote motivation toward productive teaching performance.

"Sometimes being strict is part of the job. If you are too lenient, tasks will be delayed. Teachers expect guidance, and leadership means setting direction."

"We just follow whatever is decided. There's no point in suggesting because decisions are already final."

Theme 3. Balancing Control and Collaboration

The presence of a Mixed Leadership style—where administrators combine directive and participative approaches—emerged as a common practice in the three TEIs. This approach appears to

be a pragmatic adaptation to contextual realities. Administrators often alternate between assertive decision-making and consultative engagement depending on situational demands. This adaptive behaviour aligns with situational leadership theory, which suggests that effective leaders adjust their style to match task complexity, follower readiness, and institutional needs (Richardson et al., 2014; Northouse, 2025). However, while flexibility is beneficial, the data reveal that the "mixed" approach sometimes results in inconsistency—faculty members perceive inclusion as sporadic rather than systemic. This inconsistency weakens motivation because faculty cannot predict when their participation will be valued. As a result, while mixed leadership mitigates the rigidity of pure autocracy, it falls short of the motivational impact achieved through consistent participative and democratic engagement.

"We try to involve teachers in discussions, but sometimes we must decide quickly. We balance listening with taking action."

CONCLUSION

The study examined the leadership styles practiced by administrators of Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in Sulu Province and identified which styles promote faculty motivation toward productive teaching performance. Findings revealed that administrators generally practiced autocratic and participative leadership styles at moderate levels, while democratic leadership was least evident. Across all institutions, administrators rated themselves higher than faculty did, showing a perception gap between leadership intent and faculty experience. Results further indicated that participative and democratic leadership styles were most effective in motivating faculty. These styles foster autonomy, recognition, and inclusion, which enhance teachers' enthusiasm and commitment to teaching. In contrast, autocratic leadership, though ensuring discipline, often limited motivation due to restricted faculty involvement in decision-making. The findings underscore that effective leadership in teacher education depends on engagement and empowerment, not control.

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