



LEADERSHIP STYLE OF WOMEN LEADERS IN THE ACADEME INDUSTRY: A HEURISTIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research study determined the leadership style of women in the academic department of Private Colleges in the Province of Aklan Philippines for the School Year 2018-2019. The study was carried out within the framework of a cross-sectional survey research design employing both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data collection methods. The study consisted of thirty one (31) female participants who were either currently or previously heads of academic department. For the interview, ten female academic heads of department, served as the participants in the survey. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. A structured, pre-coded questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the thirty- one female participants with a minimum of two year administrative work experience. The quantitative data was analyzed using a relevant statistical package. Key-findings from both survey and interviews were then analyzed and tabulated. The major findings indicated that there was mentorship and formal preparation for the position prior to become head of department. The women were confident about the skills needed in managing an academic department. Respondents revealed they were trained in dealing with stress management, delegation authority and entrepreneurial skills. It was noted that, the common leadership style among women leaders in the academe industry tended toward 'Coaching and Delegating type of leadership which is considered appropriate for today's leadership in organizations. The findings suggested that institutional and other barriers to women's advancement existed, and the challenges and demands for women's experiences were a major source of stress and tension for them.

KEYWORDS: *academe, colleges, department, leadership style, heuristic analysis*

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's leaders need to know new knowledge, abilities and skills to effectively cope with the constant organizational changes. The most significant function of an institution of higher learning relies on its leadership effectiveness in creating a pleasant teaching environment for faculty and in providing students with quality education they deserve (Afnan Al-Shuaiby, 2009). Blair (2000) stated that institutions of higher learning are increasingly expecting a Dean to attain external funding to be considered as an effective leader whilst in a recent study it is indicated that "only a few studies have asked senior academic administrators about what they do, what they need to know, and what characteristics or attitudes they need to possess" (Mapp, 2008). Also while the educational policies and procedures play a significant role in the mission accomplishment of higher education institutions, Deans are ultimately responsible for implementation of such policies and procedures.

"The most powerful influences on a woman's career pattern . . . come from her past experience" (Giele, 2008). To understand their career trajectories and development as academic leaders, a systematic reflection exercise was

structured to focus on strengths, weaknesses, and successes during the early, mid, and late stages of the women's career.

Women are now found in leadership roles, as opposed to management roles, and it is unclear whether their leadership styles differ from those of male leaders or what the consequences of these styles might be. Adler and Izraeli (1994) stated that women have always played a major role in educational administration. However, Adler and Izraeli (1994) noted that this participation in educational administration has occurred more at primary and secondary levels than at college and university levels. They identified 56.9% of educational administrators as female when all levels of public education were grouped together, noting that the emergence of a female secondary school principal was one major outcome of affirmative action. Similarly, Desjardins (1989) noted greater visibility of women within primary and secondary education leadership positions. Desjardins (1989) found that approximately 70% of all elementary school administrators and faculty members are female.

Female leaders have many of the same qualities as their male colleagues, especially an ability to set high goals and inspire others to fulfill them. But women are different in

some particular ways that make them valuable additions to decision making teams.

For one thing, women are more motivated by the purpose or meaning of their work than men, who focus more on compensation and their job titles. Women also tend to show more emotions at work and are more risk averse.

In this study, heuristic analysis was used. Heuristic analysis is an approach to the discovering, learning and problem-solving that uses rules, estimates or educated guesses to find a satisfactory solution to a specific issue. While this way of problem-solving may not be perfect, it can be highly successful when applied to computer processes where a quick answer or timely alert is required based on intuitive judgment. A heuristic evaluation is a usability inspection method for computer software that helps to identify usability problems in the user interface (UI) design. It specifically involves evaluators examining the interface and judging its compliance with recognized usability principles (the "heuristics"). These evaluation methods are now widely taught and practiced in the new media sector, where UIs are often designed in a short space of time on a budget that may restrict the amount of money available to provide for other types of interface testing.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the intersectionality theory was used. Intersectionality theory (Collins, 2000) was proposed as a good candidate to be the critical feminist theoretical underpinning for women's leadership development - placing them in the role of "fixers" rather than ones needing to be fixed. It provides a complex model of the matrix of domination in societies that identifies four levels or layers in which power relations work simultaneously to oppress women and minorities: the structural level, the disciplinary level, the hegemonic level, and the interpersonal level. This theoretical framework provides many new ideas about how to conceptualize all types of oppression and how to combat them differently at different levels of the matrix. A number of examples of pedagogies based on these ideas were identified and explained. A feminist post structural pedagogy was explained in some detail and examples of how it has been used were provided.

Conceptual Framework

Contributory Factors

1. Intellectual /Leadership Factor
2. Work Management Factor
3. Communication Factor
4. Interpersonal Factor
5. People Management Factor

Leadership Style

1. Directing
2. Coaching
3. Facilitating
4. Delegating

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study was purposely conducted to find out the leadership style of women leaders in the academe industry for the Year 2018-2019. Specifically, the following research questions were set,

1. What was the prevalent leadership style of women's in the academic leadership?
2. What were the dominant leadership styles they demonstrated?
3. What factors might have contributed to the styles of leadership they exhibited?

IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The completion of this study will provide understanding of the concept present so as to generate data and information that every planner could use in order to come up with strategies, plans and designs that will strategically position them in the highly competitive, diverse, and complex business environment that are experienced at present.

By fulfilling the aims that were stated in the objectives section, this study will be helpful for other researchers who may be focusing on understanding the concept of effective leadership. The notable significance of this study is the possibility that other researchers may be able to use the findings in this study for future studies that will create a huge impact on society. The findings of the study could be used for other findings that might prove to be helpful in introducing changes to the academic sector.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research Design

The study explored the problem in an interpretative view and investigation, using a qualitative approach which uses focus group discussion and semi-structured interview and descriptive method of research specifically the normative survey.

Descriptive method of research used to gather information about the present existing condition. The main purpose of employing this method was to describe the nature of a situation, as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the possible influence of phenomena on the performance of employees and the organization.

Data Collection

The primary data gathering technique used in the study was in-person, semi-structured interviews, facilitated by a series of open-ended questions. The questionnaires illustrated the questions deployed to facilitate responses from the participants' central to the focus of the study. The data collection included in-depth interviews with four participants of private colleges in Aklan. Interviews were done from ten to fifteen minutes in length. Two underlying uses in case study research, according to Stake (1995), are to obtain the interpretation and descriptions of the phenomenon as depicted by the study participant.

Data Analysis

The accomplished questionnaires were thoroughly checked to make sure that all the necessary data was obtained from the participants. Weighted means, frequency and percentages were used in this study.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Interviews

The first stage of data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews. The interviews involved asking questions and then probing deeper with open-form questions to obtain additional information (Borg, 2007). Face-to-face interviews permitted the researcher to observe nonverbal responses and behaviors during the interview, allowing when necessary for additional probing, follow-up, and clarification of the verbal answer (Creswell, 2013; McMillan, 2012).

Table 1. Years of Administrative Experience

Years of Administrative Experience	Frequency	Percent
11 & Above	5	16.13
6-10	8	25.81
2-5	18	58.06
Total	31	100.00

Factors Influencing Leadership Styles

Respondent said: As school administrator the following emerged as the main factors influencing leadership styles these are:

- Availability of resources,
- The high staff turnover,
- School traditions,
- The nature, size, and status of schools,
- Stakeholders’ demands,
- Geographical locations

Leadership styles were therefore, seen as outcomes of various interdependent variables, with whose interplay creates relevant leadership.

Another factor which have direct bearing on leadership style was the school leader’s experience, a leader’s level of experience, both as a leader and with a particular organization can have an impact on her style. Someone who is new to a leadership role may be more inclined to lead “by the book” to avoid potential mistakes, while a more experienced leader will often feel more confident in following her own interpretation of rules and regulations. A leader who has been part of an organization for many years will likely have a better understanding of the organization’s nuances than a new member, so she may be more comfortable when making decisions.

School leadership should be decentralized, making schools more autonomous in their decision making and holding them more accountable for their results.

Table 2. Contributory Factors influencing Leadership Style

Factors	Degree of Influence						Mean	Interpretation
	5	4	3	2	1			
1. Intellectual Leadership Factor								
a. The Dean/School Administrator possess Sound Judgment and Analytical Skills	12 60	5 20	3 9	0	0	4.45	High Influence	
b. The School had Strategic Development Plan	15 75	3 12	2 6	0	0	4.65	Very High Influence	
c. The Colleges Mandate, Philosophy and Goals is displayed in conspicuous places	18 90	2 8	0	0	0	4.9	Very High Influence	
Grand Mean						4.66	Very High Influence	
2. Work Management Factor								
a. The College had Plan and Organized Faculty and Employees Team Building Activities	11 55	6 24	3 12	0	0	4.55	Very High Influence	
b. The College adapts flexi work time schedule for personnel	8 40	10 40	2 6	0	0	4.3	High Influence	
c. High, cohesive team spirit with full participation is found in the College.	7 35	6 24	7 21	0	0	4.0	High Influence	
Grand Mean						4.28	High Influence	
3. Communication Factor								
a. Possess Oral Presentation Skills	13 65	5 20	2 6	0	0	4.55	Very High Influence	
b. Encourages feedback and questions to insure mutual understanding.	14 70	4 16	2 6	0	0	4.6	Very High Influence	
c. Good oral and written Communication Skills	15 75	3 12	1 3	1 2	0	4.6	Very High Influence	
Grand Mean						4.58	Very High Influence	
4. Interpersonal Factor								
a. Building Relationships	11 55	4 16	4 12	2 4	0	4.35	High Influence	
b. Negotiating and Influencing	9 45	7 24	4 12	0	0	4.05	High Influence	
c. Good Client Relations	12 60	5 20	3 12	0	0	4.6	Very High Influence	
Grand Mean						4.33	High Influence	
5. People Management Factor								
a. Can motivate employee for effective and efficient Performance	11 55	5 20	4 12	0	0	4.35	High Influence	
b. Delegating & Develop Staff	8 40	6 24	6 18	0	0	4.1	Very High Influence	
c. Fostering	14 70	5 20	1 3	0	0	4.65	Very High Influence	
c. Teamwork	9 45	6 24	4 12	1	0	4.05	High Influence	
Grand Mean						4.23	High Influence	

Legend:

4.50 – 5.00 – Very High Influence 3.50 – 4.49 – High Influence 2.50 – 3.49 – Moderate Influence
1.50 – 2.49 – Little Influence 1.00 – 1.49 – No Influence

Table 3. Leadership Style of Women Leaders as rated by themselves

Leadership Style	Rating Scale						Mean	Interpretation				
	5		4		3				2		1	
A. Directing	F	FW	F	FW	F	FW	F	FW	F	FW		
1. Provide detailed instructions	8	40	6	24	5	15	1	2	0	0	4.05	High
2. Give staff specific goals and objectives	10	50	5	20	4	12	2	4	0	0	4.3	High
3. Check frequently with staff to keep them on track	8	40	4	16	3	9	2	4	0	0	3.45	Average
4. Demonstrate the steps involved in doing the job	9	45	6	18	4	12	3	6	0	0	4.05	High
Total	24		14		10		4		0		3.96	High
B. Coaching												
1. Represents management's position in a convincing manner	10	50	6	24	5	15	1	2	0	0	4.55	Very High
2. Try to motivate people to make decisions	9	45	6	24	5	15	1	2	0	0	4.3	High
3. Sell staff in their own ability to do the job	11	55	2	8	2	6	3	3	0	0	3.6	High
4. Praise staff for their good work	15	75	3	9	3	9	1	2	0	0	4.75	Very High
5. Provide staff with a lot of feedback on how they are doing	13	65	2	6	3	9	2	2	0	0	4.1	High
Total											4.26	High
C. Facilitating												
1. Involve staff in making the decisions which will affect their work	15	75	3	12	2	6	0	0	0	0	4.65	Very High
2. Make staff feel free to ask questions and discuss important concerns	14	70	5	20	1	3	0	0	0	0	3.9	High
3. Hold frequent staff meetings	16	80	4	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.0	Very High
4. Help staff locate and support their own developmental activities	17	85	2	8	1	3	0	0	0	0	4.8	Very High
5. Listens to staff problems and concerns without criticizing or judging	16	80	3	12	1	3	0	0	0	0	4.75	Very High
Total											4.62	Very High
D. Delegating												
1. Delegate broad responsibilities to staff and expect them to handle the details.	9	45	8	32	3	9	0	0	0	0	4.3	High
2. Expect staff to find and correct their own errors	10	50	7	28	2	6	1	2	0	0	4.3	High
3. Provides clear objectives and boundaries to team members	17	85	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.85	Very High
4. Give relevant and appropriate advises to subordinates	16	80	4	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.6	Very High
5. Devolves team management to the team itself	13	65	6	24	2	6	0	0	0	0	4.75	Very High
Total											4.56	Very High

Legend:

4.50 – 5.00 – Very High

3.50 – 4.49 – High

2.50 – 3.49 – Average

1.50 – 2.49 – Low

1.00 – 1.49 – Very Low

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Today's leaders need to be inspirational, creative and innovative, ready to embrace change and with a long-term vision for achievement. Effective leaders manage by example and in doing so, develop their teams. School Leaders must encourage all its teachers to lead by example. It requires leaders who can motivate, problem solve and build great teams. Moreover, school leaders should employ people in a wide range of roles and provides a career structure which allows their subordinates to progress through the organization.

In today's globalized business environment characterized by rapid change of school leaders they should be equipped

with emotional intelligence abilities so that they are able to effectively exercise their leadership roles. Leadership styles are very much contingent on the organizational environment, thus, rendering none of the leadership style as superior than the other. The emotional intelligent ability of the leaders is crucial to ensure that the leadership styles chosen by the leaders can be executed effectively to enhance the employees' organizational commitment.

Further research should be undertaken to explore whether women intentionally change their leadership behaviors in male dominated organizations, and whether they would pose to adopt different leadership styles given a different organization to work in. In spite of the fact that women are gaining increasing visibility at managerial teams, their admission to board of directors is still inadequate on a comparative basis.

It would be interesting to assess causal relationships and consider alternative modes of enquiries such as employing the longitudinal design (e.g. observations or interviews) to

determine if the findings tested are likely to be sustained. Further research should also involve a nationwide survey covering samples from the whole population of the higher education institutions.

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