

School Heads' Leadership Styles of Public Schools, Sub-Congressional District III, Bohol

RONALD R. BONIAO

rrboniao@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7827-7216>

MARIBETH DUSAL- ALPUERTO

mdalpuerto@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4849-3652>

ELIJAH L. SALES

elsales@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7248-4230>

ABSTRACT

This research study aimed to identify the school heads' profile and the association between the self-assessed and teacher-assessed school heads' leadership styles. It was tested on the 35 school heads and 315 public school teachers in the districts of Dimiao, Lila, Sevilla, Loboc, and Loay. It used a quantitative standardized survey instrument to determine the school heads' leadership styles. Findings revealed that school heads were mostly 41 to 60 years old, mainly female, mostly married, most had MA units, having Principal 1 designation, and had been in the service for 11 to 15 years. As assessed by the school heads themselves and the teachers, the majority of school leaders were going through a transition phase as to leadership styles, with a few using delegative and authoritarian styles, and none applied the participative style. Results revealed significant relationships between the self-assessed leadership styles and age and civil status, while statistically insignificant results in the relationship between the leadership styles and sex, educational attainment, designation, and length of service. As to the teacher-assessed leadership styles and the school heads' profile, the relationships were statistically insignificant.

Furthermore, there was no association between the self-assessed and the teacher-assessed school heads' leadership styles.

Keywords: Educational Management, leadership styles, quantitative method, sub-congressional, Bohol, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

What are the qualifications of becoming a school leader, be it in public or private schools? Can anyone be a school leader? Is it easy to become a school leader? What should a school leader consider in leading? Let us pause for a while, as those are just some of the few questions people usually ask themselves about becoming a school leader.

School leadership, in any part of the globe, is relatively crucial. It is a most delicate and profound task, for there are many factors to consider and take heed to when leading a school. School leaders have to find personal goals, objectives, attitudes, behaviors, commitment, and efficacy; the top and low peoples' attitudes, behaviors, and backgrounds, excellent and reliable machinery, ample and standard materials, and sufficient financial resources to propel the way forward of the laid-out vision, mission, and goals. It is a significant factor in achieving excellent educational outcomes concomitant to the attributes and practices of the school head together with the help of the headteachers and teachers in school (Dinham, 2005). The school head being an instructional leader, is likely to understand the views of quality instruction and have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum to discern that suitable content is delivered to all students. Further, school heads are adept in providing constructive feedback to enhance teaching or are capable of designing a system in which others offer support (Wahlstrom, 2008). Hence, teachers in all parts of the world need help for their commitment, enthusiasm, and ability over their careers. It is when they face enormous emotional, intellectual, social demands. Further, when they work towards constructing the internal and external relationships required by ongoing government reforms and social movements. (Day, 2006)

Another probable question in mind is how the school leader could persuade, instigate, and make people (teachers) work and probably spearhead the achievement of common goals? Some people would answer this way, "Cross the bridge when someone got there, or someone will know at the proper time."

Nevertheless, these scenarios are just scapegoats of the unprepared and inexperienced. The best way is to acquire better knowledge and comprehend the styles of leadership one is operating. It is because leadership styles among public school heads play a significant role in teachers' motivation and well-being (Eyal, 2011). An educator can freely decide what styles of leadership to choose. The educator can choose the authoritarian or autocratic style. This style commands the teachers what and how to do it without getting their recommendation. The participative or democratic style is another option – where all members work together to make decisions. However, the final decision-making authority usually preserves within the leader, or the delegative or laissez-fair that authorizes the teachers to make the decisions which an educator, as the leader, is still accountable for the decisions made. Unfortunately, there are leaders whose leadership styles cannot be determined right away. Such leaders might be going through a transition phase either personally or at work. The choice is apt to the educator, but remember, principals'/school heads' support is precisely significant to teachers' well-being. According to the study of Sergiovanni, 2005, a (teaching) job can be pleasurable and substantial if someone has the well-being in accepting complications and challenges and is willful in working hard. When school heads face restrictions in making decisions, it would always be tough and incredible to lead.

Leadership is one of the key factors linked with any organization's success and failure. Leadership style determines how people are motivated and directed by a leader towards achieving common organizational goals (Al Khajeh, 2018). Mostly various studies and researches predominantly conclude that the head's leadership style generally has an impact on the subordinates in any organization. Oftentimes, conflicts arise due to the difference in the perception of the leadership style as viewed by themselves and by their respective subordinates. Thus, this research study entitled *School Heads' Leadership Styles*, be carried out to the big public schools (35 school heads/principals and 315 teachers) in Dimiao, Lila, Sevilla, Loay, and Loboc districts. These districts comprised the Third Sub-Congressional District in the Division of Bohol. The results of the quantitative descriptive survey questionnaire are used, hoping to help better learn, understand, and capture the association between the self-assessed and teacher-assessed leadership styles of school heads applied in school.

This study is anchored upon the different theories and models. The leadership style survey adopted from the AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) Education Department cited **Kurt Lewin's Leadership Styles/3-Style Model** in 1939. Lewin identified three behavioral styles, the authoritarian, democratic or participative, and free-rein or delegative, among leaders that become a guide to more effective leadership. Further, **the Situational/Contingency Model/Theory** states that there is no single ideal approach to leading because circumstances vary. Therefore, effective leaders must change behavior according to the situation, must be flexible and adaptable when leading. Sometimes, leadership styles are hardly identified due to limiting factors such as beliefs and old habits, either personal or professional in nature, that persist despite training. Moreover, the **Leadership Behaviour Continuum** by Tannenbaum and Schmidt reminds us that leaders depend on the location, the pressures, and the nature of the task. It further states that the effective leader varies his/her behavior at will, according to circumstances.

On the other hand, **Fried Fiedler's Contingency Model** in 1967 states that specific leadership challenges suit one form or the other better. However, in **Robert House's Path-Goal Theory** in 1971, the leader's primary role is to motivate followers by increasing or clarifying the followers' benefits of striving for and reaching the group's goal, explaining and clearing a path towards the achievement of the group's goals. House implies that leaders need to adapt their leadership style based on both the characteristics of the workplace environment and the characteristics of the team.

A good leader uses the conglomeration of the three styles of leadership. These styles may be authoritarian, participative, or delegative. However, it depends on what forces are involved between the followers, the leader, and the situation. The powers that influence the style to use include various factors. The amount of time available, the relationships based on respect, trust, or on disrespect, the one who has the information—the leader, the employees or both, the degree on how well the employees trained and how adept the leader knows the assignment, the internal conflicts, the stress levels, the type of duty, and the laws or established procedures. (Clark, 2015). Furthermore, leaders can bear a mix of leadership styles depending on their sedulity and the crimp they face. At the root of these styles are the action logics. It is according to leadership experts Bill Torbert

and David Rooke who assess how leaders decipher the things around them and react when their power or safety is oppugned. These action logics are the strategist, opportunist, diplomat, and expert. (Becker, 2019). However, each leader has a unique gift. No one has to have the complete package of all leadership gifts. Some people are more autocratic, while others are more delegative or more participative. We all have our tips, and the great thing is that teams will often have people who are engaged in complementary areas. Leadership styles also depend on context: a right leadership style for one group – or circumstance – could be all wrong for another. The critical thing is to know what type of leadership is needed when and to adapt accordingly. (Bailey, 2018).

As there are different styles of leadership, all have advantages and disadvantages. Leadership is always situational. For highly qualified and morally developed people, they preferred a delegative leadership style. However, for undeveloped people, the autocratic or authoritarian style is excellent. All forms are essential in different situations. It will be an oversight to adopt a single method in all circumstances. Nowadays, people are getting aware and socially advanced; therefore, they should take the delegative style. However, the success of leadership style also depends on the quality of influence of leaders. The leaders should be well qualified. Well qualified and influential personalities can manage the followers in a better way while using any leadership style. Honesty is a typical quality for all leadership styles. Honesty is responsible for the success of all leadership styles. (Khan, 2015).

Teachers and school heads both play a vital role in the education process as education is fundamental to indorsing sustainability for the next generation, and educational leaders show an essential part in that process (Mehaffey, 2014). Moreover, teachers and school heads carry the charisma, knowledge, and skills to improving the schools, and their ability to devise solutions to the hitches of teaching and learning is a valuable untapped resource (Sparks, 2002). Teachers' and school heads' enthusiasm, optimism, self-efficacy, satisfaction, commitment, dedication, and interpersonal relationships help contribute to the overall performance in the classroom. An article posted by the Ministry of Education in Guyana said that teachers also play an essential role in the school when it speaks of the environment. Students often forge a teacher's activity. If the teacher sets a warm, joyful environment, students are more likely to be satisfied. The place set by the teacher can be positive or negative. If students feel

the teacher is mad, students may respond negatively to that, and therefore, learning can be tarnished — the same way as that of a teacher and the school head. Teachers are responsible for social habits in the classrooms. This habit is primarily a remark of the teacher's actions and the place she sets. One study showed that principals played significant contributions to improving schools in the area of capacity building, teaching, and learning. Their characteristics, qualities, beliefs, and high expectations made a difference (Gurr, 2006). Moreover, school heads' leadership styles affect teachers' satisfaction each directly and indirectly through their occupation perceptions (Beatty, 2000). Hence, in any academic institution, the school heads and the teachers should be able to spot the leadership styles applied.

Printy (2008), in their study on Leadership for Teacher Learning: A Community of Practice Perspective, proposed that both the school heads and the department heads are prominent in affecting chances for teachers to absorb in communities of practice. Successful school heads are those that establish the capacity to progress the school vision, set schemes, build capacity, and inaugurate a more extensive network for the prosperity of the school improvement (Raihani, 2017).

Noting the clear role of the school heads and their leadership styles as viewed by themselves and by their subordinates, this study was conducted.

The goal of this study sought to answer the following:

1. What are the leadership styles among the school heads as assessed by the school heads themselves and by the teachers?
2. Is there a significant degree of association between school heads' profiles and the school heads' leadership styles?
3. Is there a significant degree of association between the self-assessed and the teacher-assessed school heads' leadership styles?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study used a quantitative descriptive survey method utilizing a standard questionnaire of leadership styles. These questionnaires were distributed to the 35 public school heads and 315 teachers in Dimiao, Lila, Sevilla, Loboc, and Loay. This study identified the perception of school heads' leadership styles themselves and to that

of the teachers. The school heads' leadership styles survey adopted from the AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) Education Department be used to determine the perception of the school heads' styles of leadership themselves and to that of the teachers using a scoring system.

Before the conduct of the study, a pre-oral presentation together with the research panel had been conducted to agree on the topics presented and the tool to be used. After having a draft of the first chapter, the study had undergone a thorough ethics review by the University of Bohol Research Ethics Committee. This procedure was done to make sure that the research paper conformed to the ethics research standard that no one was jeopardized in the process.

A short discussion and explanation were conducted to the respondents in school to ensure that they had understood the objectives, purposes, and contents of the research study. Essentially, the respondents were informed that they could withdraw any time from participating without the need for justification and without being penalized or questioned on their decision. Further, to guarantee the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents, they were aware that only the sex, age, civil status, highest educational attainment, designation, and length of service of the profiles were considered. Most importantly, it was made sure that no one was harmed or aggravated in this survey since, for the variable, only the perceptions of the school heads' leadership styles practiced themselves and to the perception of the teachers to their school heads' leadership styles.

The statistical tools used in data analyses were the Frequency Distribution and Percentage, Weighted Mean, Composite Mean, and Chi-Square Test.

Finally, the data were collected, gathered, computed, and analyzed as the results give the researcher insights, hints, and understanding as bases for conclusions and recommendations of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows how school heads assessed their leadership styles. Among the leadership styles, almost half (48.6%) of the school heads were going through a transition phase, subsequently followed by the delegative and authoritarian styles, and none used the participative style.

Table 1. School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles

| Items | Frequency | Percent | Rank |
|---|-----------|---------|------|
| Authoritarian | 8 | 22.9 | 3 |
| Delegative | 10 | 28.6 | 2 |
| Participative | 0 | 0.0 | 4 |
| Respondent is going through a transition phase (either personally or at work) | 17 | 48.6 | 1 |
| Total | 35 | 100.0 | |

Data showed that as assessed by the teachers, more than half (77.1%) of them perceived that their school heads were going through a transition phase. Only a few of the teachers perceived their school heads to have applied authoritarian and delegative leadership styles, while none applied the participative style. The data were obtained by getting the average assessment of the teachers per school head (See Table 2).

Table 2. School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles

| Items | Frequency | Percent | Rank |
|---|-----------|---------|------|
| Authoritarian | 5 | 14.3 | 2 |
| Delegative | 3 | 8.6 | 3 |
| Participative | 0 | 0.0 | 4 |
| Respondent is going through a transition phase (either personally or at work) | 27 | 77.1 | 1 |
| Total | 35 | 100.0 | |

Results revealed that the school heads' self-assessed leadership styles were associated with the school heads' profile as to age, civil status, and designation. The rest of the profiles were not statistically associated with the school heads' self-assessed leadership styles (See Table 3).

Table 3. Association Between the School Heads' Profile and Self- Assessed Leadership Style

| Variables | Chi-Square Test Value | P-value | Decision | Interpretation |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Sex and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 1.412 | 0.560 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | There is no significant statistical association between the variables. |
| Age and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 18.732 | 0.001 | Reject the null hypothesis. | The variables are significantly associated. |
| Civil Status and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 11.160 | 0.031 | Reject the null hypothesis. | The variables are significantly associated. |
| Highest Educational Qualification and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 9.652 | 0.781 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The variables are insignificantly associated. |
| Designation and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 22.664 | 0.014 | Reject the null hypothesis. | The variables are significantly associated |
| Length of Service and School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles | 9.767 | 0.300 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The variables are insignificantly associated. |

Results of the Chi-Square Test revealed an insignificant association between the school heads' profiles and teacher-assessed leadership styles. It might imply that there were other factors not part of this study that affected the perception of the teachers in assessing the leadership styles applied by their school heads in the school. And it can be a good subject for future study (See Table 4).

Table 4. Association Between the School Heads' Profile and Teacher-Assessed Leadership Style

| Variables | Chi-Square Test Value | P-value | Decision | Interpretation |
|--|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Sex and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 0.316 | 1.000 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |
| Age and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 3.294 | 0.509 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |
| Civil Status and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 2.068 | 1.000 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |
| Highest Educational Qualification and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 3.915 | 0.961 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis | The association between the variables is insignificant. |
| Designation and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 8.512 | 0.707 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |
| Length of Service and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 12.159 | 0.134 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |

The p-value of 0.066 indicated that the perceptions of the school heads and the teachers were not congruent statistically (See Table 5). This somehow has some similarities with the study, which revealed that the managers and the subordinates' perceptions of the managers' leadership style used differ significantly (Asrar-ul-Haq, 2014).

Table 5. Association Between Self- Assessed and Teacher-Assessed School Heads' Leadership Style

| Variables | Chi-Square Test Value | P-value | Decision | Interpretation |
|--|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|---|
| School Heads' Self-Assessed Leadership Styles and School Heads' Teacher-Assessed Leadership Styles | 8.367 | 0.066 | Failed to reject the null hypothesis. | The association between the variables is insignificant. |

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results, most school heads ranged in age from 41 to 60 years old, were mainly female, married, most had MA Units, were in Principal 1 designation, and had been in the service for 11 to 15 years. The majority of school leaders were going through either personal or professional transitions, which made their leadership style not identifiable, whether authoritarian, delegative, or participative.

School heads' profiles in terms of age, civil status, and designation were significantly associated with the school heads' self-assessed leadership style. On the other hand, the school heads' self-assessed leadership style had no significant connection with the rest of the school heads' profiles. Moreover, the teacher-assessed school heads' leadership styles were not significantly influenced by the school heads' profiles.

Furthermore, the self-assessed and the teacher-assessed school heads' leadership styles were not statistically associated, hence, it is incongruence with each other.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusions of the study, the following were the recommendations:

1. It is suggested for a third party evaluator to assess the leadership styles of the school heads, and come up with participative strategic measures.
2. As most of the school heads included in this study have MA units only, there is a need to craft a professional growth tracking of school heads ensuring that they will venture into higher academic endeavors;

3. A need to provide leadership training to school heads so that they can define their leadership styles to better manage their teaching teams and for better productivity in their schools;
4. Identify and train the second line of school leaders who are more technologically adept and adaptive to recent trends in education;
5. Identify potential school heads for external leadership training in the hope that when they come back, they can train second-liners for leadership and management; and,
6. Conduct rest and recreation activities within and among leaders and the rank and file to provide them an avenue to recharge, unwind, and draw strength from each other for a better outcome.

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