Leadership Practices of Secondary School Principals in the Province of Capiz

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Abstract- This quantitative-qualitative study intended to determine the leadership practices of the Secondary School Principals in the Province of Capiz, Philippines for the school year 2013-14 and to determine the significant differences of the leadership practices among Secondary School Principals in the Province of Capiz.

For the quantitative design, the survey method was utilized; for the qualitative design, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted. A total of 80 public and private secondary school principals in the Province of Capiz for School Year 2013-2014 were utilized as respondents of the study. The descriptive statistics used were the frequency count, percentage, and standard deviation whereas the inferential statistics used was the analysis of variance. The alpha level of significance was set at .05. The findings of the study revealed that the most dominant leadership practices of Secondary School principals is that which "challenge the process" and there are significant differences between the leadership practices of the secondary school principals.

Index Terms- Leadership Practices, Secondary School Principals

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is definitely not a 'one-size-fits-all' sort of word. It is one of those words that is ceaselessly debated and typically elicits a spectrum of individual opinions, from describing personality attributes, 'position' characteristics, or even behaviors. Whatever the arena – sports, politics, religion, business, or an educational institution – a leader impacts and influences organizational effectiveness.

The continuous and major challenges of the educational reforms require effective leadership competence in dealing with the current issues, as well as leading the organizations towards excellent performance. The requirements are comprised of numerous individual characteristics, particularly appropriate knowledge competency, communication skills, interpersonal relations, and leadership wisdom (Ahmad, Rahim & Seman, 2013).

Successful leaders have vision and are able to connect the disparate pieces and develop a cohesive view of their schools which is an alignment of goals that can lead their organizations to success (Manasse, 1986). In spite of the demands placed on effective principals in a rigorous accountability system, the leadership practices of the interviewed principals (Sanzo, et.al. 2010) enabled them to promote and sustain a successful academic environment. The analysis of the transcripts revealed four overarching themes which surfaced from the conversations with the ten middle school principals: sharing leadership, facilitating professional development, leading with an instructional orientation, and acting openly and honestly.

In public and private institutions in the Philippines, school administrators have clear vision, mission, goals and development plans, clear performance parameters, clear policies, system and procedures. Chief Executive Officers have centralized and decentralized leadership and decision-making, strong management Information System, active Board of Trustees involvement on total school life and work, rationalized ranking system and pay plan, comprehensive management, comprehensive resource/property development and management and development, comprehensive plan, sound financial planning, monitoring and control, relative effectiveness and efficiency of organizational structures, no financial transparency, involvement of key staff/leaders in decision-making process, etc.

At present, as observed by the researcher, the issue that confronts school principals today is the extent of their institutional capability such as leadership practices to become more effective in their attainment of the vision, mission and goals of the institutions that they serve.
It is on this premise that the researcher has decided to embark on this study on the leadership practices of the public and private secondary school principals in the province of Capiz that influence their organizational effectiveness.

II. RESEARCH ELABORATIONS

The participants of the study were 80 public and private secondary school principals for the school year 2012-2013. Census or complete enumeration was used as a technique to determine the number of participants. Their demographic profile of is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic data of the participants in terms of age, sex, marital status, highest degree earned, type of school affiliated with, years of experience as school principal, and basic monthly salary. Of the 80 secondary school principals included in the study, as to age, 6(7.5%) ranged in age 30 to 39 years old, more than a majority, 55(68.8%) ranged in age 40 to 49, and the remaining 19 (23.8%) ranged in age more than 49 years old; As to sex, 51 (63.8%) are females and 29 (36.3%) are males; As to marital status, 12 (15%) are single, while 68 (85%) are married; Majority or 70 (87.5%) of the respondents, are master's degree holders, 4 (5%) have finished the bachelor's degree, and 6 (7.5%) have acquired doctorate degrees; As to the type of school affiliated with, 62 (77.5%) come from the private schools whereas 18 (22.5%) come from the public schools; As to years of experience as

school principal, 14 (17.5%) of the respondents have served a minimum of less than 5 years, 22 (27.5%) have served between 5 to 10 years, and 44 (55.0%) have served to a maximum of more than 10 years; in terms of basic monthly salary, 62 (77.5%) of the participants receive a salary of more than P30,000.00, and 62 (77.5%) have a salary which ranged from P25,000.00 to P30,000.00,

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Variables	F	%
Age		
30 - 39 yrs	6	7.5
40 - 49 yrs	55	68.8
> 49 yrs	19	23.8
Sex		
Male	29	36.3
Female	51	63.8
Marital Status		
Single	12	15.0
Married	68	85.0
Highest Degree Earned		
Bachelor's Degree	4	5.0
Master's degree	70	87.5
Doctorate degree	6	7.5
Type of School Affiliated With		
Public	62	77.5
Private	18	22.5
Yrs of Experience as School Principal		
< 5 yrs	14	17.5
5 - 10 yrs	22	27.5
> 10 yrs	44	55.0
Basic Monthly Salary		
PhP25,000- 30,000	18	22.5
> PhP30,000	62	77.5
Total	80	100.0

The researcher used a questionnaire composed of Part One about the demographic profile of the participants of the study such as their (a) age, (b) sex (c) marital status, (d) highest degree earned, (e) type of school affiliated with (f) years of experience as school principal and (g) basic monthly salary and Part Two, the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (LPI) which was utilized to acquire information on their leadership practices using standardized instrument of Kouzes and Pousner (2000) It was used to obtain information on the use of the five leadership practices (Modeling the Way (Items 1-5), Inspiring a Shared Vision (Items 6-10), Challenging the Process (Items 11-15), Enabling Others to Act (Items 16-20), and Encouraging the Heart (Items 21-25). However, the instrument was modified to suit the

purpose of the study. The LPI contained 25 items (5 items for each scale).

Responses to each of the 5 items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors labeled: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The scores obtained in the respective were tabulated in a separate score sheet, summed up and the mean was computed. The respondents' leadership practices were interpreted using the scale below:

Scale	Description
4.20 – 5.00	Most Dominant
3.40 – 4.19	More Dominant
2.60 – 3.39	Moderately Dominant
1.80 – 2.59	Slightly Dominant
1.00 – 1.79	Least Dominant

The instrument was jury-validated, pilot-tested to 30 school administrators who were not actual participants of the study and had reliability index of .915.

The FGD was conducted on December 14, 2014, at 8:00-11:00 A.M. at the MVW Hotel & Restaurant, with 7 teacher-participants and 6 student-participants. The FGD Guide for the teacher-participants was made up of ten (10) open ended questions asking the participants to respond to how their principals lead their school, engage their participation as stakeholders as well as the organizational effectiveness of their leaders. The areas covered the vision, culture, management, collaboration, ethics and political, social, economic and legal aspects of the school. Participants also were asked to describe the state of their current school, the changes implemented by their principals, their most important responsibilities and the greatest obstacles faced by them.

For the student-participants, the FGD guide was made up of eleven (11) open ended questions asking the participants to respond to how their principals govern their schools. They were also encouraged to share their opinions and/or comments about the leadership competencies of their principals.

Permission to conduct research was requested from the Department of Education and the school authorities i.e. the school supervisors and principals. Permission to participate in the study was also sought from each respondent. Participants were informed about the research in which interviews were used. They were assured that their privacy and is going to be protected. They were also assured that the information was going to be used solely for the research purposes. It was also revealed to the respondents that information used would be treated as highly confidential.

After the researcher sought the approval of the different School heads, he personally requested the respondents of the study to fill-up the questionnaires. When all the questionnaires were retrieved, these were encoded, tallied, tabulated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software.

Data gathered from the study were analyzed using mean, frequency count and percentage to determine the respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, sex, marital status, highest degree earned, school affiliated with, years of experience as school principal, and basic monthly salary. Standard Deviation was used in order to determine the homogeneity as well as the heterogeneity of the respondents' leadership practices. Analysis of Variance was carried out to determine the significance of the differences among three or more compared groups. All inferential tests were set at .05 alpha level of significance.

III. RESULTS OR FINDINGS

Table 2 Leadership Practices of Secondary School Principals

Leadership Practices	Mean	SD	Rank	Description
Overall (N = 80)	4.46	0.33		Most Dominant
Challenge the Process	4.56	0.41	1	Most Dominant
Encourage the Heart	4.52	0.42	2	Most Dominant
Enables Others to Act	4.45	0.41	3	Most Dominant
Inspire a Shared Vision	4.42	0.39	4	Most Dominant
Modelling the Way	4.35	0.46	5	Most Dominant

Scale	Description
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Principals who "Challenge the Process" ranked 1st *(M = 4.56, SD = 0.41)*, those who "Encourage the Heart" ranked 2nd *(M = 4.52, SD = 0.42)*, those who "Enable Others to Act" ranked 3rd *(M = 4.45, SD = 0.41,* those who "Inspire a Shared Vision" ranked 4th *(M = 4.42, SD = 0.39);* and those who are "Modelling the Way" ranked 5th. *(M = 4.35, SD = 0.46).*   This indicates that

secondary school principals are finding a process that needs to be improved the most.

In the focus group discussion (FGD) conducted with the teachers, all seven (7) discussants expressed that the school principal:

"*is not the single most important factor in the success of their school*."

Discussant 5 remarked:

"*once the school is improving or reaping success in every endeavor, the principal has a very significant contribution in that success. But the teachers and students also share their part to the achievement of the goals of the school as a whole.*"

Discussant 7 also reiterated:

"*I think aside from the very influential role of the principal in the organization, I would also say that even if the organization has a very beautiful plan, a very objective plan but if the subordinates do not want to support this, then the program will not succeed.*"

In the same manner, discussant 3 commented:

"*the school principal plays a vital role in the achievement or in the success of a certain organization, because they are the ones planning and implementing for the betterment of the school. However, no man is an island. No man could stand alone and we cannot attain progress without others so the principal is not the only factor in the attainment of success but also the subordinates.*"

Moreover, Pupil-discussant 4 shared:

"*our principal gathers the opinions of the teachers, so I can say that she doesn't think only what is best for her but what is best for everybody.*"

Table 3 .*Differences Among the Leadership Practices of Secondary School Principals*

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.35	4	.59	3.36	0.010*
Within Groups	69.03	395	.17		
Total	71.37	399			

*Significant @ 5% level of significance

Table 3 reflects the ANOVA differences among the leadership practices of the principals. The results indicate that there are significant differences in the leadership practices of the participants, $F(4,395) = 3.36$ with $p = .010$. This shows that the kind of leadership practices applied by secondary school principals matters in the achievement of their goals in school.

Different situations require different leadership styles/practices. In this view, leaders change the way in which they lead depending on where they are. In other words, the most successful leaders are those who adapt their style to the unique demands of any given situation. This result was confirmed by teacher- discussant number 3 who mentioned:

"*there are principals who have different strategies, and their own style and of course there are some that focus on the schedule of classes and monitoring the teachers whether or not they are handling their classes. Some are good, they deal with us professionally. Other principals focus on renovations or for the improvement of school facilities, but we also had principals who do not continue what the previous principals have started, so there is no continuity.*"

Discussant number 2 also remarked:

"*I guess, it just so happens that some principals have different principles or priorities. Our principal focuses on the infrastructures and physical development instead of giving more attention on improving our academic achievements and I think we are moving backward instead of moving forward.*"

Moreover, Discussant number 3 emphasized that her principal:

"*is concerned with her people. I know this because, she was my teacher and my adviser during my high school years, she is very concerned with her people especially when she saw the teachers struggling in their way of teaching, because most of the teachers in our school are new. Our school principal is really looking into our potentials and developing them, because I was one of those who benefited out of it.*"

Confirming the teachers' views of their principals, student-discussant number 2 narrated:

"*our principal is responsive to our needs. For example, when our teacher suggested that a faculty room be provided for the teachers, he provided a vacant lot in our school. He also accepts comments and opinions of the teachers, parents and students.*"

Discussant number 3 also claimed:

"*our school principal is a good model to us, and he is someone who is worthy to be emulated, especially by those who wanted to become a principal, because he has the ability to encourage teachers, students and parents. He also establishes good rapport with the stakeholders.*"

Furthermore, discussant number 5 reported:

"o*ur principal really 'walks the talk'. If she tells us that we need to construct something in school, she really takes an initiative to start and implement the project, even if it meant spending her own money.*"

CONCLUSIONS

1.The most dominant leadership practices of Secondary School principals is that which "challenge the process".

2. There are significant differences between the leadership practices of the secondary school principals.

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