

ETHICS – BASED LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC HEADS

Andrews, P. Maquiling, Ed. D

Assistant Professor/ AMA International University – Bahrain
BAHRAIN

ABSTRACT

This descriptive-correlational study determined the Ethics-based leadership styles and administrative performance of academic heads of Southwestern University, Cebu City, SY 2007-2008, the findings of which were the bases for a leadership-training program. Included in the study were the 273 teachers from the colleges in Southwestern University. A researcher-made questionnaire was used in the inquiry of ethics-based leadership style of academic heads, while the second questionnaire on dean's administrative performance was patterned after the administrative officer's performance evaluation from the Center of Research of Southwestern University. The simple percentage, weighted mean, Oneway ANOVA and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were used for statistical treatment of data. In the level of ethics-based leadership style, most of the academic heads were perceived as transformational. With respect to their administrative performance level, majority of the academic heads showed excellent performance. There is a strong positive relationship between ethics-based leadership style and administrative performance, thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. There is a significant relationship between ethics-based leadership style and administrative performance of academic heads of Southwestern University as perceived by the teachers. The level of Ethics-based leadership style of academic heads in terms of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people was generally transformational. There was a significant difference among the colleges on the level of the Ethics-based leadership style and in the administrative performance of academic heads. There was also a significant relationship between the Ethics-based leadership style and in the administrative performance of academic heads across the colleges in Southwestern University.

Keywords: Ethics-based leadership, transformational, administrative performance, academic heads, Southwestern University.

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to know an ethical leader. It is hard to identify its moral foundation. Leadership styles vary due to self and cultural milieu. Christ strengthened the love-based leadership style. Christianity continues to influence, inspire, and motivate people that it becomes one of the strongest organizations even in the modern era. Should an academic head embrace the love-based leadership style to become effective ethical leader? Karl Marx, on the other hand, has gained 1/3 of the worlds' population, though Marx idea of leadership weakens when members lost their sense of individualism.

Virtuous leadership promotes legacy: Socrates, Confucius, Lao Tsu, et al. It is in the same faith that a school leader whose style is founded on moral ethical ground imbues subordinates with pride and honor. Academic heads are filled with difficult ethical dilemmas. Having moral obligations to teachers, to society, to the profession, to the school board, to students, they find it difficult to judge and act on what is right and proper. There is a problem because there is an ethical dilemma. As defined by Lockman (1995), an "ethical dilemma" is not a

choice between right and wrong, but a choice between two rights. Dilemmas arise when cherished values conflict. This kind of conflict is heightened because school leaders are public officials with obligations to people who have competing values or interests. Should the principal or dean defend a teacher who has made a questionable grading decision? The researcher, being a member of the middle managers in Southwestern University, experienced the same aforementioned dilemmas. The researcher is a graduate of Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy, Master's Degree in Education major in Educational Management, and a Doctorate Degree in Education major in Educational Management.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with human conduct and morality. Ethics is concerned with distinguishing between good and evil in the world – between right and wrong human actions – between virtuous and non-virtuous characteristics of humans. Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right Bennis (1997). Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it. Dwight D. Eisenhower (<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article>). Ethical Relativism argues that there is no absolute universal moral principle. The rightness and wrongness of an act depends upon culture and society. Southwestern University is a multicultural society. And the practice of changing administrators of Southwestern University challenges a threat to the establishment of an ethical management. The researchers' purpose is to find out if this educational institution values ethics in its leaders. What is exactly the style of leadership that will foster transformational metanoia to all the members of the institution to be able to live a virtue of excellence? The ethics of leadership rests upon three pillars: (1) the moral character of the leader, (2) the ethical values embedded in the leader's vision, articulation, and program which the followers either embrace or reject, and (3) the morality of the process of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue. Such ethical dimensions of leadership have been widely acknowledged (Wren, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Greenleaf, 1970).

The researcher anchored this study on Exchange Theory. The Exchange theory emphasizes the importance of the relationship between a leader and the employees. It is the ability to direct and be effective. The Exchange theory of leadership includes transformational leadership style, which is considered as the most ethical of all Ethics-based leadership styles in maintaining high performance of the working staff without losing values, interest, and social choice in education. Exchange theory also includes charismatic and transactional leadership. In 1978, James McGregor Burns first proposed the idea of Transformational leadership that was later expanded by Bernard Bass (Liontois, 1992). Although they based their work on business executives, army officers and political leaders, the principles of transformational leadership can be extended to schools. Leithwood (1992) defines transformational leadership as a leadership that facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment and the restructuring of their systems for goal accomplishment. It is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (Brubacher et al., 1994). Hence, transformational leadership must be grounded in moral foundations (Bass and Steidlmeir, 1998).

Transformational leadership contains four components: idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1998). Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino (1991) suggest that transformational

leaders employ on or more of the “Four I’s” to achieve superior results. The Four I’s are: (1) *Idealized influence* – Transformational leaders serve as role models for others, especially followers, and admired, respected, and trusted. They can be counted on to do the right thing and maintain high standards. (2) *Inspirational motivation* – Transformational leaders motivate and inspire others by providing a challenge and meaning and inspire others by providing a challenge and meaning to their work. Team morale, enthusiasm, and positive outlook are enhanced and evident. The leader involves others in thinking about attractive future outcomes or states (Sankowsky, 1995). (3) *Intellectual stimulation* – Transformational leaders encourage and prompt others to be innovative and think of alternatives by questioning, rethinking problems, and examining their work in new and different ways. When people engage in creative problem solving, their ideas and mistakes are not criticized, and they are encouraged to try their ideas. (4) *Individualized consideration* – Transformational leaders serve as coaches and mentors in the professional growth and development of their members and acknowledge each and delegate tasks to provide opportunities for success. They monitor progress and provide additional encouragement as needed in a supportive environment. While true transformational leaders are concerned about developing their followers into leaders, pseudotransformational leaders are more concerned about maintaining the dependence of their followers. Pseudotransformational leaders will welcome and expect blind obedience.

Another leadership style in the exchange theory is Transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is in common understands with Professional leadership style by utilizing the traditional management function of leading. They clarify the role and task requirements of subordinates, initiate structure, provide appropriate rewards and try to be considerate and to meet the social needs of subordinates. They have the ability to satisfy subordinates thus increase their productivity. They excel at management functions. They are hardworking, tolerant and fair minded. They take pride in keeping things running smoothly and efficiently. They often stress on the valuable aspects of performance such as plans, schedules and budgets. They have a sense of commitment to the organization and conform to norms and values. Transactional leaders are those who use legitimate, coercive, or reward powers to elicit obedience and attempts to instill in followers and ability to question standard modes of operation. Nevertheless, under Exchange theory, the best of leadership is both transformational and transactional. Transformational leadership augments the effectiveness of transactional leadership. It does not replace transactional leadership (Bass, <http://cls.binghamton.com.,2000>).

Democratic governing is an expression of Transformational and Behavioral People – Oriented style. Bruce Joyce and Emily Calhoun (1996) state that the strategies that would support organizational learning is the formation of “Responsible Parties” to lead the school community in improvement efforts. This reveals that collective inquiry can be strengthened by more democratic forms of governance (www.Educ.led.com).

The Professional leadership style is the social contract approach which is more flexible than the Bureaucratic administrator. The major ethical problem with this style is that the corporate culture must be amoral or immoral and this will dominate the Professional Manager’s approach due to the social contract. Professional leadership is closely identified with Transactional theory in giving emphasis to the existing social needs and culture of the school as the foundation of morality. Greenberg and Baron (1997) note that Professional leaders are concerned on initiating structure activities which are designed to enhance productivity or performance; leaders who employ this perspective are generally task-oriented.

Another style of leadership is Bureaucratic. This type of leadership uses rule-approach. This creates a sin of omission where others are hurt unintentionally because their unique need is not included in the rigid rule-based organizational structure. This style of leadership follows a close set of standards. Everything is done in an exact, specific way to ensure safety and/or accuracy. You will often find this leadership role in a situation where the work environment is dangerous and specific sets of procedure are necessary to ensure safety. In the working world, bureaucratic leadership skills would be best utilized in jobs such as construction work, chemistry-related jobs that involve working with hazardous material, or jobs that involve working with large amounts of money. Bureaucratic style of leadership is commonly adopted in business ethics. Bureaucratic leaders are newly dubbed as “organization man”.

Manipulative style of leadership is whose end of action or decision always justifies the mean. This style is amoral and is driven by the motive of power and control. It is essentially an economic or egotistical ethic. The end result of any decision or action justifies the means taken to manipulate others. It is based on Machiavellian ethics that views leadership unscrupulously.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There were two leadership styles which were earlier identified, namely Task oriented and Employee-oriented. The Task-oriented style gives more emphasis on the accomplishment of the job, rather than the development and satisfaction of the subordinates. The Employee-oriented style, on the other hand, shows more concern for the welfare of the subordinates and encourages them to perform their task. This style is expressive of Transformational leadership. Seltzer (1990) found that when leaders engage in transformational leadership, their subordinates tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction and performance. Transformational leadership is more strongly correlated with lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and higher satisfaction (<http://archon.educ.kent.>)

Human behavior is conditioned by his culture. An academic head coming from a state university will have a crisis functioning in a private non-sectarian school. Transformational leaders are in pursuit of three major goals: helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school environment; fostering teacher development; and helping teachers solve problems more effectively (Leithwood, 1992). The most significant held belief by these leaders is that their staff members, as a group could develop better solutions than the principal alone. Transformational leadership has a sizable influence on teacher collaboration and a significant relationship exists between its aspects and the changes of teachers' attitudes toward school improvement and altered instructional behavior. Such transforming leadership style is also exemplified by Laura Lipton and Robert Melamede (1997) in suggesting that the key to successful group dynamics is dialogue rather than debate (www.transform.org.2001). Many of the problems that are experienced by principals and teachers relate to questions of values, ethics and vision (Brubacher et al., 1994). Hence, transformational leadership has become a benchmark in the workings of many educational institutions, which has resulted in new roles for the academic heads and teachers.

Each person has a leadership style that they feel comfortable with. What educators must realize is that there are different styles of leadership that are required for different situations. Most of them like to believe that they are transformational leaders because that is the style that fits in with dealing with their group. What they have to understand is that they may have

to switch to a different style of leadership to get the job accomplished while maintaining their integrity and honor.

Machiavelli (The Prince, 1552) as cited by Beach & Judy Reinhartz (2000), viewed people as uncooperative, greedy, self-centered, and rebellious individuals; therefore, his recommendations on how to lead or govern emphasized the need to control people using whatever means necessary, including lying, cheating, and stealing, in order to establish order and maintain power. This theory of leadership has been based on the belief that humans are motivated by strong emotions and selfish desires rather than by rational or social concerns. A manipulative leader will use deceitful methods to achieve their goals. Manipulative leader has greed or personal gain as driving force or a major motivation.

METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive-correlational method to determine the relationship between ethics-based leadership style and administrative performance of the academic heads of Southwestern University. The descriptive method used the survey technique by using questionnaires & interview to the respondents to know the level of academic heads ethics-based leadership style & administrative performance. Correlation, as the statistical measure, was used to know the relationship between the two aforementioned variables. The research environment is Southwestern University, founded by Don Matias Hipolito Chavez Aznar. The school was established in 1946 at Urgello Street, Cebu City, Phillipines. There were 273 teachers – respondents of the study from all colleges. The research subjects of the study were the deans of all colleges and 2 principals of Southwestern University. There were two research instruments in the study. The first one is a self-made questionnaire on Ethics-based leadership style. Its validity was tested by administering a pretest to the Graduate School teachers which were not included in the study. The second questionnaire on dean's administrative performance was patterned after the administrative officer's performance evaluation from the Center of Research of Southwestern University. The data gathered were analyzed and computed using, Simple Percentage, Weighted Mean, Oneway Analysis of Variance and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

RESULTS

Table 1: The Ethic-based Leadership Styles of Academic Heads

College	Grand Mean	Interpretation	F- ratio	p-value	Decision
			9.87	0.000	Reject Ho
1. College A	3.41	Transformational			
2. College B	3.33	Transformational			
3. College C	3.5	Transformational			
4. College D	3.01	Professional			
5. College E	3.24	Professional			
6. College F	3.13	Professional			
7. College G	3.34	Transformational			
8. College H	3.65	Transformational			
9. College I	3.52	Transformational			
10. College J	3.18	Professional			
11. College K	3.56	Transformational			
12. College L	3.41	Transformational			
13. College M	3.81	Transformational			
14. College N	3.64	Transformational			

15. College O	3.51	Transformational	
16. College P	3.84	Transformational	
17. Elem. School	3.54	Transformational	
18. High School A	3.38	Transformational	
19. High School B	2.14	Bureaucratic	

Table 11: Administrative Performance of Academic Heads

College	Grand Mean	Interpretation	F- ratio	p-value	Decision
			7.59	0.000	Reject Ho
1. College A	3.27	Excellent			
2. College B	3.35	Excellent			
3. College C	3.55	Excellent			
4. College D	3.24	Very Good			
5. College E	3.1	Very Good			
6. College F	3.22	Very Good			
7. College G	3.45	Excellent			
8. College H	3.69	Very Good			
9. College I	3.58	Very Good			
10. College J	3.28	Excellent			
11. College K	3.42	Excellent			
12. College L	3.42	Excellent			
13. College M	3.73	Excellent			
14. College N	3.7	Excellent			
15. College O	3.61	Excellent			
16. College P	3.84	Excellent			
17. Elem. School	3.39	Excellent			
18. High School A	3.32	Excellent			
19. High School B	2.38	Good			

Table 111: Areas in Ethics-based Leadership Styles of Academic Heads

Leadership areas	Range of Scores	Mean Scores	Standard deviation	N	Interpretation
Providing direction	1.50-4.0	3.34	0.51	273	Transformational
Implementing plans	1.13-4.0	3.33	0.54	273	Transformational
Motivating people	1.38-4.0	3.31	0.58	273	Transformational
All areas	1.46-4.0	3.33	0.5	273	Transformational

Table IV: Areas in Administrative Performance of Academic Heads

Administrative Performance	Range of scores	Mean Score	Standard deviation	N	Interpretation
Communication	1.0 – 4.0	3.4	0.57	273	Excellent
Personnel Management	1.23 – 4.0	3.35	0.5	273	Excellent
Supervisory Skills	1.10 – 4.0	3.33	0.51	273	Excellent
Leadership	1.67 – 4.0	3.32	0.53	273	Excellent
Personal Quality	1.5 – 4.0	3.38	0.53	273	Excellent
All areas	1.39 – 4.0	3.36	0.46	273	Excellent

Table V: Relationship between – Ethics-based Leadership Styles and Administrative Performance of Academic Heads

Areas of Ethical Leadership	Areas of Administrative Performance											
	Com- muni- cation	p- val ue	Perso- nel Mana- gement	p- val ue	Super- Visory	p- val ue	Lead- ership	p- val ue	Per- sonal Qual- ities	p- val ue	Overa- ll Perfor- manc- e	p- val ue
Providing Direction	0.75	0.00	0.76	0.00	0.71	0.00	0.73	0.0	0.68	0.00	0.82	0.0
Implementing Plans	0.75	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.71	0.0	0.60	0.00	0.79	0.0
Motivating People	0.79	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.72	0.0	0.64	0.00	0.84	0.0
Overall leadership	0.82	0.00	0.78	0.00	0.77	0.00	0.77	0.0	0.69	0.00	0.88	0.0

DISCUSSION

Ethics-based Leadership Styles

Most of the academic heads of Southwestern University are transformational as shown in table 1. Only one of the academic heads is bureaucratic. The researcher believes that bureaucratic and manipulative styles are not sound approaches to justify certain ends in the educational arena. It is because, with the trend of academic freedom, teachers become aware of their rights and duties in school and their obligation to their immediate heads that it will be inhumane to treat as means towards an end. School leadership styles have to change to be “in” with time. Transformational leadership is a process in which the leaders take actions to try to increase the awareness of what is right and important. It is also a process to raise motivational maturity and to move beyond the persons’ own self-interest for the good of the school or society. Transformational leadership provides others with a sense of purpose that goes beyond a simple exchange of rewards for efforts done (<http://205.231.84.242/demo/intro/>). Results of the Oneway ANOVA ($F=9.87$, $df=18.254$, $p < 0.05$) showed (Table I) that there was a significant difference in the ethics-based leadership scores among the heads of the different colleges in Southwestern University. Teachers from the High School B, perceived their academic heads to display less ethics-based leadership as compared to the perception of teachers from the other colleges. To bring about change, an ethical leader will foster the model values of honesty, loyalty and fairness and the end values of justice, equality, and human rights (Bass,1998). At times, a school head will manipulate his subordinates in order to become efficient. The researchers observed that there are deans who do not respect certain individual personalities of their teaching staff which leads to coercion.

Administrative Performance

With respect to the Administrative performance of academic heads, table 2 shows that out of 19 academic heads there are 5 who were very good (more effective), 1 was good (least effective), and 13 who were excellent (most effective). Results of the Oneway ANOVA ($F=7.59$, $df=18, 254$, $p < 0.05$) shows that there is a significant difference on the administrative performance scores among the heads of the different colleges in Southwestern University.

The Fieldler's Model proposes that effective group performance depends upon the proper match between the leader's style of interacting with followers and the degree to which the situation allows the leader to control and influence. Fiedler found out that the individual's leadership style is fixed. Therefore, it is better to bring in a new leader whose style better fits the situation for the leader to perform well. Or change the situation to fit the leader (e.g. restructuring tasks or increasing the power that the leader had over factors such as salary increases, promotions, and disciplinary actions (<http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/fiedler.htm>)).

Areas in Ethics-based Leadership Styles

Table 3 shows that out of 273 teachers- respondents, the ethical leadership style of academic heads has the grand mean of 3.33. It follows that all the leadership areas in the Ethics-based Leadership Style are interpreted as transformational. Hence, the teachers perceived majority of the academic heads of Southwestern University as Most Ethical. Transformational leaders, based on the Cutting-Edge approaches to leadership, are evaluated as more effective, higher performers, and more recommendable than their transactional counterparts.

The three leadership areas are essential for academic heads to be really ethical. Yet, table 3 shows that motivating people has the lowest mean score of 3.31. According to Maslow (1971), as cited by Dweck, (1986), the source of motivation is certain needs. For anyone to love and become self-actualized, which are both considered to be in the highest level of needs, the person motivated has to fulfill first the lower need. Marx (1896) strengthened the point aforementioned as mentioned by Babor, (2001) by postulating in his teaching of Materialism that human nature is found in labor and society. That in order for man to be productive he has to labor. Hence, man has to find meaning in his existence through his/her work. A man who is not well paid of his work loss his nature and dignity.

Areas in Administrative Performance

Table 4 provides sub-areas of the administrative performance of academic heads. This table shows that teachers rated their heads as Excellent; thus, academic heads were perceived as Most Ethical. Performance can be limited when followers lack the resources needed to get the job done. At other times, followers may lack the opportunity to demonstrate acquired skills. Such is the case when passengers are hungry but flight attendants do not have any meals to serve during the flight. In this situation the flight attendants could have very high levels of customer service goals, capabilities, and motivation, but will not be able to satisfy customer needs. Leaders must ensure that followers and teams have the needed equipment, financial resources, and the opportunities to exhibit their skills if they want to eliminate this constraint on performance. The researcher believes that developing credibility and trust in the leader increases job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The transformational leaders, in many different and unique ways, are proactive. These leaders attempt to optimize not just performance, but development as well. Development encompasses such things as the maturation of ability, motivation, attitudes, and values. They convince others to strive for a higher level of achievement as well as higher levels of moral and ethical standards. High performing teachers contribute to high performing organizations (<http://205.231.84.242/demo/intro/>).

Relationship between Ethics-based Leadership Styles and Administrative Performance

There is a strong positive relationship between ethics-based leadership style and administrative performance of academic heads of Southwestern University as perceived by the teachers. The over-all performance ratio of 0.88 is greater than the p-value of 0.05. It can be surmised that an ethics-based leadership style is necessary for effective performance of academic heads. This finding is consistent with the study of Kanico (1983) that employed the democratic style of leadership in the performance and execution of their functions and that democratic style which is an expression of transformational style, has significant relationship with job performance.

The type of leadership that traditionally exists in schools is often referred to as “command” or “dominance” leadership. In essence, one person leads, the others follow. One person makes the major decisions that affect the entire group. Policy is made by one person and handed down. Input may be asked for or given, but the decision itself is left to one individual (Ryan, 1999). In the case of schools, this one person is almost always the principal or the dean of the college. Ideally, we would like schools to be well-run and productive organizations. Schools should be focused on the students, and facilitate learning. Teachers and administrators should work together, collaboratively and productively, to establish and implement policy. Unfortunately, the traditional model, which could either be Manipulative or Bureaucratic, has administrators establish a hierarchical form of authority, they are communicating to the teachers the assumption that they are subordinates who do not share goals as the administration, and that they must be monitored in order to force them to be productive. This structure tells teachers that their knowledge is not valuable, and that their input would not be an asset (Marsh, 2001). To bring about change, an ethical leader will foster the model values of honesty, loyalty and fairness and the end values of justice, equality, and human rights (Bass, 1998).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that the level of Ethics-based leadership style of academic heads in terms of providing directions, implementing plans, and motivating people is generally transformational. There was significant difference among the college deans in the Ethics-based leadership style and in the Administrative performance of academic heads. There was also a significant relationship among the college deans in the Ethics-based leadership style and in their Administrative performance. Educational leadership involves values, morals, and ethics. The purposes of education in the twenty-first century are to reflect the changing context of educational organizations. Educational administrators will have to create communities of reciprocal caring and responsibility. Creation of such communities can be accomplished only if educational leaders are authentic and truly human. Transformational Leadership has to provide lenses through which educational administrators can examine their personal underlying values and beliefs. School administrators can develop standards of good practice and improve their skills as ethical leaders through numerous activities, such as writing personal platforms and comparing and contrasting codes of ethics from various organizations.

Whatever virtue is desired, moral philosophers going back to Aristotle have emphasized that it must become a habit. Just as musicians develop musical ability by playing in instrument, people become virtuous by practicing virtue. Ethical behavior is not something that can be held in reserve for momentous issues; it must be a constant companion.

Leadership styles can be as multifaceted as the personalities of the leaders. It is difficult to place a leader neatly in one box and categorically state that they are a particular type of leader. On occasion even Hitler listened to his follower's advice yet it would be difficult to think of him as anything but a command leader. It would be more precise to say that leaders are defined by the style of leadership that they most often or most consistently exhibit.

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