

The management leadership styles of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the management leadership style of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco. It sought answers to the following sub-problems: 1) What is the management leadership style of the office heads in the City Government of Tabaco in terms of autocratic, democratic, delegative, transformative and servant leadership?; 2) What is the level of practice of management leadership styles along communicating, decision-making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities; and executing mandated functions?; 3) Is there a significant difference on the level of practice of the management leadership styles as perceived by the two (2) groups of respondents along the areas of concern?; 4) What are the challenges in management leadership styles encountered by the respondents?; and 5) What management plan may be proposed to address the challenges in management leadership styles of offices heads? The descriptive-survey method of research was employed. The study followed the survey-correlational technique in gathering the data. It utilized a researcher-made questionnaire to collect the needed data. There were 494 respondents in this study. A total of 250 regular employees and 244 job-order employees responded to the distributed questionnaire. The descriptive statistics employed were frequency counts, percentage, weighted mean, F-test and ranking. The salient findings of the study show that 1.) The management leadership style of the office heads in the City Government of Tabaco is democratic management leadership style; 2.) The level of practice of the management leadership styles as rated by the two (2) groups of respondents is always with communicating has the highest combined average of 4.30. 3.) There is no significant difference on the level of practice on the management leadership style of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco between the regular and job-order employees along communicating, decision-making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities as well as executing mandated functions. 4.) The challenges with the final ranks among the areas are as follows: in communicating, it is difference in communication skills; in decision-making, it is poor data coordination; in handling organizational issues and complaints, it is lack of cooperation among the employees; in planning projects, programs and activities, it is numerous and complex nature of required plans and in executing mandated functions, it is political interference; and 5.) A management plan was proposed to address the challenges in management leadership style of office heads.

Keywords: Management leadership style, autocratic, democratic, delegative, transformative and servant leadership, communicating, decision-making, handling organizational issues and

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complaints, planning programs, projects and activities; and executing mandated functions management plan.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a growing consensus among governments worldwide that leadership is central to achieving good governance. Effective governance enables governments to respond efficiently to the needs of their citizens while ensuring accountability, transparency, and fairness within political institutions. In the absence of these elements, policies often become ineffective and fail to address public concerns. Leadership in the national context is inherently complex due to differing perspectives and varied interpretations of societal realities. Developing leadership perspectives requires a deep understanding of Filipino culture and its diverse subcultures, as these significantly influence social, economic, and political life. Everyday decisions are shaped not only by political leaders but also by ordinary citizens, whose actions are guided by cultural and social considerations and the implications these decisions may produce.

Local governments in the Philippines are structured into four levels: provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays, collectively referred to as local government units or LGUs. Their operations and management are governed by the Local Government Code of 1991, which institutionalized decentralization and granted local autonomy by transferring powers and responsibilities from the national government. The Department of the Interior and Local Government provide supervision and support to these units. Managing LGUs involves numerous challenges and tensions that require strong and capable leadership. Local leadership serves as a driving force for positive change, as political leaders are positioned to shape outcomes through their familiarity with local conditions and their direct involvement in addressing issues such as poverty, peace and order, stability, and employment.

The effectiveness of local government units largely depends on the competence and performance of office heads who oversee organizational operations. Office heads who demonstrate strong leadership abilities are better equipped to collaborate, innovate, and implement improvements in public service delivery, thereby enhancing the quality of life within the community. Investing in leadership development for office heads fosters a culture of accountability and trust, strengthens morale and engagement, and ultimately improves job performance and satisfaction. In this regard, management leadership style plays a critical role in guiding individuals and managing organizations within the public sector.

Within the field of management, leadership styles are characterized by distinct approaches to communication, decision making, and employee motivation. Each style presents its own advantages and limitations that must be carefully considered. Office heads can more effectively respond to the unique demands of public service by adapting their leadership approach to the organizational context, the complexities of public policy, and the expectations of stakeholders. As key figures in the operation and management of city governments, office heads significantly influence organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Their management leadership styles determine how well their respective offices fulfill mandated functions and deliver services to the public.

This study is anchored on two theoretical perspectives: the Management Leadership Style Theory by Gary Yukl and the Theory of Practice by Pierre Bourdieu. The Management Leadership Style Theory, as proposed by Yukl (1989), emphasizes the importance of essential leadership skills as enabling factors for effective leadership and recognizes that individuals

possess distinct leadership styles with which they are most comfortable. It underscores that no single leadership style is universally applicable across all situations. In parallel, Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1979) highlights the influence of structural factors on human behavior. It posits that human actions are not purely the result of rational choices made by completely autonomous individuals, but are shaped by broader social structures that influence desires, needs, and interests. According to Bourdieu, individuals perceive their motivations as personal, yet these are deeply embedded in social realities and shaped by legitimized social differences that arise from human practices.

Statement of the problem

This study explored the management leadership style of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco. It endeavored to:

1. Identify the management leadership style of the office heads in the City Government of Tabaco in terms of autocratic, democratic, delegative, transformative and servant leadership.
2. Determine the level of practice of the management leadership styles along communicating, decision-making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities, and executing mandated functions.
3. Test if there is a significant difference on the level of practice of the management leadership styles between the regular and job-order employees along the areas of concern;
4. Identify the challenges in management leadership styles encountered by the respondents; and
5. Propose a management plan to address the challenges in management leadership styles of office heads.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design using the descriptive comparative method to examine the management leadership styles of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco. The design was selected to allow for the systematic description of variables and the comparison of responses between identified groups, thereby ensuring an objective and structured analysis of the data gathered. The respondents of the study consisted of 494 employees from the City Government of Tabaco, including 250 regular employees and 244 job order employees who participated in the survey. These respondents were considered appropriate sources of information as they directly experienced and observed the leadership practices of their respective office heads.

Data were collected through a validated questionnaire developed by the researcher in consultation with the Thesis Adviser. The research instrument was composed of three parts designed to capture the key variables of the study. The first part identified the management leadership styles of the office heads in the City Government of Tabaco. The second part examined the level of practice of these management leadership styles across five areas, namely communicating, decision making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities, and executing mandated functions. The third part determined the challenges encountered by the respondents in relation to management leadership styles within the same five areas of concern. The structure of the instrument ensured that all relevant dimensions of leadership style and practice were comprehensively assessed.

Following the approval of the thesis proposal, the researcher formally requested permission from the Local Chief Executive of the City Government of Tabaco to conduct the study and administer the research instrument. Upon approval, a schedule for data collection was prepared. The researcher coordinated with the Office of the Human Resource Management and Development to obtain the official list of regular and job order employees. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher to ensure proper distribution and to address any concerns raised by the respondents. After a period of two weeks, all questionnaires were successfully retrieved, resulting in a 100 % retrieval rate. The collected responses were encoded in a tally sheet using Microsoft Excell for organization and preparation for statistical analysis. The data were then subjected to appropriate statistical treatment, followed by tabulation, analysis, and interpretation.

Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the gathered data. Frequency counts and percentage were employed to identify the management leadership styles of the office heads. To determine the level of practice of these leadership styles across the identified areas, frequency count and weighted mean were used. The F test was applied to determine the significant difference in the level of practice between regular employees and job order employees in relation to the specified areas of concern. In addition, frequency counts and ranking were used to identify and prioritize the challenges encountered by the respondents. These statistical tools provided a systematic and objective basis for interpreting the data and drawing conclusions relevant to the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion of the study involving 494 respondents composed of 250 regular employees and 244 job order employees from the City Government of Tabaco. The study employed a quantitative research design using the descriptive comparative method, with data collected through a validated researcher made questionnaire. The analysis utilized frequency counts, percentage, weighted mean, and F test to examine the management leadership styles of office heads, their level of practice across specified areas of concern, and the differences in perceptions between the two groups of respondents. The discussion that follows is grounded in the data gathered and interprets the findings in direct relation to the objectives of the study.

The findings reveal that among the management leadership styles practiced by office heads in the City Government of Tabaco, the democratic management leadership style obtained the highest frequency, with 395 responses or 79.96 %. This indicates that a substantial majority of respondents perceived their office heads as practicing participative and inclusive leadership approaches, which emphasize shared decision making and employee involvement. This is followed by the delegative management leadership style, which garnered 239 responses or 48.38 %, suggesting that a considerable number of office heads also practice the delegation of authority and responsibilities to subordinates. The transformative management leadership style recorded 202 responses or 40.89 %, reflecting the presence of leadership behaviors that inspire change, innovation, and development among employees. Similarly, the servant management leadership style received 183 responses or 37.04 %, indicating that some office heads prioritize serving the needs of their employees and fostering a supportive work environment. In contrast, the autocratic management leadership style obtained the lowest frequency, with 119 responses or 24.09 %, suggesting that directive and centralized decision making is less commonly practiced among office heads. These findings align with contemporary leadership theories that emphasize participative and transformational approaches as more effective in public sector organizations, particularly in promoting collaboration, accountability, and employee engagement.

In terms of the level of practice of management leadership styles across the five areas of concern, namely communicating, decision making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities, and executing mandated functions, the combined ratings of regular and job order employees consistently yielded an adjectival description of always. This indicates that office heads are perceived to regularly demonstrate effective leadership practices across all functional areas. Among the indicators, the highest average weighted mean of 4.35 was observed in follows legal bases and frameworks in the execution of mandated functions, suggesting strong adherence to rules and policies in governance. This is followed by adheres to transparency and accountability with a mean of 4.29, identified areas for improvement and sustains excellence with 4.24, establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms with 4.23, and communicates performance regularly and celebrates gains with 4.20. The overall average weighted mean for executing mandated functions was 4.26, which is interpreted as always. These results indicate that office heads consistently demonstrate high levels of competence and commitment in executing their duties, particularly in ensuring compliance with legal standards and maintaining transparency. The consistently high ratings across all indicators reflect a positive perception of leadership effectiveness, which is essential in enhancing organizational performance and public service delivery.

The test of difference on the level of practice of management leadership styles between regular employees and job order employees was conducted using the F test at 0.05 level of significance. The computed F values for the different areas of concern were 0.25 for communicating, 2.333 for decision making, 1.375 for handling organizational issues and complaints, 0.375 for planning programs, projects and activities, and 1.75 for executing mandated functions. All these computed F values are lower than the F tabular value of 5.318. Based on these results, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the level of practice of management leadership styles between the two groups of respondents is accepted. This indicates that both regular employees and job order employees share similar perceptions regarding the leadership practices of office heads across all areas of concern. The absence of significant differences suggests a consistent application of leadership styles regardless of employment status, which may reflect standardized organizational practices and equitable treatment within the workplace.

With regard to the challenges encountered in the management leadership styles of office heads, the findings identified specific issues across the five areas of concern. In communicating, the primary challenge is the difference in communication skills among employees, which may hinder effective information exchange and understanding. In decision making, poor data coordination emerged as the top challenge, indicating difficulties in accessing or integrating relevant information needed for informed decisions. In handling organizational issues and complaints, the lack of cooperation among employees was identified as the main concern, suggesting potential issues in teamwork and collaboration. In planning programs, projects and activities, the numerous and complex nature of required plans poses a significant challenge, reflecting the demanding nature of administrative and developmental tasks. In executing mandated functions, political interference was identified as the primary challenge, highlighting the influence of external factors on administrative processes and decision making. These challenges underscore the multifaceted nature of leadership in the public sector and the need for adaptive and context sensitive leadership approaches.

In response to the identified challenges, a management plan was developed to address the issues related to management leadership styles of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco. The development of this plan signifies a proactive approach to improving leadership

effectiveness and organizational performance by targeting the specific areas of concern revealed in the study.

Overall, the findings of the study demonstrate that democratic leadership is the most dominant management leadership style among office heads, and that leadership practices are consistently rated as always across key functional areas. The absence of significant differences between regular and job order employees indicates uniformity in leadership implementation, while the identified challenges highlight areas that require strategic intervention. These results contribute to a deeper understanding of leadership dynamics within local government units and emphasize the importance of adaptive leadership in addressing organizational and contextual demands. The findings provide a strong empirical basis for the proposed management plan and offer valuable insights for enhancing leadership practices in the public sector, thereby setting the stage for further discussion on implications and recommendations in the succeeding section of the study.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study provide a comprehensive understanding of the management leadership styles of office heads in the City Government of Tabaco and their level of practice across key functional areas. The results clearly indicate that the democratic management leadership style is the most commonly practiced approach among office heads, reflecting a strong inclination toward participative and inclusive leadership within the organization. This dominant leadership style suggests that office heads prioritize collaboration, shared decision making, and employee involvement, which are essential in fostering a responsive and accountable public service environment. At the same time, the presence of other leadership styles such as delegative, transformative, and servant leadership indicates that office heads demonstrate a degree of flexibility in their leadership approaches, although these are less frequently observed compared to the democratic style.

The level of practice of management leadership styles across the areas of communicating, decision making, handling organizational issues and complaints, planning programs, projects and activities, and executing mandated functions was consistently described as always. This finding signifies that office heads are perceived to regularly and effectively perform their leadership roles in all identified domains. Such consistency reflects a high level of commitment to organizational responsibilities, adherence to governance standards, and sustained efforts to ensure efficient service delivery. The uniformly high level of practice across all areas further implies that leadership behaviors are well established and institutionalized within the local government setting, contributing to the overall effectiveness of operations and management.

Moreover, the analysis revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of practice of management leadership styles between regular employees and job order employees across all areas of concern. This indicates that both groups of respondents share similar perceptions of how leadership is practiced within the organization, suggesting a consistent and equitable application of leadership strategies regardless of employment status. Such uniformity in perception may reflect standardized leadership practices and a shared organizational culture that promotes fairness, inclusivity, and consistency in the treatment of employees.

Despite the generally positive findings, the study also identified several challenges associated with the management leadership styles of office heads. Differences in communication skills emerged as a key concern in the area of communication, while poor data coordination was identified as a challenge in decision making. In handling organizational issues and complaints, the lack of cooperation among employees was highlighted as a major difficulty. The planning of programs, projects, and activities was found to be hindered by the

numerous and complex nature of required plans, and the execution of mandated functions was affected by political interference. These challenges underscore the complexities of leadership in a public sector context and highlight areas where improvements are necessary to enhance organizational performance and effectiveness.

In response to these identified challenges, the study emphasizes the importance of implementing a management plan tailored to address the specific issues encountered in leadership practices. Such a plan is expected to provide structured interventions and strategic actions that can strengthen leadership effectiveness and mitigate the challenges identified in the study. Furthermore, the findings suggest that office heads may benefit from adopting a broader range of leadership styles, particularly delegative and transformative approaches, in addition to democratic leadership. This diversification of leadership practices can enhance motivation, innovation, and excellence in service delivery.

It is also recommended that executive leadership courses be offered to office heads and their assistants to sustain and further develop effective management leadership practices within the City Government of Tabaco. Encouraging both regular and job order employees to participate in leadership and personality development trainings and seminars is likewise essential in fostering a more collaborative and empowered workforce. In addition, presenting the identified challenges to the local government for discussion in management committee meetings can facilitate informed decision making and collective problem solving. Providing the management plan to the local government for consideration further supports the implementation of targeted strategies aimed at improving leadership practices.

Overall, the study affirms the central role of leadership in ensuring effective governance and organizational performance within local government units. The dominance of democratic leadership, the consistently high level of practice across all areas, and the absence of significant differences in perceptions among employees collectively highlight the strengths of current leadership practices in the City Government of Tabaco. At the same time, the identified challenges and corresponding recommendations provide valuable insights for enhancing leadership effectiveness and addressing existing gaps. These conclusions not only reinforce the importance of adaptive and context responsive leadership in the public sector but also offer a clear direction for future initiatives, thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of governance and public service delivery.

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