

# Contemporary Leadership Pattern of Three Tertiary School Administrators in Jolo

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## ABSTRACT

The study is focused on the contemporary leadership pattern of three tertiary school administrators in Jolo. To determine the leadership style practiced by subject school administrators, the researcher endeavored to attain the following objectives: identify the leadership pattern employed by the school heads; find out the dominant leadership style among the three school administrators; determine and analyze the factors that influence leadership pattern; know if academic performance is attributed to leadership pattern; and identify leadership pattern suited for tertiary school administrators in Jolo.

The study utilized the descriptive and explorative design. Out of six tertiary schools in Jolo, the research focused on three institutes only. Probability sampling was used in selecting the respondents. Structured questionnaires were used in the data gathering. In the data analysis, frequency tally sheets were used. Ordinal scale was also utilized for comparison purposes. Percentage scale was likewise employed in ascertaining the ordered series of the graduated quantities, values and degrees per hundred. And for reason of economy, the study opted for descriptive interpretation.

**KEY WORDS** – leadership Pattern, leadership style, tertiary school administrators, Jolo

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the process of directing and inspiring workers to perform the task-related activities of the group. It is the central part of the management role in achieving organizational goals. Normally, it is manifested in the style or pattern of leadership practiced by the management.

Leadership style is the pattern of behavior employed by leaders during the process of directing and influencing workers. To attain leadership effectiveness, appropriate leadership pattern should be identified. (Davis, 1985:155)

As leaders, tertiary school administrators in Jolo adopt a style of leadership believed to be effective in achieving the goals of their respective schools. It is however observed that in the course of their administrative operations, unexpected adverse events usually happen thereby hindering the attainment of institutional goals and objectives.

The case of Mindanao State University-Sulu perfectly illustrates this situation. Way back in 1977 and 1983, apparent show of discontent in the leadership was manifested by waves of employees and student strikes and demonstrations. These years were also characterized by legal battles, as some employees file administrative charges against the school head. As a

consequence, the management retaliated by terminating the faculty member believed to have organized and led the strike.

With this scenario, the successful attainment of the vision and mission of the school will be unlikely. According to Gregorio (1961), teachers, students and parents have recognized the fact that success and failure of any institution rest squarely on the shoulders of the administrators who are responsible for the activities of the group under their direction and guidance.

At the Hadji Butu School Arts and Trades, similar incidents also took place. The administration was likewise rocked by series of demonstrations and strikes staged by students and employees in 1980 and 1983. These protest actions are concrete indications that some constituents of this school were dissatisfied with the way they were managed. Today, teachers continue expressing their displeasure by not holding classes regularly. As a consequence, students usually loiter in and outside the campus even during class hours and oftentimes got involved in campus troubles. Noticeably, students and teachers have gradually withdrawn their respect and confidence in their superior but the administrator persists in adamantly ignoring their discontent. With this kind administration it is highly doubtful that quality education could be achieved. As such, the expected role of the academe as a catalyst of progress and development will be no more than a fictitious illusion.

Today, it is a common remark among parents of alumni that Hadji Butu School Arts and Trades at present is a far cry of what it was twenty years ago.

In like manner, the employees of the Sulu State College also experienced similar predicament. In fact, in the early 90's a group of faculty members staged a sit down strike against the administration ending up in the suspension of seven faculty members and were later recommended for dismissal. Fortunately, after four long years, they were reinstated to the service when the Civil Service Commission dismissed the case for lack of merits.

It is saddening that incidents like these happen in academic institutions. Why can't school administrators think of a leadership pattern that ensures the promotion of harmonious relationship between employees and management.

This is perhaps one major reason why developments in said colleges are comparatively very slow that the colleges and universities in other regions.

Davis (1985) further pointed out that, "the way the manager leads is primarily influenced by his background, knowledge, values, and experiences. Characteristics of subordinates are also considered before managers can choose an appropriate leadership style." Consequently, management and employees seldom met at a point of agreement on what leadership pattern is acceptable to all because of diversity of backgrounds, knowledge, values and experiences of individuals involved.

Most of our tertiary school administrators in Jolo are influenced by the evident despotism nationwide. Not a few were playing an emperor's role by using their power to bend employees to unquestionably obey their orders. Every word they say must be considered as a law that must be followed to the letters. Once in power, they usually do things they could think of in total disregard of the feelings and sentiments of their subordinates. Sometimes, they tend to forget the very reason of their being there in the position.

Stone and Wankel suggest that a manager should consider situational forces such as specific work group, the nature of the tasks, the pressure of the time, and even environmental factors as they affect the organizational member's attitudes towards authority.

The most frustrating experience of the employees with their administrators was the failure of the school heads to give what is due them. Teachers in HBSAT lamented the recurrent

delays in their monthly salaries and other monetary incentives. MSU-Sulu constituents likewise expressed the same concern as they have been deprived of monetary incentives like overload pay, amelioration allowance, centennial bonuses and other support amenities basic to the nature of their work such as sufficient copies of textbooks and references, adequate laboratory equipment and supplies and usable comfort rooms. In addition, it is also a must that there are clean and orderly classrooms furnished with table, chairs, and blackboards and are sufficiently lighted and properly ventilated.

The lack of support amenities is a perennial problem that was never given enough attention by the administrators. With such mediocre work station, how can leaders inspire and influence workers to perform their best? How can the goals of the academic organization be attained if employees and student are not properly motivated to cooperate with the administrators?

The problem cited above can be minimized or, better still solved, if only administrators are responsive and are willing to adopt an appropriate leadership pattern deemed suitable to the situation, employees' behavior and the environment.

The researcher would like to find out the leadership pattern practiced by the administrators in three tertiary schools in Jolo as well as the factors that influence the practice of a particular leadership pattern. The writer likewise endeavors to know the preference of the respondents as to the leadership pattern that their respective administrators should adopt. Further, the study wishes to ascertain whether or not that the academic performance of subject tertiary schools is distributed to the leadership pattern practiced by the school administrators. It likewise attempts to identify strategies by which the leadership pattern of school administrators can be improved. Furthermore, this research aims to pinpoint measures on how to improve the motivational ability of the school administrators.

This research is focused on the perception of the faculty members of the three tertiary schools on the afore-mentioned research objectives. The researcher also intends to discover solutions to the prevailing problems of said school through the respondents' sincere and honest sharing of perceptions on the different issues that will be presented to them. Furthermore, it is earnestly hoped that this work will become a future reference for school administrators so that they will realize the importance of adopting the appropriate leadership pattern and the need of improving or changing prevailing pattern if found out no longer effective. For students of public administration, hopefully, this piece will serve as a jumping board for the pursuit of further studies on this subject.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Unfair treatment of subordinates, favoritism and indecisiveness in handling administration problems are common setbacks that plague tertiary schools in Jolo. These dilemmas did not only retard organizational growth but also triggered conflicting views among teachers as to the acceptability or unacceptability of the leadership style adopted by the school head. These problems further gave rise to the formation and growth of factionalism among employees thereby endangering their sense of unity, cooperation and commitment. This study therefore aimed to seek answers to the following questions:

1. Is the pattern of leadership common or different among tertiary school administrators? How do they differ?

2. What is the dominant style of leadership in the tertiary schools?
3. What are the factors that influence the dominant leadership style?
4. Is academic performance attributed to the leadership pattern practiced by the administrator?
5. What leadership pattern is perceived to be appropriate for effective management among tertiary schools in Jolo?

### 1.2 Objectives of the study

This study endeavors to attain the following objectives:

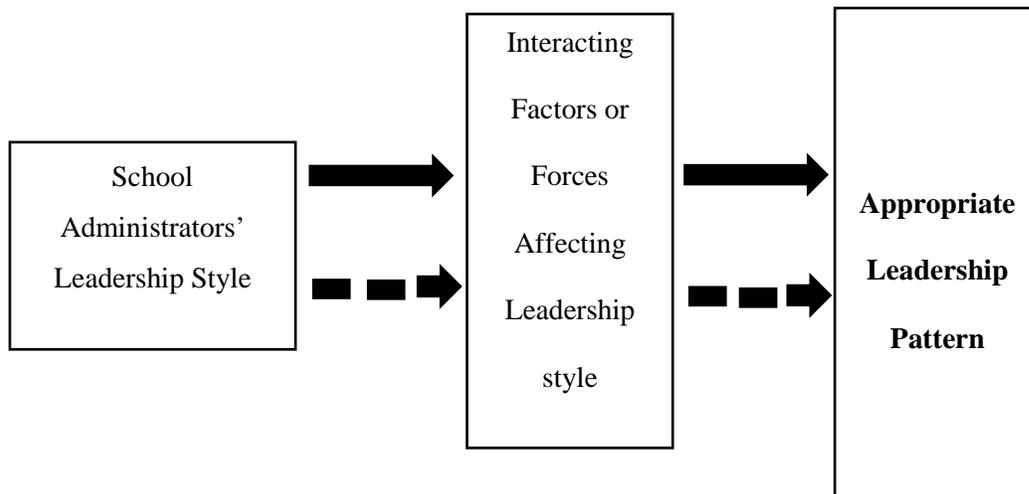
1. To find out if the leadership pattern employed by the school administrators in the three tertiary schools in Jolo is common or different.
2. To find out the dominant leadership style among the tertiary school administrators.
3. To determine and analyze the factors that influence leadership pattern.
4. To find out if academic performance is attributed to the perceived leadership pattern employed by the school administrators.
5. To determine appropriate leadership pattern suited for the tertiary school administrators in Jolo.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is based primarily on the theory of factors that influence a manager’s choice of leadership style and choice of leadership pattern espoused by Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt.

### 1.4 Conceptual Framework

The above-mentioned theories served as the foundation of the conceptual framework of this study.



**Modified Model of the study**

The model shows the interplay of the different variables in the study. The independent variable consists of the school administrators’ leadership style while the dependent variables, which is the outcome of the study, is the appropriate leadership pattern that will be favorable to

the academic organization concerned. The intervening variables are the factors that influenced the leadership pattern of the school administration.

## 2. FINDINGS

The study generated the following findings:

**First.** The leadership pattern of school administrators in the three tertiary schools in Jolo differs. The leadership pattern in HBSAT turned out to be autocratic and auto-democratic. MSU-Sulu's leadership pattern was seen as democratic and auto-democratic. And finally in SSC, THE leadership pattern emerged to be auto-democratic and autocratic.

**Second.** The dominant leadership styles practiced by the tertiary school administrators are autocratic and auto-democratic.

**Third.** The leadership pattern preferred by the respondents varies. The faculty members of HBSAT highly favored the democratic pattern; MSU-SULU teachers opted for participative style; and SSC mentors settled for a democratic-consultative approach.

**Fourth.** All three schools shared a common perception as to the factors that influence leadership pattern. The respondents believed that said factors are manager-related. The respondents considered the knowledge of the administrators in managerial leadership; their values, experiences and backgrounds as the major factors that influence the leadership pattern of administrators.

**Fifth.** The perceptions of the respondents on the effect of educational laws and policies, political pressure, pressure groups, social and economic factors that influence leadership patterns were likewise shared by all of the respondents.

**Sixth.** The perceived academic performance in the tertiary schools is also common. Majority perceived the academic performance of their respective schools as unsatisfactory.

**Seventh.** It was likewise uniformly affirmed that academic performance is attributed to the leadership pattern of school administrators.

**Eight.** The respondents also commonly perceived that their respective school administrators need to improve their leadership pattern.

**Ninth.** On the perceived strategies to improve the leadership patterns of school administrators, the respondents emphasized the following:

- a) Proper training, knowledge, personality, moral values, and competence of the school administrators must be prioritized;
- b) The administrators must give prime concern for the welfare of subordinates in all undertakings through the adoption of participative, democratic or democratic-consultative approach, as was pointed out by the respondents.

**Tenth.** Again, there was a common view on how could school administrators motivate their teachers to work effectively. The respondents highlighted the following motivators:

- a) The school administrators must be fair in treating employees;
- b) They must recognize the potentials and abilities of the faculty members by rewarding them;
- c) Administrators who lead by “leadership by example” inspire faculty members to perform well;
- d) Provision of adequate laboratory equipment and supplies, conducive classrooms and clean comfort rooms with water and other necessary facilities encourage faculty members; and
- e) School administrators must be firm in the implementation of rules and regulations to induce or even pressure the workers to effectively discharge their assigned functions.
- f) As additional input, the writer observed that with regards to decision-making process, most subordinates adhere to the need for consensus and collective logic regarding strategic decisions of the school administration. Most faculty members in subject schools have that feeling of concern and want to be involved in exploring alternatives in all school undertaking. In the light of this observation, the administrators must therefore enlist the active participation of faculty members so that strong commitment is ensured. It is highly believed that since they are participants in identifying the decision, they will also actively take part in carrying it out.
- g) The spirit of cooperation among the employees and administrators is very crucial along this area. Employees support better ideas either from the manager or from fellow subordinates in order to get others to have confidence in their potentials. This will encourage school administrators to ask questions, solicit ideas that will help facilitate the formulation of best decisions.
- h) The perceptions further brought to light that faculty members have wants and needs that demand special attention. It is thus essential that administrators know their subordinates substantively. It was also noted that school administrators must provide a work environment that encourage everyone to contribute their best efforts in carrying out the plans and programs of the school.
- i) School heads must not project an elitist image if they sincerely wish to promote and maintain ideal rapport with faculty members. They must let everyone feel or sense that he is approachable, open minded and receptive to employee’s suggestion, complaints and needs. They must promote employee loyalty to the organization not to themselves.
- j) Summing up the respondents’ perceptions on motivation almost defines the type of leadership pattern appropriate in the three tertiary schools.
- k) Finally, it was apparently revealed that for a school administrator to become effective leader there is a need to him to have high intelligence, foresight, creativity and innovative capacity. In addition, he has to have strong drive for accomplishment coupled with mature and stable emotional health. He must likewise aspire to acquire other traits and qualities suggested by the faculty members to subject tertiary school.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that the leadership pattern practiced by the school administrators in three tertiary schools in Jolo differs.

The dominant leadership patterns adopted by said school administrators are autocratic and auto-democratic.

The preferred leadership pattern in the three tertiary schools varies. HBSAT favored a democratic pattern. MSU-SULU opted for a participative approach, while SSC go for a democratic consultative model.

Majority of the respondents maintained that the factors that influence leadership pattern in the three tertiary school are mostly associated with the administrator rather than the work situation. Nevertheless, factors linked up with work situation and subordinates were also seen to affect the leadership pattern to a certain extent.

The respondents of the three tertiary schools maintained that educational laws and policies, political pressure, pressure groups, social and economic factors affect the factors that influence leadership pattern of their respective school administrators.

The academic performance of the three tertiary schools was perceived to be unsatisfactory. The respondents also shared a common view that the state of academic performance of their schools is attributed to the leadership pattern employed by their respective school administrators. And lastly, school administrators must undergo appropriate trainings to improve their pattern of leadership.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

This study is aimed at improving the leadership pattern of the tertiary school administrators in Jolo by coming up with the appropriate pattern. On the basis of findings, these suggestions are hereby recommended:

1. The school administrators must objectively assess their individual value system and determine the leadership style most appropriate for their respective schools. If it is deemed that need to observe flexibility in their approach because the effectiveness of the leadership style lies in its ability to adapt to the ever-changing objectives. Work force, the work situation and the environment. Therefore, the school administration must plan their course of action carefully in order to coordinate organizational efforts the attainment of objectives. They must give primary attention to the achievement of specific goals as well as the maintenance or strengthening of relationships between employees and themselves and among subordinates. Furthermore, there must be a clear-cut delineation and understanding of the administrators' position and power, the structure of the tasks, and the interpersonal relationships between school administrators and other members of the academe. An understandable organizational structure provides the framework that will guide school administrators in determining the most appropriate leadership pattern they could adapt.

To carry out the above recommendation, the writer endorses the following;

- 1.1 The school administrators must adopt and meaningfully implement an open door policy. Through this policy, employees are encouraged to approach their administrators and consequently share their thoughts as well as problems that affect them. The administrators must project a welcoming attitude so that the employee will feel psychologically free to enter the administrator's office to express their view points on any organizational concerns. An even more effective open door policy is for administrators to walk out and mingle with their employees. In this way, they

will learn about the work situation, the employees' needs and wants, and inadequacy or total absence of school facilities.

- 1.2 The school administrators must implement a suggestion system in order to gather both positive and negative suggestions by providing suggestion boxes in different school departments. The administrators must consider both positive and negative comments and in the light of the suggestions generated, prompt actions must be carried out. The administrators must duly acknowledge those who contributed suggestion by way of open expression of his appreciation for their initiative in doing so. This way, the administrators will encourage more employees to share their thoughts, experiences and feelings, which will be vital inputs in determining the appropriate leadership pattern suitable to the academe.
  - 1.3 The school administrators must conduct and maintain regular follow-up meetings, at least once a month, involving the faculty members and administrative staff. One of the common pitfalls of school administrators is their failure to understand that faculty members need regular contact with their leaders. In order to maintain better rapport between the faculty members and the school administrators, academic personnel must be regularly invited to share their experiences and information about their works, problems, as well as suggestions.
  - 1.4 School administration must employ an attitude survey. It is a management diagnostic tool to find out what employees are thinking about, what is motivating them, what is bothering them, what gives them satisfaction on the job. This survey can serve as supplemental check on how everything is going on. Surveys may be on specific areas of questions such as working conditions, supervision, quality of workmanship and literally everything that might conceivably affect the employee's attitude toward their job and the leadership pattern. Practices or conditions that seem to be sound and well deserve. Furthermore, strengthening those that are sources of dissatisfaction should be corrected or abandoned. As a matter of fact, even before a survey begins, administrator should be conditioned to accept the results as objectively as they can and to commit themselves to something about them.
2. Further follow up studies are needed. Future studies on the leadership pattern of tertiary school administrators in Jolo may focus on the following:
    - 2.1 Study on the factors that affect academic performance and its impact on leadership pattern of the school administrator in tertiary schools in Jolo.
    - 2.2 A study on the impact of leadership pattern practices of school administrators upon the motivational factors of employees in the tertiary school in Jolo.
    - 2.3 A research on the effect of the socio-economic and cultural settings of the school administrators in the tertiary schools in Jolo on the leadership styles they adopt.

If ever undertaken, said studies could help identify all possible key factors in assessing the environmental setting within which leadership styles operates. As a result, it will open the door to a deeper understanding of the nature of leadership patterns adopted by school administrators. As a consequence, it will facilitate a more accurate identification of the leadership pattern best suited for tertiary school administrators

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