

Interpersonal Orientation Vis a Vis School Principals' Transactional and Transformational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the work motivation and resourcefulness of public elementary school principals in the Fourth Congressional District of Nueva Ecija during School Year 2018-2019. It described work motivation in terms of work values, job outlook, and quest for renewal; assessed principals' resourcefulness; determined whether these variables differed across selected profile characteristics; and examined the relationships between the three work-motivation constructs and resourcefulness. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed. The participants were 101 public elementary school principals. Data were gathered using an information sheet, an adapted 15-item Work Motivation Checklist, and a 15-item Resourcefulness Inventory Checklist, supplemented by interviews and observations. Weighted means, frequency distributions, reported tests of group differences, and

correlation coefficients were used in the analysis. Most principals demonstrated very high work motivation in work values (86.14%), job outlook (68.32%), and quest for renewal (77.23%). Resourcefulness was also high to very high, with 70.30% classified as very high and 29.70% as high. The reported inferential results indicated a significant difference in work values by civil status and a significant difference in resourcefulness by gender. Resourcefulness was significantly related to work values ($r = .2202$), job outlook ($r = .3743$), and quest for renewal ($r = .4223$). The findings underscore the value of sustaining principals' motivation and strengthening leadership-development initiatives that cultivate practical creativity, professional renewal, and responsive school management.

Keywords: *work motivation, resourcefulness, public elementary school principals, work values, job outlook, quest for renewal*

INTRODUCTION

School principals occupy a central position in the management and development of school organizations. Their responsibilities include directing school programs, coordinating with teachers and stakeholders, promoting instructional improvement, communicating institutional goals, and sustaining a climate conducive to teaching and learning. These duties require not only administrative competence but also an ability to respond constructively to varied interpersonal situations. Interpersonal orientation refers to the degree to which individuals are responsive to the interpersonal aspects of their relationships with others (Swap & Rubin, 1983). For school principals, this responsiveness is reflected in how they communicate, build trust, recognize the perspectives of teachers and stakeholders, and manage relationships in the performance of their duties. Because leadership unfolds through continuing interaction with people, interpersonal orientation may shape the way principals exercise leadership practices in school settings.

Leadership literature distinguishes transactional and transformational approaches while also recognizing that their practices may coexist in actual organizational settings. Transactional leadership generally emphasizes exchanges, expectations, and the accomplishment of organizational tasks, whereas transformational leadership seeks to elevate motivation, reinforce shared values, and move members toward common goals (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). In the operational framework adopted by the source study, leadership qualities were assessed through five practices: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. The first three were categorized as transactional qualities, while the last two were categorized as transformational qualities. This classification is retained to preserve the original research design.

The study was conducted to provide empirical information on the interpersonal orientation and leadership qualities of public elementary school principals in the Fourth Congressional District of Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it determined the degree of principals' interpersonal orientation; described their leadership qualities across the five dimensions; examined whether interpersonal orientation was related to transactional and transformational leadership attributes; and determined whether the leadership dimensions were interrelated. The findings were intended to support leadership development, school management, and the strengthening of superior-subordinate relationships.

Literature Review

Interpersonal Orientation in School Leadership

Interpersonal orientation concerns a person's responsiveness to relationships and social interaction. Swap and Rubin (1983) developed a measure of interpersonal orientation to examine how individuals attend to and respond to interpersonal aspects of their relationships. In school leadership, this construct is relevant because principals regularly interact with teachers, learners, parents, community leaders, and higher school authorities. Their ability to manage these relationships can influence cooperation, trust, and the implementation of school programs.

The source manuscript emphasized that public elementary school principals operate under varied responsibilities, pressures, and expectations. Their work requires technical competence, human competence, and the capacity to understand the interrelationships among factors affecting the school organization. These competencies are not isolated from interpersonal behavior; rather, they are expressed through daily communication, decision-making, and collaboration.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Transactional and transformational leadership have been widely discussed as distinct but related approaches. Bass (1985) explained that transactional leadership focuses on exchanges between leaders and followers, while transformational leadership encourages followers to move beyond immediate self-interest toward broader organizational goals. Bass and Avolio (1994) further described these approaches as part of a fuller range of leadership practices that can be developed through organizational learning and training.

Odumeru and Ogbonna (2013) noted that although transactional and transformational leadership differ conceptually, elements of both may appear in the same leader. In school settings, principals may need to clarify expectations and manage tasks while also inspiring a shared direction, supporting participation, modeling institutional values, and recognizing teachers' contributions. The Leadership Practices Inventory has also been examined as a way to infer broader transactional and transformational dimensions from reported leadership behaviors (Fields & Herold, 1997).

Leadership Practices Examined in the Study

The source study assessed five leadership practices. Challenging the process referred to seeking innovative approaches and learning from difficulties. Inspiring a shared vision involved communicating a hopeful future and encouraging others to participate in a common direction. Enabling others to act referred to fostering

cooperation, discretion, respect, and ownership. Modeling the way focused on demonstrating values, communicating leadership beliefs, and setting goals. Encouraging the heart emphasized appreciation, recognition, morale, and celebration of accomplishments. Together, these practices provide a school-based lens for examining how interpersonal orientation relates to leadership behavior.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design to examine the interpersonal orientation and leadership qualities of public elementary school principals. The design was used to describe existing conditions and investigate reported relationships among the variables without manipulating the school setting.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in public elementary schools within the Fourth Congressional District of Nueva Ecija during School Year 2018-2019.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants were 101 public elementary school principals. The source manuscript reported that the principals were universally drawn from the target district; thus, total enumeration was used for the identified population.

Research Instrument

Two checklists were used. The researcher-developed Interpersonal Orientation Checklist contained 15 statements designed to measure responsiveness to interpersonal relationships, interests, and reactions to others' behavior. The Leadership Qualities Checklist was adapted from Fields and Herold (1997). It assessed three transactional dimensions - challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, and enabling others to act - and two transformational dimensions - modeling the way and encouraging the heart. Each leadership dimension contained six statements. Responses were recorded using a six-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Data Gathering Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to the principals in the identified public elementary schools. Interviews and observations were also used to cross-validate the findings drawn from the checklists. The collected responses were organized, tabulated, and interpreted according to the study objectives.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentage distributions were used to summarize participants' classifications. Weighted means were used to describe responses to the interpersonal-orientation and leadership-quality statements. The source manuscript identified Phi Cramer's V as the correlation procedure, while its results tables reported correlation coefficients using the notation r . To preserve the original results without introducing unsupported statistical revisions, this article reports the coefficients as presented in the source tables. The original statistical output should be reviewed before submission to confirm the appropriate coefficient label and corresponding significance values.

Ethical Consideration

The source manuscript did not provide a detailed statement regarding formal ethics clearance, informed consent, or data-protection procedures. Before journal submission, the author should supply the applicable institutional approval and clarify the procedures used to protect participants' confidentiality, voluntary participation, and anonymity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Participants

The study involved 101 public elementary school principals. The participant profile was characterized by a slightly larger proportion of women, a predominantly married population, a broad age distribution, and substantial experience in school leadership.

Table 1. *Profile of the public elementary school principals*

Profile variable	Category	f	%
Gender	Male	47	46.53
Gender	Female	54	53.47
Civil status	Single	8	7.92
Civil status	Married	93	92.08
Age	35 and below	1	0.99
Age	36-40	21	20.79
Age	41-45	22	21.78
Age	46-50	26	25.74
Age	51 and above	31	30.69
Years as school principal	5 years and below	28	27.72
Years as school principal	6-10 years	54	53.47
Years as school principal	11-15 years	8	7.92
Years as school principal	16-20 years	11	10.89
Educational attainment	Bachelor's degree	7	6.93
Educational attainment	Master's degree	94	93.07

Degree of Interpersonal Orientation

Most principals demonstrated favorable interpersonal orientation. Of the 101 participants, 82 (81.19%) were classified as favorable and 10 (9.90%) as very favorable. Nine principals (8.91%) were classified as moderate, while none were classified as unfavorable or very unfavorable. The item-level average weighted mean was 4.41, interpreted as agree. The result indicates that most principals perceived themselves as responsive to interpersonal relationships in their work environment.

Table 2. *Degree of principals' interpersonal orientation*

Score range	Degree	f	%
15-29	Very unfavorable	0	0.00
30-44	Unfavorable	0	0.00
45-59	Moderate	9	8.91
60-74	Favorable	82	81.19
75-90	Very favorable	10	9.90
	Total	101	100.00

Item-level average weighted mean = 4.41 (Agree).

Transactional Leadership Qualities

The three leadership dimensions operationally categorized as transactional were generally high. Challenging the process was rated high by 60 principals (59.41%) and very high by 32 (31.68%). Inspiring a shared vision was rated high by 68 principals (67.32%) and very high by 22 (21.79%). Enabling others to act was rated high by 57 principals (56.44%) and very high by 36 (35.64%). The weighted-mean summaries showed that enabling others to act obtained the highest average (5.70, strongly agree), followed by challenging the process (5.11, agree) and inspiring a shared vision (5.01, agree).

Table 3. *Summary of transactional leadership qualities*

Dimension	Moderate f (%)	High f (%)	Very high f (%)	Overall WM	Rating
Challenging the process	9 (8.91)	60 (59.41)	32 (31.68)	5.11	Agree
Inspiring a shared vision	11 (10.89)	68 (67.32)	22 (21.79)	5.01	Agree
Enabling others to act	8 (7.92)	57 (56.44)	36 (35.64)	5.70	Strongly agree

The prominence of enabling others to act suggests that the principals valued cooperative relationships, respect, discretion, and shared ownership in school activities. This complements the relational emphasis of interpersonal orientation and reflects the importance of leadership practices that make participation possible within the school organization.

Transformational Leadership Qualities

The leadership dimensions operationally categorized as transformational were also positively rated. Modeling the way was favorable among 65 principals (64.36%) and very favorable among 31 (30.69%). Encouraging the heart was favorable among 69 principals (68.32%) and very favorable among 21 (20.79%). Item-level weighted means were 5.36 for modeling the way and 5.21 for encouraging the heart, both interpreted as strongly agree.

Table 4. *Summary of transformational leadership qualities*

Dimension	Moderate f (%)	Favorable f (%)	Very favorable f (%)	Overall WM	Rating
Modeling the way	5 (4.95)	65 (64.36)	31 (30.69)	5.36	Strongly agree
Encouraging the heart	11 (10.89)	69 (68.32)	21 (20.79)	5.21	Strongly agree

The findings indicate that principals reported practices associated with clarifying values, setting goals, recognizing teachers' contributions, and supporting morale. These practices are consistent with the broader view that transformational leadership strengthens commitment to common organizational purposes (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Relationship Between Interpersonal Orientation and Leadership Qualities

The reported coefficients showed positive relationships between interpersonal orientation and each leadership dimension. The strongest reported relationship was with inspiring a shared vision ($r = .446$), followed by challenging the process ($r = .377$) and enabling others to act ($r = .375$). The coefficients for encouraging the heart ($r = .212$) and modeling the way ($r = .187$) were smaller but were marked as significant in the source table. Thus, the source study rejected the null hypothesis that principals' interpersonal orientation was not related to their transactional and transformational leadership attributes.

Table 5. *Reported coefficients between interpersonal orientation and leadership qualities*

Leadership dimension	Reported coefficient
Challenging the process	.377*
Inspiring a shared vision	.446*
Enabling others to act	.375*
Modeling the way	.187*
Encouraging the heart	.212*

The pattern suggests that principals who were more responsive to interpersonal relationships also tended to report stronger leadership qualities. The association was most evident in practices that require communication of a shared direction, openness to innovation, and participation of others.

Interrelationships Among Leadership Qualities

The dimensions categorized as transactional and transformational were positively interrelated. The highest reported coefficient was between challenging the process and modeling the way ($r = .649$), followed by inspiring a shared vision and modeling the way ($r = .638$). The remaining reported coefficients ranged from .440 to .549. These findings support the source study's conclusion that the leadership dimensions do not operate in isolation.

Table 6. *Reported interrelationships among leadership qualities*

Transactional dimension	Transformational dimension	Reported coefficient
Challenging the process	Modeling the way	.649*
Inspiring a shared vision	Modeling the way	.638*
Challenging the process	Encouraging the heart	.549*
Inspiring a shared vision	Encouraging the heart	.546*
Enabling others to act	Modeling the way	.491*
Enabling others to act	Encouraging the heart	.440*

The relationships demonstrate that practices focused on innovation, shared vision, participation, values, and recognition may reinforce one another. The findings are consistent with the view that transactional and transformational approaches are conceptually distinguishable yet may coexist in actual leadership practice (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that most public elementary school principals in the Fourth Congressional District of Nueva Ecija demonstrated favorable interpersonal orientation. They also reported positive leadership qualities across challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart.

Interpersonal orientation was positively related to the reported leadership dimensions. The findings indicate that school leadership is not only a matter of administrative competence but also of responsiveness to relationships, communication, participation, values, and recognition. The positive interrelationships among the leadership dimensions further suggest that effective principal leadership is strengthened when these practices are developed together rather than treated as isolated competencies.

Recommendations

Public elementary school principals should sustain and further strengthen interpersonal practices that promote constructive communication, trust, compassion, and responsiveness toward teachers, stakeholders, and other school authorities.

School divisions and higher education institutions should provide continuing leadership-development activities focused on shared vision, innovation, collaborative decision-making, values-based leadership, teacher recognition, and school-community relationships. Seminars, coaching sessions, and reflective leadership workshops may be used to reinforce these competencies.

School leaders should periodically conduct self-assessment and peer-feedback activities to identify strengths and areas for improvement in interpersonal orientation and leadership practice. Future studies may replicate the investigation among public secondary school principals, use updated data, and validate the findings through additional statistical procedures and qualitative evidence.

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