

LEADER BEHAVIOR OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS PERCEIVED AND PREFERRED BY TEACHERS IN THE PROVINCE OF NORTH COTABATO*

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The purposes of this study were to find out the perceived and preferred leader behavior of the elementary school principals in the eleven districts of North Cotabato and to discover if there were factors which were related to those principals' behavior as perceived by their teachers. Specifically, the study aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between the leader behavior of each elementary school principal as perceived by his own teachers and the leader behavior preferred by them?

2. Is there a significant difference between the task-orientation mean score and the mean of the person-orientation score of each principal, as preferred by the teachers?

3. Is there a significant difference between the mean of the scores of task-oriented and the mean of the scores of person-oriented leader behavior of the principal, as perceived by the teachers?

4. On the basis of the perception of teachers of what are task-oriented and person-oriented leader behaviors, which principals can be typologized as (a) high in both dimensions, (b) low in both dimensions, (c) high in task-oriented lead-

er behavior and low in person-oriented ones, (d) low in task-oriented leader behavior and high in person-oriented ones, and (e) middle-of-the-road?

5. Are such variables as (a) age, (b) marital status, (c) length of service under present administrator, and (d) educational attainment of teachers, associated with the:

1) teachers' perception of leader behavior in their principals?

2) teachers' preference of leader behavior in their principals?

The term "leader" as used in this study was used with the word "principal" who was represented by the "administrator" of the respondents. These "administrators" as used in this study were the various principals in the twenty-three public elementary schools in North Cotabato during the school year 1981-1982.

Instrument Used. The main instrument used in this study was the *Leader Behavior Attitude Scale* in the *Halpin Modern Form* consisting of two scales, namely: (1) *Person-oriented Leader Behavior Scale* (POLBS) and (2) *Task-oriented Leader Behavior Scale* (TOLBS), each consisting of thirty items which were prepared by the group enrolled in the Seminar in Administration: Leadership during the second semester of school year 1980-

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The original questionnaire consisted of a list of 246 items which were rewritten several times after these had been classified into "person-oriented" and "task-oriented" items by "judges" or practicing administrators comprising of deans and department heads of Central Philippine University. The semi-final draft consisted of 93 items with agreement ratios (AR) ranging from .70 to 1.00. After the pre-oral examination of the researcher, the 60-item questionnaire was reduced to 50 items due to some duplications.

The sample. The samples consisted of 274 teachers with at least two years of service under their present administrators from the twenty-three public elementary schools in the eleven districts of North Cotabato. The thesis committee advised the researcher to get thirty principals around the radius of Mlang, but she was able to administer her questionnaire to only twenty-three schools due to critical condition of peace and order in the areas where the seven other schools were situated.

Administration of the questionnaires. Once the subjects were identified from each school where the researcher administered her questionnaire, each of them was personally contacted by the researcher with the aid of her husband and given a questionnaire to fill up after they had been properly oriented as to the purpose and importance of the study and given directions what to do with the questionnaire. Retrieval of the questionnaires re-

quired a day after the distribution. Administration and retrieval of the questionnaires were finished in two weeks' time.

Data Analysis. The perception and preference of the teachers-respondents were based on the weighted scores they obtained on the fifty leader behavior items. The weighted score of an item is the sum of the four subscores of an item. A subscore is obtained by multiplying the frequency of a response by its weight.

Statistics used were the means, SD, SE_D , SE_M , and CR to determine how significant the difference between the leader behavior of each elementary school principal as perceived by his own teachers and the behavior preferred by his own teachers.

To determine the typology or category of the principals involved in the study the obtained SPeS for the task-oriented and the SPeS for the person-oriented were transformed.

To determine the correlation between the two dimensions in the twenty-three schools involved, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) was computed.

In order to determine what factors were associated with the perceived and preferred leader behavior of the principal, the Kruskal Goodman ordinal association gamma (C) was used for age, length of service under present administrator, and the educational attainment of teachers. The point-biserial r (r_{pbj}) was used for marital status. A Z -

value of the 5 per cent level of significance was sought before association between the perceived leader behavior and any of the variables was declared.

Findings

After the examination of facts and figures from the study, the following were the findings:

1. In each of the other three schools, the difference between the leader behavior of each elementary school principal as perceived by his own teachers and the leader behavior preferred by his own teachers was significant at the 1 per cent level.

2. In each of the other four schools, the difference between the teachers' perception and preference of leader behavior of the principal was significant at the 5 per cent level.

3. In each of the other sixteen schools, there was no significant difference between the perception and preference of the teachers of leader behavior of the principals.

4. The difference between the mean of the scores of task-oriented leader behavior and the mean of the scores of the person-oriented leader behavior of the principals as perceived and preferred by the teachers was not significant.

5. Principals differed according to the perception of teachers. Two of the principals were high in person-oriented and task-oriented leader behavior; two were low in task-oriented but middle-of-the-road in person-oriented leader behavior; one was low in person-oriented but

middle-of-the-road in task-oriented leader behavior; fourteen principals were middle-of-the-road; and four principals were low in both dimensions of leader behavior.

6. The perception of the teachers of leader behavior of the principals was not associated with the age, marital status, educational attainment, and length of service of teachers under their present administrator.

7. The preference of teachers of leader behavior of principals was significantly associated with their age at the 5 per cent level.

8. The preference of teachers of leader behavior of the principals was not associated with the marital status, educational attainment, and length of service of teachers under their present administrator.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. In general, the perception of teachers of leader behavior of the principals was lower than the preference of teachers of the leader behavior of the principals.

2. There seemed to be a similarity between the means of the scores of task-oriented leader behavior and the means of the scores of person-oriented leader behavior as perceived and preferred by the teachers.

3. Out of twenty-three principals evaluated by their teachers, many of them showed minimum concern on task and person dimensions of the leader behavior.

4. Neither the age, marital status, educational attainment and length of service of teachers under their present administrator was related to the perception of the teachers of their principals' leader behavior.

5. The preferred leader behavior of the principals seemed to be associated with the age of teachers. The teachers tended to prefer principals who are high both in task-oriented leader behavior and person-oriented leader behavior.

6. Neither the marital status, educational attainment, and the length of service of the teachers under the present administrator was associated with the preferred leader behavior of principals.

Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Since the sample used in this study was limited to teachers only, it is recommended that the same study be conducted to include the principals themselves and their superiors to make it more compre-

hensive.

2. The findings of this research on the perceived leader behavior of principals were low on task and person dimensions. The researcher recommends that the elementary school principals in the province of North Cotabato should undergo training in leadership so as to upgrade skill and show much concern on both person and task dimensions.

3. It is also recommended that a similar study be conducted in high school and college departments both in public and private institutions to widen the coverage of the study and to make a sophisticated research which will provide a basis for definite steps for the improvement of leader behavior in all educational institutions.

4. Other variables such as sex, civil status, length of service and educational qualification of the leader in the organization should be included in further studies.

5. The present version of the instrument should be revised so as to include more items and to subject all these items to a more sophisticated evaluation process.