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THE DOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLES AMONG THE GOVERNMENT REGIONAL AGENCIES IN BICOL REGION

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ABSTRACT

Leadership remains a central determinant of organizational effectiveness in public sector institutions, particularly in regions facing complex developmental and governance challenges. This study investigates the dominant leadership styles practiced by agency heads in regional government offices in the Bicol Region, Philippines, and examines how these styles influence leadership practices in supervision, resource management, project implementation, and service delivery. Utilizing a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected through structured survey questionnaires administered to regional directors, assistant regional directors, and division chiefs. The findings reveal that bureaucratic leadership remains the most dominant style, followed by democratic leadership, indicating a hybrid leadership structure combining formal authority with participative governance. However, transformational leadership, while recognized globally as effective, appears less dominant in the local context. The study also identifies key leadership challenges, including limited resources, difficulty in monitoring employee performance, and maintaining motivation among staff. Based on the findings, a contextual leadership framework the CYNDI Model is proposed to enhance leadership effectiveness in public sector organizations. This research contributes to the literature by providing localized empirical evidence and offering actionable recommendations for leadership development in regional governance.

KEYWORDS: Leadership styles, public administration, regional governance, organizational performance, Philippines.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a fundamental role in shaping the performance and responsiveness of public sector organizations. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, globalization, and increasing public expectations, leadership in government institutions has become more complex and

demanding. Public leaders are no longer confined to enforcing rules and policies; they are expected to demonstrate adaptability, innovation, collaboration, and ethical governance.

Globally, leadership paradigms have evolved from traditional bureaucratic models toward more flexible and participative approaches such as transformational, servant, and adaptive leadership. These approaches emphasize employee empowerment, stakeholder engagement, and organizational innovation. Studies have consistently shown that transformational leadership, in particular, enhances employee motivation, organizational commitment, and overall institutional effectiveness.

In Southeast Asia, public sector leadership is influenced by ongoing reforms aimed at improving governance, transparency, and service delivery. While bureaucratic traditions remain deeply embedded in many government institutions, there is a gradual shift toward participative and citizen-centered leadership practices. This shift reflects the increasing need for governments to respond effectively to complex socio-economic challenges.

In the Philippines, leadership in government agencies is shaped by both historical administrative structures and contemporary reform initiatives. The Civil Service Commission has emphasized leadership development programs that promote digital governance, accountability, and adaptive leadership competencies. However, many government offices continue to exhibit hierarchical leadership patterns, resulting in variations in leadership practices across agencies.

The Bicol Region presents a unique context for examining public sector leadership. Characterized by developmental challenges, disaster vulnerability, and the need for inter-agency coordination, the region requires effective leadership to ensure efficient service delivery and sustainable development. Regional directors play a critical role in bridging national policies and local implementation, making their leadership styles particularly significant.

Despite the importance of leadership in regional governance, there is limited empirical research on the dominant leadership styles practiced in government agencies within the Bicol Region. This study aims to address this gap by analyzing leadership styles, practices, and challenges among regional agency heads and proposing a framework for improving leadership effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to determine and analyze the dominant leadership styles practiced among regional government agencies in the Bicol Region.

Specifically, it aims to:

1. Identify the dominant leadership styles practiced by agency heads.
2. Examine leadership practices in terms of:
 - Supervision
 - Resource Management
 - Project Implementation
 - Service Delivery
3. Determine the challenges experienced by agency heads.
4. Propose a framework to promote effective leadership in regional government agencies.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Leadership Styles in Public Sector Organizations

Leadership styles significantly influence organizational performance, employee behavior, and service delivery in public institutions. Traditional bureaucratic leadership, characterized by hierarchy, formal rules, and centralized decision-making, has long been dominant in government organizations. While this approach ensures stability and accountability, it may also limit innovation and flexibility.

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, focuses on inspiring and motivating employees to achieve higher levels of performance. It encourages creativity, innovation, and adaptability, making it highly relevant in modern governance contexts. Empirical studies have shown that transformational leadership positively impacts employee engagement and organizational effectiveness.

Democratic leadership emphasizes participation and collaboration, allowing employees to contribute to decision-making processes. This style enhances communication, trust, and teamwork, which are essential for effective governance.

Transactional leadership focuses on structured supervision and performance-based rewards. While effective in maintaining order and achieving short-term goals, it may not foster long-term commitment or innovation.

Leadership Practices

Leadership practices refer to the observable actions and behaviors of leaders in managing organizational functions. Effective leadership practices in the public sector include:

- **Supervision:** Ensuring accountability, providing feedback, and guiding employees
- **Resource Management:** Efficient allocation and utilization of resources
- **Project Implementation:** Coordinating activities and ensuring timely completion
- **Service Delivery:** Providing responsive and high-quality public services

These practices directly influence organizational efficiency and public satisfaction.

Leadership Challenges

Public sector leaders face numerous challenges, including:

- Resource constraints
- Organizational complexity
- Digital transformation demands
- Diverse stakeholder expectations

These challenges require leaders to adopt adaptive and innovative approaches to maintain organizational effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on an integrated theoretical framework combining:

- **Fayol's Administrative Theory** – emphasizes management functions
- **Behavioral Leadership Theory** – focuses on leadership behaviors
- **Leader-Member Exchange Theory** – highlights relationships between leaders and employees
- **Leadership Process Theory** – views leadership as dynamic interaction
- **Leadership Development Theory** – emphasizes continuous improvement

The CYNDI Leadership Model

The study proposes the CYNDI framework:

- **Control:** Supervision and accountability
- **Yield:** Organizational performance outcomes
- **Nurturing:** Employee support and relationships
- **Development:** Capacity-building and growth
- **Innovation:** Process improvement and adaptability

This model provides a holistic approach to leadership effectiveness in public organizations.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive research design was used to analyze leadership styles and practices.

Participants

Participants included regional directors, assistant regional directors, and division chiefs from government agencies in Albay.

Data Collection

Data were collected using structured questionnaires with Likert-scale items.

Data Analysis

Statistical tools included:

- Frequency distribution
- Ranking
- Weighted mean

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dominant Leadership Styles

The results indicate that bureaucratic leadership is the most dominant style, followed by democratic leadership. This suggests that while formal structures remain strong, participative approaches are increasingly practiced.

Leadership Practices

Leadership practices were generally moderate, with strengths in supervision and communication. However, gaps were observed in mentoring and innovation.

Leadership Challenges

Key challenges include:

- Monitoring employee performance
- Resource limitations
- Maintaining employee motivation

These findings highlight the need for leadership development.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The dominance of bureaucratic leadership reflects the structured nature of government institutions. However, the presence of democratic leadership indicates a shift toward participative governance. The limited presence of transformational leadership suggests that leadership development programs should focus on enhancing innovation and adaptability.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that leadership in regional government agencies in the Bicol Region is characterized by a hybrid model combining bureaucratic and democratic styles. While this ensures stability, there is a need to strengthen transformational leadership to improve organizational performance and service delivery.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop leadership training programs focusing on transformational leadership
2. Improve performance monitoring systems
3. Encourage participative decision-making
4. Strengthen digital leadership competencies
5. Adopt the CYNDI framework

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to:

- Public administration practice
- Leadership development programs
- Academic research on leadership

Limitations of the Study

- Limited sample size
- Focus on one region
- Short data collection period

Future Research

Future studies may:

- Explore other regions
- Use longitudinal designs
- Examine additional variables

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