From leadership attribution to leadership contribution: proversified leadership skills and abilities of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s) administrators

Nida H. Garcia*1, 2, 3 and Alexander S. Acosta1, 2, 3, 4

1Technological University of the Philippines, Manila Philippines,
2Philippine School Doha, Doha, State of Qatar,
3Association of Philippine Schools Overseas,
4Philippine Christian University, Manila Philippines

Within the dynamics of school leadership, considering amass of theories and leadership practices, leading and managing people in an organization with different cultural background and mores has been a challenging task for school administrators of Philippine Schools Overseas. Employing in depth semi-structured interview, this phenomenological attempt probed that the leadership attributes of the selected school administrators from the State of Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman, Kingdom of Bahrain, State of Libya, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are potent leadership contributions to understanding the role of school leaders in school organizations. Transcribed data were read and reread for purposes of naïve understanding and were chunked into meaning units ready for structural analysis via a dendogram. To capture the comprehensive understanding of the given phenomenon, transcendental subjectivity was observed and subjected to member checking procedure following the inductive approach in theme development. Results from cool to warm analyses afloat three distinct leadership skills namely: attributory leadership skills, participatory leadership skills, and contributory leadership skills that illuminate the latent leadership power as exercised by PSO’s school administrators the extent to which these synergistically operate within the panorama of understanding that leadership persona is cloaked with either dominant or recessive leadership attributes that may occur anytime at the workplace depending on a given situation.

Key words: Attributory leadership skills, contributory leadership skills, participatory leadership skills, phenomenology, Philippine schools overseas, proversified leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Leaders of today must be equipped with the essential leadership skills to be able to lead successfully and effectively in a highly diversified, greatly competitive, and fast transforming world (Chapman, 2017; Smith et al., 2017; Binvel, 2015; GTF, 2014; Chuang, 2013; Madden, 2013; Schleicher, 2012; Martin, 2007; OECD, 2001). These leadership skills according to Mc Pheat (2010) are the tools, behaviors, and capabilities that help people grow in their own capacities and are the specific abilities that enable leaders to perform their multi-faceted roles appropriately and responsibly (Kokemuller, 2015). As there are different leadership styles there are likewise variety of skillsets a leader can embrace to oversee processes, guide initiatives, and steer their employees toward the achievement of specific goals as they undergo reform and respond to changes. These skillsets as stated by Whitaker (2012) include leaders’ ability to connect and build trust, ignite passion, motivate people, build strong teams, make change look easy, and build leaders better than they are. The strengths, abilities, and common leadership practices demonstrated and employed by Philippine Schools Overseas administrators make up their proversified
leadership skills. Inspired by Graham's (1997) concept on proversity; a term coined from progressive diversity, PSO administrators’ proversified leadership skills serve as facilities through which they positively impact their work environment amidst multiformity, complexity, and transformation.

Indeed, school leadership covers many different areas that require different skills. School leaders embrace the extremely significant role of ensuring that the school system is operating effectively and efficiently through proper academic management to include major areas such as curriculum, instruction, and evaluation and people management, not to mention the daunting challenges they come face to face with daily as an open system and an organization that thrives on the effective interrelationship within it and with its relevant communities, the interdependence of which according to Bakwai and Umar (2013) is unbreakable. This paper argues that leadership skills come in various forms and are utilized by leaders in different ways; awareness of leadership expectations, competence and proper execution of which according to Ulrich and Smallwood (2012) are essential to create a leadership that last overtime. While it is true that leaders possess certain attributes that enable them to perform their roles effectively, not all possess the will and the heart to utilize, develop, and transform them into skills that can bring about better result, create pathways for advancement and make lasting contribution not only to their very own organization but also to the community and the humanity as a whole. Maxwell (2008) termed this lasting contribution as legacy; something a great leader leave behind for the next generation which can take the form of possessions leaders place on the hands of others, principles lived that carry on beyond their lives or people whose lives are better because of their leadership influence. The administrators of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s); the educational institutions operating outside the Philippines which may be fully or partly owned by Filipinos or managed and operated by Filipinos, and implementing the Philippine education curriculum in accordance with the laws of the Philippines and the host country, (MPSR, 2014), just like any educational leaders of today find themselves facing considerable number of challenges and changes that call for the employment of particular leadership skills.

This research attempt looked into the rich leadership experiences of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s) administrators as they lead highly diversified learning institutions. It examined the proversified leadership skills principals and coordinators employ in the practice of their unique leadership styles as they address concerns pertinent to the daily operation of the school and other important issues related to cross-cultural differences, school commerciality, and corporate social responsibility. Viewed as an ongoing and lengthy process, managing organizational diversity as emphasized by Zane (2002) takes commitment, skill training, and breadth of organizational knowledge to sustain people’s willingness to work together amidst individual and cultural differences. It calls for cross-cutting skills in leadership, organizational development, change management, psychology, communication, measurement, and assessment (Kreitz, 2007). Through this phenomenological inquiry the researcher endeavors to identify the skills PSO administrators utilize to make things work positively in their respective schools which could lead to the emergence of a new leadership skillset known as Proversified Leadership Skills (PLS).

**METHOD**

**Research Design**

This study is qualitative in orientation and made use of phenomenology as a research design. A qualitative phenomenological research attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation; the goal of which is to describe the meaning of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Waters, 2000; Van Manen, 1990). Its focus is on emergence (Hancock et al., 2007); the researcher of which identifies the essence of human experiences (Moustakas, 1994) and describes as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts (Groenewald, 2004). As such, this type of research does not start with a theory to test; theory is generated from empirical data (Woods, 2006).

**Research Locus and Sample**

The respondents in this study were school administrators of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s). Six school principals and five coordinators from six countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), namely: State of Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Sultanate of Oman, Kingdom of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and State of Libya were selected through qualitative purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell and Plano, 2011; Creswell, 2007; Bernard, 2002; Patton, 2002). Selection of study participants were based on the following criteria, (a) respondents have served as school administrators for at least five years and (b) were employed in Philippine Schools Overseas when the study was conducted. Of the six principals, two are doctors and the rest are master’s degree holders. Similarly, all the coordinators are MA graduates aside from one who is a Bachelor Degree holder. All of them have served Philippine Schools Overseas as administrators for more than five (5) years. Two of the respondents have worked as such for more than twenty years. As this type of research seeks to penetrate the life and experiences of the respondents, this requires the researcher to be immersed in the research field and to establish continuing, fruitful relationships with respondents to address the research problem in depth. As such, a small number of cases could be less than twenty, as cited by Crouch (2013) will facilitate the researcher’s close
association with the respondents, and enhance the validity of fine-grained, in-depth inquiry in naturalistic setting. Small samples, not more than ten participants, are most suitable for a phenomenological study as large samples can become unwieldy (Van Manen, 1990).

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

To capture the essence of the phenomenon of this investigation, the researcher made use of a two-part instrument. The first part was the robotfoto; a Dutch term meaning facial composite (Kelchtermans and Ballet, 2002) sought for the demographic sketch of the respondents namely gender, civil status, educational attainment, work experience, and years of service. This was given to the respondents before the actual interview. The second part was a twenty five item semi-structured interview which according to Cohen and Crabtree (2006) is a formal interview, the interviewer and the respondent engage in; the interviewer of which uses a guide or a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation, but is able to follow topical trajectories that may stray from the guide when he or she feels this is appropriate. The face to face interview was conducted by the researcher upon approval from the respondents through a written consent. Information from interviews were recorded using audio tape and by making handwritten notes (Creswell, 2003; Bernard, 2002). The respondents were assured of utmost confidentiality when it comes to the treatment of their responses.

Data Analysis

For a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, Colaizzi’s process for phenomenological data analysis (Sanders, 2003; Speziale and Carpenter, 2007) following the inductive approach in theme development (Ryan, 2003) is empirically observed in this research using these steps: (1) reading and re-reading of transcribed data in order to obtain a general sense of the interviewees’ idea or opinion; (2) identifying small units called the meaning units; (3) transforming meaning units from the language of the interviewees (emic) to the language of the researcher (etic); (4) sorting formulated meanings into categories, clusters of themes, and themes via a dendogram (Faulkner and Sparks as cited by Acosta, 2010); (5) creating a simulacrum or the visual representation of the findings; (6) subjecting emergent themes to triangulation and member checking procedures to ensure validity and data trustworthiness (McWilliam et al, 2009). Peer review and research advisor’s auditing were likewise conducted to increase the rigor of qualitative findings.

FINDINGS

There are certain skills that make one a great leader. These skills enable managers and administrators to perform their daily tasks effectively, help them inspire people and empower them to deal with the complexities at work for the organization to continuously grow and succeed. Philippine Schools Overseas administrators’ leadership skills can be gauged as either dominant or recessive based on how they make use of these skills in the exercise of their unique leadership style, as they deal with cross-cultural differences, as they improve the school’s commerciality and as they perform their corporate social responsibility. All these areas are cloaked within the revealed leadership skills bound to be attributory, participatory, and contributory which at times can be shown to be dominant or recessive depending on the given situation.

Figure 1 shows the metrical ability of leaders that at times expressed as dominant or recessive. The proverbized leadership skills of PSO administrators can be best characterized as a complementation among attributory, participatory, and contributory skills exhibited in the areas of leadership style, cross-cultural differences, commerciality, and corporate social responsibility respectively.

Attributory Leadership Skills

Development of skills and practice of leadership techniques can be attributed to certain factors such as the attitude, character or personality of a leader, the kind of work environment and other related situations. Leaders’ perception of their surroundings, their outlook about work and their concept of people largely influence their actions and reactions towards a certain phenomenon. The findings of this paper revealed the standpoints of PSO administrators in dealing with peculiarities at work. They averred:

“It’s having the right attitude! I don’t allow competition to affect our activities. If we have interschool activities, I make sure that we are not affected.” P6

“It’s consistency! You have to be consistent in talking to your team members, in following –up, in teaching them, in praising them, and you have to be a doer yourself.” C1

“I have the guidelines given, rules set. I follow deadlines and abreast myself with the recent development in the educational system both in the Philippines and the host country.” C4

These verbalizations typify the kind of principals and coordinators Philippine Schools Overseas have. Their character, principle and other similar attributes direct their decisions and behavior as leaders of their organization.

Participatory Leadership Skills

Certainly, there is no limit to the potential of individuals who come together and work as a team. When people in an organization work collectively, share work load and experiences, build partnership, and create synergy, they can better deal with complexity, uncertainty, and change. Hence, significant number of leaders today recognizes the value of participatory leadership in the creation of
collective impact and culture of innovation. They acknowledge the importance of deeper engagement and greater involvement of the majority if not all in the pursuit of organizational goal. Evidently, one administrator shared “I do this by sharing responsibilities and leadership; that is delegating powers with proper consultation.” P3 This connotes delegation, consultation, and coordination which are part and parcel of PSO administrators’ participatory leadership skills. Principals and coordinators value employees’ participation in the decision making process and the overall operation of the school. One principal confirmed in his statement:

“We find the committee approach very effective. If there are some problems in discipline for example, we discuss it in the committee. At first they discuss among themselves then they elevate the concern to the principal, then to the highest school official.” P5

It should be noted however, that participatory leadership in the culture of Philippine Schools Overseas goes beyond collective learning and co-evolution as workers founded on trust and respect, as one administrator sincerely narrated:

“We work as one family, we treat each other as a family, we go out as a family, and relax as a family.” P6

The foregoing articulations illustrate how the practice of participatory leadership skills can lead to powerful human encounter. Harnessing the wisdom and strength of individuals enable leaders and employees perform their role better thus, yielding positive results for human persons in particular and the organization in general.

**Contributory Leadership Skills**

It is a rewarding experience for leaders to see that their efforts and sacrifices pay off. This could be in terms of organizational progress and development, recognition and achievement, stability and change, the creation of powerful and positive culture or could simply be the completion of a task, acceptance of mistake by an erring employee, conflict resolution and or coming up with a fitting solution to the problem at hand. This chance to share, the opportunity to serve and the possibility to bring about change, touch or transform people’s life make leadership truly rewarding. It
should be remembered, however, that this gratifying experience is a return of investment on the part of the leaders; an offshoot of the practice of their contributory leadership skills. Administrators of Philippine Schools Overseas do this in various ways. They set the people and the work field by clarifying personal and organizational goals and objectives. Two administrators articulated:

“I make them aware that working abroad is a commitment. When we are committed to our job we love our job. We value not the salary that we are receiving but the effect we have in our children. We have to thank God for our job is a blessing.”
P4

“I clarify the direction and mission vision of the school to all the teachers, parents, and stakeholders for them to subscribe willingly towards the attainment of this mission.”
P5

Principals define certain parameters for operation and proactively manage the school organization. A confirmatory statement relative to this was revealed by school administrators who had relative thought of taking actions to make things work in school and bring out the best in their people. They emphasized:

“The way to move forward, to maintain excellence in line with our mission is to embark on accreditation. Accreditation is not an easy process; it should start from within, from the heart, from the mind.”
P5

“We maintain the schools standard and we work for improvement because we want to give better education for the kids and we want our parents to really be satisfied with the kind of education that we are giving.”
P6

Similarly, they promote good relationship not only between and among employees but also with parents and the community. One principal expressed, “We tap the support of parents; enlist their efforts to support the entirety of school activities. We establish linkages, hold school activities and encourage Filipino organizations to participate. We also encourage them to come up with some kind of scholarship assistance for the children of their members.”
P5

They also ensure that tasks are properly executed to avoid conflicts. One principal mused:

“I check and supervise them to help them see that proper work execution yield or result to good outputs and good working relationships while shortcomings and misunderstanding affect others.”
P6

In the end, everything boils down to the administrators’ genuine concern for people and strong commitment to serve. Two coordinators verbalized:

“I train future leaders; I teach them and help them improve for their own good, for the children and for the school.”
C1

“I try to stand by my personal mission that is to teach Filipino children. My commitment has given me so much strength to help the school and to support the school in whatever way I can.”
C3

The verbalizations of these school administrators simply proved that PSO leaders are always ready to give a part of themselves to bring about desirable result. Undoubtedly, their contributory leadership skills are apparent in the exercise of their leadership style; as they deal with the different issues confronting the school system.

DISCUSSION

The success or failure of enterprises, whether business firms, manufacturing plants, financial institutions, military organizations, schools, colleges, universities, government departments, or volunteer groups, depend more upon the effectiveness and quality of certain essential people than on any other part of the organization (Mann, 2013). Those people, Mann (2013) added, committed to adapting the organization to changing conditions, redefining its mission, planning, and designing roles and processes, making decisions about general operations, or setting the standards or objectives for the performance of subordinate staff, hold to a disproportionately high degree the key to the success or failure of their respective units. These indispensable people, obviously, are the leaders. Their impact to the institution is too great; hence, the culture of an organization is regarded as a reflection of their leadership. As cited by Miller (2014) all leaders shape their company’s cultural mindset. The tone company leaders set whether positive or negative creates a thriving organizational culture which identifies the company’s personality; a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that governs how people behave in organizations (McLaughlin, 2015). Leaders and their leadership styles vary in different ways depending on the organization or the working environment they thrived. This requires a careful blend of leadership characteristics and skills, attitudes and behavior, methods and approaches that can be either acquired or innate, experienced or predicted (Brooks, 2012; Farrell, 2011). Welch as quoted by Sloane (2007) spelled out the skills expected of great leaders in the statement “Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion” (p.5). This gives the notion that a leader in his capacity to guide and influence people has the responsibility not only to set the direction of the organization and identify its sense of purpose but also to commit himself in the articulation of that vision and use his special skills and abilities for the realization of such.

Similarly, the PSO administrators’ proversified leadership skills categorized as attributory, participatory, and contributory are revealed to be dominant or recessive at times as exhibited in the style of leadership administrators employ and in other significant areas such as those related to cross-cultural differences, commerciality, and corporate social responsibility.

Considering the metrical ability of PSO administrators, dominant are those leadership skills which are characterized by certain degree of consistency when it comes to practice and those that almost always bring about positive result or change in a specific unit or department and the school as a whole. Recessive are those which are rarely practiced or observed and are employed only as called for by circumstances. Literature on the concept of dominance and recessiveness is broad as perceived and
investigated differently across discipline such as genetics (Beuchat, 2014; Michels, 2002; Pitman, 2002), medicine and science (Hampton, 2002), communication and technology (Di Natale, 2008), agricultural biotechnology (Campagne et al., 2013), industrial information technology (Zurawski, 2005) and other related fields. A leadership category; however, may be dominant or recessive at a given period of time depending on the PSO administrator’s response to a given situation.

**Attributory Leadership Skills**

PSO principals and coordinators, like any other leaders, make use of varied approaches in setting school direction, motivating employees, and implementing school wide plans. The leadership styles they adopt are undoubtedly influenced by their personal values and principles, as well as the existing mores and culture of the school. As justified by Blanken (2013) leadership and management styles are not fixed in place or permanently attached to an individual’s personality. While most leaders develop a dominant leadership style, the best learn to adopt elements of other styles when needed to achieve their goals. Teammates, as expounded by Benincasa (2012) must realize that leadership can and should be situational, depending on the needs of the team. Comparatively, great leaders choose their leadership style like a golfer chooses his or her club, with a calculated analysis of the matter at hand, the end goal and the best tool for the job. Likewise, there are various situations in the school system that challenge administrators’ leadership skills. These challenges according to Zahran, et al. (2016) can either be micro level challenges which often stem from the failure to create cohesion within the organization or macro level challenges which encompass the ferocity of change brought about by globalization and technology development. Hence, drive school administrators to set higher standards, implement reforms, and continuously improve quality of education. Earley (2016) emphasized the impact of school leadership on teachers and teaching, as leaders can create and influence improvement in the teaching and learning environment which indirectly impacts student outcomes.

In Philippine Schools Overseas, areas on cultural differences, commerciality, and cross-cultural responsibility are looked into in order to possibly expand the panoramic leadership scale of PSO’s administrators in facing circumstances and when a situation warrants. On one hand, cross cultural differences in PSO setting can simply be described as the dissimilarities and variations between and among individuals and groups as to background, cultures, practices, preferences, and the like which in one way or another affect the day to day operation of the school. This gives the impression that cross-cultural leaders need to be aware of and appreciate the diversity they face in leadership practices (Lovvorn and Chen, 2011) and must be able to manage culturally diverse settings efficiently (Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Commerciality, on the other hand, refers to the school’s commercial quality or character; how the school’s overall performance is perceived by the public in comparison with the other existing schools in the area. As opined by Szu-Fang Chuang (2013) a leader must think globally and act swiftly to maintain their competitiveness in multicultural organizations and global markets. Whereas, corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to a business practice that involves participating in initiatives that benefit or produce an overall positive impact to the society (Baker, 2015; Taylor, 2015); hence, includes PSO’s environmental advocacies and socio-economic accountability and moral responsibility. The promotion of corporate social responsibility according to Smith (2011) and Strand (2011) is expected in today’s leadership.

In the competitive landscape of the 21st Century, a sustainable advantage of globalization depends on the skills and abilities of a leader (Szu-Fang Chuang, 2013). These leadership skills as described by Rouse (2015) are the strengths and abilities individuals demonstrate that help them oversee processes, guide initiatives and steer their employees toward the achievement of goals. Good leadership skills as expounded by Grier (2008) include the ability to inject huge doses of enthusiasm into a team or individual, and be very energetic in driving others forward. Similarly, PSO’s leadership skills are revealed to be the strengths, abilities, and common leadership practices demonstrated and employed by Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s) administrators in the management of diversity. These skills are found to be either attributory, participatory or contributory in nature.

PSO administrators’ attributory leadership skills represent the qualities and characteristics of PSO principals and coordinators; the traits and abilities that define them as leaders. The fascinating revelations of school administrators as to the leadership skills they employ in dealing with diversity speak of right attitude as their most common attribute. Attitude according to Tracy (2015) is a person’s worldview; the way an individual mentally looks at the world around him; how he views his environment and his future. Tracy (2015) reiterated that the success of an organization is most dependent on the leader’s attitude. James in Mashonganyika (2013) summed up the importance of having the right attitude in the quote “It is our attitude at the beginning of a difficult undertaking which, more than anything else, will determine its successful outcome” (p.18). This is tantamount to saying that a positive attitude is an attributive factor that can pave the way to a successful completion of any kind of leadership endeavors or of any kind of management initiatives. As Boehlke (2015) justified having a good, positive attitude, along with positive thinking at work will reflect on what a person does. Similarly, Hofer and Johnson (2017) stressed that there is a significant power in being surrounded by positive and inspired people in an era when educators and leaders are under enormous stress and pressure.

Comparatively, principals and coordinators display a remarkable pattern of behavior in the performance of their role. This is consistency which according to Krames (2009)
is intuitively understood by most great leaders. They know that in order to be perceived as strong leaders they must maintain a strong set of values, live by a certain code of conduct, effectively communicate these, and then lead by example. Inconsistency and hypocrisy, therefore, as pointed out by Schrage (2016) so acutely matter. A leader who is always late to his own meetings evokes eye rolls when he speaks about punctuality. Thus, he cannot preach what he does not practice in the same manner that he cannot appear to be one thing to one group of people and something else to a different set to be viewed as a stalwart leader. Likewise, PSO leaders pride themselves in setting rules and guidelines, observing deadlines, and keeping themselves abreast with the current trends in education.

Indeed, the list of leadership attributes is endless but as exemplified by PSO administrators, no leader can be, without being visible and in touch, having good communication skills, leading oneself before leading others, inspiring teams, knowing how to make rational decisions, placing others’ needs above one’s own and leading people where they want to go (Sprenger, 2015). In addition, Hewes (2014) highlighted the importance of getting results, being costumer and strategically focused, being good at dealing with conflict and earning the trust of people as common traits leaders of today need to be able to work effectively in a fast paced and complex environment across different time zones. These attributes surely equip leaders with the needed skills and direct them to lead a team successfully.

Participatory Leadership Skills

No matter how good the leader is, he cannot achieve success alone. In spite of their expertise; leaders cannot have anything extraordinary done without the talent and support of others as decision making is more accurate and less risky when entrusted to a diverse group than to a single individual (Kouzes and Posner, 2011; Surowiecki as cited by Reeves, 2006). This marks the value of participative or participatory leadership which is defined by Murdock (2014) as a leadership style in which the leader works closely with team members, focusing on building relationships and rapport. Participatory leadership as expounded by Rooke and Torbert (2005) is based on respect and engagement, which constructively focuses energy in every human to human encounter. A more advanced, more democratic and more effective model of leadership, it harnesses diversity, builds community, and creates shared responsibility for action likewise, deepens individual and collective learning yielding real development and growth.

In dealing with the diverse nature of Philippine Schools Overseas, administrators make active use of their participatory leadership skills in developing and nourishing a work environment that promotes collaboration. PSO leaders encourage employees’ participation through delegation, consultation and coordination. Delegation is the process of giving decision-making authority to lower-level employees and is closely intertwined with empowerment (Simmering, 2015). With the skill to assign task, responsibility, and authority to others, a leader builds employee involvement, creates a sense of collaboration among workers, and shows employees they are valued and trusted with important work (Kokemuller, 2015). Collaboration according to Elfers and Plecki (2016) may take place at multiple levels within the system, within grade levels, departments and or professional learning communities or across school and district contexts. Closely related to delegation are consultation and coordination. By consultation, the leader uses his communication skills in getting the opinion and viewpoints of his team to be able to come up with a decision. Consultation according to Brown (2007) focuses on using the skills, experiences, and ideas of others. However, the leader using this style still retains the final decision-making power. A leader will not make major decisions without first getting the input from those that will be affected. The consultative leadership traits include involving others in problem solving, team building, retaining right for final decisions, focusing time on more important activities, providing proper recognition, delegating but keeping “veto power”, and weighing all alternatives before final decision is made. Leaders learn about the best course of action for the organization over time, hence, are able to coordinate their followers around a credible mission statement, which communicates the future course of action of the organization (Bolton et al., 2012). Consequently, Spillane et al as cited by Stein (2016) argued that school leadership is not simply a function of what a school principal, or any other individual or group of leaders, knows and does. It is rather the activities engaged in by leaders as they interact with others in the performance of specific tasks.

PSO administrators’ use of participatory leadership skills cannot be underestimated in the context of leadership practice as it binds people together and keep the school organization stronger. Allowing the team to assist in the decision making process, to give input, and to share ideas, as justified by Murdock (2014), make employees feel acknowledged and empowered, thus, creating a participative work environment defined by employees’ collaborative efforts.

Contributory leadership skills

Leaders are recognized primarily by the nature of their contribution to the success of an organization (Harvey and Grégoire, 2014) and the kind of influence they have in the life of others. It should be noted; however, that the role of a leader is not merely a combination of position, title, rank, and style as position and title can only provide vehicles through which to lead, and rank and style can only hope to complement and facilitate leadership (Meeks, 2010). The leaders’ role she added is simply to lead and to consistently act in accordance with established values.

Basically, in the context of Philippine Schools Overseas, administrators have their own contributory leadership skills that enable them to achieve desired results. As
revealed in the study, these skills are initially manifested in the leaders attempt to clarify personal and organizational goals. Mills (2005) called this attempt as taking leadership positions which involve skills in identifying vision, making a commitment to the mission and to the people one leads, taking responsibility for the accomplishment of the mission and the welfare of others, assuming risk of loss and failure and accepting recognition for success. This according to Mausbach and Morrison (2017) is all about focus; the building and maintenance of which requires persistence which can easily get derailed by forces outside the organization.

PSO administrators likewise exhibit special skills in building relationship and harmonizing people. They recognize the value of employees as the most important asset of the school system. Similarly, their contributory leadership skills are exercised in their drive to maintain the standard of the school, bring out the best in people and continuously move forward. This can be likened to what Edmonds (2011) referred to as the creation of employees’ discretionary energy toward goals; the employees’ willing application of knowledge and skills in service towards espoused strategy and goals, and their demonstrated positive enthusiasm for work, the team, and its members. Finally, PSO administrators’ contributory leadership skills are anchored to and are best expressed through service which is vividly described by Greenleaf as cited by Keith (2015) as the natural feeling of wanting to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are met. Service is wanting to help others, identifying, and meeting the needs of colleagues, customers, and communities. This extends the notion that leaders perform various roles as they exercise their contributory leadership skills. They act as forerunners, thinker, team-builders, decision-makers, mentor, and servant leaders. Harvey and Grégoire (2014) cited four other roles leaders perform as they contribute to the success of the organization. The connectors focus on their employees, colleagues, superiors and clients and foster working environments characterized by collaboration, the implementers focus on work performance and are notable for high-level execution skills, the resolute with the courage and ability to make hard decisions and take the necessary action for what is important and a priority, and the visionaries who bring together those with a talent for setting directions and devising innovative concepts. Whatever role leaders play in the system, through their special skills, they remain to be the key persons in bringing about change and success in the organization.

Conclusion

This qualitative study probed into the rich leadership experiences of Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s) administrators to uncover the distinct leadership skills they employ in leading highly diversified learning institutions.

The analysis of phenomenological data using an emergent strategy revealed that leadership attribute can be a leadership contribute that strengthens the magnanimity of leaders to exercise authority over their people within the bounds of prudent management. It can be concluded that as leadership evolves, new set of skills rises. These are the strengths, abilities, and common leadership practices demonstrated and employed by Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO’s) administrators as heads of their respective schools. The leadership attributes revealed in this study have provided opportunities for leaders to be emulated by other leaders of which these become their contribution to uplifting the leadership practice at the workplace. Contributory leadership skills as typified by Philippine Schools Overseas administrators are anchored to and are best expressed in the spirit of true service which enables them to take others’ ideas and feelings into account while holding in trust the group’s ideals, beliefs, and hopes which keeps them aware of others’ needs while in turn enabling them to become progressive leaders and profound individuals.

Findings of this study highlight proversified leadership skills as a new set of skills in managing highly diversified working environment capitalizing on the premise that no matter how different people are, there will always be similarities among the members of the workforce and that this commonalities will bring about positive change in schools. All Philippine Schools Overseas Administrators, therefore, should take a proactive move to discover and develop their very own proversified leadership skills to dwell not only on cross-cultural differences but also consider cross-cultural similarities that unite people in the performance of their multi-faceted roles as managers of a school system composed of people having individual and cultural differences. Leaders of schools and corporate environments alike should embrace the dynamism of leadership, discover and hone their very own attributory, participatory, and contributory proversified leadership skills and use them appropriately to serve the best interest of the organization and harness all possible means to replicate these skills to address the growing challenges of 21st century leadership.

Findings revealed in this study are inconclusive that leadership attributes are potent and absolute as far as leadership contribution is concerned, for every leader has his own leadership management and style. There are possible leadership attributes less explored and are not evident in this study which could be timely for possible research studies empirically grounded particularly within the concept and control of metrical variables specified in the quantitative aspects or in mixed methods to further find out the cultural implications and philosophical dimensions anchored on proversified leadership.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.
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