

SELF-RELIANCE LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL-RECONSTRUCTIONIST EDUCATION OF SCHOOL HEADS IN PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership among school heads in public elementary schools, highlighting their complementary roles in fostering effective and inclusive educational environments. Self-reliance leadership focuses on traits such as confidence, resourcefulness, and independence, enabling leaders to address challenges, make autonomous decisions, and inspire trust among staff. Social-reconstructionist leadership emphasizes equity, collaboration, and inclusivity, encouraging leaders to address societal inequalities and instill civic responsibility and social awareness in students. Together, these leadership styles empower school heads to guide their schools in resource-limited or challenging environments while fostering innovation, resilience, and a sense of community. The study employed a descriptive correlation design, collecting data from 139 teachers through validated questionnaires measuring dimensions of both leadership styles. Results indicate that self-reliance leadership dimensions—intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence—were consistently exhibited at high levels. Similarly, social-reconstructionist practices, such as fostering creative groups, consultation, student services, and teacher education services, were also highly manifested. A significant positive relationship between the two leadership styles was identified, suggesting that self-reliant leaders are more likely to adopt socially conscious practices that address systemic challenges and promote inclusive education. These findings provide a framework for school leaders to integrate self-reliance and social-reconstructionist principles, enabling them to inspire their teams, foster collaborative efforts, and promote values of equity and social responsibility. This dual leadership approach equips schools to meet academic goals while addressing broader societal needs, preparing students to become proactive, engaged citizens. The study offers actionable insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers, advocating for leadership development programs that enhance these complementary leadership styles to create resilient and socially responsible schools.

Keywords: Self-reliance leadership, social-reconstructionist leadership, inclusive education, school administration, civic responsibility

1. INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

Self-reliance equips school leaders with the confidence and initiative to make independent decisions, solve complex problems, and effectively guide their schools, particularly in resource-limited or challenging environments. When coupled with strong leadership skills, self-reliance empowers school heads to inspire and mobilize staff, students, and the community toward shared goals, fostering a positive school culture and encouraging collaboration.

Adopting a social-reconstructionist perspective further enhances leadership by embedding a commitment to social responsibility and equity in education. Leaders with this mindset aim to transform schools into inclusive, socially conscious institutions that address community needs, challenge inequalities, and promote civic engagement among students (Poenaru & Sava, 2018). Such leadership not only manages day-to-day operations but also acts as a catalyst for broader social progress, preparing students to become informed and proactive citizens.

In Australia, self-reliance is regarded as the capacity of individuals and communities to independently meet their needs sustainably, encompassing protection, education, and livelihood development (Held, 2013). Applying this principle in education, school heads who demonstrate self-reliance can build resilient schools that thrive independently while fostering community engagement. Similarly, a social-reconstructionist approach enables leaders to address social inequalities and instill values of inclusivity and civic responsibility in students (Morris, 2015; Galang, 2015).

In the Philippines, promoting self-reliance and social-reconstructionist values in school leadership is essential for shaping educational environments that emphasize both academic success and social engagement. This combined leadership approach equips students with the skills and awareness to address real-world issues, fostering a culture of critical thinking, resilience, and community involvement (Shapiro, 2013).

This study seeks to explore the relationship between self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership among school heads in public elementary schools. The findings aim to provide a framework for developing policies and practices that empower school leaders to create equitable and socially responsible educational environments.

2. REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT LITERATURE

Self-Reliance Leadership. Self-reliance leadership emphasizes traits such as confidence, resourcefulness, and independence. According to Bass (2015), self-reliance leaders inspire trust, respect, and admiration among their followers, employing mechanisms such as intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. These traits enable leaders to foster creativity, challenge the status quo, and mentor their teams effectively (Riggio, 2019).

Burns (2018) elaborates on self-reliance leadership as a process that motivates followers through a shared vision and mission. Leaders exhibiting this style prioritize ethical conduct and model behavior that followers seek to emulate. They challenge conventional norms and encourage innovative solutions to organizational challenges. **Social-Reconstructionist Leadership.** Social-reconstructionist leadership, also known as participative leadership, emphasizes collaboration and inclusivity. Leaders employing this style encourage group members to contribute to decision-making, fostering creativity, commitment, and shared responsibility (Smith, 2011). Social-reconstructionist leaders prioritize addressing societal inequalities through education, promoting values of justice, equity, and civic engagement among students (Reeves, 2013). This leadership style is particularly effective in environments where collaboration and creative problem-solving are essential. However, it requires skilled group members and ample time for participatory decision-making to achieve optimal results (Burns, 2018).

Synthesis

The interplay between self-reliance and social-reconstructionist leadership offers a robust framework for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by school heads. By combining the confidence and independence of self-reliance with the inclusivity and social awareness of the social-reconstructionist approach, school leaders can create educational environments that are both resilient and socially responsible.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on Bass's (2007) self-reliance leadership theory, which emphasizes the transformative influence of leaders on their followers through trust, integrity, and inspiration. Burns's (2000) social-reconstructionist leadership theory complements this by highlighting the participative and inclusive aspects of leadership that address social inequalities.

The conceptual framework outlines the relationship between the independent variables—self-reliance leadership (measured by intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence) and social-reconstructionist leadership (measured by creative groups, consultation, student services, and teacher education services)—and their influence on effective school administration.

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to determine the relationship between self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership among school heads in public elementary schools in Caraga District, Division of Davao Oriental. Specifically, it addresses the following questions:

1. What is the level of self-reliance leadership of public elementary school heads in terms of:
 - 1.1. Intellectual stimulation,
 - 1.2. Individualized consideration,
 - 1.3. Inspirational motivation, and
 - 1.4. Idealized influence?
2. What is the level of social-reconstructionist leadership of public elementary school heads in terms of:
 - 2.1. Creative groups,
 - 2.2. Consultation,
 - 2.3. Student services, and
 - 2.4. Teacher education services?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership of school heads in public elementary schools?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

There is no significant relationship between self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership among school heads in public elementary schools.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for various stakeholders:

CHED Officials: Findings can guide the formulation of leadership policies that integrate self-reliance and social-reconstructionist values to enhance school administration.

School Heads: Insights from this study can help school heads improve their leadership styles, fostering better relationships and creating inclusive educational environments.

Teachers and Students: A better understanding of leadership dynamics can lead to more supportive and engaging learning environments, benefiting both teachers and students.

Future Researchers: The findings provide a foundation for further studies on the interplay between leadership styles and their impact on educational outcomes.

Definition of Terms

Self-Reliance Leadership: A leadership style that enhances motivation, morale, and performance through intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

Social-Reconstructionist Leadership: A participative leadership style that emphasizes inclusivity and collaboration, measured by creative groups, consultation, student services, and teacher education services.

This study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of these leadership styles and their implications for effective school administration.

3. METHOD

This chapter presents the research design, participants, instruments, data gathering procedure, and methods of data analysis employed in the study.

Research Design. The study utilized the descriptive correlation method, which is appropriate for describing the current status of a phenomenon and exploring relationships between variables. This design allowed the researcher to assess the level of self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership among school heads in public elementary schools and to determine the relationship between these leadership dimensions. The descriptive aspect focused on identifying the extent to which specific leadership behaviors were exhibited, while the correlational component examined the connection between the two variables, as emphasized by Travers (2016).

Research Participants

The respondents of the study were 139 teachers from public elementary schools. These participants evaluated their respective school heads' leadership traits through the questionnaire administered to them. Teachers were included in the study if they had at least three years of teaching experience, ensuring that they had sufficient exposure to assess their school heads' leadership styles accurately. Universal sampling was employed, meaning that the entire eligible population within the scope of the study was included. Data collection was conducted during the 2021–2022 school year.

Research Instruments

The research instrument was a structured questionnaire, adapted from existing validated tools and contextualized to suit the local setting. The questionnaire was refined with input from the researcher's thesis adviser and three external validators, ensuring its appropriateness for the study.

The questionnaire consisted of 40 items, divided into two main sections. The first section assessed social-reconstructionist leadership using four indicators: creative groups, consultation, student services, and teacher education services. The second section measured self-reliance leadership, with four indicators as well: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. For both leadership types, scores ranging from 4.20 to 5.00 indicated a "very high" level of manifestation, while scores of 1.00 to 1.79 indicated a "poor" level, meaning the behavior or trait was never observed.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection began with securing permission to conduct the study from the Dean of Graduate Studies at Rizal Memorial Colleges and obtaining endorsements from school principals, moderators, or teachers-in-charge. Once approved, the questionnaires were distributed personally by the researcher to the respondents. Clear instructions were provided to ensure accurate and honest responses.

All distributed questionnaires were retrieved, achieving a 100% response rate. The completed questionnaires were then organized, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis. The procedures were carefully executed to maintain the integrity and reliability of the data.

Data Analysis

The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis to address the research objectives. The mean was employed to determine the levels of self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership exhibited by school heads. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was used to identify and measure the relationship between the two variables. These statistical tools provided a robust framework for analyzing and interpreting the data, ensuring that the findings were valid and aligned with the study's purpose.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results of the study and provides discussions addressing the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The findings focus on the level of self-reliance leadership and social-reconstructionist leadership exhibited by public elementary school heads, and the relationship between these leadership dimensions.

Level of Self-Reliance Leadership in Terms of Intellectual Stimulation. The findings revealed that self-reliance leadership, specifically in the dimension of intellectual stimulation, was highly manifested among public elementary school heads. Teachers perceived their school heads as encouraging them to submit requirements efficiently, update teaching strategies, and enhance their professional development through graduate courses and technology integration. This indicates that intellectual stimulation was consistently practiced to foster a proactive and innovative teaching environment.

The importance of intellectual stimulation in education lies in its ability to cultivate critical thinking and creativity among educators. Leaders who exhibit this quality challenge their staff to explore new methodologies, embrace diverse perspectives, and pursue continuous learning, which directly impacts the quality of instruction provided to students. As Parades (2011) emphasized, individuals are motivated to follow leaders who satisfy their professional needs, fostering growth and resilience in educational settings.

Level of Self-Reliance Leadership in Terms of Individualized Consideration

The data revealed that individualized consideration was another highly manifested dimension of self-reliance leadership. School heads were noted for providing moral support, assisting teachers during personal and professional challenges, and promoting well-being. However, helping teachers find ways to augment their income was observed less frequently, though still present at a moderate level.

This finding highlights the empathetic and supportive role of school heads, who act as mentors and collaborators rather than authoritarian figures. As Poole (2015) suggested, organizational welfare is closely tied to the economic and emotional security of its members, which in turn fosters a positive and productive work environment. Teachers who feel valued and supported are more likely to engage actively in their professional roles.

Level of Self-Reliance Leadership in Terms of Inspirational Motivation

Inspirational motivation was also found to be highly manifested among public elementary school heads. Teachers recognized their leaders' efforts in fostering team spirit, building harmonious relationships, and coordinating school activities effectively. The findings suggest that leaders inspire a shared sense of purpose and enthusiasm, enabling both staff and students to align their efforts toward collective goals.

As Leithwood and Jantzi (2012) observed, inspirational motivation in educational leadership fosters an environment where individuals feel empowered to overcome challenges and achieve their fullest potential. This dimension of leadership strengthens collaboration and unity, which are critical for creating an effective and thriving school culture.

Level of Self-Reliance Leadership in Terms of Idealized Influence

Idealized influence was also perceived to be highly evident in the practices of school heads. Leaders were noted for their concern for teachers' welfare, their encouragement of professional growth, and their efforts to resolve challenges constructively. This dimension reflects the ability of leaders to serve as role models, earning trust and respect through ethical conduct and a commitment to shared values.

As Sockett (2013) emphasized, idealized influence is rooted in leadership rather than authority or control. Leaders inspire others to align with organizational goals by demonstrating integrity, fairness, and a focus on collective well-being.

Level of Social-Reconstructionist Leadership in Terms of Creative Groups. The findings on social-reconstructionist leadership, particularly in the dimension of creative groups, revealed a moderate level of manifestation. School heads were recognized for finding creative solutions to resource challenges and generating meaningful ideas for decision-making. However, their efforts to foster creative environments and develop innovative instructional materials were perceived as less consistent.

This aligns with Burns' (2018) assertion that creative group leadership requires the ability to balance innovation with the practical demands of educational management. While creativity is crucial for addressing systemic challenges, it often requires more structured support and resources to thrive.

Level of Social-Reconstructionist Leadership in Terms of Consultation. The consultation dimension of social-reconstructionist leadership was highly manifested among school heads. Teachers appreciated the emphasis on open communication, collaborative goal-setting, and the integration of feedback into decision-making processes. These practices reflect a participatory leadership style that values input from all stakeholders.

According to Albritton (2018), consultation fosters a collegial atmosphere where ideas can be freely exchanged, enabling leaders to make informed and inclusive decisions. This approach is particularly effective in dynamic and rapidly changing educational environments.

Level of Social-Reconstructionist Leadership in Terms of Student Services. The study found that the student services dimension of social-reconstructionist leadership was highly evident. School heads were praised for supporting sports development, providing scholarships, and addressing students' medical and dental needs. This suggests a strong commitment to holistic student development and welfare.

As Schneider and Reichers (2013) noted, effective student services not only enhance individual achievement but also contribute to a sense of community and shared purpose within schools. Leaders who prioritize these services demonstrate their dedication to creating inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Level of Social-Reconstructionist Leadership in Terms of Teacher Education Services. Teacher education services were also highly manifested in the practices of school heads. Respondents acknowledged the provision of essential resources such as faculty rooms, visual aids, and library corners. These efforts reflect the leaders' commitment to equipping teachers with the tools and facilities necessary for professional success.

Joseph (2017) highlighted the ethical responsibility of leaders to support their staff through adequate resources and opportunities for growth. By addressing the needs of teachers, school heads lay the foundation for improved instructional quality and student outcomes.

Relationship Between Self-Reliance and Social-Reconstructionist Leadership. The study established a significant relationship between self-reliance and social-reconstructionist leadership among public elementary school heads. The correlation suggests that leaders who exhibit strong self-reliance traits, such as intellectual stimulation and idealized influence, are more likely to implement socially conscious practices, such as creative problem-solving and consultation.

As Goleman (2010) observed, effective leadership integrates both personal efficacy and a commitment to societal improvement. By combining self-reliance with social-reconstructionist principles, school heads can create educational environments that promote equity, innovation, and community engagement.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings underscore the pivotal role of both self-reliance and social-reconstructionist leadership in shaping effective and inclusive educational environments. Public elementary school heads who demonstrate intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence are better equipped to address the diverse needs of their teachers and students. Similarly, socially conscious practices such as consultation and student services contribute to a culture of collaboration and mutual respect.

This dual focus enables school heads not only to manage their institutions effectively but also to inspire positive change within their communities. By fostering innovation, equity, and shared purpose, they prepare students to navigate and contribute to a complex and interconnected world.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the self-reliance leadership of public elementary school heads in terms of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence is consistently manifested at a high level. This indicates that school heads effectively inspire and guide their teachers while fostering an environment of collaboration and professional growth. Furthermore, the social-reconstructionist education practices of school heads, as evidenced through creative groups, consultation, student services, and teacher education services, are also observed at a high level. This reflects the ability of school heads to foster collaborative efforts, support student-centered services, and encourage professional development among educators.

The study establishes a significant relationship between democratic leadership and self-reliance leadership among school heads. The correlation findings suggest that the integration of democratic principles within leadership practices enhances the ability of school heads to guide their institutions effectively. This significant relationship underlines the

importance of incorporating both participatory and self-reliant leadership qualities to create a balanced and inclusive approach to school management.

Based on the conclusions, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the leadership practices of public elementary school heads. School heads should continuously strive to enhance their self-reliance leadership by promoting intellectual stimulation and providing individualized support to teachers. Professional development programs and mentorship initiatives can further strengthen these practices, ensuring that teachers feel empowered and motivated to contribute to the school's goals. Efforts to sustain the high level of social-reconstructionist education should focus on fostering creative group activities and enhancing consultation mechanisms to address emerging challenges within the school community. By encouraging open dialogue and collaboration, school heads can create a more inclusive environment.

The school culture should emphasize positive work environments by fostering camaraderie and open communication among staff. Recognizing the efforts and contributions of both teaching and non-teaching staff can significantly boost morale and productivity. Leadership practices should be centered around inspiring and empowering staff through recognition programs, consistent feedback, and role modeling, which will further strengthen the commitment and performance of the school community. Empathetic and compassionate leadership approaches are essential for addressing the personal and professional needs of staff. By focusing on heartfelt leadership, school heads can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that caters to the holistic development of their team.

To achieve cohesive and effective school communities, initiatives that integrate democratic and self-reliant leadership practices should be explored. Joint decision-making processes and shared responsibility for school improvement plans can foster a culture of collaboration and shared vision. By focusing on these recommendations, school heads can continue to enhance their leadership practices, ensuring a more inclusive, empowering, and progressive educational environment for teachers, students, and the wider community.

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