

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, LEADERSHIP STYLE, RISK MANAGEMENT TRAININGS AND DISASTER RESPONSIVENESS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN TACLOBAN CITY DIVISION

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ABSTRACT

The Philippines averages about 20 typhoons a year, including three super-typhoons plus numerous incidents of flooding, drought, earthquakes and tremors and occasional volcanic eruptions, making it one of the most naturally disaster-prone countries in the world. The schools have not been spared from the disasters brought by natural calamities. School buildings have been damaged, furniture have been looted, instructional materials, books and references got wet and damaged as well. Some students and school personnel died and got injured in the disaster. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to assess the profile, emotional intelligence, leadership style, and disaster responsiveness of school administrators in Tacloban City Division. These variables were examined to find its relationship with the respondents' level of disaster responsiveness. A total of forty-nine school administrators and one hundred ninety-nine teachers from public and private elementary and secondary schools participated in this study. Findings reveal that profile and leadership style of school administrators have no significant relationship with disaster responsiveness. In likewise manner, the leadership style whether relationship-motivated or task-motivated is not related to the level of disaster responsiveness of school administrators. On the other hand, all aspects of emotional intelligence are significantly related to disaster responsiveness. This means that school administrators who are more emotionally intelligent are more responsive to disasters. It is recommended that trainings related to disaster preparedness be designed to address the disaster responsiveness indicators that are not developed among school administrators to help them acquire necessary skills in disaster responsiveness.

Field of Research: *Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Style, Disaster Responsiveness, School Administrators*

1. Introduction

At some point in a school administrator's career, they come across a disaster. Whether it is caused by natural calamities, the sudden withdrawal of a key client, a factor outside their control, or a bad decision backfiring, it is often how he responds to the challenge that defines whether the school comes out the other side. Sensible school administrators put disaster plans in place, and consider worst-case scenarios to help them develop responses that can be deployed during times of crisis well in advance. There is only so much preparation for the unknown that school administrators can do, however, and at some point, important decisions – that will have far-reaching consequences – will need to be made. Whether these consequences are positive or negative, is often decided by how emotionally intelligent the school administrator is, his knowledge on risk and disaster management and the leadership style he has. In tough times, it is human instinct to follow emotions and be reactionary. While evolutionarily speaking, this may have helped us in the past – by causing us to run away from danger – the same approach does not translate quite as effectively in a school scenario. As a leader, being able to manage emotions and mentally ready is an incredibly valuable quality. Having the ability to think all the options through, and

calmly choose the best strategy, can make all the difference. Allowing decisions to be rushed, and influenced by panic, can have devastating consequences during a crisis. A high level of emotional intelligence, proper risk and disaster management training, and the right leadership style can help school administrators not only escape tricky situations, but also potentially turn them into opportunities.

2. Emotional Intelligence

Bradberry and Greaves (2009) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to identify, consider and control emotions in oneself and to recognize them in others, brought on by a combination of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. In certain situations, emotions have a stronger impact on human behavior than thinking. When humans are in a situation of high threat, emotions take precedence over rational thought. This is what Goleman (2006) calls an emotional hijack. Strong emotions can overwhelm our ability to think and make good decisions.

3. Leadership Style

Northouse (2011) defined leadership style as the behaviors of leaders focusing on what leaders do and how they act. This includes leader's actions toward subordinates in a variety of contexts. In terms of the differences between the cognitive orientation and affective style of the leader, there are two distinct styles of leadership: Production-oriented or task-oriented and Relationship-oriented which are at opposite ends of the same continuum. In normal circumstances, leadership is entirely different as all decisions are taken after enough thinking. On the other hand, in crisis situations or under unstable and disruptive conditions or in disasters, tasks of leaders usually become difficult. Many of the designated local leaders are themselves affected by the disaster.

4. Disaster Responsiveness

In the British Government's Emergency Response and Recovery Guide (2013), disaster response refers to decisions and actions taken in accordance with the strategic, tactical and operational objectives defined by emergency responders. At a high level these will be to protect life, contain and mitigate the impacts of the emergency and create the conditions for a return to normality. Response encompasses the decisions and actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of an emergency. In many scenarios, it is likely to be relatively short and to last for a matter of hours or days—rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, coordination and communication are, therefore, vital. In response, school administrators have engaged in widespread mitigation and preparedness efforts, including both investment in technologies and systems as well as public education and awareness-raising. The results have been mixed, even in the most developed countries with advanced disaster management systems. The failure to effectively respond to disaster events is generally attributed to the shortcomings of disaster management systems, inadequate planning, poor communication and/or coordination. While these reasons are certainly valid, what is frequently overlooked is the possible role that human nature may have in perpetuating these crises.

5. Theoretical Framework

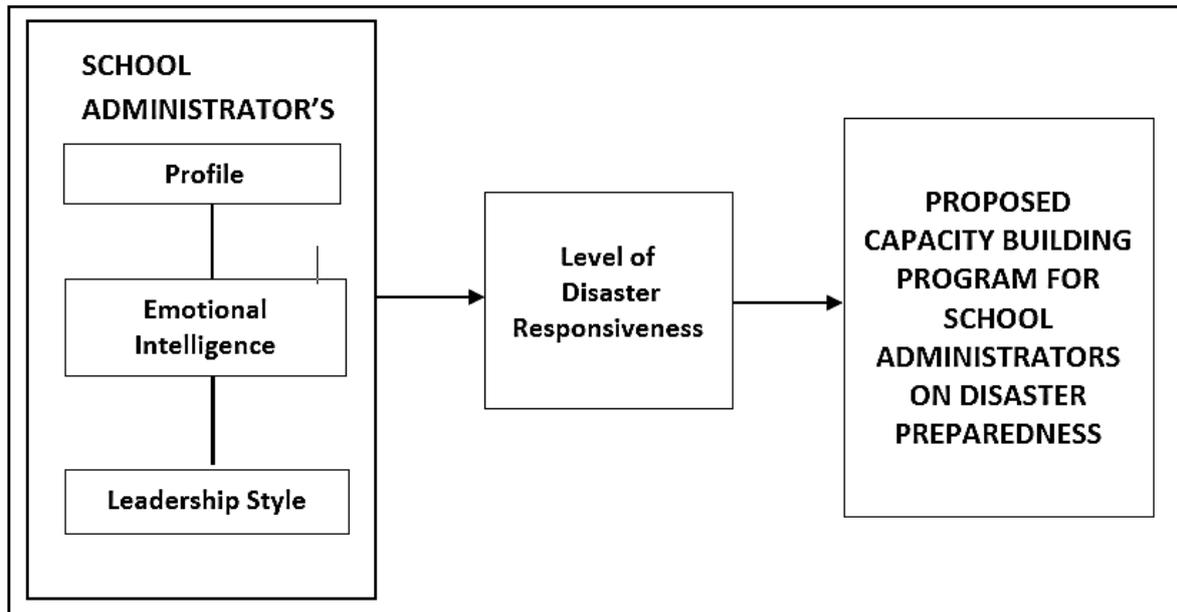


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The framework determines whether a relationship exists between the school administrators' emotional intelligence, leadership style and disaster responsiveness. Likewise, it is assumed that emotional intelligence may directly affect the leadership style and vice versa to the level of disaster responsiveness of school administrators. The results from the data gathered are the bases for formulating disaster preparedness programs that can be implemented in school. Since education is one of the change agents, it is highly imperative that school administrators come up with disaster preparedness program. The instrument used was adapted from Wendorf-Heldt (2009), Lunenburg & Ornstein (2011) and McCarty (2012) earlier related studies.

6. Methodology

6.1 Sample and data collection method

A total of forty-nine (49) school administrators and one hundred ninety-nine (199) teachers participated in this undertaking. The study used the mixed research method wherein quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. For quantitative method, the descriptive-correlational method of research using survey questionnaires was utilized to determine the extent to which the different variables are related to each other. With the qualitative method, an interview was conducted utilizing a semi-structured interview to determine the major points regarding the study. Open-ended questions at the end of the survey and semi-structured interviews were conducted to school administrators and teachers to support the quantitative data and to gather a deeper understanding of the subject at hand. Results from the interview were extracted and analyzed according to themes and content.

6.2 Instrumentation

The following Table indicates how the variables of the study were measured. The items in the instrument were adapted from previous studies by Wendorf-Heldt (2009), Lunenburg & Ornstein (2011) and McCarty (2012)

Table 1: Instrumentation of the Study Variables

Study Variables	No. of Items	Source of Scale	Type of Scale
Emotional Intelligence	32	Wendorf-Heldt (2009)	5-point Likert Scale
Leadership Style	20	Lunenburg & Ornstein (2011)	7-point Semantic Differential Scale
Disaster Responsiveness	32	McCarty (2012)	5-point Likert Scale

7. Finding & Discussion

7.1 Reliability analysis

The study used Cronbach's alpha coefficient value to determine the reliability of the instruments used. Results revealed a range of coefficient value from .76 to .85 accordingly. The dependent variable of disaster responsiveness had a high reliability coefficient of .85 as compared to the independent variables. The independent variables of profile, emotional intelligence, leadership style had coefficient values of .76, .81 and .77 respectively.

7.2 Descriptive statistics & analysis

A lot of findings were revealed in this study. One is that most of the school administrators are already experienced having ages of 41 years old and above. There are more female school administrators than males. Majority of the school administrators are holding Principal I – IV positions. The number of years of service as school administrators shows that most of the school administrators are neophyte having five (5) years of service as school administrator and below. Majority of the school administrators are not trained on risk management. They have limited training experiences on risk management.

Second is on the level of emotional intelligence of school administrators. Based on the perceptions of the school administrators, they have high emotional intelligence in all the four aspects – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management having the highest percentages of 53%, 45%, 39% and 39% respectively. Based on the teachers' perceptions, school administrators have average emotional intelligence on the aspect – self-awareness, self-management and relationship management with percentages of 39%, 39% and 37% respectively, though they perceived that the school administrators have high emotional intelligence on the social awareness aspect having a percentage of 37%. It only shows that school administrators and teachers have different perceptions based on what they experience with each other and with the school administrators themselves.

Third revealed that the school administrators and teachers' perception on the school administrators' emotional intelligence on the four aspects – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and

relationship management has a significant difference. This confirms that school administrators must know more himself or herself so that his or her subordinates would really know them.

Fourth revealed that out of 49 school administrators surveyed, 44 (89.8%) said that they are relationship motivated indicated by high LPC, while 5 (10.2%) consider themselves as task motivated. This is validated by the result of the teachers' responses where 92% of them agreed that school administrators are relationship motivated and only 8% said that school administrators are task motivated. Results of the interview validates the outcome of the survey. Of the thirty-one school administrators interviewed, 25 said that they are relationship motivated.

Fifth showed the level of disaster responsiveness of school administrators. The school administrators and teachers agree that school administrators "consider security and safety needs" fast having the highest mean value of 3.88 and 3.61. School administrators also "take command" fast with a mean value of 3.88. In likewise manner, both the school administrators and the teachers agree that school administrators respond averagely in the indicator "hold daily intervention sessions with the crisis response team members" having the lowest mean value of 3.37 for school administrators and 3.19 for teachers. Teachers also rated average the indicator "provide crisis intervention services" having the lowest mean value of 3.19. Among the thirty-two (32) indicators, 50% (16) of the indicators show difference on the responses of school administrators and the teachers. School administrators consider themselves fast but teachers consider them as average. This shows that in some instances, school administrators think otherwise and have different perception of the other.

Sixth show that there is no significant difference on the perception of school administrators and teachers on the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness. Although there is no significant difference on the response of school administrators and teachers, the mean values of the teachers indicate less confirmation on most indicators of disaster responsiveness.

Seventh reveal the correlation of profile variables, emotional intelligence, and leadership style to disaster responsiveness. Results show that correlating the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness and their profile variables revealed that none showed to have a significant relationship. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness and their profile variables were not rejected at the 5% level of significance. Results also show that correlating the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness and their level of emotional intelligence in all the aspects considered such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management showed to be significant related. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the school administrators' level disaster responsiveness and their level of emotional intelligence were rejected at 5% level of significance. This means that the higher the level of emotional intelligence in the four aspects, the higher is the level of disaster responsiveness of school administrators. Results also revealed that correlating the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness and their leadership style showed to be not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the school administrators' level of disaster responsiveness and their leadership style was not rejected at the 5% level of significance. This only shows that leadership style is not related to the level of disaster responsiveness.

8. Conclusion and Future Recommendation

Findings reveal that profile and leadership style of school administrators have no significant relationship with disaster responsiveness. This means that the age, gender, years in service as administrator and risk management trainings attended is not related to how school administrators respond to disasters. In likewise manner, the leadership style whether relationship-motivated or task-motivated is not related to the level of disaster responsiveness of school administrators. On the other hand, all aspects of emotional intelligence are significantly related to disaster responsiveness. This means that school administrators who are more emotionally intelligent are more responsive to disasters. In the light of the findings of this study, education policy makers, non-government organizations, training institutions and the Department of Education should consider these variables in the design and implementation of disaster preparedness programs. It is recommended that trainings related to disaster preparedness be designed to address the disaster responsiveness indicators that are not developed among school administrators to help them acquire necessary skills in disaster responsiveness.

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