

# Gender and Leadership Skills among School Administrators

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**Abstract:** *The historical aversion between gender and leadership has eloped throughout the years. Thus, the continuous disseminating issue regarding gender gap and differences was a constant source of problems bringing endless irreparable changes and alternation in leadership. Therefore, this study emphasizes determining the relationship between gender and leadership skills among school administrators. The study adhered through an in-depth interview among the five school administrators and each has six teacher respondents to answer the survey questionnaire form, which gives a total of 35 respondents in the five public secondary schools located in Bulakan, Bulacan. The questionnaires and variables utilized in the study were adapted, provided with permission from the authors. In the quantitative data; the survey questionnaire was adapted containing the (18) eighteen items in leadership skills; administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual in Likert scale agreement. Meanwhile in the qualitative data, an in-depth interview for the (5) five school administrators was stipulated in this research and formulated (9) semi-structured questions mainly, in terms of organizational management, day to day instruction, and internal relations. The information stated by the respondents was kept under ethical considerations. Therefore each respondent was given a confirmation note. The data gathering was executed online to avoid and use preventive measurements to the present crisis in the Corona Virus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The research revealed that the outstanding rating of the level of leadership skills was evident in male school administrator and showed competencies, effectiveness, and efficacy depends on the individual rather than their gender. Hence, understanding and respecting each other's gender diversity and the gap will bring gender equality for everyone)*

**Keywords—** gender equality, gender diversity, competencies, leadership skills, and leadership effectiveness.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past centuries, the development, and practices of school leadership in the Philippines are caused by the rich influence of history. Cultivating policies and creating opportunities for every individual to take part in society is the essence of Education. Leadership is considered as human experience back as far in Homer's Iliad and has been evident in the religious text. Tracing back the leadership antiquity through the late 1970s focused on men is only considered as accountable leaders. However, in this new millennia leadership has evolved and women eloped with eagerness to acknowledge having equal rights and privileges among men. In the Philippines, the 1987 Constitution Article II section 14 firmly states that "The state recognizes the role of women in the nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law". Embarking this Constitutional Law emphasizes the importance of gender equality and disseminating gender stereotypes, gaps, and differences. Introducing, stereotyping of hegemonic masculinity that consciously or unconsciously influences our expectation of what a leader 'should' be. Consequently, women and others who do not fit the masculine leader stereotype are perceived as outsiders in the leadership role by society. Since, gender is the key ratio and central explanation of organizational behavior phenomena such as leadership. Hence, leadership is an active process of influencing, inspiring, guiding people to achieve a common goal and endeavor as a leader. The school administrators must possess skills to ensure, persuade, and dedication to generate effective leadership.

Also, many researchers concluded that communication acts as an advantage skill to become effective. Towler (2003), expresses that the essential key to great leadership is communication, it is a vital aspect to be considered. In other words, effective leadership is all about communicating effectively. Furthermore, recent studies had been globally conducted focused on the leadership capabilities of a school administrator such as skills. In the educational context, a school administrator is considered the heart and mind of the school. According to Cunanan (2017), stated they hold the authority, and accountability in managing all school affairs. Thus, the success and failure of the school depend on what kind of school administrator it has. Also, under the Republic Act number 9155 Chapter, 1 series number 7 states that "consistent with the national educational policies, plans, and standards, the school heads shall have authority, responsibility, and accountability in managing all affairs of the school." Thus, the success and failure of the school depend on what kind of school principal it has. The present issues relating to school administrators: the weighing responsibility results to stress in attaining and the expected improvement of the educational system, increasing demand in the position and quality of learning process, occurrence, and responding to the distinct crisis in school. Also, the critical dilemma is the negligence of the spirit of being a leader such as avoiding and escaping to handle stressful works often leads to the mischievousness of the leader and poor outcome in the academic performance in school.

Simply, the school administrators are exposed to challenges, requiring a paradigm of shift, collegiality, efficiency, and effectiveness. Taking head-on the challenges will entail development and quality in administering leadership skills. Moreover, the prominence of these issues should be addressed properly by providing training and development programs to enhance the quality of school leadership capabilities and institutional provisions (DepEd). Consequently, studies that had been produced in this area did not expand to explore the effects of gender and leadership in schools.

This research paper desires to contribute to the field of education and society. This will determine the leadership skills of the school administrators to hone their abilities in managing, and extending capabilities and approaches applicable in administering the school. Also, appropriate measures may be executed.

**1.1 Objectives of the Study**

The research's general objective is to determine the relationship between gender and leadership skills among school administrators.

Specific:

1. To determine the school administrators level of leadership skills.
2. To analyze the level of leadership skills in line with the gender of the respondents.
3. To describe schools administrators' view in their gender in accomplishing the following tasks:
  - 3.1. internal relations;
  - 3.2. day to day instruction; and
  - 3.3. organization management.

**2. METHODS**

**2.1 Research Design**

This research was applied with a combination of quantitative and qualitative data (i.e., mixed-method research). Also, according to Creswell (2014), quantitative research was a type of research, wherein mathematical data were being gathered and analyzed through mathematical methods. This might be done by utilizing online surveys and questionnaires to gather data. Upon data gathering, the researchers would analyze and interpret the data using statistical treatments appropriate to it. While qualitative research was conducted through various means such as an online in-depth interview to gather deeper perspectives of the participants.

**2.2 Data Gathering Procedures**

The researchers personally supervised with an online survey questionnaire to measure the quantitative, schoolteachers, and did an online in-depth interview has been recorded with

public secondary school administrators located at Bulakan, Bulacan. The researchers utilized a confirmation note stating that the respondents shall adhere to the said condition: veracity- only stating truthfulness, upon signing the confirmation note. The said interview has been recorded using mobile phones via the permission received by the respondents.

**3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Part 1. School Administrator's Level of Leadership Skills

The table hereunder presents the weighted mean and standard deviation of levels of leadership skills.

*Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Leadership Skills of School Administrators*

No.	Leadership Skills	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Administrative	4.51	0.550	Outstanding
2	Interpersonal	4.52	0.587	Outstanding
3	Conceptual	4.57	0.563	Outstanding
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.53</b>	<b>0.547</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

The table shows the weighted mean and standard deviation of school administrators in terms of levels of leadership skills. Also, the table showed that the Conceptual skills were the most outstanding in the level of leadership skills, wherein the mean score was 4.57, with a descriptive rating of "Outstanding". Followed by Interpersonal skills (O=4.52) and lastly administrative skills (O=4.51). Such a result was implied of the following level of leadership skills resulted in a grand mean 4.53 and overall outstanding rate.

Part 2. Gender of School Administrators and Leadership skills

This part reflects the mean and standard deviation of the gender and level of leadership skills.

*Mean and Standard Deviation of Level of Leadership Skills of School Administrators by Gender*

No.	Leadership Skills	Male N=18		Female N=12	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Administrative	4.60	0.498	4.37	0.615
2	Interpersonal	4.69	0.537	4.25	0.578
3	Conceptual	4.71	0.517	4.36	0.586
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>0.506</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>0.563</b>

The table presents the mean and standard deviation of levels of leadership skills of school administrators by gender. Results manifested that among the male school administrator the Conceptual skills are at the highest level with a mean score of (M=4.71), followed by Interpersonal (M=4.69), and lastly Administrative (M=4.60). On the other hand, a female school administrator excels the most in Administrative (M=4.37), then Conceptual (M=4.36), and Interpersonal (M=4.25). This

only implied that the male school administrator has the highest mean score with 4.67 in all aspects of leadership skills regardless of the difference of 0.34 with the female mean score of (M=4.33). This result is like Barry Eklund, & Grunberg, (2017) results with different areas of exemplary in gender and leadership domains. Incoherent with various studies indicate that gender differences do exist and are shown in various aspects especially in leadership (Chletoti, Matheri, & Mulwa, 2015). Such as the study of Gieselmann (2004), studies gender and leadership skills and the results indicated that male and female school principals provide, the best fact that female principals excel in some ways or vice versa.

Part 3. Gender and Leadership skills independent T-test Analysis

The table hereunder presents the Independent t-test analysis on gender and leadership skills.

Independent t-test Analysis of Gender and Leadership Skills of School Administrators

Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	p-value
Male	18	4.67	0.506	28	1.726	.095
Female	12	4.33	0.563			

\* 0.05 level of significance

The result of the t-test analysis in table 6 reveals that the observed difference in the mean score of male administrators (4.67) and female administrators (4.33) in leadership skills was found not to be significant (t = 1.726, p > .05) at 0.05 level of significance. This was a piece of substantial evidence to accept the null hypothesis because there was no significant correlation existing between gender and leadership skills among the school administrators.

Such a result was evident in the study of Cheloti, Matheri, & Mulwa (2015), wherein there no significant relationship between the principal’s gender and effectiveness in managerial and leadership.

Part 4. Qualitative Data Presentation

The data presented hereunder were collected from the answers of 5 respondents in an in-depth interview which was conducted online by the researchers.

Thematic Analysis: Respective Categories of the School Administrators’ answer in the in-depth online Interview

CODES	BASIC THEMES	ORGANIZING THEMES
INTERNAL RELATIONS	Knowing and understanding subordinates	SOCIAL & PERSONAL COMPETENCIES
	Establishing a professional relationship	
	Abiding rules and regulations	
	Having good communication skills	
	Firm in decision making	
	Sensitive and kind-hearted	
	Treating and sees gender fairly	
DAY TO DAY INSTRUCTIONS	Empathy skills	PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES
	Problem-solving skills	
	Knows and consider limitations	
	Eagerness to motivate others	
ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT	Fair, Objective and Diplomatic	ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES
	Displaying leadership skills	
	Decision making in a democratic and respectable way	
	Act as facilitator	
	Courage to take initiative and innovation	
	Shows professionalism at all times	

The table shows that there are three organizing themes and 17 basic themes that the researchers constructed from the three codes as the basis in the in-depth online interview given with a total of 9 questions that were detected from the answers of the respondents. The mentioned codes stated the gender and school administrators accomplishing their tasks. These themes are further explored in the succeeding sections.

**Social and Personal Competencies in Leadership.** It is a set of skills that includes social awareness, self-management, and control like transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimization that extends towards emotional awareness. This was also derived from the concept of Gender Schema Theory also known as social-cognitive theory focused on social interactions and observation by classifying information, decision making, and belief that regulate the behavior. These competencies were evidenced in the following statements.

“Sa tingin ko personally, mas maganda ang lalaki as a leader because mas marami syang pwedeng gawin, deretsong magsalita, pwede mong sabihin o kausapin or sa nasasakupan yung gusto mong mangyari because we have the power and the eagerness to motivate and, to change them”. (School administrator 1)

“Ang great leader dapat courageous, matapang dapat may integrity, honest at tsaka merong focus dun sa mission and vision dun sa kung ano man yung kinakaaniban nyang institution.” (School administrator 5) “Upon male heads as respectable even if they wear simple but dignified attires. They look upon male heads as full of bright ideas and equipped with wisdom and knowledge in all diverse fields.”(School Administrator 2)

“kaya naman nating kontrolin yung sitwasyon so everything

*is fine and smooth when it comes to leadership, when it comes to management so I think mas comfortable ang mga tao pag lalaki ang leader because they an approach more and then they rely what they hear or what they say about the situation.” (School Administrator 1)*

*“male school head were flexible ahh kahit saan kami dalin kunyari kumbaga ditto sanay ako mag drive kahit san ako puntahang eskwelahan may ivisit akong ganitong school so on the go ako lagi dun sa mga activity, sa nakakasali din kasi ako sa mga outdoor activities like for example yung Jamboree.” (school administrator 3)*

Moreover, most respondents personally emphasized the essence and qualities of an effective leader.

**Professional Competencies.** It is the ability to execute and perform tasks with a skill of acceptable quality. Communication skill is one of the essential skills needed. As stated by one of the school administrators:

*“When it comes to communication with parents be it male or female, we observe diplomacy and courtesy. All we talk are based by legally accepted principles abiding certain laws applicable in DepEd”. (School administrator 2)*

Also, some answers clearly state that communicating effectively towards the same-gender creates balance and harmony. On the contrary, one participant stated:

*“Yung opposite gender, medyo mas applicable sa leadership ibig sabihin pagka ang babae ang leaders so mas ano ang lalaking client dini pag ka babae naman, lalaki leader mas approachable yung babae kaya madali silang lumapit or mag approach”. (School Administrator 1)*

*“syempre kailangan kong mamili ng salita kasi diba pag lalaki yung kausap kinakailangan pag parents yung kausap mo talagang pipiliin mo yung mga salita na ihaharap mo sa kanila.” (School Administrator 5)*

However, some situations may bring ungrateful issues and problem that are an often source of misleading information such as stated by some respondents:

*“pag ang opposite gender medyo nag aalangan sila syempre nga lalaki ang nasa office so ayun lang yung Nakita kong medyo disadvantages thou hindi mo pagka babae syempre girl to girl so baka mamaya eh ma misinterpret ng iba.” (School Administrator 1)*

*“ang mahirap kapag ka male and female eh dalawa lang kayo sa office medyo kahit sabihin natin na ano wala naming masama ehyyy yung issue ba so kaya gusto ko at lease merong nakaharap na isang babae den na co-counterpart.” (School Administrator 3)*

Global perspective was also evident among the answers of the respondents in terms of their viewpoints in gender in certain points. In particular, most school administrator stated:

*“I don’t think na hindi makakaapekto yung gender para maisolve yung problema, kasi usual na iyon minsan tinitingin nila bilang isang leader dapat daw porke group leader dapat lalaki pero generally ngayon, gender equality na tayo so wala na yung sa pagiging babae o lalaki ng isang leader yan”. (School Administrator 5)*

Moreover, the participants are displaying Professionalism and productivity in engaging problems while accomplishing their tasks. In particular, one school administrator stated:

*“syempre meron kang pinamumunuan hindi mo na kailangang ipakita yung kahinaan mo . Kailangan mo pa ding maging matatag para Makita nila na ito pa lang leader naming.” (School Administrator 4)*

In addition to that statement:

*“anduduan yung eagerness mo na para matuto din hindi naman porke headteacher tayo o principal eh alam mo na lahat so dapat matututo tayo sa mga teachers.” (School Administrator 4)*

*“Teachers enjoy having a conversation with us and listen with all eyes and ears to some current trends in the field of education.” (School Administrator 2)*

In alignment with this idea supports the concept of Transformational Leadership theory states that there is a higher percentage of building relationships, establishing good communication, and gradual respect.

**Administrative Competencies.** Supports the knowledge, skill, qualification, and capacity to manage and direct his/ her subordinates. In the field of education, there is always absolute rules and regulation that everyone should abide. In particular, these are the statements of the participants:

*“Possessing the qualifications and will show loyalty to his superiors or vice versa and follow guidelines”. (School Administrator 2)*

*“We will urgently take an action and will make sure that the employee will face the consequences of his actions like being unbecoming but of course everything will be done in a due process.” (School Administrator 2)*

*“Bilang leaders dapat tulungan mo yung mga kasamahan mo na makuha nila yung goal nila at wag dapat matakot na yung tao nay un mga tinulungan mo eh maging mabuting tao sila sayo kase hindi eh .. pride mo yun at accomplishment mo na natulungan mo sila.” (School administrator 5)*

#### Part 5. Consolidation and Interpretation of Data

The findings of both qualitative and quantitative data were parallel to each other, and the said findings manifested the following.

First was that the level of leadership skills of both male and female school administrators was outstanding in terms of Conceptual, Interpersonal, and Administrative. According to (Guerra & Rowe, 2013) these set of skills was mainly based on the Skills Based theory which believes that provided with this set of skills gives a leader the understanding of influencing, through accomplishing goals and objectives within an organization.

The second was in terms of gender and leadership skills the male school administrators excels in Conceptual, Interpersonal, and Administrative on the other hand female school administrator has a deficit score of 0.34 points and excel in Administrative, Conceptual and Interpersonal. According to the previous studies conducted, Appelbaum (2003), females' leadership skills or style is way more diverse than males, but males can learn to adopt women's style or vice versa and use it effectively as well.

A third was that there was no significant correlation when it comes to gender and leadership skills. Also, as reflected in the qualitative data based on the majority of the participants said that gender is not the basis to measure the leadership skill of neither an individual nor the capabilities to perform their task well. For instance, a female school administrator stated that;

*"syempre hindi na pag uusapan kung babae o lalaki sya as long as ma meet nya yung standard kung ano man yung kailangan."*

In addition to that statement, another male school administrator stated the same perspective,

*"actually noh so gender equality natin ang babae at lalaki so under sa ating Magna Carta in other rules eh so parehas lang naman yon so hindi na, wala ng diskriminasyon kung babae or lalake so the same ang trato natin babae o lalake regardless nadun."*

However, according to Glanz, Shaked, & Gross (2017), believed that females are usually selected as principals or school administrators after gaining more teaching experience and professional academic studies than males. One female school administrator pointed out that,

*"sa government tsaka military usually and leaders ay male pero pag dating sa services and education babae yung nag do dominate as marami yung babae na nangunguna dun sa education."*

These perspectives implied the issues relating the gender and leadership in educational organizations, such matter triggers

the researchers to dig deeper into this topic. Such results in qualitative data come up with the Leadership Competence; Social and Personal competencies, Professional competencies, and administrative competencies showed alignment with the given level of leadership skill.

According to Fowler (2018), leadership competencies are mainly designed to equip leaders with knowledge, skills, ability and other characteristics, required to effectively lead people toward organizational achievement and goals. Such results were also evident in the study of Dos & Savas (2015), it was expected that school principals have strong interpersonal relationships, leadership qualities, considerate in both social and personal aspects.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

From the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the respondents, the researchers were able to formulate three conclusions in this study follows:

1. The outstanding level of leadership skills of the school administrators in public secondary schools in Bulacan, Bulacan can lead to a higher rate of success in achieving the goals and objectives in education.
2. The leadership competencies, effectiveness, and efficiency are linked to the individual rather than to an individual's gender.
3. Learning to that accepts and respect gender differences exists however it proves that men and females are diverse and unique in every aspect of leadership.

Based on the data gathered as well as the conclusions, the researcher hereby recommends the following:

1. The school administrators' continuation of execution and exhibiting outstanding leadership skills especially in contributing to the school's achievements and outcomes.
2. Encouraging the administrative leaders either male or female to adopt and apply creativity, and innovation especially in aiming for higher outcomes.
3. To the curriculum, designers and gender and development groups will continue to widen the educational perspective about gender equality.

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