Relating Meaningfully with the World:
A Philosophical Perspective on School Leadership

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Abstract

Every teacher enters a classroom with a philosophy of education that serves as one's moral and pedagogical principles in making teaching and learning happen meaningfully. Eventually, as the teacher grows in the teaching profession, he engages in mentoring and leading teachers and other stakeholders. Unconsciously, he creates personal school leadership philosophy that will be his guiding principles in leading the school. This study aims to find out the philosophy on school leadership of selected doctoral students and identify their leadership principles guiding them in carrying out their duties as current or future school heads. The findings will provide inputs in enhancing the graduate school core and specialization courses. Furthermore, the inputs will strengthen the development of graduate school students in becoming future-ready education leaders, expert practitioners and research scholars. Using qualitative content analysis as the methodology in this study, it found out that the participants' school leadership philosophy is about positive and nurturing culture, being human, inspiration, empowerment and collaboration are evident. They believe that engaging in a meaningful relationship with the stakeholders is the most appropriate way in leading schools today. The findings validate the relevance today of classical and contemporary leadership theories on human relations, transformational leadership, empowerment, and synergy. Moreover, these may the leadership theories that must be emphasized in preparing and enhancing current and future school leaders.

Keywords: School Leadership Philosophy; Nurturing; Collaboration; Inspiration; Empowerment

Introduction

Undoubtedly, man is a social being who relates with other human beings. There are different types of relationship namely family, friendship, acquaintances, romantic, sexual, work, and civil. In society, there are relationships where authority is seen and felt. At home, parents are responsible for their children and have moral authority over them. At work, leaders supervise their subordinates and have authority over them. The relationship between leaders and subordinates is always anchored on authority unlike in the family which is founded on love. But it does not mean that it is impossible to feel love in the workplace. The relationship in the workplace can go beyond authority where respect and love permeate in the environment. This will depend on how the leader relates and engages with the subordinates and other stakeholders.

Everyone has an experience of relating with a leader personally or professionally. People praise their leader because of his/her vision and contributions to the success of the organization. More than the successes, a leader is admired because of his/her good relationship with the stakeholders. Ironically, employees hate leaders who are authoritative and blinded by power. They follow out of fear in losing their jobs. In reporting for work, they drag themselves and do their tasks with no commitment. In other words, they just work for the money with no concern for the company. They are not

inspired to do their tasks because of unconcerned managers who are more focused on work and not on people. Classical scientific management theories advocated by Frederick Taylor, the father of scientific management, and Henri Fayol, the father of modern management theory focused more on authority, processes, and system. However, a new theory emerged which is on human relations through the study of Elton Mayo who led the Hawthorne experiments. It was one of the great turning points in management thinking. Together with the other researchers, they concluded that it was not the changes in physical conditions that were affecting the workers' productivity. Rather, it was the fact that someone was actually concerned about their workplace, and the opportunities gave them to discuss changes before they took place. In other words, human relations are important in motivating people. In another study by Frederick Herzberg, he found out the factors for satisfaction in the workplace namely achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. From scientific to human relations theory, these were all based on researches that proved to be helpful for leaders.

In the contemporary and modern era, more leadership and management theories emerged which are basically anchored on relating with people as there is human element to it. Contemporary literatures on leadership and management present a shift from, authority to human relations. John Kotter, an expert on change management came up with the eight-step process for leading change. James McGregor Burns conceptualized transformational leadership which was later developed by Bernard Bass. Similarly, Barry Posner and James Kouzes developed the leadership practices inventory. Peter Senge believed in the importance of systems thinking process. These concepts were supported by John Maxwell through his 21 irrefutable laws of leadership. In 2001, Jim Collins developed Level 5 leadership.

From these classical and contemporary school leadership theories, it provides an idea that leadership is both a science and an art. According to Duffin (2022), leadership and art are fundamentally driven by bringing a new vision to life. Transforming these visions from the spark of an idea to reality is no mean feat and demands dedication, authenticity, and unbridled creativity. In leading people, science helps by understanding patterns, behaviors, and attitudes of people based on studies and researches. But leadership in terms of relating with people is an art because it deals with managing people. A leader adapts to the people in the working environment and employs a personal but contextualized leadership style. While maintaining his leadership principles, he adjusts and demonstrates flexibility according to the culture and unwritten rules in the organization. In the article of Jhunjhunwala (2022), he pointed out that there is a discernible sense that leadership embodies an intersection between art and science. While there are definite strategies in place to understand leadership traits, each person will deploy them differently. Hence, our best bet is to cultivate leaders who can use the best of both worlds and influence people for the betterment of the society.

In supervising and managing people, a leader demonstrates a personal philosophy of leadership in supervising and managing people. This philosophy is consciously or unconsciously influenced by classical and contemporary management theories. Furthermore, it may not necessarily be clearly written but fully instilled in one's mind and heart based on his reflection, experiences and knowledge. But in leading people, it is important that every leader should have a very clear personal philosophy of leadership.

In the Philippines, school heads and teachers are not only guided, influenced and inspired by western classical and contemporary management literatures but also by local policies and standards like the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), Philippine Professional Standards for Supervisors (PPSS), and Philippine Professional Standards for School Heads (PPSSH). Catholic schools in the Philippines are guided by

Philippine Catholic Schools Standards for Basic Education. In Southeast Asia, the Competency Framework for Southeast Asian School Heads (2014) is also a reference.

Why is there a need for a personal philosophy of leadership? In the article of Aquino (2023) "Why study philosophy?", he said that philosophy signals the evolution of the reflective spirit. Moreover, he pointed out that we know, and we are convinced that we know, but what is it that we know and how we know - these are questions that are truly philosophical, and while at first, the gamut of answers provided to these questions in the history of philosophy may be disturbing to the student, what is in fact opened to him is an exciting variety of perspectives, a rich buffet of the finest products of the human mind. In writing a personal philosophy of leadership, a leader reflects on his knowledge, experiences, and interpersonal relationships. Through his reflection, he manifests a commitment not only to leadership but also in making people and the organization better. With a clear philosophy, he is well-guided in leading and inspiring people.

With all these literatures and standards on teaching and leadership, this study aims to find out the philosophy on school leadership of selected doctoral students who are future and current school heads. This will assist in identifying their leadership principles which they consider as the important foundation in leading schools. The findings will also provide inputs in enhancing the graduate school course syllabi of core courses and specialization courses. Moreover, it will provide inputs in making graduate school students future-ready education leaders, expert practitioners and research scholars.

Method

The method used in this study is content analysis which is defined as "the systematic reduction of content, analyzed with special attention to the context in which it was created, to identify themes and extract meaningful interpretations of the data." (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique. Rather than being a single method, current applications of content analysis show three distinct approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. All three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this study, summative content analysis was used which involved counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context. The participants of the study were twenty (20) doctoral students in a teacher education university in Manila, Philippines who are future and current academic or school heads enrolled in a leadership core course in school year 2023-2024. They were from basic education (public and private schools), private and state universities and colleges. Data were obtained from a recorded online class that focused on school leadership practices and their written personal philosophy on school leadership. During the online class, the researcher who was also the professor of the participants informed them about the study including its objectives. Because the online classes were usually recorded, he sought the students' consent in using the recorded online class and their written personal philosophy on school leadership. They were assured that no names will be mentioned in the study and only pseudonyms will be used. An informed consent form was accomplished and submitted by each participant. Data analysis started with searches for occurrences of the identified words by hand or by computer. Data were managed and organized. They were read and the emerging ideas, patterns or insights were written by the researcher. Word frequency counts for each identified term were calculated. Counting was used to identify patterns in the data and to contextualize the codes. The emerging data were coded and thematized. In coding, the researcher organizes data collected into segments and assigns a word or phrase to them as labels (Creswell, 2014). Eventually, the findings were represented in tables illustrating

the relationships between the different themes. The data were triangulated with the course syllabus and literatures on leadership and management. This research was endorsed by the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and approved by Educational Policy Research and Development Center (EPRDC). It received clearance to proceed from the Research Ethics Committee. Before the data gathering was conducted, all participants were oriented about the study and informed consent was sought from the participants. All participants accomplished and submitted the informed consent form. After the research was completed, it was submitted and obtained clearance from the EPRDC.

Results and Discussion
The findings of the study including the discussion are presented on their relationship with classical literatures and contemporary literatures on leadership, and its inputs in enhancing the Philosophy and Practice of Transformational Leadership Course in the graduate school.

1. Philosophy on School Leadership of Doctoral Students and Classical Literatures on Leadership
The themes that emerged on the philosophy of school leadership of doctoral students related to classical literatures on leadership are positive and nurturing culture, being human, inspiration and collaboration. Empowerment which is one of the themes that came out does not have classical literatures on leadership that be closely associated with. It can be gleaned on Table 1 the themes and the classical literatures supporting them.

Table 1. Philosophy on School Leadership of Doctoral Students and Classical Literatures on Leadership

Themes	Classical Literatures on Leadership
Positive and Nurturing Culture	• Initiative (Henri Fayol) • Human relations are important in motivating people. (Elton Mayo)
Being Human	• Equity (Henri Fayol) • Stability (Henri Fayol) • A focus on people, rather than upon machines or economics. (Elton Mayo)
Inspiration	• Motivation depends upon teamwork, requiring co-ordination and cooperation of individuals involved (Elton Mayo) • Recognition (Frederick Herzberg)
Collaboration	• Develop a work system (Frederick Taylor) • Esprit de Corps (Henri Fayol) • Human relations within teams must fulfill both individual and organizational objectives simultaneously. (Elton Mayo)

a. Positive and Nurturing Culture
Any teacher will feel excited reporting to school because of the warmth and positive attitude of the stakeholders particularly the teachers and students. When school leaders take care of teachers and students, the school as a community grows. The participants agreed in the class discussion that seeing many teachers resign every end of the school year is an indication that the school does not have a nurturing culture. They

said that this is a red flag for a school leader though he/she can argue that happiness is relative. Participant 3 shared that (Interview and document, February 12, 2023):

> In our school, there were teachers who were about to resign but prevented by the principal because he talked to them personally and listened to them. This happened two years ago and these teachers continued to stay in our school. In those two years, these teachers were supported morally by the principal in their graduate studies. They just want the support of our heads.

Another participant believes that everyone should feel that they are in a learning environment that is nurturing. Participant 2 said that (Interview and document, February 9, 2023) :

> As an individual, I personally prefer a proactive leadership style wherein the leader is active and hands-on in managing its people and the organization. I want to creating a positive and nurturing school culture where all students feel welcome, safe, and supported. Everyone should feel that they are at home and there is an opportunity for them to grow.

Authority cannot be ignored in any organization but what should permeate is respect. A school community that is nurturing also manifests respect. Teachers and students show respect to the school head because of his warmth and support and not just his authority. Participant 9 said that (Interview and document, February 4, 2023):

> I believe a leader's most important thing is to be kind. Kindness fosters a warm, welcoming atmosphere in which everyone feels appreciated and respected. Being open and honest about your objectives as a leader is also essential. Being transparent and honest fosters trust and respect among the people you lead.

This theme is closely related to the Scientific Management Theory of Henry Fayol particularly on initiative and Human Relations of Elton Mayo specifically in motivating people. Initiative and human relations support having a positive and nurturing culture. It transcends the meaning of management in relation to authority. Leadership is more than authority. People seek a community that is caring led by a proactive leader. Essentially to them is a nurturing atmosphere where everyone is valued. In these postmodern times we are rediscovering the importance of community. We seek to re-create safe and appropriate spaces wherein effective teaching and learning can take place. We strive to provide a caring environment where individuality is preserved, but not at the cost of cohesiveness and community (Bennett & Anderson, 2003).

b. Being Human

Leaders are human beings with authority. It does not give them any authority to dehumanize persons under their supervision. People leave an organization when they are not properly treated. The participants believe that the human element in leadership should not be taken for granted. They believe that there are leaders who are blinded by the authority given to them and forget that their subordinates are human beings and not slaves. In their experience, they said that they admire school leaders who are grounded and human in relating with teachers and students. Also, they said that they dislike leaders who do not admit their mistakes as if they are perfect human beings because of their authority. When asked to describe a leader who is human, Participant 20 said that (Interview and document, February 22, 2023):

> A true leader is called a worthy leader when he or she can see through the lives and experiences of his or her subordinates. A true leader is emphatic. A true leader knows how to communicate well.

Participant 1 similarly mentioned that (Interview and document, February 14, 2023):

As a leader, I intend to take a stand and listen to the teachers' perspectives and then act on them as and when needed, create welcoming, caring communities of practice that value each person's contribution, demand that all interactions at work be courteous, provide professional development that avoids ranking or comparing individuals and celebrate growth rather than just highlighting areas for improvement and inspire and enable teachers to be better.

Participant 10 believes in being human and encouraging as a leader. He/She said that (Interview and document, February 10, 2023):

Every great school has one thing in common: a positive culture and the support of its students. We can instill a love of learning in every student and guide them toward realizing their full potential if we foster an environment where they all feel supported, protected, and welcomed. Ensure that all children have a pleasant experience at school, which is one of the essential components of developing a welcoming atmosphere. This entails establishing conditions in which every student feels appreciated and respected. In addition, it is essential to provide a secure and encouraging atmosphere in the classroom so that every student may feel at ease testing out novel concepts and taking calculated risks.

Being human is associated in the scientific management theory of Henri Fayol particularly on equity and stability, and Elton Mayo's Human Relations Theory specifically on focusing on people rather than on machines or economics. The leaders' relationship with teachers and student is above all human. In a nurturing environment, being human in leadership comes with it. We can all work to invest in relationships and find ways to show people that we care about them. When you show you care in your own unique way, you will stand out in a world where many have seemed to forget to care. And when you care, you inspire others to care. After all, think about all the great organizations lead by positive leaders who are showing the world they care. A caring leader unites, connects, encourages, and transforms teams and organizations and changes the world (Gordon, 2017).

c. Inspiration

People usually look for motivation and inspiration to pursue their dreams. These are their parents, elders, teachers, and leaders who can encourage and inspire them through their wisdom and example. The participants indicated that they want leaders who inspire them to be better and contribute to society. In schools, they said that they want to be a leader who inspire their teachers and subordinates because they were inspired by their former or present school head. Some said that they are challenged to be an inspiration because they were never inspired by their former or former school head. Participant 18 shared that (Interview and document, February 8, 2023):

With the spark/inspiration that I have, it is my faith that I could be productive, responsible, and accountable in my tasks so that I can effect change in my community.

Similarly, Participant 12 said that (Interview and document, February 11, 2023):

My school leadership philosophy is one that focuses on two important aspects: people and mission. People, which includes teachers, school staff and personnel, need to be motivated to be able to perform their assigned tasks to the best of their abilities. I believe that I should be a source of inspiration to all as we nurture a culture in school that listens, promotes well-being, empowers, and gives premium to accountability. Mission is our ultimate goal as an institution that is to educate the students. All efforts must be focused on providing the best and quality education for future citizens of our nation.

Participant 11 who was inspired by his present school head shared that (Interview and document, February 11, 2023):

> I believe that I should be a source of inspiration to all as we nurture a culture in school that listens, promotes well-being. To inspire means to be an epitome of passion for whatever work is at hand. I should be a source of strength and direction while considering all aspects of the educational system.

School leaders should serve as an inspiration to all stakeholders particularly the students and teachers. Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory Of Motivation-Hygiene states that motivators, like recognition and achievement, lead to higher satisfaction and motivation. Similarly, Elton Mayo's Human Relations Theory emphasizes motivation which will depend on teamwork, coordinate and cooperation. These inspire people. When people are inspired, they become more creative and do innovations. A study found out that there is a significant positive relationship between followers' creativity and organizational innovation. In addition, the relationship between transformational leadership and followers' creativity, through the mediating role of employees' psychological empowerment, support for innovation, workplace relationships and employee learning, was also found to be both positive and significant (Harbi et al, 2019).

d. Collaboration

Being a school leader is not only a challenging job but also a lonely one. Final decisions come from the school leader and communicating them particularly hard or sad decisions can be very stressful. The process of making plans and decisions is not a solitary task. According to John Maxwell, nobody does anything great alone. Great leaders surround themselves with great people. It's lonely at the top, so you'd better take someone with you. People perform better when they are teamed with people performing at higher levels than they are.

The participants agreed that they will foster teamwork and collaboration as school leaders for they cannot do it alone. Teachers and staff will feel valued when they are involved. Participant 14 shared that (Interview and document, February 11, 2023):

> The school community that I aspire to lead is a school that promotes collaboration and empowerment among members of the school community in line with the DepEd Mission, Vision, and Core Values, through open communication, positive working relationship, and professionalism.
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> Similarly participant 1 pointed out (Interview and document, February 14, 2023):
> An organization is not a one-man army where only one person do all the work. A leader must be able to recognize that the goals of an organization can be only attained through collaborative efforts and by that, leaders need to inspire their people. Motivate them. Urge them to be one of the key participants in improving the institution.

In terms of involving other stakeholders in realizing the vision-mission of school, Participant 8 said that (Interview and document, February 20, 2023):

> Lastly, cultivating supportive and cooperative connections with every member of the school community is an absolute must to create an atmosphere successfully. Developing great connections with children, parents, and staff members is an essential part of this. By cultivating these healthy connections, we can establish a community inside the school that is dedicated to cooperating to ensure the academic achievement of every student. In addition to this, any effective school leader must lead by example. I can set the tone for the whole school and assist others in understanding the significance of these concepts if I demonstrate the conduct I anticipate from others.

Even during the initial years of developing scientific management theories, collaboration was already identified as a core component in management. Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol emphasized the value of developing a work system and esprit de corps but it was not as similar to the present meaning of collaboration. Elton Mayo also pointed out that human relations within teams should be for the personal and institutional objectives. At the turn of the 21st century, collaboration was identified as one of the most important skills that must be developed. Collaboration is a must and 21st century school leaders should not ignore the value of teamwork in leading schools in the 21st century. For high performing schools, it was found out that these schools have high levels of collaboration and communication. Things are done better when stakeholders both internal and external collaborate rather than compete. The key to collaboration is open and clear communication among members of the school community (Llagas et al, 2016). In the cause of improving instruction, effective principals take advantage of the collaborative culture they work to create in their schools, noting that the school leaders they observed "consistently expressed" the desire to see teachers working, teaching, and helping one another (Mendels, 2012).

e. Empowerment

For almost twenty years, leadership experts have been talking about the importance of empowerment. Empowerment is not only about giving our followers the ability to make their own choices; it is about giving them the tools and processes to make those choices effectively and productively. It is not about delegating responsibilities; it is about strategically assigning employees tasks that are a little outside of their ability level. Why? Because as long as they have the aptitude, their capacity and capabilities will expand in a way that will help them complete the assigned task. As a result, they will grow as a leader.

The participants believe that empowerment should be part of their leadership philosophy so that the school as an organization will grow through sustainable leadership. Participant 17 said that (Interview and document, February 14, 2023):

> I think school leaders should always be grounded with the fact that they are in positions to help and empower their teachers, staff, and eventually, their learners. The positions and titles they have are all but opportunities to serve their clients and their followers.
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> Participant 6 pointed out that (Interview and document, February 19, 2023):
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> My school leadership philosophy is one that focuses on two important aspects: people and mission. People, which includes teachers, school staff and personnel, need to be motivated to be able to perform their assigned tasks to the best of their abilities. I believe that I need to empower them in order to ensure that all initiatives and programs are communicated to all. This means that all understands the reasons for such initiatives and programs.

Empowerment as a key theme that emerged in the philosophy of school leadership of the participants is modern theory in management which does not have an equivalent in the classical literatures on leadership. It may be construed that leadership during that period was more focused on authority though there were already emphases on cooperation, human relations, being human and inspiration. Empowerment is about building trust and micromanaging. As understood before, leaders micromanage their subordinates and ensure that they are in the thick of things from start to finish on any project, activity or plans. However, the workload can be overwhelming and other tasks may be in jeopardy should a leader insist that he will be on top of everything. Empowerment is the key to ensure that different tasks are managed accordingly. School leaders believe that there are teachers or academic heads who can lead projects and

committees. They have to trust their people in getting the job done and become more involved in the realization of the vision. Empowerment is also an opportunity for the teachers to grow and realize their potential as teachers and school leaders in the future. Essential to leaders is the development of a coherent set of educational values on which to base leadership for school improvement. These values serve as fundamental principles on which to develop and design their schools and to provide consistency across all aspects of their leadership. One of the eight values is empowerment which means a commitment to the meaningful involvement and participation of school community members in the life of the school (Brundrett et al, 2003).

2. Philosophy on School Leadership of Doctoral Students and Contemporary Literatures on Leadership

The themes that emerged on the philosophy of school leadership of doctoral students related to contemporary literatures on leadership are positive and nurturing culture, being human, inspiration, collaboration, and empowerment. It can be gleaned on table 1 the themes and the contemporary literatures supporting them.

Table 2. Philosophy on School Leadership of Selected School Heads and Contemporary Literatures on Leadership

Themes	Contemporary Literatures on Leadership
Positive and Nurturing Culture	• Be proactive. (Stephen Covey) • Encourage the heart. (Posner & Kouzes) • Idealized Influence (Bernard Bass) • A personal sense of humility, (Jim Collins) • A passionate commitment to continuous learning. (Jim Collins)
Being Human	• Individualized Consideration. (Bernard Bass) • Seek first to understand then to be understood - Emphatic listening. (Stephen Covey) • A deep personal understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses. (Jim Collins) • The Law of Connection (John Maxwell)
Inspiration	• Inspirational Motivation (Bernard Bass) • Model the Way. (Posner & Kouzes) • The Law of Solid Ground (John Maxwell)
Empowerment	• Empower others to take part of the vision. (John Kotter) • The Law of Empowerment (John Maxwell)
Collaboration	• Synergize (Stephen Covey) • Team learning (Peter Senge) • Form a powerful guiding coalition. (John Kotter)

a. Positive and Nurturing Culture

As leadership practices evolved since the scientific management, many contemporary leadership theories were developed based on researches and experiences. Stephen Covey, a leadership expert who conceptualized the seven habits of highly effective people emphasized the importance of being proactive. is about taking responsibility for your life. Proactive people recognize that they are "response-able." It

means that they don't blame circumstances, conditions, or conditioning for their behavior. They know they can choose their behavior. In the five practices of exemplary leadership by Kouzes and Posner, it is important that leaders encourage the heart. It means accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize the contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes. Bernard Bass, who developed transformational leadership that leaders must manifest idealized influence. It means that they are role models for their followers because they engage in high standards of ethical behavior. Followers identify with these leaders, and want to emulate them. Jim Collins who developed Level 5 leadership said that leaders must have a personal sense of humility and a passionate commitment to continuous learning. These principles in leadership are about creating a positive and nurturing culture.

b. Being Human, Inspiration and Empowerment

On being human, this is supported by the principle of individualized consideration on transformational leadership by Bass wherein a leader attends to each follower's needs and is a mentor, coach or guide to the follower. This leader listens to the concerns and needs of each follower and provides support and is empathic of each person' situation and background. Covey said that leaders must seek first to understand then to be understood which also means emphatic listening. Leaders on being human must have a deep personal understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses according to Jim Collins. In the law of connection of John Maxwell, he said that leaders should have a connection which is to bring or to join one thing to another, to hit it off, to be on the same wavelength. Establishing a connection with another person is vital in leadership. A CEO who fails to emotionally connect with his people is on the road to failure because we must connect with others before we can expect them to follow. As Maxwell says "Leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand."

Leaders should be an inspiration to their subordinates. School heads must be an inspiration to the teachers and students. In transformational leadership, Bass emphasized on inspirational motivation wherein a leader articulates an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. Leaders who use inspirational motivation have high standards and expectation for their followers. Kouzes and Posner said that leaders model the way. They clarify values and set the example. To John Maxwell, leaders should follow the law of solid ground which means leaders have a solid character, living with integrity, authenticity and discipline. Trust is the foundation of leadership. It is earned or it isn't. Character is the source of trust. We build our character by being scrupulously honest, even when it hurts. To be authentic, we must be ourselves with everyone, not pretending to be something that we aren't. Discipline comes from doing what needs to be done whether we like it or not.

Empowerment which is a modern principle on leadership is supported by John Kotter, an expert on change management. He explained that leaders must empower people. Empowering people by removing as many barriers as possible to implementing the change vision in turns allows as many people as possible to take action towards that vision. On the other hand, Maxwell said that leaders should follow the law of empowerment which is to give the means, the power or opportunity to do to others. In order to empower others, we must first trust ourselves and then trust others to follow through managing processes and performing the tasks.

c. Collaboration

Collaboration which may also mean teamwork is strongly supported by contemporary literatures. According to Covey, leaders must synergize the people.

Synergy unifies and unleashes great power from people, as it's based on the tenant that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. To Peter Senge, the person behind systems thinking said that leaders must promote team learning. Team Learning starts with dialogue, the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine process of thinking and talking together. To the ancient Greeks, "dialogos" meant a free flowing of meaning through a group, allowing the group to discover insights not attainable individually. Interestingly, the practice of dialogue has been preserved in many "primitive" cultures but it has been almost completely lost to modern society. Today, the principles and practices of dialogue are being rediscovered and put into a contemporary context. Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. Lastly, Kotter supports collaboration because for change and progress to happen, leaders must form a powerful guiding coalition. The objective of building a guiding coalition is to establish buy-in toward the change initiatives. The idea is that the greater the respect for the team's diversity (i.e., in terms of skills, experiences, perspectives, etc.), the more respect change agents will have for the actual change. The objective is that this coalition can have enough power to shape, implement, and sustain the efforts. Together, they can assist leadership in transforming the organization.

These data reveal that school leadership is about relating with people, valuing people, and giving premium on people in school particularly teachers and students. In relating with people, it should help in developing a positive and nurturing culture, being authentic, collaboration, inspiration, and empowerment. This means leaders must relate meaningfully with the people and the small world where they are looked up to and hope that will make them better and productive individuals.

3. Philosophy on School Leadership of Selected School Heads and the Course Philosophy and Practice of Transformational Leadership

The course, Philosophy and Practice of Transformational Leadership is a core course in the doctoral program in this teacher university. The course enables the students to acquire deliberate and critical understanding of transformational leadership including the underlying premise in its practice in education-related organizations. Likewise, it highlights the opportunity for students to analyze theoretical and philosophical perspectives on transformational leadership and the how of its practice. Students in this course shall focus on analyzing inner work of leadership in addition to expanding participants' understanding of how to lead in the midst of change and complexity both in the Philippine educational system and society and global contexts, and consequently, be able to develop a leadership framework on three levels: 1) Learning about self as a leader and instrument of change (self); 2) Creating productive and fulfilling relationships in a leadership role (organization); and 3) Understanding leadership with complex systems (Philippines and beyond).

From the themes that emerged in the study namely positive and nurturing culture, being human, inspiration, empowerment and collaboration, it is evident that the course provides them knowledge and deeper understanding in leading schools today particularly in valuing and relating meaningfully with teachers, students and other stakeholders. They believe that the course allows them to reflect on their practices not only as teachers but also as current or future leaders in their respective schools. It prepares them with the needed competence in leading schools today with emphasis on transformational leadership. However, there is a need to emphasize these themes in the course particularly by citing more practical examples where the students can relate with.

Conclusion

School leadership may be associated initially with authority, power and bigger responsibilities but it has significantly shifted its focus on people, valuing the human person. The philosophy of the doctoral students who are future and current school heads is about positive and nurturing culture, being human, inspiration, empowerment, and collaboration. Their philosophy is influenced by classical literatures but more by the contemporary literatures on leadership which are related to head, hand and heart in leadership. Contemporary literatures highlight the value of collaboration, encouragement, presence, nurturing, empowerment, and inspiration. Though authority is important, their philosophy is anchored on the most important element in school – People. This is relating more meaningfully with the people, with the world. The course is reflective of these themes as it presents classical and contemporary literatures on leadership. It can also be understood that it is responsive to the needs of current or future school heads primarily those who are in the doctoral programs of the teacher university. However, it must look into recent developments in education and school leadership in order to become more relevant and responsive in preparing and developing school leaders. There may be new emerging leadership theories supportive of the themes that arose from this study. To develop future-ready education leaders, expert practitioners and research scholars in the university, the themes that emerged in the study must be given strong emphasis in the course by providing practical examples and through active and meaningful engagement of the students. Today, school leadership is about relationship, a matter of head, heart and hand.

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