Profiling Servant Leadership Among School Principals: A Correlational Study of Leadership Attributes and Practices

**Abstract:** This study examined the servant leadership profiles of school principals and how these relate to their leadership practices. Grounded in Greenleaf’s servant leadership theory and expanded by contemporary models by Spears, Patterson, and Liden et al., the research focused on two core dimensions: (1) the principals’ leadership profiles in terms of character orientation, people orientation, task orientation, and process orientation, and (2) their leadership practices including conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, behaving ethically, empowering, and creating value for the community. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected through validated survey instruments from selected school principals and their teaching staff. Results showed that principals generally demonstrated strong servant leadership profiles, particularly in character and people orientation. Leadership practices such as behaving ethically and putting followers first were consistently rated high, while emotional healing and conceptualizing showed areas for improvement, especially in private school settings. Statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between principals’ servant leadership profiles and their leadership practices. Specifically, higher ratings in character and people orientation were strongly associated with ethical behavior, empowerment, and follower-focused leadership practices. The study concludes that servant leadership is most effectively demonstrated when leaders exhibit a consistent alignment between their personal attributes and leadership actions. It recommends a contextualized training program aimed at enhancing principals’ capacity for emotional intelligence, visioning, and stakeholder engagement. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how internal leadership dispositions translate into effective servant leadership in educational settings.

**Key Words:** Servant Leadership; School Effectiveness; Teacher Performance; Governance; Educational Leadership

1. INTRODUCTION

Educating students in Philippine society is a challenge educators face today. More students are coming to school with greater needs to have a direct impact on their motivation and their ability to learn. Our society calls for schools to perform better in educating our youth and in holding teachers and school leaders or principals accountable for student success. One of the key factors in the success of any school is the school principal who is not only an excellent educator but role model endowed with core values and who can expand his or her role, particularly in the urban, suburban and rural areas.

Before the pandemic, feedback from parents through an evaluation survey conducted by the Research Office indicated that they prefer to enroll their children in a sectarian school because of the discipline, security, quality instruction, religious administrators, facilities, school activities and other practices of the school. Recently, similar feedback was received.

In today’s competitive environment, there is a need for a new kind of leadership that will respond to the needs of time and inspire a diverse work group for long-term common good, creating a culture of high achievement (Greenleaf, 1977). The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 states that the school leader has the ability to work with various stakeholders, develop effective relationships with diverse individuals and groups, inspire the respect and cooperation of people, and promote the development and effectiveness of people within the organization.

In the Philippines, both private and public schools have principals who are in the position without a test of servanthood, eligibility, master’s degree, managerial skills and relevant training. These actual experiences may be happening in the Division of Northern Samar, where many titled leadership positions do not recognize the potential and lasting impacts of their actions. Some principals are leaders but not servants in the exercise of leadership skills, moral values, valuing growth and development of people or subordinates, and attainment of organizational goals and community building.

In the educational setting, the key concern of all institutions would be productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of quality education to its students. In this context, the principal has the crucial responsibility to generate satisfaction in the achievement of work objectives, maintenance of quality standards through planning, leading and controlling in the use of material and human resources to meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders

The range of institutional crises may be well addressed by a kind of leadership and leadership styles that are vital components within the success and growth of the schools. Servant leadership is seen to correct this mistake. Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy built on the belief that the most effective leaders strive to serve others to include customers, partners, fellow employees and the community at large (Greenleaf, 1977). It is shepherd leadership which is marked by mutual trust between the school administrator and constituents like students, teachers, staff, and parents, as well as improved school performance.

Researchers have also stated that a principal can shape a school’s culture of high achievement through understanding the conflicts and different types of negotiations needed for success (Eva, et al., 2029). In this time of crisis, the establishment of an orderly school environment conducive to learning requires substantive managerial skills that foster cooperation, cordiality, respect, and care for one another to the success of the educational system. The role of the principal in the adoption and implementation of servant leadership within every aspect of the school, the culture, and behavior will contribute great impact on the school’s climate, culture and overall students’ achievement.

The Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools, which may also be applicable to the public schools, states that one of the duties and accountabilities of the school principal is to provide a healthy and wholesome school environment conducive to effective learning. The result of PISA, NSAT, and NAT where the Philippines is second to the bottom and other current realities compel us to revisit our identity as institutions and reexamine our leadership styles and search for new and better ways of becoming effective and relevant to our educational mission. Darrick (2020) showed that servant leader principals positively impact on the satisfaction of teachers which improves retention and school performance.

Given these realities, this study seeks to examine the servant leadership profiles of high school principals and their corresponding leadership practices. It aims to determine whether there is a significant relationship between leadership attributes and practices, with the goal of informing the development of a contextualized training program for school leaders in both public and private high schools.

*2.1 Objectives of the Study*

This study aims to explore the servant leadership practices of principals from both public and private schools in Northern Samar. It seeks to examine how these leadership styles relate to overall school performance, with the goal of using the findings to inform the development of a training program for school leaders.

Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Determine the servant leadership profile of the principals in terms of:

1.1. Leader’s Personal Character and Actions

1.1.1. Character Orientation

1.1.2. People Orientation

1.2. Leader’s Interaction with Others

1.2.1. Task Orientation

1.2.2. Process Orientation

2. Identify the level of servant leadership practices in terms of:

2.1. Conceptualizing

2.2. Emotional Healing

2.3. Putting Followers First

2.4. Behaving Ethically

2.5. Empowering

2.6. Creating Value for the Community

3. Examine the significant relationship between the principals’ servant leadership profile and their servant leadership practices.

2. METHODOLOGY

*2.1 Locale of the Study*

This study was conducted in public and private high schools in Northern Samar, one of the provinces of the Samar Island in Eastern Visayas.

Northern Samar is divided into three (3) major geographical areas, namely: Balicuatro Area, Central Area, and Pacific Area, including the Pacific Valley. It comprises 24 towns or municipalities with 567 registered barangays. It has two legislative districts—the first district covers the Balicuatro and most parts of the Central Area, while the second district covers the Pacific Area and some parts of the Central Area, including Catubig Valley.

According to the Department of Education [DepEd] (2023), the Northern Samar Division has a total of 21 private high schools and 146 public junior and senior high schools covering the different districts. The number of principals corresponds to the number of public and private high schools. There are 2,984 teachers in the public junior and senior high schools in Northern Samar and 288 in private high schools.

*2.2 Research Design*

To assess the principals’ servant leadership and school performance in the Division of Northern Samar, the descriptive–correlational research design was employed in this study.

The descriptive design provides a detailed and accurate picture of the characteristics and behavior of a particular population or subject. According to Sirisilla (2023), it describes relationships between variables, patterns, and trends, and compares data from multiple sources. Descriptive research designs cannot control conditions nor test hypotheses.

This design used the survey method because it specifically determined the professional profile of the principals in Northern Samar, their servant leadership, and school performance.

This study also used correlational design because it aimed to test the hypotheses on relationships. According to Creswell (2009), correlational research is a statistical test used to determine the tendency or pattern for two or more variables or two sets of data to vary consistently, and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables.

This method attempted to find out if there was a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In this particular study, the phenomena involved were the assessment of principals’ servant leadership in relation to school performance.

*2.3 Population and Sampling*

The population of the study consisted of secondary school principals and teachers from both public and private high schools in the Division of Northern Samar. A total of 21 principals from large public high schools were included. In accordance with DepEd Memorandum No. 35, s. 2017, large or big schools are defined as those with a full complement of teachers handling secondary-level instruction.

To ensure balanced representation, seven (7) principals from private high schools were also included. In geographic areas with more than one public high school, the random sampling technique was employed to select the target number of public school participants per area—specifically within the Pacific, Central, and Balicuatro districts. In contrast, due to the limited number of private schools, all eligible private high school principals were automatically included.

The study utilized complete enumeration for the selection of both the principals and their respective teachers from the identified public and private schools. Only teachers who had worked with their current principal for at least two years were considered, ensuring that respondents had sufficient familiarity with their school leaders’ practices to provide reliable assessments.

*2.4 Respondents*

The respondents of the study included 21 public high school principals, 7 private high school principals, and their respective teachers from both public and private secondary schools in the Division of Northern Samar.

To ensure the credibility and relevance of responses, only principals who had served in their respective schools for at least two years were included in the study. The selection of principals followed a proportionate random sampling technique, particularly in areas where multiple high schools existed within a geographic zone.

Similarly, teachers who had worked under their current principal for a minimum of two years were chosen as respondents. This criterion ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to their principal’s leadership style. The selection of teacher-respondents also followed proportionate random sampling to maintain balanced representation across schools and districts.

*2.5 Variables*

The independent variables included the principal’s profile in terms of educational attainment, eligibility, administrative experience, and training in administration and supervision. Servant leadership was assessed based on personal character, actions, and interactions with others, categorized under four orientations and the dimensions of servant leadership.

The dependent variable was school performance, measured through SMEA results based on the BMEF framework: Access, Equity, Quality, and Resiliency and Well-being.

These variables served as inputs for designing a training program for school leaders, which is the intended output of this study.

*2.6 Research Instruments*

This study utilized three sets of survey questionnaires focusing on the principal’s profile, servant leadership orientations, and the dimensions of servant leadership. The questionnaire for principals consisted of three parts. The first part gathered information on the principal’s profile, including highest educational attainment, eligibility, administrative experience, and training or seminars attended in administration and supervision.

The second part assessed the principal’s servant leadership based on 99 indicators derived from four leadership orientations: 30 for character orientation, 20 for people orientation, 24 for task orientation, and 25 for process orientation. These indicators were adapted from Page and Wong’s Servant Leadership Characteristics.

The third part focused on the dimensions of servant leadership, including conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, helping followers grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering, and creating value for the community. This section included 28 indicators: four for conceptualizing, four for emotional healing, three for putting followers first, five for helping followers succeed, four for behaving ethically, four for empowering, and four for creating value for the community. These were adapted from Dr. Robert Liden’s Servant Leadership model.

All questionnaires used a 5-point Likert scale. Teacher-respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each item, describing the principal’s characteristics and leadership practices. The survey measured both personal character and actions, as well as interactions with others, based on the four orientations and servant leadership dimensions.

School performance data were based on three years of SMEA results, which included indicators on access, quality, governance, and teacher performance.

*2.7 Validation of Instruments*

The research instruments used in this study were adapted from two established tools: the Revised Servant Leadership Profile (SLRP) developed by Page and Wong, and the Servant Leadership Questionnaire designed by Liden et al. These instruments focused on seven key dimensions of servant leadership: conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, behaving ethically, empowering, creating value for the community, and helping followers grow and succeed.

To ensure content validity, the adapted instruments underwent expert validation. The questionnaire items were reviewed by three experienced school leaders—two public school principals and one private school principal. These validators evaluated the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items within the context of Philippine secondary schools. Based on their feedback, several refinements were made to improve the wording and contextual alignment of selected items.

The suggestions were carefully incorporated by the researcher before the final administration of the instrument. This validation process ensured that the tool was both contextually appropriate and aligned with the research objectives, thereby enhancing the reliability and credibility of the data collected.

*2.8 Data Gathering Procedure*

The researcher first obtained an official list of all public and private high schools in the Division of Northern Samar, including the names of principals and teachers who had at least two years of teaching or administrative experience under the current school leadership. This criterion ensured that all respondents had sufficient exposure to accurately assess their principal’s leadership style.

Prior to the distribution of the research instruments, formal permission was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent, allowing the participation of school principals and teachers in the study. This step ensured compliance with ethical standards and institutional protocols.

To maintain the authenticity and accuracy of responses, the researcher personally distributed and retrieved the questionnaires from the participating schools. Respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality and voluntary nature of their participation. The data collection process was conducted over a period of one month, providing ample time for completion and retrieval of responses from all selected schools.

*2.9 Statistical Treatment of Data*

To ensure a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the data gathered in this study, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the socio-demographic profile of the principal-respondents, including their sex, highest educational attainment, eligibility, years of administrative experience, and training attended. These statistics provided a clear overview of the background characteristics of the school leaders involved in the study.

Means and ranks were applied to analyze the principals’ servant leadership profiles and dimensions, specifically focusing on character orientation, people orientation, task orientation, and process orientation, as well as on the six servant leadership practices (conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, behaving ethically, empowering, and creating value for the community). These measures helped determine the relative strength and consistency of servant leadership traits as perceived by the teachers.

For hypothesis testing, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was utilized to examine the significant relationships between key variables, including the relationship between: (1) the principal’s servant leadership profile and servant leadership practices, (2) the principal’s demographic profile and school performance, (3) the servant leadership profile and school performance, and (4) servant leadership practices and teacher performance.

All statistical computations were processed using appropriate statistical software, with a significance level set at 0.05 to determine the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*3.1 Servant leadership profile of the principals*

3.1.1 Leader’s Personal Character and Actions

Based on the findings in Table 1, the three character orientation dimensions with the highest overall means are Integrity (4.32), Serving Others (4.31), and Humility (4.20)—all rated Exceptional by the respondents. These dimensions reflect the core values of servant leadership and emphasize the importance of character in the exercise of leadership, particularly in educational settings. The findings affirm that school leaders in Northern Samar are widely perceived as value-driven, ethical, and service-oriented.

In the dimension of Integrity, leaders were recognized for prioritizing ethical decisions over personal image or approval, embodying a principle-centered leadership style. These results echo Walker’s (2003) view that ethical leadership is foundational to servant leadership. Page and Wong (2003) also emphasized that authentic servant leaders act based on moral values, not self-interest. In schools, such integrity fosters trust among staff, students, and the community.

The Serving Others dimension also scored highly, indicating that leaders are seen not only as administrators but as compassionate individuals who are genuinely committed to meeting the needs of others. This reflects the inclusive nature of their leadership and aligns with Greenleaf’s original concept of servant leadership, which begins with a natural desire to serve. These findings support Ciriello’s (2006) assertion that true leaders promote equity and inclusion in diverse settings. In a multi-ethnic and religiously diverse society like the Philippines, this inclusivity is especially important in ensuring equitable education.

In terms of Humility, leaders were highly rated for their modest and self-effacing leadership practices. This suggests they are not ego-driven but take joy in the success of others—an essential quality in collaborative educational leadership. These results imply that leaders model accountability and openness. Bryant (2003) and Lubin (2001) both emphasized that humility enhances team dynamics and builds credibility in leaders. In schools, this quality fosters a culture of mutual respect and continuous improvement.

These findings strongly reflect the presence of servant leadership traits among school leaders in Northern Samar. Whether through integrity, humility, or a commitment to serving others, these leaders are perceived as embodying the values that foster positive school climates and effective educational leadership. These results support existing literature while also highlighting the relevance of character-oriented leadership in Philippine educational contexts, where moral leadership and inclusive practices are crucial to school effectiveness and community trust.

The results in Table 1 also reveal that school leaders generally exhibit strong People Orientation, with particular strengths in Caring for Others, Empowering Others, and, to a slightly lesser extent, Developing Others. These dimensions are integral to servant leadership, emphasizing interpersonal relationships, support for team growth, and the nurturing of leadership potential within the organization. The Grand Mean of 4.19, interpreted as Strong, suggests a very positive perception of people-oriented leadership among the respondents.

In the Caring for Others dimension, leaders were rated Exceptional, suggesting a deep appreciation for those who show authentic concern for staff well-being. These findings support Page and Wong’s (2003) contention that servant leaders build trust through compassion and active presence. However, some items were rated slightly lower, indicating possible variability in leaders' perceived approachability and empathetic listening.

The Empowering Others dimension also received an Exceptional rating overall. Respondents viewed school leaders as supportive of staff autonomy and engagement—key components of empowering leadership. This supports Lubin’s (2001) assertion that servant leadership fosters environments where individuals are encouraged to grow through responsibility and initiative. Nonetheless, slightly lower ratings on one item suggest some hesitance or perceived limitations in risk-taking or tolerance for failure within the school leadership context.

In the dimension of Developing Others, the overall mean was slightly lower at 4.14 (Strong). This suggests that while leaders are perceived as supporting personal growth and leadership development, there may still be room for enhancing mentorship and leadership cultivation efforts. These findings align with Ciriello’s (2006) view that servant leaders develop others not only through training but also by inspiring self-improvement.

Overall, the results show that school leaders in Northern Samar are perceived as caring, empowering, and value-driven individuals—strongly reflecting the ideals of servant leadership. While there is slightly less emphasis on leadership development compared to other people-oriented traits, the general perception remains highly positive. These results affirm the importance of servant leadership in fostering effective and ethical educational environments.

Meanwhile, in terms of process orientation of school leaders in Northern Samar, as reflected in the dimensions of Visioning, Goal Setting, Leading, Modelling, Team Building, and Shared Decision-Making. The overall results reflect a strong and consistent emphasis on both achieving organizational goals and fostering inclusive, collaborative processes. The Grand Mean ratings across all dimensions indicate an Exceptional level of servant leadership.

In the Visioning dimension, the overall mean was 4.26, indicating that most principals demonstrated a clear alignment with their schools’ vision and mission. These findings align with Greenleaf’s (1970) concept of servant leadership, which emphasizes that effective leaders possess a sense of higher calling and commit themselves to a vision that transcends self-interest. This also supports Sergiovanni’s (1992) notion of moral leadership, where school heads lead with purpose and value-driven conviction.

The Goal Setting dimension recorded the highest overall mean among the task orientation components at 4.37. Principals were recognized as focused, disciplined, and results-oriented. These findings are consistent with Covey’s (2002) model of principle-centered leadership, which highlights the importance of discipline, accountability, and aligning goals with core values. It also resonates with Bass’s (2016) assertion that transformational leaders foster organizational growth by setting high performance expectations and empowering others to achieve them.

The Leading dimension also received an Exceptional overall mean of 4.26, indicating that principals are not only visionary and goal-oriented but are also perceived as effective implementers. These findings support Humphrey (2005) framework of leadership effectiveness, which suggests that leaders influence through shared purpose, clear communication, and consistent follow-through. Slightly lower scores in some areas may suggest room for growth in strategic delegation and assertive decision-making—skills discussed by Wheatley (2002), who argued that servant leaders must act with courage and foresight, particularly when navigating complex organizational challenges.

In terms of Process Orientation, the overall results were also highly favorable. The dimension of Modelling recorded a strong mean, indicating that leaders were viewed as role models who embody the values they promote. This supports Sergiovanni’s (1992) view of leadership as stewardship, where leaders must authentically live out values of service, humility, and responsibility. Greenleaf (1977) likewise emphasized that servant leaders must “model the way,” setting the standard for ethical and service-oriented behavior.

In the Team Building dimension, school leaders were perceived as cultivating strong team relationships built on trust, shared vision, and collaboration. These practices reflect Covey’s (2002) principle-centered leadership, which emphasizes cohesion and affirmation within high-performing organizations. Crippen’s (2010) perspective on servant leadership also aligns with these findings, suggesting that recognizing individual contributions leads to more inclusive and empowered school communities.

The Shared Decision-Making dimension also received strong ratings, reflecting openness among leaders in distributing authority and fostering participative leadership. This finding aligns with Spears’ (2004) ten characteristics of servant leadership, particularly persuasion, listening, and awareness, which promote shared responsibility. It also supports Hersey et al. (2001) concept of situational leadership, where empowering others enhances morale and responsiveness.

Taken together, the overall Grand Mean for the combined dimensions was 4.28, reflecting a highly commendable level of task- and process-oriented servant leadership. School leaders in Northern Samar were widely perceived as purpose-driven, collaborative, and values-based in their leadership practices. These findings reinforce Wheatley’s (2002) assertion that servant leaders act courageously by nurturing trust, collective action, and organizational coherence. By emphasizing both clear direction and inclusive systems, these leaders contribute meaningfully to the development of ethical, effective, and sustainable school communities.

Table 1. Character Orientation and People Orientation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Character Orientation | Weighted mean | Interpretation |
| Integrity | 4.32 | Exceptional |
| Humility | 4.20 | Exceptional |
| Serving Others | 4.31 | Exceptional |
| Grand Mean | 4.28 | Exceptional |
| People Orientation |  |  |
| Caring for Others | 4.22 | Exceptional |
| Empowering Others  | 4.24 | Exceptional |
| Developing Others | 4.14 | Strong |
| Grand Mean | 4.19 | Strong |
| Task Orientation | Weighted mean | Interpretation |
| Visioning | 4.26 | Exceptional |
| Goal Setting | 4.37 | Exceptional |
| Leading | 4.26 | Exceptional |
| Grand Mean | 4.30 | Exceptional |
| Process Orientation |  |  |
| Modelling | 4.20 | Exceptional |
| Team Building | 4.28 | Exceptional |
| Shared Decision Making | 4.24 | Exceptional |
| Grand Mean | 4.24 | Exceptional |

*3.2 Level of Servant Leadership Practices of the Principals*

Table 2 presents the combined results of six core dimensions of servant leadership: Conceptualizing, Emotional Healing, Putting Followers First, Behaving Ethically, Empowering, and Creating Value for the Community. These dimensions reflect how school leaders in Northern Samar embody the deeper psychological, moral, and community-centered traits of servant leadership beyond tasks and processes. The overall findings indicate that these school leaders demonstrate a strong servant leadership orientation, with grand means consistently interpreted as either Exceptional Strategic Thinking or Strong but Inconsistent—suggesting high potential with varying levels of consistency across dimensions.

In the Conceptualizing dimension (Grand Mean = 3.91), school leaders demonstrated competence in strategic thinking, organizational awareness, and guiding others through complex challenges. However, inconsistencies were observed in areas involving interpersonal trust and consultative decision-making. These findings suggest a need to balance cognitive leadership with emotional intelligence—particularly approachability, empathy, and openness. As Patterson (2003) and Greenleaf (1977) noted, a servant leader must not only think ahead but also be relationally present. Leadership mentoring, reflective practice, and consultative management could help strengthen this dimension further.

For Emotional Healing (Grand Mean = 4.05), results indicate that many principals are empathetic and supportive, though emotional sensitivity is not always embedded in daily leadership practice. Leaders were viewed as caring, but there remains room to deepen emotional presence and trust-building behaviors. As Ciriello (2006) and Wheatley (2002) emphasize, compassion and moral care are central to servant leadership—particularly in educational contexts where relationships directly affect school climate and teacher retention.

The Putting Followers First dimension received one of the strongest evaluations, with a Grand Mean of 4.25, interpreted as Exceptional. This highlights a consistent perception that school leaders prioritize the well-being, professional growth, and success of their staff. These results align with Page and Wong’s (2003) servant leadership framework and Patterson’s (2003) view of empowerment and ethical service as core virtues. School leaders in the study were seen as ethical mentors and facilitators of professional development—qualities essential for fostering high morale and staff retention.

In Behaving Ethically (Grand Mean = 4.37), school principals were regarded as morally grounded, trustworthy, and sincere—hallmarks of servant leadership. This is consistent with Spears’ (2004) and Covey’s (2002) arguments that ethical behavior forms the foundation of influence and legitimacy in leadership. While some inconsistencies were noted in self-sacrificial aspects, the overall strength of this dimension reflects a leadership culture built on integrity and moral conviction.

The Empowering dimension received a Grand Mean of 4.19, interpreted as Strong but Inconsistent. This suggests that while leaders generally support autonomy and distributed leadership, there may be variability in how consistently they mentor and develop their teams. These findings echo Lubin’s (2001) and Girard’s (2000) observations that servant leaders may support task delegation but are less consistent in long-term staff development. Still, the positive ratings affirm a strong foundation for empowerment that could be deepened through intentional mentoring practices.

Lastly, in Creating Value for the Community, the Grand Mean was 4.21, indicating strong community-minded leadership. Principals were seen as active contributors to civic and social well-being beyond school walls. These findings support Greenleaf’s (1977) view of the servant leader as a steward of the community, and Spears’ (2004) emphasis on community building as a core leadership function. However, slightly lower scores in areas related to innovation and advocacy suggest an opportunity to strengthen leadership impact through creative, equity-focused community initiatives.

In summary, the results from Table 2 confirm that school leaders in Northern Samar display meaningful engagement across all six servant leadership dimensions. Their strongest traits lie in ethical behavior, putting followers first, and community involvement, with emerging potential in conceptualizing, empowering, and emotional healing. These findings affirm the relevance of servant leadership in educational contexts—particularly in fostering inclusive, ethical, and resilient learning communities. As Patterson (2003) and Spears (2004) emphasized, the servant leader’s purpose is not just institutional success, but human flourishing within and beyond the organization—a principle well reflected in the practices of Northern Samar’s school leaders.

Table 2. Level of Servant Leadership Practices of the Principals

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Servant Leadership Practices | Weighted mean | Interpretation |
| Conceptualizing | 3.91 | Strong but inconsistent |
| Emotional Healing | 4.05 | Strong but inconsistent |
| Putting Followers First | 4.25 | Exceptional strategic thinking |
| Behaving Ethically | 4.37 | Exceptional strategic thinking |
| Empowering | 4.19 | Strong but inconsistent |
| Creating Value for the Community | 4.21 | Exceptional strategic thinking |

Table 3. Relationship between the principal’s servant leadership profile and the dimensions of servant leadership practices

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Servant Leadership Profile | Parameters | Servant Leadership Practices |
| Conceptualizing | Emotional Healing | Putting followers first | Behaving ethically | Empowering | Creating value for the community |
| Personal Character and Actions |
| Character Orientation | Pearson r | 0.582 | -0.104 | -0.580 | 0.103 | 0.039 | 0.391 |
| Sig. | 0.000 | 0.063 | 0.031 | 0.240 | 0.299 | 0.035 |
| Interpretation | Significant | Not Significant | Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Significant |
| People Orientation | Pearson r | 0.083 | -0.314 | 0.020 | 0.399 | 0.047 | 0.111 |
| Sig. | 0.330 | 0.034 | 0.230 | 0.035 | 0.590 | 0.240 |
| Interpretation | Not Significant | Significant | Not Significant | Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |
| Leader's Interaction with others |
| Task Orientation | Pearson r | 0.399 | 0.389 | 0.480 | 0.109 | 0.106 | 0.117 |
| Sig. | 0.020 | 0.021 | 0.004 | 0.614 | 0.647 | 0.061 |
| Interpretation | Significant | Significant | Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant |
| Process Orientation  | Pearson r | 0.101 | 0.055 | 0.104 | 0.105 | 0.101 | 0.448 |
| Sig. | 0.423 | 0.340 | 0.543 | 0.059 | 0.314 | 0.011 |
| Interpretation | Not Significant | Not Significant | Not Significant | Significant | Not Significant | Significant |

*3.3 Relationship between the principal’s servant leadership profile and the dimensions of servant leadership practices*

Table 3 presents the test of relationships between principals’ servant leadership profiles—divided into Personal Character and Actions, and Leader’s Interaction with Others—and the dimensions of servant leadership practices, including Conceptualizing, Emotional Healing, Putting Followers First, Behaving Ethically, Empowering, and Creating Value for the Community. Several statistically significant correlations emerged, providing insights into which leadership attributes most strongly influence servant leadership behaviors in the school setting.

Under Personal Character and Actions, Character Orientation showed a significant positive correlation with Conceptualizing (r = 0.582, p = 0.000) and Creating Value for the Community (r = 0.391, p = 0.035), while interestingly showing a significant negative correlation with Putting Followers First (r = -0.580, p = 0.031). The positive link between character orientation and conceptualizing supports Greenleaf’s (1977) principle that morally grounded leaders can think more strategically and serve more effectively, as their integrity provides clarity and focus. Similarly, the relationship with community engagement reinforces Spears’ (2004) emphasis on stewardship and community building as critical servant leadership traits. However, the negative relationship with Putting Followers First is unexpected and may point to a possible tension between strong personal ethical standards and the flexibility sometimes required in prioritizing others’ interests—suggesting a leadership paradox similar to what Wheaton (1999) observed when servant leaders struggled to balance organizational roles with self-sacrificing behaviors.

In contrast, People Orientation was significantly related to only two areas: it had a negative correlation with Emotional Healing (r = -0.314, p = 0.034) and a positive correlation with Behaving Ethically (r = 0.399, p = 0.035). The latter supports Covey’s (2002) and Page & Wong’s (2003) assertion that leaders who value others are more likely to act ethically. The negative relationship with Emotional Healing, however, may suggest that despite valuing others, some leaders are not consistently perceived as emotionally available—a pattern also noted in the Jennings (1999) study, where principals were admired for their values but lacked emotional connection in practice.

From the perspective of Leader’s Interaction with Others, Task Orientation yielded significant positive correlations with Conceptualizing (r = 0.399, p = 0.020), Emotional Healing (r = 0.389, p = 0.021), and Putting Followers First (r = 0.480, p = 0.004). These findings indicate that goal-driven leaders can still practice compassion, collaboration, and ethical support—challenging the notion that task orientation excludes emotional or relational leadership. This echoes Burns’ (2002) view of transformational leadership, where vision-driven leaders motivate others while nurturing emotional bonds. It also affirms Humphrey (2014) and Bass (2016), who emphasized that visionary leaders can be both strategic and people-centered when servant leadership principles are integrated.

Lastly, Process Orientation was found to be significantly correlated with Behaving Ethically (r = 0.105, p = 0.059) and more strongly with Creating Value for the Community (r = 0.448, p = 0.011). The strong link with community service aligns with Contee-Borders (2002) study, which highlighted that process-driven leaders who model, build teams, and share decisions are often most effective in fostering community partnerships. It also supports Patterson’s (2003) framework, in which service beyond the organization is a hallmark of virtuous leadership.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that findings on the servant leadership profile indicate that school principals exhibit strong character orientation and people orientation, particularly in integrity, humility, and caring for others. However, slight inconsistencies were observed in areas like vulnerability, acknowledging dependence on others, and openness to feedback—highlighting areas where leadership practice could be made more humanizing and inclusive.

In terms of leader interaction, principals demonstrated exceptional competence in goal-setting, modeling behavior, and team-building. These competencies are essential to maintaining school direction and motivation among staff. However, areas like matching people to roles and empowering decision-making showed slight weaknesses, implying that servant leadership must go beyond inspiration and incorporate practical delegation and support.

The level of servant leadership practices was generally rated as “Exceptional,” especially in Putting Followers First, Behaving Ethically, and Empowering. Nevertheless, Conceptualizing and Emotional Healing showed “Strong but inconsistent” interpretations. This suggests that while leaders are strong in moral action and people development, more consistent strategic planning and emotional intelligence are needed to complete the servant leadership model.

The analysis of relationships shows that servant leadership profiles correlate significantly with various servant leadership practices, particularly those involving character and task orientation. This validates the theoretical framework of servant leadership, where a leader’s internal values and external behavior influence their leadership consistency and effectiveness. Specifically, statistically significant relationships were found between Character Orientation and practices like Conceptualizing (r = 0.582, p = .000), Putting Followers First (r = -0.580, p = .031), and Creating Value for the Community (r = 0.391, p = .035), while Task Orientation also showed significant correlations with several practices, including Putting Followers First (r = 0.480, p = .004).

Principals’ servant leadership traits—particularly character orientation, people orientation, and task orientation—are significantly associated with improved school access and governance. These findings suggest that leadership development should prioritize values-based and strategic training to improve school governance and access.

Servant leadership practices such as emotional healing, putting followers first, ethical behavior, and empowering are significantly related to better teacher performance, underscoring the importance of supportive and trust-based leadership. This implies that school leaders should cultivate emotionally intelligent and empowering practices to enhance teacher effectiveness, which can be reinforced through targeted leadership training and mentoring programs.

Based on the study’s findings, a training program was designed to enhance school leaders' competencies in both personal and relational dimensions of servant leadership. The program focuses on ethical grounding, emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, and inclusive governance.

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