

Career Development Patterns and Values of Women School Administrators

Matilde Corazon Cristina A. Loyola
Capiz State University Main Campus, Roxas City, Capiz 5800, THE PHILIPPINES

Abstract

Career development research has often explored gender differences in and development of career patterns. Women were traditionally sidelined from performing from full participation in society and have struggled for their civil rights and social freedoms by challenging the male-dominated social systems. In an age when women are now gaining strong footing in positions once dominated by only by male, it is imperative to assess how the career development of women fare. Thus, the researcher examined the career development patterns and values of women school administrators. The researcher found that women school administrators in the province of Capiz were highly motivated, have high self-esteem, have very strong spirituality, and possess very strong will power. They were also equipped with career development patterns skills that they applied on their position and in becoming successful. The researcher also found that they were able to successfully combine family and job, attaining high level of achievement. Despite marriage constraints, they were innovative, finding time for both family and work and with supportive family members that lessen the demands and burdens of their position. These women administrators also realized the importance of values on their career development patterns in providing them direction to their desired end. As successful school administrators, they made themselves “role model” for other professionals who aimed to become one in the future.

Keywords: career development, values, women school administrators

INTRODUCTION

A career is broadly defined as a lifelong process of work-related activities that includes both objective and subjective aspects (Hall, 2002). Career development is defined as an on-going series of stages characterized by unique concerns, themes and tasks (Greenhaus et al., 2000). Classic age/stage models of career development have been instrumental in laying a foundation that has shaped career theory over the years (Schein, 1978; Super, 1980). A common underlying assumption behind these age/stage models of career development is that there are a series of predictable tasks that happen at more or less predictable times during the course of a career.

Historically, women have been excluded from full participation in society and have struggled for their civil rights and social freedoms by challenging the male-dominated social systems. Despite their increasing participation in the labor market, the majority of women remain clustered in a limited number of low paying, traditionally female dominated occupations (Lindstrom, 2000). However, a significant change in the work lives of women occurred in the 1970's as women flooded into the workplace, and the advent of affirmative action served to advance equitable access, benefits, and rights in both the educational and employment arenas for women.

Issues of gender inequities in educational leadership cannot be ignored (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). The statement was in consonance with what is written on the latest issue of Fortune CEO, which states that women constitute less than one-fourth (18 percent) of elected congressional officials and there are only 4.2 percent or 21 female members of the Fortune 500 CEOs (Sellers, 2012).

Today, many women are engaged in activities that contribute significantly to economic growth and social development, some even hold positions of power and decision-making in government, the private sector, and civil society specifically that of Filipino society. Without doubt, Filipino women are proving themselves capable of serving as integral component to achieve national economic goals and technological advancements. They also realized the need of remarkable values as important parts of the foundation of their profession. Ideally, these values are embraced by all members of the profession and are reflected in the members' interactions with those persons receiving services, colleagues, and the society at large. Values like motivation, self-esteem, spirituality, and will power have a major role in their profession, developed and reinforced throughout their lives as students and as professionals. Brown(1996) believed that investing one's core values is synonymous with the pursuit of simplicity. Moreover, in one's career as well as in one's life, in order to achieve full capacity and happiness, everyone must go in the same career development pattern or direction, thus career and personal success in achieving the fullest potential, the inside and the outside must match because one's application of focus and direction on one's potential and goals allows expansion of strength and measurable results to achieve an aspired vision.

Objectives of the Study

Capiz, a province located in Western Visayas region, has produced many prominent women personalities who

became part of the Philippine history in their respective field of endeavors particularly in education. The foregoing facts show that Capizeño women power brings fame to the province in their chosen fields of endeavors. They manifest a continuing success through the years in contributing to the development and transcend the traditional roles expected of them and won better life for themselves, their families and their communities.

If Capizeño women will continue to play an ever more pivotal role as school administrator for the continued development programs and competitiveness in the province, then there is a need to investigate what factors could have influenced their career development patterns and their successful in their role as such, in spite of the constraints they have to overcome because of the different roles they play as a wife, a mother, a family, and a career woman not only in their home, school, but also in their community. Hence, this study was conducted.

The main purpose was to analyze the career development patterns and values of the women school administrators in the province of Capiz. Specifically, it considered (1) to describe the demographic profile of the women school administrators, (2) to find out the indicators of the career development patterns of mentoring, networking, role modeling and work ethic of the respondents, (3) to determine the different indicators of the values of motivation, self-esteem, spirituality and will power of the respondents, (4) to look into the constraints the respondents encountered in their career development patterns, (5) to determine if there is a significant relationship between values and career development patterns, and (6) to evaluate which among the demographic profile of the respondents are significant predictors of their values and career development patterns.

Theoretical Framework

Theorists have noted that such traditional models of career development have been based predominantly on the career experiences of men (Betz and Fitzgerald, 1987; Brown and Brooks, 1996; Osipow and Fitzgerald, 1996). What may not be reflected adequately in these classic age and stage models are the progression of women's careers, which may unfold differently as a result of their broader life contexts. While there have been calls for gender distinct treatments of careers (Gallos, 1989), to date, career theory has evolved without "a specific explanatory focus on women" (Osipow and Fitzgerald, 1996).

According to the theory of career development of individual (Holland, 1997) which is based in a modal personal orientation or a development process established through heredity and the individual's life history of reacting to environmental demands, individuals are attracted to a particular occupation that meets their personal needs and provides them satisfaction, wherein they can function and develop best in work environments that are compatible with their personalities. We always search for environments to let us exercise our skills like mentoring and networking, or to express our attitudes and values.

Methodology

The research paper was conducted in the province of Capiz. There were 145 respondents, 12 participants for the focus group discussion, and 8 interviewees, all women school administrators from both the public and private schools during the SY 2011-2012. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample from the total population. The survey technique of the descriptive method of research was used to analyze their career development patterns and values. The study made use of modified questionnaire with three parts: Part I – Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, civil status, educational attainment of the respondents, number of years as school administrator, nature of in-service training attended for the last three years, parents' educational attainment, and parents' occupation, Part II – Indicators of values in terms of motivation, self-esteem, spirituality, and will power, and Part III – Indicators of career development patterns such as mentoring, networking, role modeling, and work ethic. Focus-group discussion guide, and the in-depth interview (IDI) guide were also used by the researcher to attain the research objectives.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics for the respondents' demographic profile such as the frequency count, and percentage, mean and ranking. The mean and ranking were used to determine the average scores of the respondents' indicators of values and the career development patterns; Pearson r was used to determine the relationship between career development patterns and values of the women school administrators while stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to determine which among the demographic profile of the respondents were significant predictors of their career development patterns and values.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The age of women school administrators ranged from 23 to 57 years old, 23 being the youngest and 57 being the oldest. The result of this research revealed that most of them were middle age, ranging from 36 to 52 years old. The result implied that in Capiz, most women school administrators are in their mid-life and therefore highly productive when it comes to management skills and expertise. The results support the findings of Legaspi (2003) who posited that most women managers in the island of Panay were middle-age. Majority were married. Out of 145 respondents, the highest percentage (29.70%) was Masters' Degree holder with Ph.D/Ed.D. units which

indicate that these women school administrators were educationally qualified to their present position. Discussants and the interviewees corroborated the result when they believed that their educational attainment was a vital factor to their promotion as school administrators. Another confirmation for this particular result was taken with the Latina principals who were highly educated and were well rounded in the educational field with advanced degrees than what is required for the position of high school principal (González & Ortiz, 2007; Grogan and Shakeshaft, 2011).

Most of the respondents had been school administrators for less than 10 years, the result implies that being new in one's position does not necessarily mean that they are less effective as compared to those who have been administrators for more than ten years. The result showed that success in one's work or in any administrative position may not be directly attributed to the length of time that one indulges in her chosen career. Many of the discussants and the interviewees are "new" on their respective administrative positions, yet they can manage very well.

As to the nature of in-service training attended, this was ranked accordingly: teaching and learning styles, educational management, educational innovation, research information and communication technology, and networking. The results showed how committed the respondents to upgrade their knowledge and skills to enhanced further their capabilities as administrators. This was supported by the study of Cabantug (2000) when she said that knowledge and skills gained from trainings attended are useful to participants and can help them to become more competent on their jobs. In relation to this, Hackney (1999) suggest that networking with other professionals was an attribute to be a successful women school administrators, because they envision their leadership through collaboration, shared problem solving, and shared decision-making and these activities emphasized that the school and the community need to join efforts to accomplish a "common goal". Furthermore, this agrees with the Latina women principals who were experienced and bearing with them more components of education particularly in public education before serving as high school principals (González & Ortiz, 2007; Grogan and Shakeshaft, 2011).

In terms of parents' education, most of them were college graduates. The result indicated that parents who have attained college education are able to model and facilitate the transition of their daughters to higher education level. Parents wanted their daughters to be prepared and to be able to support themselves financially and emphasizing that having a high level of education is one major requirement for getting top position.

Most of the respondents' fathers were already dead and most of their mothers claimed to be unemployed. The results imply that in spite of their fathers' absence, the respondents still carry with them in their hearts and mind the impact of their fathers' advice and support of pursuing higher education as a way to achieve their dreams of becoming successful. For the discussants, some of them said that it was their father who taught them how to dream and to set targets in life. Respondents' mothers on the other hand opted to become housewife to personally take care of children, however, in spite of their mothers' being a housewife, this did not stop them to pursue their own career because they believed that through working were they able to realize their various needs and equipping themselves with remarkable work values as the source of their real life job satisfaction.

Indicators of Values of Women School Administrators

Most of them have high motivation, high self-esteem, very high spirituality, and very strong will power. The results indicated that with remarkable values, one can achieve a need to accomplish things they have set for themselves. They realized that to be exposed to real-life work experience allows them to see the direct relationship between their profession and life achievement to better understand the challenges of their work. The results was supported by the discussants when they said that their job today provide them personal satisfaction, using their talents for more knowledge and experience, and at the same time providing them a feeling of self-worth, and high self-esteem. The results was further affirmed by Matayabas (2003) when she reported that career women claimed to be highly motivated to their job because of wealth of experience.

On the other hand their very high spirituality gives them a framework in coping with leadership challenges that test their character. To take each day as it is and refuse to let any bad situation ruin it for them or for others. They consider their inner strength as something of a force that gives them hope to overcome whatever obstacles that come their way. The result was affirmed by (Benetiz, 2006), during the 3rd Annual International Women's Leadership Conference when she explained the role of spirituality on one's career saying that to emerge as a transformative leader, one needs first to believe in one's human potential, to conceive it on one's mind what one wants to achieve, either for oneself or for others. Their very strong will power also helped them to become responsible persons because they chose not to be influenced by other people and environment in choosing whatever goals they want to pursue. Similar to this result was the findings of (Sasson, 2006), when she reported that women managers were satisfied of what they do, of what they feel, what to do, and through hard work and perseverance were they able to achieved personal satisfaction. Findings were found in table 1.

Table 1
Values of Women School Administrators

Values	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Spirituality	4.46	Very High Spirituality	1
Will Power	4.31	Very Strong Will Power	2
Self-Esteem	4.07	High Self-Esteem	3
Motivation	3.95	High Motivation	4

Note. The Spirituality Questionnaire was adapted from Fazakas-Dehoog (1999); the Will Power Scale was from American Institute for Research with Teachers College (1994); The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale as adapted from Moris Rosenberg (1989); and Work Motivation Questionnaire was from Steers and Brainstein (1991). The data are the summary of the values of women school administrators with its corresponding verbal interpretation and its ranking.

Career Development Patterns of Women School Administrators

Most of the respondents claimed mentoring, networking, and role modeling as their most used career development pattern. The results implied that in carrying out their responsibilities as administrators, they were guided by the principles and skills they have polished because mentoring and role modeling have been a part of their experience as classroom mentors before their present position. As to their networking skills, the result indicated the respondents are gradually getting active in their professional societies as such are expected to feel greater perceived career success as they become known and recognized by others in their profession. The findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Summary of Career Development Patterns of Women School Administrators

Career Development Patterns Rank	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	
Mentoring	4.59	Most Often Used	1.5
Role Modeling	4.59	Most Often Used	1.5
Networking	4.35	Most Often Used	3
Work Ethic	4.07	Often Used	4

Note. The Mentor Function Scale was adapted from Noe (1988); the Role Model Inventory was from Arizona Character Education Foundation (1992); the Work Ethic was from Work Ethics Program (1991). The data are the summary of career development patterns of women school administrators with its corresponding verbal interpretation and its ranking.

Constraints in Career Development

Major constraints encountered by women school administrators originated from family responsibilities particularly the relationship with young children, this is happening because as a working mother they experienced lots of struggle on how to balance work and family responsibilities. To maintain career aspirations and managing personal lives at the same time is a challenge faced by most of the discussants and all interviewees. However, with family support, especially supportive husbands, they have successfully met the challenge with flying colors. The result was confirmed when (Grogan and Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 33) stated in addition for many women leaders having supportive husbands, there still exists a personal responsibility of caring for home and family. Furthermore, Grogan and Shakeshaft defines balanced leadership as “the notion that women are better able to perform their educational responsibilities if they have found ways to manage their home duties as well”. One discussant in fact mentioned of no constraint at all because it was her mother who cared for her child

from birth until now. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Constraints Encountered

Constraints	Frequency	Rank
Relationship with young children	9	1
Relationship with sick elderly/sibling	3	2.5
Inflexible working time assignment	3	2.5
Difficulty working with others	1	4.5
No constraint	1	4.5

Note: Constraints encountered by the women school administrators in their career

Relationship of Values and Career Development

There was a statistically significant relationship existing between values and career development patterns of women school administrators. The result answers the alternative hypothesis. The result emphasizes the important role that values play in the work and workplace thus contribute to their career advancement and satisfaction, as these provide direction to their desired end and success on their present position. The result affirms Brown's (1996) value-based approach to career development assuming that human functioning is greatly influenced and shaped by a person's value orientation, these are most important in career decision-making processes as these provide the direction to decision-making processes.

Predictors of Values and Career Development Patterns

In line with the second alternative hypothesis for the demographic profile of women school administrators as predictors of values and career development patterns, the findings showed that among all the demographic profile, only age and civil status were found not to be significant predictors. The result implies that regardless of whether one is young or old, single, married, separated or widowed, if one aspires to be successful in his/her chosen career, he/she would likely succeed. The results affirmed the findings of Contreras (2006) when he reported that age and civil status were not significant predictors of performance of public school administrators.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. In general, women school administrators in the province of Capiz were highly motivated, high self-esteem, very strong spirituality, and very strong will power; and are equipped with career development patterns skills that they apply on their position and becoming successful.
2. They had successfully combined family and job attaining high level of achievement. Despite marriage constraint, they were innovative, finding time for both family and work and with supportive family members that lessen the demands and burdens of their position.
3. They realized the importance of values on their career development patterns in providing them direction to their desired end.
4. Demographic profile in terms of educational attainment, length of service, in-service trainings, parents' educational attainment and parents' occupation had something to do with their values and career development patterns.
5. As successful school administrators, they made themselves "role model" for other professionals who aimed to become one in the future.

Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. Women school administrators should be exposed to total quality approaches so that their skills and experiences in administration will be enhanced and developed and this can be done through massive in-service training and seminars not only within the country, but if possible abroad, and attendance to post-graduate studies for the development of their academic intelligence in the field of administration that they could apply in their workplace for them to become more productive.
2. A needs assessment study should be conducted concerning the women school administrators so that all

- their possible needs could be met and satisfied.
3. Efficiency and effectiveness of women in the fields of research and extension activities should be facilitated for their integration into the mainstream of national development
 4. The creation, operation, and support of women's networks should be encouraged for their career enhancement
 5. A study to determine the success of provincial gender equity initiatives should be taken into consideration
 6. A study similar to the present one in design but using males in educational administration should be encouraged for comparison purposes

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