

CHARACTERISTICS, MANAGERIAL SKILLS AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN MIDDLE MANAGERS IN CENTRAL LUZON (REGION III), PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the characteristics and correlation of managerial skills and level of performance of women middle managers, in Central Luzon (Region III), Philippines. The study used the descriptive-correlation method with questionnaires, as instrument in gathering data for 190 respondents. Both the women middle managers and their staff perceived their work values, personality traits and emotional quotient, as Very Satisfactory. The women middle managers agreed that, their managerial orientation was described by their leadership style, conceptual skills, technical skills and human relation skills. The staff agreed that, the managerial orientation of women middle managers was described by their leadership style. Both the group of respondents rated the women middle managers' job performance, as indicated in their effectiveness and efficiency, as Very Satisfactory. There was low positive, but no significant relationship between the perceived managerial skills and level of performance of women middle managers. It is recommended that, the women middle managers should sustain their effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of their jobs.

KEYWORDS: *Women Middle Managers, Managerial Skills, Job Performance*

Article History

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INTRODUCTION

Women carry major responsibilities in taking care of the children and the households, because of economic situations. Given the same occupation as men, women are unable to maximize their abilities in their careers, thus they are given subordinate roles, particularly in male-dominated societies. But, gender roles have changed considerably, which resulted into the entrance of women to more opportunities, which was previously open to men. Women are now seen as vital parts of the working populace. The Philippines Report 2000 states that, there are more women in the government bureaucracy, accounting to 53.81% of the total 1.38 million.

When it comes to leadership, sports, entertainment, business and politics, women now have the authority and power to nurture and shape different industries. They are top innovators, movers, and shakers of this country. They have broken new ground in diverse areas of expertise-therefore, making them the visions of a new generation (Mercado, 2012).

The presence of more women managers, in almost every part of the world does not aim to replace men, but to provide for greater complementation in building a society. As more women have entered into and succeeded in leadership positions, people's stereotypes associating leadership with masculinity, have been dissolving slowly over time (Brooks, 2014).

Women's growth in obtaining responsible position in organizations, can be attributed to the emergence of laws, which govern women, as evidenced by the 1987 constitutional provision on women, specifically Section 14, Article II, which refers to the Declaration of Principles and State Policies, to quote: "The state recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men". This is demonstrated by the passage into law of RA 7192: An Act Promoting the Integration of Women, as Full and Equal Partners of Men in Development and Nation Building, and for other purposes. The Philippines Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025, also provides for the formulation of the GAD Plan, designed to empower women and address gender issues.

Women now take different paths to leadership, through entrepreneurship, the corporate world (Adams, 2015), politics, business (The Japan Times 2015; Kim, 2016), agriculture (Ahmed, 2012) and education. However, opportunities for women middle managers have expanded to include careers in the military, business and finance, science and technology, and the blue collar trades (Maclaughlin, 2015).

This study was undertaken because, despite the apparent positive aspects of the situation of women in the Philippines, problems still exist. Even as female possess equal amount of education, male continue to outnumber female in the national employment scene. Records show that, women generally tend to be relegated to lower position. Yet, the fact that some women have already reached top level positions clearly implies that, women can do it, given the right training and privileges. This study was also conducted to address the endless pursuit of women, occupying middle managerial positions, to raise their status and to gain the respect that society accords to men.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The nature of the study required the use of the descriptive-correlation design. The data on the assessment of the characteristics, managerial skills and level of performance of women middle managers in Region III, Philippines were described, analyzed and interpreted. The managerial skills were correlated with the level of performance of the women middle managers

Respondents and Location

The women middle managers, employed in both government and private offices and their staff were the respondents in study. The women middle managers were engaged in occupations, as administrators of educational institutions, hospitals and social welfare agencies, in the provinces of Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bataan, Bulacan, and Zambales. The map of Region III is shown in Figure 1.

The sample size of seventy-two (72) women middle manager-respondents and one hundred-eight (108) staff was determined, using the quota sampling technique. There were 12 randomly selected women middle managers and 18 randomly selected staff from each of the government and private agencies, from the provinces of Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bataan, Bulacan, and Zambales. The distribution of respondents is shown in Table 1.



Figure 1

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

| Province | Women Middle Managers | Staff |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Tarlac | 12 | 18 |
| Nueva Ecija | 12 | 18 |
| Pampanga | 12 | 18 |
| Bataan | 12 | 18 |
| Bulacan | 12 | 18 |
| Zambales | 12 | 18 |
| Total | 72 | 108 |

Instruments

The questionnaire was the main data gathering tool, which was complemented and supplemented by observation and interview. The questionnaire focused on the perception of the women middle managers and their staff, on the characteristics (work values, personality traits, and emotional quotient), managerial skills (leadership styles and managerial (conceptual, human-relation, and technical) and the level of performance (effectiveness and efficiency) of women middle managers. The 5-point rating, the Likert scale and the corresponding qualitative interpretation (Q.I.) was used, in the evaluation of the perceptions of the characteristics, level of performance and managerial orientation of the women middle managers.

The test of validity and reliability was done, by administering the questionnaire to 10 women leaders in the province of Pampanga. The questionnaire on leadership traits was adopted from De Villa, 2004.

Data Collection

Permission from the respective agencies concerned was sought by the researcher, for the conduct of the study and the administration of the survey questionnaire, to the women middle managers and to their staff. A copy of the letter of request is shown in Appendix B. Assistance of one of the staff of the office of the agency head, was requested for the distribution and collection of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 11.5 software was used in the analysis of data:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Characteristics of Women Middle Managers

Table 2, shows the work values of women middle managers, as perceived by themselves and by their staff. The women middle managers and their staff perceived themselves to be very satisfactory, in terms of work values, personality traits and emotional quotient.

Table 2: Characteristics of Women Middle Managers as Perceived by Themselves and by their Staff

| Characteristics | Self-Evaluation | Staff Evaluation | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| | Overall Weighted Mean | Description | Overall Weighted Mean | Description |
| Work Values | 3.92 | Very Satisfactory | 3.76 | Very Satisfactory |
| Personality Traits | 3.99 | Very Satisfactory | 3.97 | Very Satisfactory |
| Emotional Quotient | 3.83 | Very Satisfactory | 3.82 | Very Satisfactory |
| Grand Mean | 3.91 | Very Satisfactory | 3.85 | Very Satisfactory |

The same assessment was given by their staff that, the women middle managers were also very satisfactory. According to Robins (2001), values are important to the study of organizational behavior because, they lay the foundation for the understanding of attitudes and motivation, and because they influence people's perceptions. Individuals enter an organization, with preconceived notions of what "ought" and what "ought not" to be. On the contrary, they contain interpretations of right and wrong. Furthermore, they imply objectivity and rationality.

Robbins (2001), defined personality traits as enduring characteristics, that describe an individual's behavior. The more consistent the characteristic and the more frequently it occurs in diverse situations, the more important that trait is in describing the individual. Personal characteristics such as self-confidence, being hardworking and interested in the particular field of work engaged in, are also considered vital factors that lead women to perform well (National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 1985).

The women middle managers perceived their emotional quotient very satisfactory as to: the intrapersonal components shows self-regard and practice self-awareness, shows the ability to solve problems without confrontation, solves problems through logical thinking, shows impulse control, out of the three characteristics of women middle managers, perceived by their staff to be very satisfactory, the personality traits with a rating of 3.97 ranked first, while work values with a rating of 3.76 ranked third. Overall, the staff perceived the characteristics of the women middle managers to be Very Satisfactory (3.85).

Managerial Skills

The managerial skills of women middle managers as to leadership, conceptual, human relation, and technical skills are presented in Table 2. Both the managers and their staff agree that, the managers were always striving to be the best, the top, the first at whatever she does with a rating of 4.35.

Table 2: Managerial Skills of Women Managers as Perceived by Themselves and by their Staff

| Managerial Skills | | Mean | Description | Mean | Description |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Leadership Style | | 3.95 | Agree | 3.90 | Agree |
| Managerial Skills | Conceptual Skills | 3.68 | Agree | 3.25 | Undecided |
| | Human-Relation Skills | 4.00 | Agree | 4.00 | Agree |
| | Technical Skills | 3.84 | Agree | 3.78 | Agree |
| | Mean | 3.84 | Agree | 3.68 | Agree |
| Grand Mean | | 3.90 | Agree | 3.79 | Agree |

They agree that, their leadership maintains a sense of purpose or direction that is larger than her, with a rating of 3.15. Leaders act to help a group attain objectives, through the maximum application of its capabilities. They place themselves before the group, as they facilitate progress and inspire the group to accomplish organizational goals. Every group of people that performs near its total capacity has a person as its head who is skilled in the art of leadership. This skill is composed of at least four major ingredients: (1) the ability to use power effectively and in a responsible manner, (2) the ability to comprehend that, human beings have different motivation forces at different times and in different situations, (3) the ability to inspire and (4) the ability to act in a manner that will develop a climate conducive to responding to and arousing motivation (Rue & Byars, 1995).

The women middle managers and their staff strongly agree that, the human relation skills of women middle managers are managerial skills that inspire workers and agree that, human relation skills are managerial skills that offer valuable suggestions, when needed. Overall, the women middle managers agree that, their managerial orientation is described by their human relation skills (4.00).

In any form of organization, people are the most important element. As people live in groups, they have to maintain some kind of relationships, to enable them to carry on their daily activities cooperatively, peacefully, and according to schedule. Good human relationship is getting along well with other people. The basis of good human relation is good character. One must possess important values, as well as socially accepted human values, to enable him to live well with others (Caparas, 2002).

The women middle managers and staff agreed that, a woman middle manager with technical skills has adequate knowledge of the facts, theories and principles, related to the work, with technical skills that introduces new methods and techniques. Overall, the women middle managers agree that, their managerial orientation is described by their technical skills (3.84)

Technical skills require that, an organization must be studied as a whole, taking into consideration the interrelationships, among its parts and its relationship with the external environment. The tasks and related skills for effective management requires connection skills and negotiating skills; monitoring organizational information; using information networks; managing financial resources; developing maintenance schedules; and using general management procedures and practices.

The women middle managers agree that, leadership styles and managerial skills describe their managerial orientation, with a grand mean of 3.90 (agree). The staff agrees that, the leadership styles and managerial skills describe the managerial orientation of the women middle managers, with a grand mean of 3.79.

Level of Performance of Women Middle Managers

The level of performance of the women middle managers are reflected in effectiveness and efficiency, as perceived by themselves and by their staff, is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Level of Performance of Women Managers as Rated by themselves and by their Staff

| Level of Performance | Mean | Description | Mean | Description |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Effectiveness | 3.96 | Very Satisfactory | 3.91 | Very Satisfactory |
| Efficiency | 4.00 | Very Satisfactory | 3.96 | Very Satisfactory |
| Grand Mean | 3.98 | Very Satisfactory | 3.94 | Very Satisfactory |

The women middle managers rated themselves as very satisfactory in the level of their performance, in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Even the staff agreed that, their women managers were satisfactory. A woman middle manager perceived herself very satisfactory, as she complies with existing rules and regulations, and very satisfactory in effectiveness as she determines effectiveness of programs, projects, and activities.” Overall, the women middle managers rated their effectiveness as very satisfactory (3.96). However, the rating provided by the staff was slightly lower than that of the rating of the middle managers to themselves. As to efficiency, the women middle managers rated themselves as very satisfactory, as they observed adequate system of measuring, reporting, and maintaining resources as they comply, utilizes efficiently the resources and observes efficient operating procedures. The staff perceived the woman middle manager very satisfactory in efficiency as she “7. Observes adequate system of measuring, reporting, and maintaining resources” (4.12, ranked 1st). The staff perceived the woman middle manager very satisfactory in efficiency as she “6. Utilizes efficiently the resources and observes efficient operating procedures” (3.62, ranked 7th). Overall, the staff perceived the efficiency of women middle managers, as very satisfactory (3.96).

Managerial effectiveness is related to the efficiency of managerial personnel, in achieving the desired outcomes in the realization of enterprise objectives, by using physical, financial and human resources (Leary, 1996).

Relationship between the Perceived Managerial Skills and Level of Performance of Women Middle Managers

The test of significance of the relationship between the perceived managerial skills and level of performance of women middle managers is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Test of Significance of the Relationship between the Perceived Managerial Skills and Level of Performance of Women Middle Managers

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Pearson-r | 0.272 |
| n | 7 |
| t-computed | 0.632 ^{ns} |
| t-tabular | 2.571 |
| ns = not significant at 0.05 alpha level of significance, 5 df, two-tailed test | |

The Pearson-r value of 0.272, indicated low positive correlation (Costales & Zulueta, 2004). The relationship was not significant, as shown by the t- computed value (0.632) that is less than the t-tabular value of 2.571 (at the 0.05 alpha level of significance, 5 df, two-tailed test).

A study conducted by De Guzman (1997) revealed that, effective and efficient school management can be realized, when the administrators possess the necessary qualities or traits. The school administrators must prove that, they are competent, that they are good managers, possess leadership potentials and are effective educators.

The success of an educational institution depends on the style, which the school administrators adopt, leading or influencing the members of the organization, towards predetermined goals and objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

The women middle managers are very satisfactory, in terms of work values, personality traits and emotional quotient. They agree that, rated their work values as very satisfactory. The staff perceived the work values of women middle managers, as very satisfactory. The women middle managers agree that, their leadership styles and managerial skills, describe their managerial orientation. The staff agrees that, the leadership styles and managerial skills are indicators of the managerial orientation of the women middle managers. The women middle managers, perceived their level of performance, as very satisfactory. The staff perceived the level of performance of the women middle managers, as very satisfactory.

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