

Prepotent Needs and Superior's Leadership Style: Their Influence on Teacher's Innovativeness

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ABSTRACT

This study measured the innovativeness level of faculty members from eleven academic units of CPU. It further examined the influence of superior's leadership styles and the association of prepotent needs to the teachers' innovativeness. Pearson's r and Cramer's V analyses were used to analyze data collected from 140 full-time faculty members and 24 deans and department (unit) heads who were subjected to a one-shot survey.

The findings showed a moderate creativity among the teachers in doing their job-related and other tasks. The faculty- developmental (or considerate) leadership style of the deans and the middle-of-the-road (neither initiating structure nor considerate) leadership style of heads did not influence the moderate level of innovativeness shown by the teachers. However, the safety and social needs, which were prepotent among the teachers, were significantly associated with their moderate creative intensity.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

The country's educational institutions that have reportedly shown a continuous decline in terms of the quality of education that they offer need more qualified teachers. Many critical factors can be looked into in order to make necessary interventions to deal with the challenge. In educational institutions, teachers' development can be understood by looking at a critical area: their level of innovativeness. This often-capitalized but rarely measured employee characteristic nowadays can be reinforced by reflecting on the employees' most important needs and their superior's leadership style. For competitiveness, understanding the employees' creativity and its

possible correlates is a prerequisite.

Statement of the Problem

The study dealt with the general problem: What is the level of innovativeness of the faculty members of CPU as influenced by their prepotent needs and superior's leadership style?

More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What leadership style is eminent among deans and unit heads of the colleges of CPU?
2. What are the most important or prepotent needs of the faculty members of these colleges?
3. What is the level of innovativeness of the teachers?
4. When grouped as a whole, is innovativeness influenced by the superior's leadership style?
5. When grouped as a whole, is innovativeness influenced by the prepotent needs of teachers?
6. Is there a significant difference in the level of innovativeness when these faculty members are grouped as to the colleges they belong?

Theoretical Framework

Creative people often bemoan how obstacles interfere with their creative work, and theorists note how environmental impediments can thwart the expression of creative and sometimes universally significant ideas (Amabile, Rogers and Torrance in Sternberg and Lubart, 1995). There are two views in looking at the environmental perspective to innovativeness. One supposes that creativity is highly delicate and in need of supportive milieu. The other view supposes that innovativeness needs some but not constant support assuming that it thrives in the face of adversity. In this premise, a dominant leadership style of superiors could be supporting or impeding innovativeness.

An employee's innovativeness cannot always be self-initiated. It is motivated mostly by intrinsic motives (Sternberg and Lubart, 1995). Creative people are those who consciously and purposely decide to follow their own path. They do it because they want to, not because someone makes them. A number of experimental studies are consistent with the notion that extrinsic motivation poisons the creative wellsprings. The explanation according to Hennesey and Amabile (in Sternberg and Lubart, 1995), is that extrinsic motivation focuses people on goals rather than on paths to attain those goals. In this research, prepotent needs are the most important needs of the faculty members based on the Maslow's hierarchy. These particular needs that may influence innovativeness were looked into. This study has the following paradigm:

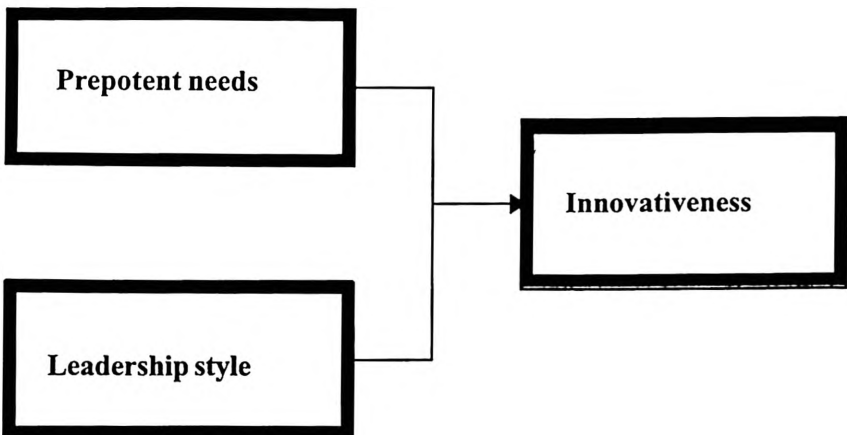


Figure 1. Assumed Flow of Relationship Among Variables

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

1. Superior's leadership styles do not influence the level of innovativeness of the CPU faculty members.
2. Prepotent needs have no influence on the level of innovativeness of the faculty members.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of innovativeness when

these faculty members are grouped as to the colleges they belong.

METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to determine the level of innovativeness, leadership style of deans and unit heads and the prepotent needs of teachers from the different colleges in CPU. It further attempted to determine the relationship between superior's leadership style and innovativeness, and the prepotent needs of teachers and innovativeness. In order to attain these purposes, a descriptive-correlational design was employed.

There were 140 full-time faculty members of the different academic units and 24 deans and unit heads who willingly participated in the study.

This investigation used three slightly modified American-made instruments on innovativeness, leadership style and innovativeness by J.E. Ettlle and R.D. O Keefe, Michael Sexton and Karen Switzer, and Don Hellriegel, respectively.

To measure the level of innovativeness, prepotent needs and leadership styles, mean scores were used. On the inferential part, Pearson's r , Cramer's V and Chi-square were employed. In determining the significance of the innovativeness of the respondents when grouped according to colleges, F-test or ANOVA was used. An F-test was also employed to determine the significance of the differences of the mean innovativeness scores when grouped according to needs.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The participants of this study are almost in their 40's, their mean age being 41.55. Predominantly, they are females (68.3 percent), married (63 percent), have just earned masteral units (51.2 percent) and have worked with the university for quite a time with 11.8 years being the mean years of service (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents According to their Personal Characteristics (N = 164)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
21-30	36	22
31-40	43	26
41-50	44	27
51-60	34	21
61 and above	7	4
Total	164	100
Mean = 41.55		
Sex		
Male	52	31.7
Female	112	68.3
Total	164	100
Civil Status		
Single	57	34.8
Married	103	62.8
Widowed	1	0.6
Separated	3	1.8
Total	164	100
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	34	20.7
With Master's Units	84	51.2
Graduated with Master's Degree	31	18.9
With Doctoral Units	7	4.3
Graduated with Doctoral Degree	8	4.9
Total	164	100
Length of Service (For Faculty Only, N = 140)		
Less than one year	3	2.7
1-5	40	27.9
6-10	40	27.9
11-15	16	11.6
16-20	15	10.9
21-25	8	6.1
26-30	16	11.6
31-35	1	0.7
36 and above	1	0.7
Total	140	100
Mean = 11.80		

Dean's and Head's Leadership Styles

Teachers taken as a whole perceived their deans to have a dominantly faculty developmental style ($m = 3.5$). Only those from the Colleges of Nursing and Agriculture perceived them as middle-of-the-road ($m = 3.2$), i.e. they are neither authoritative nor faculty developmental. This implies that using the teacher's point of view, their respective deans show an eminently friendly and supportive behavior towards the faculty members under them. This finding supports Rillera's (1968) study which observed more of the considerate style among the principals. On the other hand, the faculty members generally perceived their direct superiors or head as having displayed a middle-of-the-road style ($m = 3.3$). This may point to the idea that since immediate superiors have the direct responsibilities towards subordinates, they tend to demand more compliance for the accomplishment of the tasks than the higher superiors do.

To confirm the faculty member's perception on their superiors' leadership style, the superiors were also asked to assess their dominant leadership style using a questionnaire suited for them, containing the same items that the faculty used to rate them. The mean obtained, which was 3.28, described them as dominantly middle-of-the-road leaders which is different from the faculty member's perception. The data on the leadership styles are given below:

Table 2. Leadership Styles of Deans and Unit Heads as Perceived by the Faculty and Themselves

Indicator	Deans' Leadership Style	Unit Head's Leadership Style	Self-rating
Composite Means	3.50	3.30	3.28

Scales:	Interpretation:
4.2-5.0	Highly Faculty Developmental
3.4- 4.1	Faculty Developmental
2.6- 3.3	Middle-of-the-road
1.8- 2.5	Authoritative
1.0- 1.7	Highly Authoritative

Prepotent Needs of Teachers

As shown in Table 3, the faculty member's most important or prepotent need when they are grouped as a whole is the need for safety which got the highest mean of 8.67. This is followed by social needs ($m = 8.41$), basic needs ($m = 8.14$), self-actualization needs ($m = 7.26$), and self-esteem needs ($m = 7.25$). It can be noted that the least important needs for the teachers were self-actualization and self-esteem needs.

When the respondents were classified according to their academic units, most of them considered the need for safety as most important although those who belong to the Elementary, Engineering and Agriculture considered social needs as most important to them.

These findings stress that the teachers need a higher income to ensure freedom from want in case of sickness or during old age. If the teachers continue to dwell in their extrinsic rather than on the intrinsic motivation, Sternberg's (1995) findings are noteworthy to consider: extrinsic motivation poisons the creative wellsprings.

Table 3. Prepotent Needs of Teachers According to the Academic Units They Belong

Academic Units	Type of Needs Felt by Teachers (Means)					Prepotent Need
	Basic	Safety	Social	Self-esteem	Self-Actualization	
Elementary	8.1	9.5	9.9	8.1	7.9	Social
Nursing	8.5	9.2	8.5	7.1	7.2	Safety
Kinder	8.3	8.7	8.0	7.7	9.0	Self-Actualization
Arts & Sciences	8.7	8.9	8.5	8.1	7.8	Safety
Agriculture	8.0	7.5	8.5	6.5	5.5	Social
Education	6.8	7.4	7.2	7.1	6.5	Safety
Commerce	8.1	8.5	7.4	6.6	6.3	Safety
High School	9.6	10.1	9.4	8.4	8.5	Safety
Theology	8.6	9.8	8.6	7.0	7.3	Safety
Engineering	6.7	7.0	8.1	5.9	6.6	Social

Innovativeness of Faculty Members

The mean scores of the teachers in Table 4 show a moderate level of innovativeness for the entire population. As a whole, the teachers obtained a mean of 3.6 which means a moderate level of innovativeness. When the mean innovativeness scores of the colleges were compared, there were no significant differences of the mean scores obtained as indicated by the F-test value of 1.48. Teachers from all the colleges had the same description of their scores and the slight differences among their scores are to be ignored.

The moderate level of innovativeness displayed by the teachers may be related to Sternberg's (1995) finding that creative performance, now, is not being assessed at all. (Sternberg and Lubart, 1995).

Table 4. Teacher's Level of Innovativeness

Academic Units	Innovativeness Mean Scores
Elementary	3.5
Nursing	3.6
Kinder	3.4
Arts and Science	3.6
Agriculture	3.6
Education	3.3
Commerce	3.7
High School	3.6
Theology	3.8
Engineering	3.6
Composite Mean	3.6

*F-test value = 1.48**not significant***Scales:**

4.2-5.0

2.6-4.1

1.0-2.5

Interpretation:

High

Moderate

Low

Dean's and Head's Leadership Style and Teacher's Innovativeness Level

The *r* value of the correlation between dean's leadership style means and innovativeness scores was 0.06 which indicates a negative but negligible correlation. The same is true with the computed correlation between head's leadership style means and innovativeness scores which gave an *r* value of 0.02. The negligible correlations shown imply that the type of leadership used by the deans and the heads cannot be used as a predictor in enhancing the creativity of the teachers.

Part of the reason why so many schools discourage creativity may not have as much to do with heads. As society demands high scores on tests that measure academic achievement rather than creative use of knowledge,

while the schools emphasize recall of knowledge at the expense of its creative use, the implementation of their intended mission could be a hindrance in the development of a culture of creativity (Sternberg and Lubart, 1995).

Prepotent Needs and Innovativeness

The data in Table 5 show that most of the teachers who needed basic sustenance (21.9 percent), safety (34.7 percent), social needs (29.9 percent), self-esteem (7.3 percent) and self-actualization (12.8 percent) were those who got the innovativeness score of 4. Faculty members whose needs were self-actualization and self-esteem tend to have lower scores than those with lower needs. These observations are confirmed by the Cramer's V of 0.44 and an F-test of 2.0 which were significant at .05 level. The significant Cramer's V value means that the teacher's most important needs influenced their willingness to innovate. On the other hand, the significant F-value implies that there is difference among the mean innovativeness scores of teachers when they are classified according to motives.

This data contradicts the notion by Hennesey and Amabile (in Sternberg and Lubart, 1995) that extrinsic motives poison the creative wellsprings and the idea that intrinsic motives can more encourage innovativeness.

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents According to Prepotent Needs and Innovativeness Scores (Multiple Response, N = 164)

Motives	Innovativeness Scores						Total		Innovativeness Mean
	3		4		5				
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Basic	1	0.6	36	21.9	9	5.5	46	28.0	4.17
Safety	2	1.2	57	34.7	13	7.9	72	43.9	4.15
Social	2	1.2	49	29.9	12	7.3	63	38.4	4.16
Self-esteem	4	2.4	12	7.3	2	1.2	18	10.9	3.89
Self-actualization	0	0.0	21	12.8	3	1.8	24	14.6	4.13

Cramer's V value = 0.44

F-test value = 2.0

Significant at 0.05 level

Significant at 0.05 level

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the teachers perceive their heads as neutral who are neither demanding on task-accomplishment nor considerate to them. Whereas, they perceive their deans as more friendly and considerate. The teachers' perception did not exactly jibe with their superiors' self-rating which displays a more neutral style. The need for safety as the strongest need indicate that it is difficult for the teachers to be induced to be innovative for self-actualization. Though the teaching job calls for creativity, the faculty members show the lack of this characteristic for competitiveness. Whether the superiors will become considerate or demanding on the tasks of their subordinate teachers, such shift of behavior will not affect the teacher's creativity. The moderate level of innovativeness could be explained by the prepotence of the lower needs which are extrinsic. The field of specialization of the teachers and the type of colleges where they belong did not influence their creative potentials

Since creativity was not yet measured in many institutions, the university can bank on giving its emphasis by including innovativeness as one of the criteria in the TRS and the superior ratings. A yearly award for most innovative teachers in their respective specializations should be established. Since the need for safety was prepotent among the teachers, the administration can focus on programs that will secure a better after-retirement and present financial security. Superiors can combine demanding and considerate leadership styles as long as they are not overly strict and confine one to rule-orientation rather than on development. Teachers need creative role models to emulate in order to increase their level of innovativeness. They can learn to make sensible risks of being more creative and to fight obstacles by watching others doing these things. For further study, future researchers can look into the influence of family background, organizational climate, achievement motivation and social ambiance to creativity.

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