

## Research Article

# Take the Lead: Exploring Leadership Skills of Filipino Student Organization Officers

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**Received:** Mar 18, 2019

**Accepted:** Mar 25, 2019

**Published:** Mar 29, 2019

**Abstract:** This study determined the leadership skills of student organization officers at Batangas State University-JPLPC Campus for Academic Year 2017-2018. Specifically, it described the leadership skills as to Communication and Literary Skills, Information Technology Skills and Social Skills of the respondents. Descriptive type of research was used by the researcher and a self-made questionnaire was utilized to gather the information needed from the 76 student organization officers as their respondents. After the careful tabulation, statistical treatment, analysis and interpretation of data, the researchers found that the respondents assessed their leadership skills as Very Satisfactory This served as basis in drafting suggestions for the Student Organizations and Activities Office.

**Keywords:** Leadership Skills, Student Organization, Communication and Literary Skills, Information Technology Skills, Social Skills.

## Introduction

The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. Leaders are said to be the heart and soul of any organization. Students nowadays are being shaped and trained to be flexible and adaptive in meeting challenges of life. This is not only to promote responsiveness among students but most importantly as preparation for their future roles in the society. Youth of this generation will take the obligation of ensuring further development and progress of the country. They are expected to continue the legacy of noble leaders and foster changes on practices found obsolete. It is the job of today's generation to guide the youth and provide developmental programs that will enrich their experiences and decision making- skills. Youth development programs promote positive outcomes most especially in providing opportunities which can develop leadership skills and potentials. The word leadership has numerous definitions. The most basic of all is the act of directing and influencing a group towards a desired end. The success of an organization greatly depends on how the members work together in accomplishing the same goal; oftentimes it is the task of the leader to make sure that the group is united. How a leader motivates, inspires, encourages, and stimulates the members to work hard therefore is a crucial skill of a leader. Aside from the charismatic ability to influence, there are other skills that may determine the effectiveness of a leader. Familiarity on the nature of the organization is vital; technical knowledge and expertise on the operations of the organization is fundamentally required to lead the group. Communication and social skills are also necessary; the ability of the leader to interact, be sensitive with how other feels, and communicate clearly with a group of people promotes harmony within the organization.

Other crucial skills deemed for effective leaders are the ability to recruit new members, plan activities and programs, delegate the right people for the task, manage and direct events,

monitor progress, and resolve conflicts inside the organization. Achieving the goals of the organization is a direct measure of success in leadership. Apart from achieving goals, the best leaders are those who maintain a balance between meeting expectations and maintaining human relationships. The harmony between work orientation and people orientation describes a potentially good leader. Ensuring group effectiveness and efficiency without comprising the interests of the members is what defines a reputable leader.

Realizing the immense responsibility and significant importance of good leaders in an organization, scholars have undertaken extensive efforts in discovering the emergence of true good leaders. Different leadership theories had risen from the attempt to explain the nature of what good leadership is and what unifying traits are possessed by exemplary leaders. Camaraderie, directivity, flexibility, initiative, charisma, and integrity are some of the most striking traits of a leader.

A leader is expected to work well in group, he should possess a clear vision and direction, he should be alert and familiar with alternatives and options, he must have the appeal to persuade and inspire, and most of all he must be believable and reputable. The school is a preliminary environment which instills leadership among people.

Schools allow students to partake in an atmosphere which fosters fundamental leadership training. The opportunity to lead and direct a group; as small as a class or as big as a student organization is a good preparation for leadership roles in the future; for this reason that student leadership is encouraged and promoted in educational institutions. Schools are expected to instill leadership traits and develop leadership skills among students.

Batangas State University is an institution of Higher Education which recognizes the importance of preparing the youth of today in becoming the future leaders of tomorrow. Along with its vision of developing competent and morally upright citizens, the university gives high regard to the participation of students in the programs and activities conducted in the university. The university has a Student Organization and Activities Office which oversees all the undertakings of each student organization. The office guides leaders of student organizations and is responsible in planning programs which will promote good leadership and training of leadership skills.

The discussions presented inspired the researcher to conduct this study. This study determined how the student organization officers of Batangas State University-JPLPC Campus assessed themselves in terms of some important leadership skills such as communication and literary skills, information technology skills and social skills. This work is directed to enlighten student leaders on their abilities and skills in governing a student organization.

### **Objective of the Study**

This study determined the leadership skills in terms of communication and literary skills, information technology skills and social skills of student organization officers at Batangas State University-JPLPC Campus for Academic Year (A.Y.) 2017-2018.

### **Methodology**

This study used descriptive type of research with self-made questionnaire to gather the information needed from the 76 student leaders as respondents of the study. Weighted mean was the statistical measure used in analyzing and interpreting the data.

## Results and Discussion

This presents the data gathered together with the corresponding analysis and interpretation. The data are presented in tabular form organized in a sequential manner, following the order of presentation of the specific problems posed in the study.

### Leadership Skills of Student Organization Officers at Batangas State University-JPLPC Campus

This part of the study aimed to determine the assessment of the respondents on their leadership skills which are subdivided into communication and literary skills, information technology skills and social skills. The succeeding tables present the weighted mean for each statement along with their equivalent verbal interpretation.

**Table 1. Leadership Skills of Student Organization Officers in Terms of Communication and Literary Skills**

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
<b>As a student organization officer, I...</b>		
1. Organize and express my thoughts concisely in order to disseminate any information concerning the organization both in oral and writing manner.	3.61	Very Satisfactory
2. Can formulate concepts and ideas into words in order for me to share and express my thoughts and ideas regarding the organizational issues that can greatly help to the success of the organization.	3.63	Very Satisfactory
3. Talk to other people with confidence in order to gain respect from my co-members and in order to make everyone feel safe and comfortable with me all the time.	3.64	Very Satisfactory
4. Communicate with others using smart, clear and effective words to avoid misunderstandings which can lead to conflicts and frustrations in personal and professional relationships of each members.	3.57	Very Satisfactory
5. Observe using correct grammar when writing letters and documents in regards with organization issues in order to express my thoughts clearly.	3.53	Very Satisfactory
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

The above table indicates the composite mean of 3.59 of the respondent's leadership skills in terms of communication and literary skills with a verbal interpretation of very satisfactory. This shows that the respondents have very good communication skills in terms of verbal and literary aspects. Van Engen (2012) concluded that leaders cannot lead without recognizing the importance of communicating and listening. Listening and leadership are related concepts they recognize the value of practicing listening, as well as creating opportunities for dialogue to enhance the listening experience. Their study showed that listening and good communication has an impact on leadership and leadership.

**Table 2. Leadership Skills of Student Organization Officers in Terms of Information Technology Skills**

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
<b>As a student organization officer, I...</b>		
1. Use computers and telecommunication systems proficiently to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.	3.43	Very Satisfactory
2. Appreciate current trends and developments regarding the advancement of technology because this can help me a lot in managing the whole organization effectively and productively in terms of use of technological aspects.	3.46	Very Satisfactory
3. Manage information through technology for me to be able to plan, organize and gather information that can help me a lot in analyzing, organizing and evaluating those information that is related to organizational processes.	3.33	Very Satisfactory
4. Use search engines in gathering ideas and information as well as demonstrating and developing existing knowledge to generate new ideas and creative thoughts that can help to the success of the organization.	3.41	Very Satisfactory
5. Use social networking sites like Facebook, Yahoo Messenger, Twitter and Instagram to collaborate, communicate and interact with other students, teachers and professionals about some current events regarding the organization issues.	3.67	Very Satisfactory
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

The above table shows the results of the assessment of the respondents' leadership skills in terms of Informational Technology Skills and got a composite mean of 3.46 which receives very satisfactory in its verbal interpretation. The result upholds the idea of being updated to technologies by knowing the technical-know-how of these technologies.

The results of the study conducted by Williams (2015) indicated that key information technology skills, for example, information technology communication skills were the most relevant, and the skills most students needed to improve. She also said that although other skills—negotiation and critical thinking skills are needed in improvement, they were not as crucial at the entry-level status suitable for the community college students.

It can be gleaned from the table that the social skills of the respondents was Very Satisfactory as manifested by the composite mean of 3.59. This implies that student leaders have strong communication skills which could aid them to work smoothly with their co-officers. A study written by Riggio (2008) suggests the effectiveness of emotional and social skills in psychology, and demonstrates how an emotional and social skill framework both relates to and can play a role in the development of effective workplace leaders.

**Table 3. Leadership Skills of Student Organization Officers in Terms of Social Skills**

Item Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
<b>As a Student Organization officer, I...</b>		
1. Understand individual differences in order to meet the needs of my co-members and think of some ways to satisfy those needs.	3.53	Very Satisfactory
2. Display respect on other people's ideas, opinions, cultural differences and individuality to avoid conflicts between each members and instead, build camaraderie between them.	3.59	Very Satisfactory
3. Convey confidence in meeting new people around me in order for me to gain respect from my members and for them to feel free to approach me whenever they have issues regarding the organization.	3.61	Very Satisfactory
4. Respond open-mindedly to other people's ideas and opinions and accepts their suggestions willingly especially if it is for further improvement of the organization.	3.62	Very Satisfactory
5. Show concern and sensitivity to other people's feelings to make sure that no member of the organization is discriminated in the decision about some organizational matters.	3.59	Very Satisfactory
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

To be in better frame, the researchers prepared a summary table of composite means of the respondents' assessment on their leadership skills in Table 4.

**Table 4. Summary Table of Composite Means of the Respondents' Assessment on Leadership Skills**

Assessment on Leadership Skills	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Communication and Literary Skills	3.59	Very Satisfactory
Informational Technology Skills	3.46	Very Satisfactory
Social Skills	3.59	Very Satisfactory
<b>Grand Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

As the table reflected above, student leaders' assessment on leadership skills obtained a grand composite mean of 3.55, verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. This clearly reveals that the respondents had developed these skills as they execute their function as a leader in their respective organizations. According to Jenkins (2007), among student leaders, the leadership skills, communication skills, networking skills, knowledge, and information learned from

interaction with students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds from their own will better prepare them to transcend from student leaders to effective business, civic, and political leaders.

### **Implication of the Findings to the Services Offered by Student Organization and Activities**

The researchers came up with the following implication of the findings to the Student Organization and Activities Office. First, the office is further encouraged to provide additional budget for seminars/trainings design to develop the skills of student leaders. To better appreciate their role, the head of the office is encouraged to conduct orientation seminar of the duties and responsibilities of having a post in the student organization. Third, consistent conduct of team-building to promote unity and cooperation among student leaders is suggested.

Lastly, the head of the office is encouraged to promote reflective assessment practice. Student leaders may personally reflect on their attitudes and skills as part of self-assessment to better identify their strengths and weaknesses.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

In the light of the conclusions derived from the study, it is recommended that: Appointed Student Organization Officers may find initiative to be aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses as a leader to further become effective in working as a group in an organization. Advisers of the organizations involved may reflect on the outcomes of the study because they are the ones who have direct supervision of the officers.

Knowing the leadership skills present in each and every member of the organization helps itself manage properly and efficiently. The student organization officers may join leadership trainings as well as their advisers to fully develop their full potential as student leaders. Organization projects and activities boost camaraderie and self-development of the officers. Yearly accomplishment reports and individual achievements of the student organization officers may be strictly monitored. Since leadership skills deal with numerous concerns, a follow up study may be conducted considering other variables.

**Conflicts of interest:** There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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**Citation:** Genalyn P. Lualhati. 2019. Take the Lead: Exploring Leadership Skills of Filipino Student Organization Officers. International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research, 3(3): 248-254.

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