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LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: FROM THE LENS OF THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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ABSTRACT
Poor leadership performance among school administrators remains a significant issue. This study explored the lived experiences of religious administrators as instructional leaders. Employing a phenomenological approach, I conducted in-depth interviews with six school leaders I selected through purposive sampling. I found three key themes that shape religious leadership characteristics: centralized, dialectical, and distributed leadership. An emergent theme of sustained leadership encapsulated and transcended these modes, highlighting the adaptive and enduring qualities necessary for effective school leadership. Correlation and mediation study utilizing the themes an emerging sub-themes of this study as variables and indicators respectively may be pursued.
KEY WORDS: *Centralized Leadership, Dialectic Leadership, Distributed Leadership and Sustained Leadership*

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership is pivotal in shaping the quality of education and ensuring the success of schools globally. However, recent studies have highlighted persistent challenges in school leadership performance across various countries. Poor leadership performance has been linked to issues such as low staff morale, high attrition, and diminished school effectiveness (OECD,2020).

In the United States, ineffective leadership has disrupted educational institutions, with teachers reporting dissatisfaction due to unclear communication, lack of support, and inconsistent decision-making. In the United Kingdom, school leaders have struggled with heavy workloads and insufficient time to respond to rapidly evolving demands, affecting the overall quality of management (OECD, 2020).

In the Philippines, the issue of poor leadership performance among school administrators has been particularly evident. A phenomenological study explored the experiences of Filipino school principals and found that the crisis highlighted the need for adaptive leadership and effective crisis management strategies (Cahapay,2022).

The consequences of poor leadership performance among school administrators were profound, affecting educators, students, and broader educational outcomes. Ineffective leadership can lead to decreased teacher morale, increased turnover rates, and diminished student achievement (Howard &Dhillon, 2021). This consequence triggered the urgency for research on leadership performance among school administrators. Besides, minimal research on this matter was conducted, particularly in the southern part of the Philippines. It was for this reason that this research was conducted.

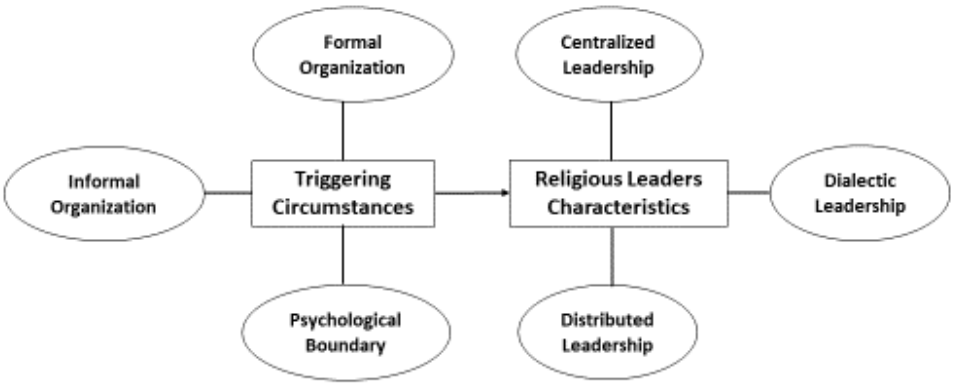
This study sought to answer the following question: What are the lived experiences of religious administrators as instructional leaders? It is assumed that Instructional leaders in religious schools do not rigidly adhere to a single leadership style. Instead, they practice a form of holistic leadership that fluidly shifts among centralized, distributed, and dialectical approaches, guided by the Catholic faith's context, mission, and values. This leadership is exercised across multiple layers of influence- structural, personal, and relational, resulting in a sustained spirituality-grounded leadership model.

This study is significant as it offers a deeper understanding of how religious instructional leaders practice holistic leadership within faith-based schools. By uncovering how centralized, dialectical, and distributed leadership approaches are dynamically applied across different organizational layers, the study provides valuable insights for school administrators, policy makers, and future leaders in

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Catholic education. It contributes to leadership theory by highlighting a lived model of sustained leadership that is mission-oriented and adaptable to contextual needs. Furthermore, it serves as a practical guide for the religious educators seeking to align leadership practices with spiritual values, promoting a more coherent and faith-anchored approach to school governance and instructional leadership.

This study is anchored on the Holistic Leadership Theory of *Eakle (2009) and Moxley (2000)*. " HLP posits that leadership has characteristics that allow for the coexistence of centralized leadership, distributed leadership, and dialectical leadership and their dynamic application according to circumstances by practitioners at each management level (top management, middle management, and staff) of the three practice layers: the formal organizational layer, the psychological boundary layer, and the informal organizational layer.



METHODS

This chapter presented the research methodology employed in the study, outlining the systematic approach used to gather, analyze, and interpret data. It began by describing the research design, which serves as the framework for conducting the study. The locale of the study was then discussed, providing context on the setting where the research was conducted. The chapter also identified the study participants, the sample size, and the sampling technique used to ensure a representative selection.

Furthermore, the data gathering procedure was explained, detailing the steps taken to collect relevant information in an organized and ethical manner. The methods used for data analysis were also described, demonstrating how the collected data were processed to derive meaningful insights. Lastly, the chapter highlights the strategies employed to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study, ensuring the reliability and credibility of its findings.

This study was qualitative, and the researcher used open interviews to solicit needed information from the participants. Tenny (2021) stated that qualitative research is a type of research that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems. It gathers participants' experiences, perceptions, and behavior. It answers the how and why instead of how many or how much. To collect rich background and data from the interviews, I, the researcher, employed multiple data sources, including interviews with administrators and teachers. Chen et al. (2020) demonstrated that employing various data collection methods, such as semi-structured interviews and large-scale surveys, can provide comprehensive insights into human behavior and experiences in educational settings. A primary objective of the data collection was to gather data about actual human behavior.

In addition, some overriding principles were essential to any data collection effort in doing qualitative studies. These include using multiple sources in which the researcher collected evidence from two or more sources, converging on the same facts or findings, and a chain of evidence with explicit links among the questions, the data collected, and the conclusions drawn. Incorporating these principles into a phenomenological study substantially increased its quality.

I utilized the phenomenological approach, as it remains a powerful method in qualitative research. According to Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2020), phenomenology is used to explore how individuals perceive and interpret their lived experiences, offering valuable insights into specific phenomena.This approach seeks to uncover essential meanings and structures of experiences within a particular group or individual. Moreover, it allows researchers to understand how individuals construct meaning from their experiences (Smith et al., 2021). While phenomenology provides depth in exploring subjective experience, other methodologies such as phenomenological

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study aim to examine contemporary real-life contexts. However, since the focus of this study is a single phenomenon—specifically, a religious school—a single phenomenological study was deemed the most appropriate approach. A phenomenological study allows for a critical examination of theoretical concepts in real-world settings, often generating new perspectives (Ridder, 2020). The study site, a religious school in Davao del Sur where I, the researcher, serve as a school administrator, was purposively selected for its relevance to the study's objectives.

This study was conducted in six (6) private schools administered by different religious congregations in Davao del Sur. Four of these schools operate under the tutelage of the Dominican Sisters of the Trinity**,** one is under the supervision of the Apostolic Daughters of Mary (ADM) Sisters in Sulop, Davao del Sur**,** and another is managed by the Theresian Daughters of Mary (TDM) Sisters in Matanao, Davao del Sur**.**

The research focused exclusively on the principals of these institutions, gathering insights into their leadership experiences. It aimed to explore how these instructional leaders navigate their roles in faith-driven environments, shaping their respective communities' educational and spiritual formation.

This study employed purposive sampling to select participants (administrators and teachers) from the identified religious schools. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique wherein participants are deliberately chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives.Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024).Six administrators underwent in-depth interviews (IDIs).In qualitative research, sample sizes are typically small, as the goal is to gain deep understanding rather than generalize findings. While some qualitative experts avoid prescribing a specific number of interviews, recommendations vary a sample size between 5 and 50 participants in phenomenological studies within educational management, you can reference the study by Dulay and Sumbalan (2020) suggests that a range of 5 to 50 participants can be adequate, depending on the study's context. Hence, the researcher decided to include six participants for the IDIs.

This study utilized a semi-structured interview guide questionnaire specifically designed to address the research questions regarding the lived experiences of instructional leaders in religious schools. The guide consisted of open-ended and probing questions**,** allowing participants to share their personal insights and leadership experiences in their own words. Open-ended questions encouraged deeper reflection, offering a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how religious administrators carry out their instructional leadership roles (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020). Since qualitative research emphasizes detailed, context-rich narratives, this approach supported the inclusion of multiple perspectives and complex realities (Tracy, 2020).

The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility, enabling follow-up questions to clarify responses further and explore emerging themes related to faith-driven leadership, challenges in administration, and best practices in Catholic education. This interview guide was validated by a panel of experts, including three internal and one external validator, ensuring its credibility and alignment with the study's objectives.

Furthermore, as the primary researcher, my role was integral in facilitating in-depth discussions and fostering an open and reflective dialogue with participants. Since the researcher played a crucial role in qualitative studies, my interactions with the respondents helped gather contextually rich and meaningful data. Through this approach, the study captured the unique leadership experiences ofprincipals from six private schools administered by the Dominican Sisters of the Trinity, the Apostolic Daughters of Mary (ADM), and the Theresian Daughters of Mary (TDM).

I took careful measures in this study and conducted a cautious review to compile and collect reliable data. I followed procedures meticulously to ensure accurate results, confirming that the data collection was an organized method of taking observations and measurements. The data collection process helped me obtain first-hand information and initial insights into the research issue, whether conducted for business, governmental, or academic purposes.

Before collection. I obtained the certificate of approval from the Research Ethics Committee. I secured approval for the initial review and permission letter, duly signed by the Dean of the Graduate School, allowing the conduct of the study. This was the first step before the survey was conducted.

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The informed consent approach ensured that participants were aware of their rights and obligations when participating in the study. It allowed them a minimum of one week to examine the consent form and indicate if they agreed with its contents. This was given to them, signifying their voluntary choice to participate.

During the Collection, I prepared necessary materials such as interview guide questions, field notes, and an audio recorder. Then, I formulated the interview guide questions and submitted them to content validation by experts. Probing questions were also prepared to clarify vague answers and extract correct and specific responses, contributing to the emergence of themes in the study. The schedule of face-to-face interviews was dependent upon participant convenience, and I performed in-depth interviews and focus group discussions as methods for data collection from our Mission schools.

After Collection. I took on the responsibility of meticulously conducting the transcription procedures. The qualitative data obtained were encoded using the transcription matrix, ensuring a systematic and accurate representation of participants' responses.

Subsequently, participants actively reviewed the encoded data to verify its accuracy and authenticity. The verification process by participants played a significant role in providing concrete evidence that the information collected from them during the study was indeed accurate and reliable if it served as a collaborative effort to maintain the integrity of the gathered data. This post-collection phase emphasized the importance of participant involvement in the validation of the encoded information, further strengthening the overall reliability and credibility of the study findings.

In analyzing the qualitative data, I used thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It wasa widely used method of analysis in qualitative research. I looked for patterns, core ideas, and themes drawn from the transcribed in-depth recorded interviews in this study. These patterns were used to generate codes that gave a clearer emphasis on the participants' experiences and insights.

In research, it was necessary to ensure everything was ethically sound. The following areas conform to the ethical soundness of this paper.

Trustworthiness and Authenticity. It was important for the researcher to establish trustworthiness in conducting qualitative research to secure the validity of the research process and its findings. Trustworthiness is a critical criterion for ensuring the quality of qualitative research, reflecting the extent to which the data and analysis are considered credible and dependable (Nowell et al., 2022). In this study, I ensured that subjectivity and misinterpretation were minimized by adhering to ethical research standards throughout the phenomenological approach. To protect participant identities, pseudonyms such as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 were used. This approach upheld the core elements of qualitative rigor: credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

Credibility in qualitative research is an essential component of trustworthiness, ensuring that the findings genuinely reflect participants' meanings and lived experiences. According to Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2022), credibility involves a rigorous process where the researcher demonstrates that the interpretations of participants' experiences are accurate and truthful through transparent and ethical data handling. In this study, I properly recorded the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Credibility was enhanced through the transcription of audio-recorded data and the use of member checking to ensure that participants' utterances were not changed or misquoted. Furthermore, the interview guide questions were validated by experts to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

As Forero et al. (2020) emphasized, transferability is established through thick description and contextual transparency, enabling readers to make informed judgments about the relevance of the findings to different settings. To observe the transferability of this research study, I ensured that the findings were applied to new contexts outside the actual study, which is strengthened by detailing the research methods, contexts, and assumptions underlying the experiences and insights of the participants. Also, it was made possible that sufficient information with detailed and rich descriptions of the settings of this study was provided to the readers. In addition, to address transferability in this case study, I included the data analysis documents and the instruments to answer the research questions in the Appendices part of this paper. Then, I laid out the study's limitations, such as the number and qualifications of the participants, the sampling technique that I used, and the particular data collection method utilized. In doing so, other researchers have the facility to explore other settings and scopes that would need to deal with the challenges and opportunities of a religious school amid the new regular education.

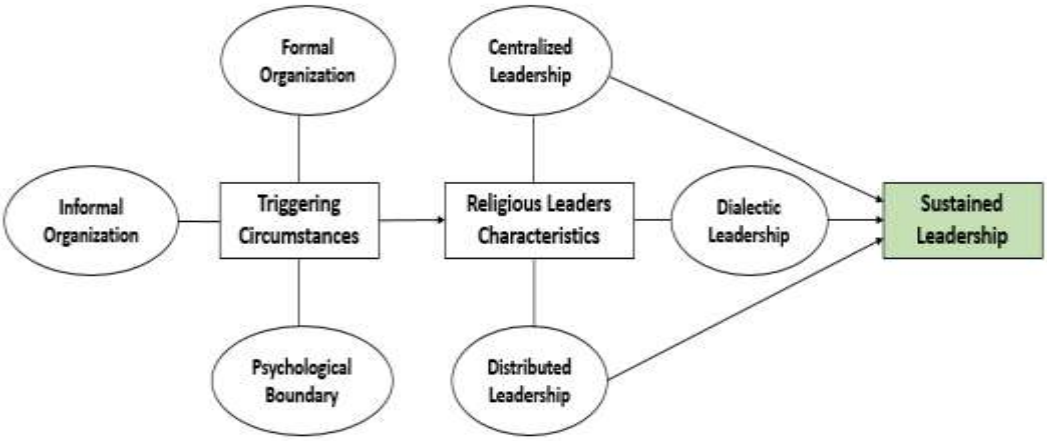
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According to Forero et al. (2020), dependability can be achieved by providing a transparent and well-documented research process, including methodological decisions, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques. In this study, I ensured dependability by offering a detailed account of the research procedures and thoroughly discussing both data collection and operational analysis. I explained the collection method and data analysis extensively to ensure that all the information and processes within the study were reported accurately. This paved the way for future researchers to repeat the work and/or gain similar results. This study may be viewed as a model for future studies.

According to Forero et al. (2020), confirmability can be strengthened through strategies such as triangulation, audit trails, and involving multiple reviewers to ensure that data and interpretations are firmly grounded in participants' experiences. In this study, I ensured confirmability by thoroughly reviewing and analyzing interview data and recordings step-by-step. Additionally, a panel of experts, including Doctor of Education professors in Educational Management, critically evaluated the drafts and provided constructive feedback to enhance the rigor and integrity of the study, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the participants' perspectives rather than my own biases.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I presented the results of the modified paradigm, as narrated by the religious administrators, highlighting the religious characteristics of leadership, namely centralized, dialectic, and distributed leadership styles. Furthermore, I elaborated on the emerging theme of sustained leadership, which encapsulates the modified paradigm and serves as the study's final outcome.



The paradigm used in this study included the triggering circumstances of leadership, the leadership characteristics an offshoot of the triggering circumstances. The subthemes of the former theme were originally articulated in the theory. However, the theory did not mention how specific subthemes define the leadership characteristics. Further, the modified paradigm included a new and emerging theme based on the sharing and revelations of my study participants. This emerging theme is sustained leadership. Such sustained leaders are also influenced by the characteristics of the religious leadership and its subthemes.

I presented the insights gathered from my interviews with selected religious leaders. I began by discussing their core religious characteristics, which defined their identity and vocation. This was followed by exploring the leadership frameworks evident in their experiences—namely, centralized, dialectic, and distributed leadership. Finally, I highlighted the emerging theme of sustained leadership, which encapsulates their ministry's enduring commitment and resilience.

Characteristic of Religious Administrators

In my conversation with the administrators, I discovered their stories about their religious characteristics as leaders. Upon listening to them, I identified three sub-themes under this particular leadership: centralized, dialectic, and distributed.

> *Before making any decision, I reflect and maintain constant communication with the Almighty. I also seek input from others, valuing their perspectives and suggestions before finalizing any course of action.(P1-Pg2-L4)*

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As she spoke, I could sense the depth of her spiritual grounding.She was calm.Her strength held with grace. Her face reflected inner peace; her eyes did not waver, her brow remained smooth, and her lips rested in a gentle, knowing line. Every movement was intentional, unhurried, and dignified, as if time bent to her clarity. She walked with purpose, stood with quiet authority, and listened with the depth of one who understood more than she spoke. In moments of tension, when voices rose and uncertainty swelled, she did not compete with the noise. Instead, she became the stillness others gravitated toward—the presence that said, without words, *we will get through this*. Her being was not loud, but it was commanding. She was calm, and in her calm, others found courage. Rooted in faith, wisdom, and quiet strength, she shared that she always takes time for deep reflection before making decisions and keeps a constant line of communication with the Almighty. Then, as I observed her continue with the sharing, I found myself fighting an inner struggle. As a leader, I know I always need to be mindful of my tone of voice, how I look at things, and how I speak to those entrusted to my care. Leadership demands not just action, but awareness. I realized I must be careful, even with the words left unspoken and the silent signals I may unknowingly send. Every gesture, every glance, every pause can either uplift or wound. In that moment, I was reminded that true leadership is not just about presence—it's about intentional presence. I saw how seriously she valued discernment—not just her own, but also that of others. *"I seek input from others,"* she said, *"because I believe their perspectives matter."* Her calm and thoughtful tone reflected a leader who does not act impulsively, but one who listens carefully and allows both prayer and community wisdom to guide her steps.

> *Though I may feel unworthy, I earnestly pray that God inspires me and grants me the wisdom and knowledge to carry out the mission He has entrusted to me.(P4-Pg2-L3)*

As she reflected on her calling, her voice softened with sincerity. She humbly admitted, "Though I may feel unworthy…"—a quiet confession that revealed the weight of her role. Yet, in that same breath, she spoke of an unwavering reliance on prayer. She earnestly turns to God, seeking inspiration, wisdom, and knowledge—not for her gain, but to faithfully fulfill the mission she believes was entrusted to her. Upon listening to her sharing, I saw in her not just a leader, but a servant with a deeply rooted sense of purpose, drawing strength not for recognition, but from the grace. As I listened, I felt a quiet stirring in my heart- a mix of admiration, humility, and inspiration. Her words resonated deeply within me, awakening a sense of awe at the depth of her commitment and the sincerity of her mission. It moved me to reflect on my own calling and reminded me of the power of leading with faith and love.

Centralized Leadership

Centralized leadership is often seen in institutions, especially Catholic schools run by religious congregations. It reflects a leadership style rooted in spiritual authority, hierarchical structure, and a shared faith-based vision.

Within this context, faith-driven decision-making plays a key role. It ensures that decisions remain consistent with the founding charism, doctrine, and mission, helping to maintain fidelity to Gospel values, Church teachings, and the spiritual foundation of the congregation.

This leadership style also promotes unity and stability, providing clear direction and coherence in spiritual and administrative matters. Furthermore, it is formation-oriented, emphasizing academic development and spiritual and moral formation.

> *Ako sister dinhi sa among school kanunay nakung ginasulti sa akong mga teachers and staff na every decision nga himoon ang approval sa principal ang gikinahanglan.(P2-Pg3-L4)*
> (As a leader here in our school, I always tell my teachers and staff that every decision they make must have the approval of the principal.)

She often reminds the teachers that one of the responsibilities of a school leader is to be fully aware of the rationale and goal behind every decision. As she spoke with clarity and conviction, I could sense how deeply rooted she is in her mission. Her strong motivation and clear direction often lead to fruitful outcomes. Witnessing this, I feel inspired and reassured, knowing that we are guided by someone who leads with purpose and heart.

Requiring the principal's approval in every decision-making process within a school is essential for maintaining consistency, accountability, and alignment with the institution's vision, mission, and goals. As the educational and administrative head, the principal comprehensively views the school operations and strategic direction. This central oversight ensured that all actions the staff members took reflect the school's core values, particularly in a Catholic institution where moral and spiritual guidance is foundational. The approval process also promotes accountability and helps prevent miscommunication, conflicting decisions, or unintended consequences. Moreover, based on what I observed for the religious leader, I realized that unattended consequences highlight the importance of having a structured environment where decisions are made with careful thought. This made me feel the deep need for intention and discernment

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in leadership. By centralizing decision-making through the principal, the school maintained order, protects its identity, and upholds the quality of education and service it offers to its community.

Dialectic Leadership

Dialectic leadership, as one of the religious characteristics, emphasized open dialogue, active listening, and mutual discernment rooted in faith. It supported the mission by fostering collaborative decision-making that respects spiritual authority while valuing the voices of others. This leadership style was grounded in Gospel values and balanced obedience to tradition and openness to the signs of the times, encouraging dynamic and responsive leadership. It also promotes shared responsibility, communal wisdom, and integrity in service.

> *Adunay panagbingkil sa mga teachers,akong gihimo kay nag individual conference mi, human sa maong interview diha na fraternal sharing.(P2-Pg5 -L6,)*
> ("*There was a conflict among the teachers. What I did is to have individual conferences with them, and after the interviews, we proceeded with a fraternal sharing.")*

As she continued sharing how the conflict among teachers was resolved, her eyes glowed, and her face radiated a joy so vivid it felt like the colors of a rainbow had wrapped themselves around her gladness. She never expected that something as simple and sincere as an individual conference could become the most powerful tool to heal wounds and restore harmony. Her story was not just about managing conflict—it was about touching hearts through understanding and compassion.

While she spoke, I couldn't help but reflect on my own life, especially my strained relationship with my half-brother. We haven't seen or spoken to each other for almost a year now. As I listened, I found myself making a personal assessment, trying to understand where the silence between us began and what had kept it going. I realized that I, too, need to take a step forward—not with pride, but with humility—to initiate healing. I must allow forgiveness to open the door that pride has long kept closed. I need the courage to listen, the grace to speak with kindness, and the wisdom to rebuild what has been broken. Her sharing reminded me that true leadership, even within families, begins with the willingness to reach out and restore peace.

D*istributed Leadership*

Distributed leadership was defined as a leadership approach that emphasizes sharing responsibilities across various individuals within an organization, rather than being concentrated in a single leader. It is grounded in the idea that leadership is a collective and interactive of individuals, who contribute their expertise and influence to achieve common goals,

> *Usa sa mga leaders,nag ingon nga kada teambuilding activity nila naghatag kini ug dakung kaayohan ug kalipay tungod kay anaa ang kahiusa. (P2-Pg3-L3)*
> (One of the participant shared that every team building activity that had brought great joy and benefit because it strengthened unity and fostered deeper understanding among one another.)

Every team-building activity brought great joy and benefit due to the participants' enhanced unity and mutual understanding." This feedback aligns with the principles of distributed leadership, where shared leadership practices encourage collaboration and strengthen interpersonal relationships.For me, having a team-building activity is one of the most powerful ways to foster common understanding, deepen relationships, and strengthen unity within a group. As I conversed with one of the administrative leaders, I saw how joyfully she praised everyone involved. Her face was glowing, radiant with the happiness that no challenge or fatigue could dim. It was the pure joy of seeing a shared dream come to life. She later invited me for a snack, and as we continued our conversation about other school activities, I noticed a genuine lightness in her spirit. There was an inner manifestation of laughter, not just from her lips, but from her whole being. She stood up and walked around with such energy and delight, as if the joy she experienced could not be contained.

As I listened to her words, I felt deeply honored—not just to be part of the moment, but to witness the authenticity of her leadership and the love she pours into her work. Her joy became contagious; it awakened something within me. I felt inspired, encouraged, and reminded of why we serve. It was more than just a conversation—it was a grace-filled moment that affirmed the beauty of collaboration, the reward of hard work, and the quiet strength that joy can bring to a leader's soul.

> *Ang usa pod nag-ingon nga sa among school niadtong nadawat namo ang rating sa among re-certification sa ESC sa dakong kalipay na 3 among score nag salo-salo dayon mi agi ug pasalamat sa tanan.(P 3-Pg5 -L6)*
> (*Another participant alos mentioned that in our school after receiving a rating of 3 in the ESC re-certification we joyfully held a simple salo-salo as a gesture of gratitude and appreciation for everyone's contribution.)*

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One of the administrators shared her joy about the result of ESC rating and as she continued to share, I saw the glow of her face-fascinating and revealing the inner emotion of genuine happiness. Additionally, following the successful re-certification of the ESC programs, the school community celebrated the achievement with a small salo-salo as a token of appreciation. As expressed by one of the school leaders." Upon receiving the rating of 3 in the ESC-recertification, we joyfully held a simple salo-salo to express our gratitude to everyone involved."

How beautiful it was to hear about the unexpected results of the ESC rating—something they hadn't anticipated. She didn't even know what to do at first; she walked back and forth, overwhelmed with emotion, praising the Lord for His goodness and love. I saw her embracing others, thanking each one sincerely for their contributions. That moment of spontaneous gratitude and shared celebration revealed the heart of their success: collaborative work built on unity. Despite their individual weaknesses, they remained anchored by one common goal: to aim high, to give their best, and to achieve excellence. And they did.

Witnessing that moment stirred something deep in me. It was more than just a report or rating—it was the fruit of dedication, teamwork, and faith. I realized that when people work hard and fully commit themselves to a mission, they deserve acknowledgment. Their efforts must not go unnoticed. As a future leader, I don't intend to simply copy what they've done, but I take this as a model—an inspiration for the kind of leadership I want to embrace. A leadership that celebrates people, affirms their sacrifices, and expresses gratitude through meaningful recognition.

This experience reminded me that appreciation is not just a reward—it's a reflection of the heart of a true leader. It showed me that shared success is sweeter and joy more profound when rooted in humility and praise. I walked away from that moment inspired and renewed in my commitment to lead with compassion, vision, and a grateful heart.

I actively involved teachers, staff, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process. By fostering a collaborative environment, I ensured that diverse perspectives were considered, leading to well-informed decisions. I also prioritized open and transparent communication within the school community. Regular updates, meetings, and feedback sessions helped keep everyone aligned and engaged.

Sustained Leadership

Sustained leadership is characterized as central, dialectic, and distributed because it combines stability, collaboration, and shared responsibility to ensure long-term effectiveness. It is central because it upholds a clear vision, mission, and core values that guide the organization's direction and decision-making. At the same time, it is dialectic because it encourages ongoing dialogue, reflection, and engagement with various stakeholders, allowing the leadership to respond thoughtfully to emerging needs and challenges. Furthermore, it is distributed as leadership roles and responsibilities are shared among different individuals and groups within the organization. This empowers others to take initiative and fosters a culture of collective ownership, which strengthens the leadership structure and ensures continuity even during transitions. Together, these three characteristics make leadership resilient, responsive, and sustainable.

My assignment becomes lighter, for everybody works, and facilitates and demonstrates. (P3-Pg5- L6)

This paragraph shows that leadership practices and responsibilities are shared consistently over time, building a supportive environment where tasks are manageable and leadership is not dependent on one person alone.

As I listened to her share, I saw more than just words—I witnessed the heart of a true leader. She spoke with such **calm assurance**: her voice steady, her posture relaxed yet firm, her gestures purposeful but never rushed. There was no need to raise her voice or assert dominance—her presence alone communicated strength rooted in peace. Her eyes reflected quiet confidence and fulfilment, as if she knew deeply that what they had built together was lasting and meaningful. Her feelings were not centered on pride, but on genuine gratitude—for the people she worked with, for the growth she witnessed, and for the God who guided their mission. She spoke not of command, but of collaboration; not of authority, but of trust. I observed how her words uplifted others, how she made room for each voice to matter. It was clear that for her, leadership wasn't about being at the center but creating space for others to grow. Her ability to delegate was not a sign of weakness, but a testament to her confidence in her team. As I listened, I began a personal assessment. I asked myself: Do I empower others the way she does? Do I trust those under my care, or do I unconsciously hold everything tightly, afraid to let go? Her sharing became a mirror, reflecting both what I admire and what I still need to learn. In that moment, I realized that great leadership is not just about direction—it is about multiplication and shaping others into leaders. And I silently prayed to have that same grace: the grace to lead by letting others lead.

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I have a deep understanding of the school's unique culture, values, and traditions. (P2- Pg 4-L1)

This reflects sustained leadership, emphasizing the leader's long engagement and commitment to the school's identity. Understanding the institution's unique culture, values, and traditions allows the leader to make informed and context–sensitive decisions, guide others effectively, and preserve the school's legacy. This deep-rooted familiarity also builds trust among stakeholders and ensures continuity in vision, which are the key elements in sustaining meaningful leadership over time.

Remaining in a leadership role for an extended period allows the school leader to continuously develop their skills, knowledge, and expertise (P6 – Pg6- L4)

Long-term leadership fosters a deeper understanding of the school's unique challenges and opportunities. As the leader stays in the role, they can adapt to evolving educational needs, refine their decision-making abilities, and develop more effective strategies for school improvement. This continuous development enables the leader to make informed decisions that align with the school's mission while promoting a culture of growth and resilience.

Remaining in a leadership role for an extended period allows a school leader to continuously develop not only skills and knowledge but also wisdom shaped by experience. As she shared this truth, I observed a gentle glow in her eyes—deep, steady, and conviction-filled. Her face bore the marks of someone who has journeyed through challenges with grace: calm, composed, and touched with a quiet joy. Her smile was soft, not of pride, but of fulfilment. Her body language was open and grounded—she sat with ease, her hands moving slowly as if every word carried weight, her posture upright yet never rigid. It was as if every movement and glance revealed years of service transformed into maturity. As I listened to her speak, I found myself inspired and humbled. I realized how much consistency in leadership matters—not for control, but for growth, both personal and communal. I reflected on my own leadership path and asked: Am I open to staying long enough to be shaped by the mission? Do I see leadership as a journey, not a role to fill, but a calling to deepen? Her sharing stirred in me a renewed desire—not just to lead, but to remain steadfast and willing to be formed. In her presence, I saw what it means to lead not just with the mind, but with the heart refined over time.

According to scholars like Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), sustained leadership allows for accumulated experience, improving effectiveness in addressing complex issues over time. This extended tenure is crucial in maintaining the consistency and stability necessary for fostering long-term success within the school community.

Having a longer-term school leader can mentor and guide new staff members, fostering a supportive and growth-oriented professional environment" (P1-Pg1-L2)

As she began to share, her manner was deeply captivating. Her way of speaking was serene and reflective, yet filled with quiet strength. Herforehead remained smooth**,** worry showing no tension or the calm clarity of someone who had learned to surrender outcomes and trust the process. Her mouth curved gently**,** speaking with sincerity—neither forced nor overly emotional, just enough to let you feel the truth in every word. Her hands moved gracefully, sometimes resting on the table, sometimes folded together in front of her chest, as if in prayer or gentle resolve. Every now and then, she would stretch them open toward me, a subtle gesture of inclusion and openness. Her feet remained planted firmly on the ground, symbolizing her rootedness in experience and faith. She did not shift nervously or pace with uncertainty; she was anchored. As I watched and listened, something inside me softened. I saw a woman not just leading but *embodying* leadership—grounded, grace-filled, and aware of her influence. Her presence invited reflection. I asked myself: Would I one day be able to carry challenges and triumphs with such peace? Am I cultivating this kind of presence that brings comfort and strength to others? Her sharing stirred in me the realization that leadership is not just about strategies or programs—it's about how we carry ourselves, how we respond with grace, and how we remain rooted when others need stability. As a future leader, I felt a silent invitation to grow not just in skill, but in spirit.

This continuity helps foster a supportive and growth-oriented environment where professional development is nurtured. Sustained leadership allows for the transfer of institutional knowledge and ensures that new staff members feel integrated and supported.

Overtime, this mentoring builds a strong, united team contributing to the school's mission and long-term success. Leadership literature emphasizes that sustained leadership strengthens professional relationships and collaborative learning, which are essential for maintaining high standards of teaching and student outcomes.

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During the interview with one of my respondents, she expressed her thoughts and feelings in a respectful manner and spoke with an appreciative tone. She recognized the value of continuity in school projects and the leader's stability to navigate the challenges with flexibility. I sensed a strong trust in the leader's decision-making skills, along with a hopeful, supportive outlook for the school's future under her leadership.

> *According to another school leader that I interviewed that having a longer or tenured leader allows familiarity with the work, which leads to increased confidence and competence.(P3-Pg3 -L5).*

As the school leader began sharing her experience, I could sense her confidence and peaceful demeanor, shaped by years of service. She mentioned that having a long-term or tenured leader allows familiarity with the work, increasing one's confidence and competence. Listening to her, I found myself agreeing with the truth of her words. Sustained leadership brings a deeper understanding of the school environment-its routines, challenges, and culture. Over time, this familiarity allows a leader to grow in skill and lead with greater assurance. Her reflection affirmed that consistent leadership is essential in building trust and providing stability within the school community. Through time and experience, a leader matures into someone who can guide others effectively and confidently.

Staying long in leadership ensures continuity in projects and plans, providing flexibility in addressing challenges. Gained experience enhances decision-making and strengthens collaboration within the school community. As an administrator, my school employees perceive me as a dedicated, compassionate, and approachable leader**.** They see me as someone who values collaboration, fairness, and continuous improvement**.** I strive to build strong relationships with my team by listening to their concerns, supporting their professional growth, and fostering a positive work environment.

They appreciated my patience and understanding, especially in handling challenges and making decisions that benefit the staff and the students. While difficulties and adjustments occurred, I ensured that my leadership was guided by transparency, respect, and integrity. Ultimately, they recognized my commitment to maintaining the school's mission and providing quality education.

The respondents spoke with clarity and conviction, expressing a deep sense of purpose and fulfilment in long-term leadership. Their tone reflected confidence in the value of experience, emphasizing how extended service allows them as school leaders to grow in competence, wisdom, and strategic ability. They highlighted the satisfaction of being able to assess programs effectively, manage people with care, and improve the quality of instruction.

> *In staying long in an institution I am able to validly assess the effectiveness of programs, and skillfully learn the techniques of leading the institution and managing the people entrusted to my care, and know better some strategies/techniques to deliver better and quality education. (P3-Pg 4-L6)*

As I listened to her and observed her closely, I was quietly enveloped by the *gentleness of her presence*. It was not a gentleness that begged to be noticed—it simply *was*. She did not need to raise her voice or make grand declarations. Instead, her presence settled the room like a soft breeze on a sweltering day—calming, reassuring, and quietly powerful. A sacred stillness about her made you want to listen more carefully, lean in a little closer, and hold onto every word she spoke. Her gentleness did not come from weakness but a profound strength, refined by time, anchored in faith, and tempered by grace.

Every gesture she made was deliberate, yet never forced. Her hands moved with a softness that mirrored her inner peace, her eyes carried a light that told stories of endurance and love, and even her silences were full of meaning and care. When she looked at you, you felt seen. Not just as a person occupying a space, but as someone who mattered, someone worthy of time and attention. There was healing in her gaze, reassurance in her tone, and wisdom in her pauses. You could feel that she had loved her mission deeply and that love had shaped every fiber of her being.

I couldn't help but admire her. Not for her position, but for the kind of woman she had become through her years of service. She embodied leadership that is deeply rooted in humanity. Her words reflected intelligence and insight earned through reflection, prayer, and constant self-giving. As she spoke about her journey, I realized that longevity in leadership is not about staying long for the sake of time, but about being transformed *through* time. Her story revealed how patience, resilience, and faith can mold a person into a true servant leader.

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In that moment, I silently prayed: *May I carry even a portion of that grace one day.* Her example reminded me that the leader I aspire to become must be formed not just through skills and strategies, but through stillness, listening, and love. And with that desire etched in my heart, I walk forward—humbled, inspired, and determined

Sustained leadership is a dynamic process that balances structure, dialogue, and shared responsibility. It remains centralized through a strong vision and core values and becomes dialectic by continuously reflecting and collaborating with stakeholders. It is distributed by empowering others to lead within their spheres. Together, these elements create a resilient and enduring form of leadership capable of navigating change and nurturing growth over time.

This presents the results of my study and discusses my research results. I presented the four themes I took from the theory I used in this study, and the merging theme I identified during my journey with participants. These are Centralized, Dialectic, Distributed, and Sustained Leadership. Added to this are the emerging themes of sustained leadership. Their statements confirm insights previously shared in earlier conversations, affirming that these leadership styles are not merely conceptual but are deeply embedded in their lived experiences. The findings suggest that religious leadership is shaped by a dynamic interplay of structure, dialogue, collaboration, and long-term commitment, as expressed authentically by the participants.

In exploring the lived experiences of religious administrators, dominant and unifying themes emerge: their leadership is fundamentally shaped by deeply held religious convictions. The Religious Characteristics of Administrators reveal how personal faith, theological values, and spiritual practices become inseparable from leadership identity and function. The centralized, dialectic, and distributed leadership themes help map the diverse ways these religious characteristics manifest.

Centralized Leadership

Centralized Religious Leadership emerges as administrators describe a primary reliance on divine guidance. This indicates a leadership rooted in prayer and spiritual discernment, and this study affirms Fry's (2003) concept of spiritual leadership, where the leader's purpose and vision are grounded in a transcendent source. Here, decision-making is not merely strategic; it is devotional. The role of the administrator is understood as a spiritual vocation, not just an organizational function.

Centralized leadership is a defining feature of many faith-based educational institutions, especially those administered by religious congregations. This model reflects more than just a hierarchical organizational structure; it embodies a theological and pastoral commitment to unity, fidelity, and mission-centered governance. In Catholic schools, centralized leadership is frequently anchored in the spiritual authority of the principal or school head, who serves not only as an administrator but also as a moral and religious leader (Cook & Simonds, 2011).

In this context, centralized decision-making is not merely bureaucratic but deeply ecclesial. This approach highlights a commitment to cohesion and doctrinal fidelity, ensuring that institutional actions align with the school's founding charism and the broader mission of Catholic education. The principal's role, therefore, is both strategic and spiritual, guarding the integrity of the school's identity and values.

This mirrors what Convey (2012) identifies as mission-driven leadership, wherein the school leader ensures that policies and practices remain consistent with the teachings of the Church and the ethos of Catholic education. Centralized leadership allows for institutional messaging, curriculum integration, and community formation coherence. It reinforces a shared vision rooted in Gospel values and facilitates the transmission of faith-based culture throughout the school (Grace, 2002).

Moreover, centralized leadership contributes to organizational stability and spiritual formation. I look at this assertion as something in agreement with the study of Lickona, Schaps, and Lewis (2003). Their study noted that effective moral and spiritual formation in schools requires a clear, consistent framework within which all members operate. By centralizing authority in the principal, the school fosters a culture of accountability, unity of direction, and protection against conflicting ideologies or fragmented decision-making. This is particularly important in religious settings, where spiritual formation is as integral to the institution's mission as academic achievement.

The formation-oriented nature of centralized leadership also reflects a pastoral dimension. Leaders in this model must guide, mentor, and model religious values in their day-to-day interactions. This idea aligns with Grace's report (2002), emphasizing that Catholic school

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leaders are "public theologians," whose role extends beyond operational leadership to spiritual shepherding. Their authority is not simply positional but moral and religious, shaped by their commitment to Church teachings and the community's spiritual well-being.

Thus, centralized leadership in religious schools is more than a top-down administrative method; it expresses theological commitment, ecclesial responsibility, and educational stewardship. It is designed to maintain fidelity to a school's religious identity, ensure alignment with Catholic social and moral teachings, and promote a spiritually coherent environment where students and staff grow intellectually and in faith and character.

Dialectic Leadership

Dialectic Leadership is also evident in how these leaders integrate personal discernment with community input. This dynamic echoes Nouwen's (1989) vision of servant leadership, where listening, humility, and shared wisdom are central. The leader is not an isolated authority but a discerning participant in a broader, communal process of seeking God's will. This resonates with ecclesial understandings of the Body of Christ, where authority is personal and collective (Volf, 1998).

Dialectic leadership, as observed in faith-based educational settings, reflects a commitment to open dialogue, mutual discernment, and collaborative decision-making that is deeply rooted in religious tradition. It integrates spiritual authority with communal engagement, balancing hierarchical leadership with participatory processes grounded in Gospel values. This leadership style honors the Church's tradition and the school community's evolving needs.

In a Catholic educational context, dialectic leadership is not simply about management but a form of *pastoral accompaniment*. This reflects a distinctively Christian conflict resolution approach rooted in personal encounter, compassionate listening, and communal healing. It resonates with Pope Francis' model of synodality, where "listening is more than hearing... it is mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn" (*Synod of Bishops*, 2018).

Dialectic leadership aligns with the Church's call for a discerning and dialogical approach to leadership. I find this thought to affirm the findings of Greenleaf (1977).Such findings highlight that servant-leaders are those who first listen and then act, placing the needs of others above self-interest. In Catholic education, this translates into leadership that seeks not only institutional efficiency but the formation and flourishing of the whole person. Grace (2002) affirms that Catholic school leaders are called to be "faithful stewards and moral educators," fostering cultures where truth is pursued in communion and dialogue.

Theologically, this leadership style echoes the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II, where the Church is seen as a communion of persons. In this light, leadership is relational and dialogical, shaped by listening, discernment, and mutual responsibility. Recent Church reflections affirm this model, emphasizing that leadership in the Church must be marked by co-responsibility, dialogue, and prayerful discernment (Synod of Bishops, 2023). Dialectic leadership embodies this spirit by recognizing the dignity and insights of every community member, especially in moments of tension or disagreement. Rather than imposing authority, the dialectic leader facilitates understanding and conversion through conversation and prayerful reflection.

From a pedagogical standpoint, this model also nurtures shared responsibility and integrity. This shared responsibility and integrity support the idea that schools fostering collaboration and collegial dialogue among faculty tend to exhibit higher trust, morale, and mission alignment. Dialogue becomes not only a leadership strategy but a formative practice, cultivating a community where decisions are shaped by collective wisdom, not unilateral command (Zepeda & Jimenez, 2021).

Dialectic leadership is responsive and dynamic. It respects the institution's rootedness in faith and tradition while remaining attentive to "the signs of the times," a phrase popularized by *Gaudium et Spes* to encourage the Church's active engagement with contemporary issues. This type of leadership allows Catholic schools to remain grounded and adaptable, stewarding the mission in a contextually relevant and spiritually authentic way.

With all this in mind, we can say that dialectic leadership as a religious characteristic promotes more than organizational effectiveness; it embodies a theological vision of leadership that values relationality, humility, and spiritual discernment. It is a mode of leading that is deeply human and profoundly Christian, echoing the voice of Christ, who leads not by domination but by invitation to communion and shared mission.

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Distributed Leadership

To speak more, Distributed Religious Leadership is especially poignant in one reflection: *"Though I may feel unworthy, I earnestly pray that God inspires me and grants me the wisdom and knowledge to carry out the mission He has entrusted to me."* Here, religious leadership is marked by humility and dependence on divine grace, qualities often associated with kenotic leadership, a self-emptying posture modelled after Christ (Philippians 2:5-8). Sanders (2003) argues that true spiritual leaders lead not from ego, but from submission, seeking not power but faithfulness to divine calling.

Distributed leadership is an increasingly recognized framework in educational leadership, defined by its emphasis on the collaborative distribution of decision-making authority and responsibility among various members of an organization. Rather than centralizing leadership in a single figure, it promotes a model where leadership is understood as a collective social process that unfolds across roles and relationships within the school (Harris & Jones, 2020).

This leadership model is particularly relevant in Catholic and other faith-based schools, where mission-driven education requires broad participation, shared responsibility, and deep communal bonds. Distributed leadership aligns with organizational theory and the theological foundations of community and mutual service found in the Gospel and Catholic social teaching.

The participants' voices in the study provide compelling evidence of how distributed leadership functions in their schools. This statement reflects a leadership culture that values relational trust, collegiality, and shared mission, all central principles of distributed leadership (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Team-building activities are recreational events and intentional opportunities to cultivate a shared identity, build interpersonal connections, and reinforce the collaborative culture needed for distributed leadership to thrive. I agree with the view that schools function as true communities of learners and require shared leadership to foster growth, innovation, and sustained improvement (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2021).

This celebration, rooted in gratitude and community recognition, underscores the spirit of shared achievement. It affirms that success in a distributed leadership model is communal—not attributable to any one individual, but to the collective effort of all members. This supports the view that distributed leadership fosters greater organizational commitment when people feel their contributions are acknowledged and meaningful (Harris & Jones, 2020).

This leadership style takes on more profound theological significance in a religious context. It reflects the ecclesial principle of co-responsibility articulated by *Lumen Gentium* (1964), where all members of the Church are called to actively participate in its mission. This vision was reaffirmed in more recent Church documents, such as Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* and the Synod on Synodality, which emphasize the collaborative, participatory nature of leadership in the Church (General Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops, 2023). Within Catholic schools, this means empowering lay educators, staff, parents, and even students to have a voice in shaping the life and direction of the institution. This statement reveals a leader who understands that shared leadership is not a sign of weakness but a hallmark of wisdom, inclusion, and ecclesial stewardship.

Furthermore, the emphasis on open and transparent communication—as seen in regular meetings, updates, and feedback sessions—demonstrates how distributed leadership can foster accountability and alignment. In Catholic schools, this participatory approach also supports the moral and spiritual formation of the community. It cultivates virtues such as humility, listening, and gratitude, which are essential for Christian leadership and service (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2020).

Hence, distributed leadership in religious schools is not only a practical strategy but a theological and pedagogical expression of a shared mission. It brings to life the Church's vision of communion, participation, and mutual responsibility. Distributed leadership strengthens both the educational mission and the spiritual vitality of faith-based institutions by valuing each member's contribution, fostering collaboration, and celebrating communal achievements.

Sustained Leadership

The last theme in this study concerns Sustained leadership, which is increasingly recognized in educational leadership literature as a dynamic and integrative process that ensures long-term organizational stability, responsiveness, and growth. Particularly in faith-based institutions, this leadership form is not merely about tenure but about consistency in vision, dialogue, and collective action. It is marked

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by a synthesis of centralized leadership for coherence, dialectic leadership for adaptability, and distributed leadership for empowerment and ownership.

At its core, sustained leadership requires a stable central vision that articulates the institution's mission, core values, and educational goals. This stability is essential for fostering consistency and guiding strategic decision-making over time. This aligns with research emphasizing that sustainable leadership must be vision-driven, learning-focused, and resilient to leadership transitions (Hargreaves & Fink, 2020).

Moreover, sustained leadership ensures that programs, practices, and reforms are not reactionary but strategically aligned with the school's long-term mission. Effective leadership supports coherence across initiatives and ensures that improvements are deeply embedded within the school culture (Day & Gu, 2020).

That sustained leadership demonstrates greater effectiveness in implementing educational change because they possess a coherent framework that evolves without losing direction.

Dialectic Dimension: Embracing Dialogue and Responsiveness

While centrality offers stability, dialectic leadership infuses sustained leadership with adaptability. It encourages ongoing dialogue, reflection, and shared discernment among stakeholders. A school leader who regularly engages teachers, staff, and the community is better able to navigate challenges with both empathy and insight.

One school leader noted: "During the interview... she expressed her thoughts respectfully and spoke with an appreciative tone, recognizing the value of continuity in school projects and the leader's stability to navigate the challenges flexibly." This study recognizes the value of moral leadership in education. The concept of moral leadership, wherein school leaders engage in reflective dialogue grounded in shared values, enables ethical and context-sensitive decisions that foster trust and integrity in the school community (Shields, 2020).

The dialectic nature of sustained leadership is especially vital in religious schools, where leaders must balance doctrinal fidelity with responsiveness to "the signs of the times"—a principle emphasized in *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) and reaffirmed in recent Vatican teachings. This dynamic tension is echoed in *Educating for Fraternal Humanism*, which urges Catholic educators to lead with fidelity to Gospel values while engaging critically with contemporary cultural and social challenges (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2020).Ongoing engagement with teachers, students, and parents allows the leader to embody servant leadership—demonstrating responsiveness, active listening, and a commitment to meeting the evolving needs of the school community (Eva et al., 2020).

Distributed Dimension: Empowering Community and Ensuring Continuity

The third key feature of sustained leadership is its distributed nature, sharing roles and responsibilities to build capacity and ensure continuity beyond the tenure of any one leader. This study affirmed the principle of shared leadership as an essential component of sustainable leadership. Sustainable leadership is not about individual authority but about cultivating leadership capacity across the organization, fostering long-term impact and growth from within (Fullan & Edwards, 2020).

In this model, the leader becomes a builder of community capacity. Distributed leadership emphasizes collaboration and the strategic use of expertise across the organization, ensuring that shared goals are met and leadership capacity is sustained beyond any one individual (Harris & Jones, 2020). This approach strengthens institutional memory and supports leadership continuity, even during transitions.

Sustained leadership over time allows leaders to mature in competence, refine their strategies, and develop trust-based relationships with the community. These thoughts aligned with the findings of Shava, G. N., Heystek, J., & Chasara, T. (2020).It emphasizes that principals play a crucial role in fostering a teaching and learning community, which is key to successful teaching and long-term school improvement. The research highlights the importance of principals' instructional leadership in sustaining school improvement efforts over time.

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Having all those above, one can say that sustained leadership is not static; it is a living system that integrates: (a) Centralized clarity of purpose and direction, (b) Dialectic openness to dialogue and reflection, and (c) Distributed empowerment of others to participate and lead.

By embodying these three dimensions, sustained leadership builds institutions that are resilient, adaptive, and deeply rooted in mission. It fosters environments where leaders grow in wisdom, communities flourish in collaboration, and the school's vision is preserved and renewed across generations.

The narratives reveal that leadership is not separate from the spirituality of these administrators—it is an expression of it. Their sense of calling, prayerful reflection, and discernment align with recent findings on how leaders integrate spirituality into their leadership practices. For instance, a 2023 study by Ferreira and colleagues emphasized that many organizational leaders rely on spiritual practices such as meditation and prayer to cultivate empathy, ethical decision-making, and resilience, suggesting that spirituality provides a moral compass in complex environments (Ferreira et al., 2023).

In addition to their concept, they affirm that faith is practiced in the everyday rhythms of work, community, and decision-making. In this way, the religious characteristics of these leaders are not only personal traits but also theological commitments that shape their institutional cultures.

These findings underscore the vital role of spiritual depth in faith-based leadership. While managerial competence is necessary, the integration of prayer, discernment, humility, and community orientation sets religious administrators apart. Their leadership reflects a spirituality that is not abstract but embodied—active, humble, and deeply relational.

A quantitative research study may explore the correlation between circumstances and religious leadership characteristics. I recommend that this study be used as a mediation analysis, where religious leadership characteristics serve as the mediating variable on the correlation between circumstances and sustained leadership. This mediation model may be developed based on the emerging themes identified in my study. These themes-circumstances, religious leadership characteristics, and sustained leadership can be designed, with their respective indicators derived from the emerging sub-themes of the main themes I mentioned above.

Religious leadership embodies various characteristics, each contributing uniquely to effective leadership. It is important to remember that no single leadership characteristic is inherently superior or inferior to another. Furthermore, a sincere and thoughtful continuing reflection within the institution is essential to recognize and nurture these diverse qualities in a balanced way.

The DomNet member schools identified in this study's findings and other members from DACS and the Diocese of Digos Commission on Catholic Schools (DDCCS) may benefit from this program.

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