Transformative leadership of library personnel and their cultural competence

Rico B. Maghuyop *

University of Mindanao Davao City, Philippines

Abstract

Libraries as an institution play an important part in knowledge-based information management and has a critical role in empowering different populations in engaging in a democratic society. The intention of this study was to determine the significant relationship between transformative leadership of library personnel and their cultural competence. Through non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing descriptive-correlational technique. Employing Pearson r, and universal sampling technique with 405 library personnel as respondents. The researcher used a survey questionnaire. The study revealed a high level of transformative leadership in terms of attributed charisma, idealized, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The level of cultural competence of library personnel was very high in terms of cultural awareness of self and others, cross-cultural knowledge and skills, development of collections, program, and services, and service delivery, while high level on language diversity, and cross-cultural leadership. There was a significant relationship between transformative leadership of library personnel and their cultural competence.

Keywords: cultural competence, library personnel, transformative leadership, Mindanao, Philippines

* Corresponding author. *E-mail address:* ricomaghuyop@gmail.com

1. Background of the study

Libraries as an institution play an important part in knowledge-based information management (Phillips, Carr and Teal, 2005), and has a critical role in empowering different populations in engaging in a democratic society (American Library Association, 2015). In today's twenty-first century, librarians are confronted with challenges and issues in a diverse populations were majority from them were belong to a minority and marginalized group of people that represents the poorest sectors of the society with little or no experience with libraries (Overall, 2009). In answer to multicultural trends, librarians need to enhance cultural competencies in order to work in a multicultural environment (Mi, 2005), and show a sense of cultural competence to serve effectively the diverse patrons in the library (Kumasi and Hill, 2013). Librarians also played an important role in the provision of information services if they listen carefully to user's needs and develop cultural competence (Mestre, 2010). In addition, librarians need to develop an understanding of their professional and cultural values, and beliefs as a step in appreciating the significance of multicultural identities in the lives of the clients they work with and serve (American Library Association, 2015).

However, in Canada it was revealed that there is a need for more diversity awareness, training and leadership with respect to diversity on the part of academic library personnel and the profession in general (Kandiuk, 2014). Thus, it is evident that despite of efforts to date, the Library and Information Science profession is behind in its efforts to address the foundational issues of cultural diversity, and disparities in LIS research and in library services for multicultural communities (Rivera, 2013). In fact, professional's lack of cultural competency is an indicative of lack of a repertoire of skills. Thus, in the field of human services lack of cultural competency, may be placed on the level of connectedness and trust the client has toward the professional serving them (Ulezi and Jackson, 2012). In addition, cultural incapacity may be a bit worse, because people in this stage actively seek to ignore cultural differences. A lack of cultural competence is when people are simply ignorant of differences (Crumpton and Bird, 2013).

Meanwhile, as organizations continue to change there is a continued challenges to leaders to cope with new environment. In fact, a survey of managers in New Zealand and Australia identified main leadership challenges for the leaders, one of which is creating and delivering effective organizational change and cultural diversity (Schermerhorn et al., 2014). With the changes, library managers should embrace the transformational characteristics of a leader in developing and creating sustainable and trustful relationships not only with the library staff but also with other patrons to reach organizational goal (Sucozhañay et al., 2014). This transformational leader is mainly appropriate in the change-laden environments that demand innovative problem solving and commitment of customer (Yuann-Jun et al., 2010).

In the Philippines, it is noted that librarians have strong concern for cultural diversity. However, the connection between libraries as cultural centers in a culturally diverse society is almost nothing, responsiveness in public services in the academic libraries shows lacks of dynamism, vigor and has not moved from the traditional belief and practice (Lopez-Pasion, 2015). Furthermore, it is evident on the study on cultural programs and cultural competency of librarians in Iloilo City that majority of the librarian-respondents have average cultural competency. They are aware and they recognized the significance of the idea on promoting cultural programs but have not integrated into services, work, and institutions (Alenzuela,

2013). Furthermore, one impact of the ASEAN Integration is a need for cultural sensitivity and awareness. Globally competitive Filipino librarians are also cross-culturally competent and have the ability to operate in different cultural settings. They should have an understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences in cultural practices such as customs, values, and traditions in different countries and the ability to work with those differences to capitalize on collaborative opportunities and to circumvent miscommunication and potentially awkward situations (Ramos-Eclevia and Maestro, 2016).

The lack of attention to the aforementioned research gap and the dearth of investigations with regard to cultural competence of library personnel has provoked the interest of the researcher to conduct a study on investigating the forms of transformative leadership. Furthermore, in line with the research agenda framework of University of Mindanao in leadership education under sustainable institution, the researcher is motivated to conduct this study since no study has been conducted yet in Mindanao, and the new knowledge that can be generated from the results would be very helpful and beneficial to the students, library staff, school administrators, researchers and most especially to the library personnel which also aimed to increase cultural competency in their organization and finally, to improve the service quality of libraries towards diversity.

2. Research objective

The purpose of this study is to determine the significant relationship between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel. Specifically, this study will answer the following specific objectives:

- To describe the level of transformative leadership of library personnel in terms of:

- Charisma
- Idealized influence
- Inspiration motivation
- Intellectual stimulation
- Individualized consideration

- To describe the level of cultural competence among library personnel in terms of

- Cultural awareness of self and others
- Cross-cultural knowledge and skills
- Organizational and professional values
- Development of collections, programs, and services
- Service delivery
- Language diversity
- Cross-cultural leadership

- To determine the significant relationship between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel.

3. Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance: There is no significant relationship between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel.

4. Research method

4.1. Research design

This study employed the quantitative non-experimental research design using the descriptive-correlational technique. In this research design, the researcher will be able to determine if there is a significant relationship between transformative leadership of library personnel and their cultural competence. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008) descriptive-correlation technique is a research design used when two variables are to be correlated with the purpose of determining if significant relationship exists. Out of the statement of the author, this means that this particular research technique is indeed appropriate for the current study which has an objective to determine if there is significant relationship exist between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel.

4.2. Research subject

The respondents of this research were the 405 library personnel of in Region XI, XI and XII in Mindanao. A universal sampling method was utilized by the researcher in determining the number of sample. They were chosen as respondents because the researcher intended to determine the level of relationship between the transformative leadership of library personnel and their cultural competence. A modified questionnaire was administered to the respondents to extract data. The study was conducted during the second semester of school year 2016 – 2017. The 405 total numbers of respondents came from the different libraries, 229 from Davao City, 1 from IGACOS, 38 from General Santos City, 12 from Marbel Cotabato, 1 from Bansalan, 18 from Tagum City, 11 from Agusan del Sur, 31 from Panabo City, 3 from Digos City, 12 from Davao Oriental, 25 from Kabacan, and 25 from Kidapawan City.

4.3. Measures

The instrument used in this study consisted of two parts. Part one consisted of transformative leadership patterned from Avolio (2002), a Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire. Part two was the cultural competence survey adopted from Association of College and Research Libraries (2012). In answering the

instrument, the respondents were asked to respond to questionnaire with five items for each factor. Scores were interpreted using a 5-point likert scale.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Level of transformative leadership of library personnel

Presented in Table 1 are the data on the level of transformative leadership of library personnel. The overall mean rating is 4.18 or Very High. Among the five indicators, *individualized consideration* has the highest total mean rating of 4.42 described as very high, followed by *inspiration* with a mean rating of 4.34. Likewise, the indicator *idealized influence* has a total mean rating of 4.19 described as high, then *attributed charisma* has a mean score of 4.00 or high, and intellectual stimulation obtained a mean rating of 3.98 with a descriptive rating of high. The result speaks that transformative leadership of library personnel were oftentimes manisfested.

Table 1. Level of Transformative Leadership of Library Personnel

Indicator	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Attributed Charisma	0.40	4.00	High
Idealized Influence	0.47	4.19	High
Inspiration	0.45	4.34	Very High
Intellectual Stimulation	0.51	3.98	High
Individualized Consideration	0.46	4.42	Very High
Overall Mean	**0.31**	**4.18**	**High**

The high level of transformative leadership is manifested by the library personnel by treating others as individuals rather than just as a member of a group, spend time teaching and coaching to the library personnel's weaknesses. The library personnel talk enthusiastically about what they need to accomplish, express confidence so that goals will be achieved, talk positively about the future, express a compelling vision of the future, and achieved goals through practical and realistic planning. In addition, this denotes that library personnel set goals and objectives for the welfare of the entire organization and work beyond their self-interest, seek different perspectives when solving problems, assemble resources for certain task achievements, and make decisions quickly and firmly. This result is congruent with the declaration of Chemers (2014) who indicated that transformational leadership is a value-driven leadership behaviour where leaders pay attention on the organizational values as models in achieving organizational goals, thus, these values are useful in building relationships and inspiring those in the organization and the leader as a model in promoting the core values of the profession.

In addition, Stoker, Van der Velde and Lammers (2012) stressed out that an effective transformational leader cultivates the leadership prospective of those throughout the organization that inspires everyone to be part in the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. Bass and Avolio (1993) added that this

leader is equipped with capability to create a shared vision. Thus, they use values to shape trust, relationships, and create long-lasting functional change (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

5.2. Level of cultural competence of library personnel

Reflected in Table 2 are the responses of the respondents on cultural competence of library personnel which revealed an overall mean rating of 4.23 described as Very High. Among the six indicators, four of indicators obtained the description of very high but with different total mean rating. These indicators were *cultural awareness of self* and others has the highest mean ratings of 4.52 followed by *development of collections, programs and services* which is 4.42 then tracked with 4.39 for the *cross-cultural knowledge and skills*; 4.23 for the *service delivery*. Likewise, two indicators obtained the description of high with different mean scores. The two indicators were *cross-cultural leadership* with a mean rating of 3.92 or high; then *language diversity* with mean scores of 3.89 which is described as high.

Table 2. Level of Cultural Competence of Library Personnel

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Cultural Awareness of Self and Others	0.74	4.52	Very High
Cross-Cultural Knowledge and Skills	0.71	4.39	Very High
Development of Collections, Programs, and Services	0.75	4.42	Very High
Service Delivery	0.87	4.23	Very High
Language Diversity	0.63	3.89	High
Cross-cultural Leadership	0.85	3.92	High
Overall Mean	**0.66**	**4.23**	**Very High**

The result of every indicator of the variable speaks that library personnel were culturally competent that they were able to examine their cultural and social identities and heritage to increase awareness of the assumption, attitudes, and values. Library personnel also identifies limitations and normative behaviour in context, they also give importance on the means in which membership in different social groups influence worldview in understanding attitudes and behavior. These findings are supported by Crumpton and Bird (2013) that library staff with high level of cultural competence is able to understand and respect another culture no matter what the source of difference might be.

Furthermore, library personnel works with a wide scope of people who are culturally diverse, thus, they were be able to respond the needs by providing appropriate methods in demonstrating and empowering skills in working with their colleagues and constituents. As described by King (2009), a competent library staff has congruent behaviors and attitudes to work effectively in cross–cultural situations. On the other hand, library personnel were competent enough in developing the collections, programs, and services that addresses the informational and research needs of the library users. Also, they were able to promote free and

open access to information for all constituents through providing quality service delivery. According to Overall (2014) a culturally competent library staff incorporate cultural and socioeconomic groups into library services in order to enhance the lives of the patrons.

The library personnel fosters openness, sensitivity, and spirit of inquiry to other world views and cultural orientations by supporting diversity skills training and diversity education, and supporting the multi-cultural workforce to meet the needs of the constituency. In support, Ulezi and Jackson (2012) stated that cultural competence is important that must be embraced by both professionals and the institutions in order to effectively provide information services to its diverse clients. Moreover, library personnel are competent in language diversity by providing the provision of information resources appropriate to their library users, and masters reference interviewing methods that reflect an understanding of the role of language in the end-users culture.

5.3. Significance on the relationship between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel

The data in Table 3 shows the correlation of Transformative Leadership of Library Personnel as independent variable with the independent which is the Cultural Competence. It can be gleaned in the result that transformative leadership is significantly corelated to cultural competence as reflected by the p-value that is less than 0.05 and correlation coefficient, r = 0.493. This implies that high transformative leadership of library personnel would essentially increase the cultural competence. The null hypothesis stating, there is no significant relationship between transformative leadership of library personnel and cultural competence, is therefore, rejected. This suggests that those library personnel that have high transformative leadership are more likely to have high cultural competence than those who have low level of transformative leadership.

Table 3. Significance on the Relationship between Transformative Leadership and Cultural Competence of Library Personnel

Variables	Cultural Competence
Transformative Leadership	.493** (.000)

The findings support the study of Abzari and Khani (2010) that cultural attributes affect the behavior of the leaders with their followers. According to Brannen (2016), diverse work environment creates the need for a leader to be culturally competent. Thus, transformational leaders need inspiration, motivation and modernization plans, in order to create strategic vision for the organization.

Furthermore, the result is linked on the findings of Keung and Rockinson (2013) that there is a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and transformational leadership in the international school leaders. It is noted that leaders with high level of cultural intelligence, exhibited a higher level of transformational leadership style. Thus, people with high cultural intelligence were capable of leading and

managing diverse environments effectively. In addition, Ansari, Radmehr and Shalikar (2012) revealed a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and transformational leadership.

6. Conclusion

Diverse workplace climate creates culturally competent leaders. This study revealed a high level of transformative leadership of library personnel. This shows that library personnel possess transformative leadership behaviour by inspiring everyone to get involved in the achievement of organizational goals. Likewise, the library personnel show a very high level of cultural competence. This result is a manifestation that library personnel are recognizing and understanding the importance of diversity by fostering openness, sensitivity and responding to the unique needs of library users. On the other hand, a significant relationship between transformative leadership and cultural competence of library personnel is observed. This finding indicates that the deeper the library personnel manifest transformative leadership, the more likely they possess cultural competence.

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