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An Assessment of the Leadership Styles of DepEd Rizal Management and Its Relation to their Communication Patterns in the Workplace by Its Employees

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions of DepEd Rizal subordinates regarding their superiors' leadership styles and explores its relationship with communication patterns within the organization. Utilizing a quantitative research design, the study employed a structured survey distributed to systematically selected subordinates within DepEd Rizal. The leadership styles and communication patterns were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine prevailing trends and correlations. Findings indicate that the delegative leadership style emerged as the most favored among subordinates based on the weighted mean, suggesting that employees value autonomy and trust in decision-making. Additionally, horizontal communication was the dominant communication pattern, indicating that employees frequently engage in peer-to-peer interactions rather than top-down or bottom-up communication. Furthermore, the results show a significant relationship between leadership styles and communication patterns, highlighting how different leadership approaches influence workplace communication dynamics. These insights provide valuable implications for enhancing leadership strategies and fostering effective communication within the organization. Given its scope, the study is limited to the perceptions of DepEd Rizal subordinates. It does not account for external variables such as organizational policies or the personal leadership preferences of superiors. Future research may explore school leaders' perspectives to gain a holistic view of leadership-communication dynamics in educational institutions.

Keywords: *Leadership styles, Communication patterns, DepEd Rizal, Delegative leadership, Horizontal communication*

INTRODUCTION

Employee perception and superiors' leadership styles are crucial in an organization. The perception of the former on the latter's leadership style essentially forms the existing communication patterns in the workplace, which influences organizational culture and largely contributes to the overall performance of an organization.

Srivasta, et al. (2006) contended that the leader's perceptions of their contextual surroundings had influenced the leader's conduct (Shivers Blackwell, 2006). An organization's culture is primarily shaped by its leadership, although leadership development can also be influenced by the culture of the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Actually, a variety of factors, such as expectations, personal convictions, and past experiences, may influence an employee's perception of a circumstance. Additionally, the company's feedback systems, recognition initiatives, and communication plans may have an impact (Parker, 2023).

Aghedr (2019) asserts that superiors, subordinates, and different teams must communicate with one another. The belief system of members of an organization is highly affected by internal communication. According to Thomas et al. (2000), the growth of employee belief inside a company is significantly influenced by communication. A leader is a beacon of light that inspires, motivates, and serves as a symbol for followers and subordinates. A successful team leader coordinates efforts and brings the pieces together to form a whole (Khan et al., 2014). All team members share credit for team achievements, and the team leader owns up to and accepts responsibility for any mistakes made. Indeed, to work well and meet expectations, employees need the necessary skills, motivation, and dedication.

Managerial practices that promote an empowering environment enable employees to act independently, thus cultivating a feeling of self-control and influence.

Amadi et al. (2019) cited Bakar and Mustaffa (2014) to argue that the interaction and communication between a superior and a subordinate in the workplace are the most crucial. Good and efficient interaction and communication between them are essential to the success of both parties and companies. Therefore, any breakdown in their communication significantly impacts the organization's effectiveness as a whole (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2014).

The Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) Year One Report (2023) documented systemic leadership challenges within the Department of Education. While much attention has been given to school-level principal shortages, the report also explicitly noted a "noticeable absence of a coaching and mentoring culture within DepEd, particularly at the SDO (Schools Division Office) and school levels." It further found that leaders at all levels have received limited professional development support since 2018, with no

structured feedback or succession planning systems. These deficiencies directly affect SDO personnel, who are expected to model effective leadership and communication for the schools they supervise. However, EDCOM II did not empirically examine how SDO subordinates perceive their immediate superiors' leadership styles or how those perceptions shape daily workplace communication. This study addresses that gap by focusing specifically on DepEd Rizal's SDO – one of the largest division offices in the Calabarzon region – and providing localized, empirical evidence on the relationship between perceived leadership styles and communication patterns.

Research Problem

The study aimed to analyze how the subordinates in DepEd Rizal perceive the leadership styles of their superiors and its relationship to the existing communication pattern in the workplace.
Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following objectives:

Major Problem: What is the perception of DepEd Rizal subordinates on their superiors' leadership styles and its relation to their existing communication patterns in the workplace?

Assumptions of the Study

1. There is no significant relationship between subordinates' attitudes toward leadership styles and their perceived communication patterns.
2. There is no significant relationship between subordinates' satisfaction with leadership styles and their perceived communication patterns.

Objectives of the Study

1. To measure the level of attitude of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles.
2. To measure the level of satisfaction of the subordinates on the leadership styles of their superiors.
3. To identify the communication pattern that exist between the subordinates and their leaders as perceived by the respondents.
4. To measure the significant relationships between subordinates' attitudes and communication patterns, and satisfaction levels and communication patterns.

Conceptual or Theoretical Framework

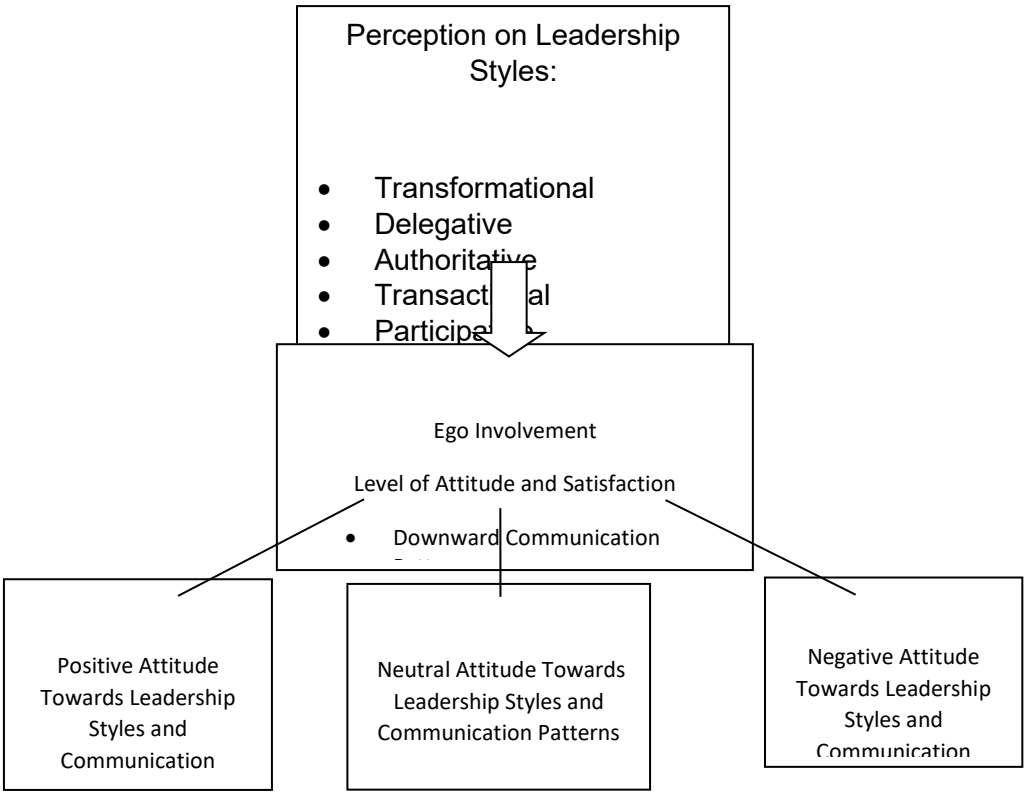


Figure 2

Figure 1 illustrates a comprehensive framework for assessing the perception of the subordinates on their superiors' leadership styles and its relationship with the existing communication patterns in the workplace. To properly evaluate the aforementioned variables, the figure incorporates two key theories: Social Judgement Theory, and Organizational Communication Theory.

This adapted paradigm is mostly similar to the paradigm of SJT, the researcher incorporated in it the leadership styles and communication patterns that are included in the study. The first box represents the subordinates' perception on the six leadership styles: transformational, delegative, authoritative, transactional, participative, and servant. This is the incoming information that the subordinates encounter and evaluate. The second one is level of ego-involvement which can be assessed by determining the level of respondents' attitude and satisfaction toward the aforementioned leadership styles and three communication patterns: downward communication pattern, upward communication pattern, and horizontal communication pattern. Under it are three boxes: first is the positive attitude of the respondents toward the leadership styles and communication patterns; next

is the neutral attitude of the respondents toward the leadership styles and communication patterns, and third is the negative attitude of the respondents toward the leadership styles and communication patterns.

The study used two theories: Social Judgement Theory, and Organizational Communication Theory. Social Judgement Theory was utilized to understand how subordinates perceive the various leadership styles of their superiors by exploring the former's level of attitude and satisfaction on the latter's leadership styles. Moreover, Organizational Communication Theory was used to identify the communication patterns that exist in the workplace as perceived by the respondents. The study was also guided by the six most common leadership styles by IMD (2024) to assess the leadership styles of DepEd Rizal management.

SJT is based on the premise that individuals evaluate leadership behaviors through three primary latitudes: the latitude of acceptance (behaviors they found agreeable), the latitude of rejection (behaviors they found unacceptable), and the latitude of non-commitment (behaviors they felt indifferent about). These latitudes reflected how subordinates perceived leadership styles, depending on how well those styles aligned with their pre-existing attitudes, values, and expectations. According to SJT, leadership behaviors that aligned with these attitudes were more likely to be accepted, leading to higher level of acceptance, while behaviors that conflicted with subordinates' expectations were likely to be rejected.

Organizational Communication Theory (OCT), particularly the model developed by Gerald M. Goldhaber, was applied to identify and assess the communication patterns that existed in the workplace, as perceived by the respondents. OCT highlighted the importance of communication flows in organizations and their impact on relationships, collaboration, and organizational effectiveness. This study focused on three primary communication patterns within DepEd Rizal:

Upward Communication: Refers to the flow of information from subordinates to superiors, including feedback, concerns, and suggestions. Effective upward communication was crucial for leaders to understand their subordinates' perspectives and needs.

Downward Communication: Involved the transmission of information from superiors to subordinates, such as directives, goals, and expectations. Clarity and transparency in downward communication were essential for ensuring subordinates understood their roles and organizational objectives.

Horizontal Communication: Occurred among peers at the same organizational level and fostered coordination and collaboration. This type of communication was crucial for maintaining positive relationships and a harmonious work environment.

Each of these communication flows was integral to understanding how leadership behaviors were perceived by subordinates and how these perceptions, in turn, influenced their attitudes and satisfaction. By identifying and analyzing the existing communication patterns at DepEd Rizal, the study provided insights into how communication practices interacted with leadership behaviors.

The integration of Social Judgement Theory (SJT) and Organizational Communication Theory (OCT) offered a holistic framework for examining the dynamic relationship between leadership styles and communication patterns. SJT explained how subordinates' attitudes and satisfaction toward their leaders influenced their acceptance or rejection of leadership styles, while OCT provided insight into how communication patterns (upward, downward, and horizontal) influence it.

Together, these theories provided a comprehensive understanding of how leadership and communication intersected to shape subordinate attitude and satisfaction and overall organizational dynamics. Effective communication served as a mediator between leadership behaviors and subordinate attitude and satisfaction.

In conclusion, this study utilized Social Judgement Theory to measure the level of subordinate attitudes and satisfaction with their superiors' leadership styles and Organizational Communication Theory to identify the communication patterns present in the workplace. By integrating both theories, the study offered a thorough understanding of how leadership behaviors and communication practices affected the work environment at DepEd Rizal.

METHODOLOGY

Data Gathering

In the data gathering, the researcher secured permits and endorsements from the research adviser, thesis panelists, and the faculty of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Graduate School. Upon obtaining these permits, the researcher made arrangements with the concerned personnel of DepEd Rizal in the conduct of the survey. The survey was conducted after the approval of the request.

In order to measure the level of attitude and satisfaction of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles, to know the communication patterns that exist between the subordinates and their superiors as perceived by the respondents, and to measure the

significant relationship between the level of attitude and communication pattern, and the level of satisfaction and communication pattern, survey questionnaires was employed. The questionnaire constituted statements regarding the superiors' leadership styles and the existing communication patterns in the workplace, and the respondents were asked to rank their perception through a 5-point Likert Scale.

Method of Research

This research measured the perception of DepEd Rizal subordinates on the leadership styles of their superiors and its relationship to the existing communication patterns in the workplace.

To meet the objectives of this study, quantitative descriptive correlation was used to have an in-depth analysis of the data gathered. Descriptive correlational design is used in research studies that aim to provide static pictures of situations as well as establish the relationship between different variables (McBurney & White, 2009).

Quantitative descriptive correlation was employed to measure the level of attitude and satisfaction of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles, to know the communication patterns that exist between the subordinates and their superiors as perceived by the respondents, and to measure the significant relationship between the level of attitude and communication pattern, and the level of satisfaction and communication pattern.

Research Design

This study examines the perceptions of DepEd Rizal subordinates regarding their superiors' leadership styles and explores its relationship with communication patterns within the organization. Utilizing a quantitative research design, the study employed a structured survey distributed to systematically selected subordinates within DepEd Rizal. The leadership styles and communication patterns were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine prevailing trends and correlations.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted at the Department of Education (DepEd) Schools Division Office of Rizal, Province of Rizal, Philippines. Specifically, it was carried out within the division office itself, where the respondents were office staff or non-teaching personnel assigned to various units and sections of the division. These subordinates work under the supervision of division-level officials, section heads, and other superior officers. The division office serves as the administrative and supervisory hub of DepEd in Rizal, overseeing the implementation of basic education programs across the province.

This locale was chosen because the division office is a formal, hierarchical, and highly structured work environment where leadership styles and communication patterns are integral to daily operations. Office staff interact regularly with their superiors through instructions, memoranda, meetings, reports, and other formal and informal channels. Their perceptions of leadership and communication are therefore grounded in direct, day-to-day organizational experience. Examining this setting allowed the researcher to capture how subordinates within the division office perceive their superiors' leadership styles and how these relate to communication patterns in the workplace.

Several contextual factors may have influenced the study. First, the bureaucratic and policy-driven nature of DepEd may shape both leadership practices and communication flows. Second, the division office environment involves multiple units and varying workloads, which may affect how subordinates experience communication with their superiors. Third, the presence of both formal and informal communication channels—such as face-to-face interactions, written memoranda, and digital platforms—may influence perceptions. Fourth, individual differences in tenure, position, and assignment may also shape how office staff view their superiors' leadership and communication. These factors were considered in interpreting the findings and in acknowledging the study's scope and limitations.

Participants or Data Sources

This research studied how the subordinates in DepEd Rizal perceive the leadership styles of their superiors and its relationship to the existing communication patterns in the workplace. Therefore, the study was limited to the perception on leadership styles, and communication-related activities in the organization.

The study aimed to recognize a gap in understanding how subordinates in DepEd Rizal perceive the leadership styles of their superiors and how it affects the existing communication patters in the workplace, and provides a thorough understanding on the topic. In order to accomplish this, survey questionnaires were handed to DepEd Rizal's subordinates. The study employed stratified sampling.

The study was limited on the perception of the subordinates. Hence, the participants in this study are the second level, first level, casual, and job order employees of DepEd Rizal. Moreover, the administered questionnaire was limited to positive statements that might affected the responses of the subordinates.

Research Instruments or Materials

Survey Questionnaire – The survey question items were structured to obtain answers to the queries raised in this study. The questionnaire is divided into three parts. The first part contains statements about different leadership styles, which aims to determine the level of attitude of the respondents by answering whether they strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree on the statements. The second part also contains statements about leadership styles, which aims to determine the level of satisfaction of the respondents

by answering whether they are very satisfied, satisfied, undecided, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied on the statements. Finally, the third part contains statements about communication patterns, which aims to identify the existing communication patterns in the workplace as perceived by the respondents by answering whether they strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree on the statements.

Data Gathering Procedure

In the data gathering, the researcher secured permits and endorsements from the research adviser, thesis panelists, and the faculty of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Graduate School. Upon obtaining these permits, the researcher made arrangements with the concerned personnel of DepEd Rizal in the conduct of the survey. The survey was conducted after the approval of the request.

In order to measure the level of attitude and satisfaction of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles, to know the communication patterns that exist between the subordinates and their superiors as perceived by the respondents, and to measure the significant relationship between the level of attitude and communication pattern, and the level of satisfaction and communication pattern, survey questionnaires was employed. The questionnaire constituted statements regarding the superiors' leadership styles and the existing communication patterns in the workplace, and the respondents were asked to rank their perception through a 5-point Likert Scale.

Data Analysis

Weighted mean was utilized to measure the level of attitude and satisfaction of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles, and to identify the communication pattern that exist between the subordinates and their leaders as perceived by the respondents.
The formula for the weighted mean was:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_i * w_i)}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i}$$

Where:
Σ = summation
w = the weights.
x = the value.

To examine the relationships between subordinates' attitudes towards leadership styles and perceived communication patterns, as well as satisfaction levels and communication patterns, **Spearman's Rank correlation** was employed.

A **5-point Likert Scale** was used to measure the statement of the respondents regarding their perception of the leadership styles of their superiors and its relationship to the existing communication patterns in the workplace.

Level of Attitude

Scale	Description	Numerical Equivalent
SA	Strongly Agree	4.21 – 5.00
A	Agree	3.41 – 4.20
U	Undecided	2.61 – 3.40
D	Disagree	1.81 – 2.60
SD	Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80

Level of Satisfaction

Scale	Description	Numerical Equivalent
VS	Very Satisfied	4.21 – 5.00
S	Satisfied	3.41 – 4.20
U	Undecided	2.61 – 3.40
D	Dissatisfied	1.81 – 2.60
VD	Very Dissatisfied	1.00-1.80

Data from the questionnaires was analyzed using the statistical package **SPSS.**

Ethical Considerations

The researcher observed strict ethical standards throughout the conduct of this study. Prior to data collection, the research protocol was submitted to and reviewed by the Graduate School Ethics Committee. The study received ethical clearance and approval. Permission to conduct the study was also secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd Rizal and other relevant authorities. These approvals ensured that the study complied with institutional policies and national regulations, including the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 01
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Transformational

Level of Attitude: Transformational	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
My superior motivates and inspires me to go beyond what is expected.	3.870	Agree
My superior communicates a clear and compelling vision for our work.	3.730	Agree

My superior encourages innovation and creativity among team members.	3.760	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.787**	**Agree**

Table 1 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward transformational leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.787 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "My superior motivates and inspires me to go beyond what is expected" (3.870), consistent with Ugochukwu (2024) who identified motivation and inspiration as core transformational traits. The lowest item was "communicates a clear and compelling vision for our work" (3.730), though still positive. Respondents also agreed that their superiors encourage innovation and creativity (3.760), aligning with IMD (2024) and with Filipino cultural tendencies toward creativity (Concepcion, 2018). Overall, transformational leadership is perceived favorably, supporting Ilac's (2021) observation that Filipino employees desire *makatao* (empathetic) leaders. However, Lin et al. (2019) caution that transformational leadership may lead to leader burnout when managing less competent teams – a consideration for DepEd Rizal SDO.

Table 02
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Delegative

Level of Attitude: Delegative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior trusts me to make decisions independently.	3.950	Agree
My superior allows me autonomy in completing my tasks.	3.930	Agree
My superior provides guidance when needed but gives me space to work.	3.920	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.933**	**Agree**

Table 2 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward delegative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.933 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "My superior trusts me to make decisions independently" (3.950), followed closely by "allows me autonomy in completing my tasks" (3.930) and "provides guidance when needed but gives me space to work" (3.920). These findings align with IMD (2024), who noted that delegative leaders emphasize trust and accountability, and with Vorecol (2024), who found that autonomy enhances employee engagement and satisfaction. Horizontal communication is strongly associated with this style, as peer-to-peer interaction flourishes when leaders step back (IMD, 2024). However, researchers caution that delegative leadership can lead to undetected problems, productivity declines, and communication breakdowns if team members lack self-direction (Amadi et al., 2019; Smith, 2019). For DepEd Rizal SDO, this

suggests that while autonomy is valued, periodic checkpoints and guidance are necessary to mitigate risks.

Table 03
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Authoritative

Level of Attitude: Authoritative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior makes decisions confidently and decisively.	3.870	Agree
My superior sets clear expectations for our team.	3.870	Agree
My superior takes charge in challenging situations and provides guidance	3.730	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.823**	**Agree**

Table 3 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward authoritative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.823 ("Agree"). The highest-rated items were "My superior makes decisions confidently and decisively" and "sets clear expectations for our team" (both 3.870), indicating that respondents value decisiveness and clarity. The lowest item was "takes charge in challenging situations and provides guidance" (3.730), though still positive. Downward communication is strongly associated with this style, as authoritative leaders provide clear direction and set expectations (IMD, 2024). Positive attitudes align with Ilac's (2021) finding that Filipino employees prefer job-savvy, person-focused leaders who mentor and inspire. However, researchers caution that authoritative leadership can be overbearing, limit employee autonomy, reduce morale, and centralize decision-making risks (Online Learning College, 2022). For DepEd Rizal SDO, this suggests that while decisiveness and clarity are appreciated, leaders should balance authority with opportunities for staff input to avoid resentment.

Table 04
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Transactional

Level of Attitude: Transactional	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior rewards achievements and recognizes hard work.	3.650	Agree
My superior provides clear instructions on tasks and expectations.	3.790	Agree
My superior sets specific goals and monitor progress.	3.840	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.760**	**Agree**

Table 4 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward transactional leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.760 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "My superior sets specific goals and monitors progress" (3.840), followed by "provides clear instructions on tasks and expectations" (3.790). The lowest item was "rewards achievements and recognizes hard work" (3.650), though still positive. Downward communication is strongly associated with this style, as transactional leaders emphasize clear instructions, goal setting, and performance feedback (IMD, 2024). Positive attitudes align with Hutama et al. (2024), who found that employees prefer transactional leaders because they improve performance and reduce stress. However, researchers caution that excessive monitoring can lead to negative perceptions, cultures of fear, and reduced trust (Hubstaff, 2024). For DepEd Rizal SDO, this suggests that while goal clarity and progress monitoring are valued, leaders should balance oversight with transparency, privacy, and employee control over data to maintain trust and morale.

Table 05
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Participative

Level of Attitude: Participative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior values and considers my input in decision-making.	3.720	Agree
My superior actively involves the team in setting goals and strategies.	3.850	Agree
My superior encourages open communication and idea-sharing.	3.740	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.770**	**Agree**

Table 5 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward participative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.770 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "My superior actively involves the team in setting goals and strategies" (3.850), followed by "encourages open communication and idea-sharing" (3.740). The lowest item was "values and considers my input in decision-making" (3.720), though still positive. Horizontal communication is strongly associated with this style, as participative leaders foster collaboration, open dialogue, and peer-to-peer interaction (IMD, 2024; Lumen, n.d.). Positive attitudes align with Filipino cultural values of *pakikisama* (harmony), *utang na loob* (reciprocity), and *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity), where employees value involvement to avoid being labeled as "walang pakisama" (Torres, 2019; Gallego, 2022). However, participative leadership can be time-consuming and may slow decision-making in urgent situations – a consideration for SDO managers balancing inclusion with efficiency.

Table 06

Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Attitude of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Servant

Level of Attitude: Servant	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior prioritizes the needs and well-being of the team members.	3.780	Agree
My superior demonstrates empathy and compassion in leadership.	3.850	Agree
My superior serves as a role model for ethical behavior and integrity.	3.750	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.793**	**Agree**

Table 6 shows that subordinates hold a positive attitude toward servant leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.793 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "My superior demonstrates empathy and compassion in leadership" (3.850), followed by "prioritizes the needs and well-being of team members" (3.780). The lowest item was "serves as a role model for ethical behavior and integrity" (3.750), though still positive. Upward and horizontal communication patterns are associated with this style, as servant leaders practice active listening, empathy, and collaboration (IMD, 2024). Positive attitudes align with Filipino preference for *makatao* (empathetic) leaders (Ilac, 2021) and with research showing that servant leadership builds trust and engagement (Jiggens, 2023). However, servant leaders risk burnout or being perceived as overly soft in high-pressure environments – a consideration for SDO managers balancing care with accountability.

Table 07
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Transformational

Level of Satisfaction: Transformational	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior's ability to motivate and inspire me.	3.80	Satisfied
My superior's communication of a clear vision for our work.	3.89	Satisfied
My superior's encouragement of innovation and creativity.	3.83	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.84**	**Satisfied**

Table 7 shows that subordinates are satisfied with transformational leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.84 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's communication of a clear vision for our work" (3.89), followed by "encouragement of

innovation and creativity" (3.83). The lowest item was "ability to motivate and inspire me" (3.80), though still positive. Upward communication is strongly associated with this style, as transformational leaders motivate employees to share ideas and feedback (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with Govender et al. (n.d.), who found that transformational leadership increases job satisfaction through charisma and intellectual stimulation. Clear vision communication fosters trust and reduces miscommunication (Pure, 2024). However, as noted earlier, transformational leadership may lead to leader burnout when managing less competent teams (Lin et al., 2019) – a consideration for SDO sustainability.

Table 08
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Delegative

Level of Satisfaction: Delegative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior's trust in my ability to make decisions independently.	3.88	Satisfied
My superior's provision of autonomy in completing tasks.	3.92	Satisfied
My superior's guidance when needed while giving me space to work.	3.86	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.89**	**Satisfied**

Table 8 shows that subordinates are satisfied with delegative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.89 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's provision of autonomy in completing tasks" (3.92), followed by "trust in my ability to make decisions independently" (3.88). The lowest item was "guidance when needed while giving me space to work" (3.86), though still positive. Horizontal communication is strongly associated with this style, as delegative leaders grant autonomy and encourage peer interaction (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham), where autonomy enhances empowerment and self-development (Cilliers et al., 2008). However, researchers caution that a passive, hands-off approach can lead to fear of failure, lack of direction, and perceived absence of leadership (Madlock, 2008; Xirasagar, 2008). For DepEd Rizal SDO, this suggests that while autonomy is valued, leaders should remain accessible for guidance to avoid employee uncertainty.

Table 09
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Authoritative

Level of Satisfaction: Authoritative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**

My superior's decisiveness and confidence in making decisions.	3.84	Satisfied
My superior's setting of clear expectations for our team.	3.85	Satisfied
My superior's taking charge in challenging situations and providing guidance.	3.82	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.84**	**Satisfied**

Table 9 shows that subordinates are satisfied with authoritative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.84 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's setting of clear expectations for our team" (3.85), followed by "decisiveness and confidence in making decisions" (3.84). The lowest item was "taking charge in challenging situations and providing guidance" (3.82), though still positive. Downward communication is strongly associated with this style, as authoritative leaders provide clear direction and vision (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with Filipino preferences for clear communication (Ilac, 2021) and with research showing that authoritative leaders enhance employee satisfaction by inspiring, empowering, and fostering psychological safety (Mazzetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Zheng et al., 2020). However, as noted earlier, authoritative leadership can be overbearing and limit autonomy (Online Learning College, 2022) – a balance SDO leaders should manage.

Table 10
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Transactional

Level of Satisfaction: Transactional	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior's recognition of achievements and hard work.	3.82	Satisfied
My superior's provision of clear instructions on tasks and expectations.	3.85	Satisfied
My superior's setting of specific goals and monitoring of progress.	3.83	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.83**	**Satisfied**

Table 10 shows that subordinates are satisfied with transactional leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.83 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's provision of clear instructions on tasks and expectations" (3.85), followed by "setting of specific goals and monitoring of progress" (3.83). The lowest item was "recognition of achievements and hard work" (3.82), though still positive. Downward communication is strongly associated with this style, as transactional leaders provide clear instructions, goals, and performance-based rewards (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with the Philippine

government's Performance-Based Incentive System (PBIS), which links monetary rewards to employee performance (Ramon et al., 2021). Clear communication and goal setting boost confidence, morale, and accountability (University of Pennsylvania, 2023; Chellappa, 2023). However, excessive monitoring and a rigid reward-penalty structure may create a culture of fear or reduce intrinsic motivation (Hubstaff, 2024) – a consideration for SDO managers.

Table 11
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Participative

Level of Satisfaction: Participative	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior's valuing and consideration of my input in decision-making.	3.87	Satisfied
My superior's active involvement of the team in setting goals and strategies.	3.82	Satisfied
My superior's encouragement of open communication and idea- sharing.	3.81	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.83**	**Satisfied**

Table 11 shows that subordinates are satisfied with participative leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.83 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's valuing and consideration of my input in decision-making" (3.87), followed by "active involvement of the team in setting goals and strategies" (3.82). The lowest item was "encouragement of open communication and idea-sharing" (3.81), though still positive. Horizontal communication is strongly associated with this style, as participative leaders foster open, collaborative environments (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with research showing that involving employees in decision-making builds trust, engagement, and intrinsic motivation (Landry, 2020; Usman et al., 2021; Sagnak, 2016). Open communication also strengthens team dynamics and productivity (Blink, 2023). However, participative leadership can be time-consuming and may delay urgent decisions – a consideration for SDO managers balancing inclusion with efficiency.

Table 12
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Satisfaction of The Subordinates Toward Their Superiors' Leadership Styles in Terms of Servant

Level of Satisfaction: Servant	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
My superior's prioritization of the needs and well-being of the team members.	3.85	Satisfied

My superior's demonstration of empathy and compassion in leadership.	3.83	Satisfied
My superior's role modeling of ethical behavior and integrity.	3.76	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.81**	**Satisfied**

Table 12 shows that subordinates are satisfied with servant leadership, with an overall weighted mean of 3.81 ("Satisfied"). The highest-rated item was "My superior's prioritization of the needs and well-being of team members" (3.85), followed by "demonstration of empathy and compassion" (3.83). The lowest item was "role modeling of ethical behavior and integrity" (3.76), though still positive. Upward and horizontal communication patterns are associated with this style, as servant leaders practice active listening, empathy, and collaboration (IMD, 2024). Satisfaction aligns with research showing that feeling valued and supported increases engagement, motivation, and loyalty (Wellics, n.d.). Empathy and compassion foster teamwork and stronger bonds (Wallbridge, 2023). However, servant leaders risk burnout or being perceived as overly soft in high-pressure environments – a consideration for SDO managers balancing care with accountability.

Table 13
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Agreement in Terms of Upward Communication Patterns

Upward	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and concerns to my superiors.	3.900	Agree
My superiors actively solicit feedback and suggestions from me and my colleagues.	3.670	Agree
I perceive that my concerns and feedback are taken seriously by my superiors.	3.820	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.797**	Agree

Table 13 shows that subordinates agree with positive perceptions of upward communication, with an overall weighted mean of 3.797 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and concerns to my superiors" (3.900), followed by "my concerns and feedback are taken seriously" (3.820). The lowest item was "my superiors actively solicit feedback and suggestions" (3.670), indicating a gap in proactive leader-initiated upward communication. Positive perceptions align with research showing that upward communication fosters employee engagement, trust, and a positive workplace culture (Fermin, 2023; McGoldrick, 2024; Dupeyroux, 2022). However, challenges include information distortion, delays, lack of leader engagement, and flattery (Soni, 2022). For DepEd Rizal SDO, the low score on active solicitation suggests that leaders

should be trained to proactively seek subordinate feedback rather than waiting for employees to speak up.

Table 14
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Agreement in Terms of Downward Communication Patterns

Downward	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
My superiors communicate organizational goals and expectations clearly and effectively.	3.830	Agree
Feedback provided by my superiors on my work performance is constructive and helpful.	3.700	Agree
I feel supported and informed by my superiors through their communication efforts.	3.840	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.790**	Agree

Table 14 shows that subordinates agree with positive perceptions of downward communication, with an overall weighted mean of 3.790 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "I feel supported and informed by my superiors through their communication efforts" (3.840), followed by "superiors communicate organizational goals and expectations clearly" (3.830). The lowest item was "feedback provided is constructive and helpful" (3.700), indicating room for improvement in performance feedback quality. Positive perceptions align with research showing that clear downward communication helps employees understand roles, responsibilities, and organizational goals, reducing misunderstandings and increasing efficiency (Atkins, 2023; Turner, 2023). However, disadvantages include information distortion, slow feedback loops, lack of employee input, and reduced morale (Study.com, 2019). For DepEd Rizal SDO, the lower score on constructive feedback suggests that leaders should receive training on delivering helpful, actionable performance feedback.

Table 15
Respondent's Assessment on The Level of Agreement in Terms of Horizontal Communication Patterns

Horizontal	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Communication among colleagues is open and transparent.	3.950	Agree
Collaboration and information sharing among peers are encouraged and valued.	3.930	Agree

I feel supported and respected by my colleagues in our communication interactions.	4.100	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**3.993**	Agree

Table 15 shows that subordinates strongly agree with positive perceptions of horizontal communication, with an overall weighted mean of 3.993 ("Agree"). The highest-rated item was "I feel supported and respected by my colleagues in our communication interactions" (4.100), followed by "communication among colleagues is open and transparent" (3.950). The lowest item was "collaboration and information sharing among peers are encouraged and valued" (3.930), though still very positive. Horizontal communication fosters collaboration, problem-solving, transparency, and unity (Guthrie, 2021). Employees value peer learning and candid exchange of ideas (Reeves, 2023; Ganesh, 2024). However, disadvantages include interdepartmental rivalry, workflow disruptions, gossip, and potential jealousy (Articles Junction Blog, 2013). For DepEd Rizal SDO, the strong positive perception of horizontal communication suggests that peer-to-peer collaboration is a workplace strength that should be maintained and leveraged, while managing risks such as excessive informal chatter or silo competition.

Table 16
Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Attitudes and and Upward Communication Patterns

Attitude on the leadership styles	**Upward**				**Remark**
	Correlation Coefficient	**Interpretation**	**p-value**	**Decision**	
Transformational	0.854	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.840	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.855	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.861	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.849	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.872	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 16 shows very strong positive correlations between subordinates' attitudes toward all six leadership styles and upward communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.840–0.872$). This means that the more favorably employees view their superiors' leadership, the more comfortable they

feel expressing opinions, giving feedback, and raising concerns upward. Servant leadership had the highest correlation (r = 0.872), suggesting that empathetic, well-being-focused leaders create the safest climate for upward voice. Delegative leadership had the lowest but still very strong correlation (r = 0.840), possibly because high autonomy reduces the perceived need for upward interaction. These findings align with IMD (2024) and Kumari et al. (2022), who noted that servant leaders establish honest, open channels. Practically, if DepEd Rizal SDO wants to improve upward communication – which scored lowest on "superiors actively solicit feedback" (mean = 3.67) – training division chiefs in servant leadership traits (active listening, empathy, prioritizing staff well-being) would be most effective.

Table 17

Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Attitudes and and Downward Communication Patterns

Attitude on the leadership styles	Downward				Remark
	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	
Transformational	0.885	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.833	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.824	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.909	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.889	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.901	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 17 shows very strong positive correlations between subordinates' attitudes toward all six leadership styles and downward communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.824–0.909$). This means that favorable attitudes toward leadership are associated with clearer, more supportive information flow from superiors to subordinates. Transactional leadership had the highest correlation (r = 0.909), indicating that when employees have positive attitudes toward structured reward-and-penalty systems, they perceive goals, instructions, and performance feedback as exceptionally clear and helpful. This aligns with Khairy et al. (2023), who noted that transactional leaders excel at setting clear objectives and expectations. Authoritative leadership had the lowest correlation (r = 0.824), possibly because its directive, mentor-driven approach may be perceived as less open to two-way exchange. Practically, for DepEd Rizal SDO, if leaders want to improve downward

communication – which scored lowest on "feedback is constructive" (mean = 3.70) – adopting transactional clarity (clear goals, regular progress monitoring) combined with constructive feedback training would be most effective.

Table 18
Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Attitudes and and Horizontal Communication Patterns

Attitude on the leadership styles	Horizontal				Remark
	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	
Transformational	0.810	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.779	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.763	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.839	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.836	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.823	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 18 shows strong to very strong positive correlations between subordinates' attitudes toward leadership styles and horizontal communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.763–0.839$). This means that favorable attitudes toward leadership are associated with greater peer-to-peer collaboration, open idea-sharing, and teamwork. Transactional leadership had the highest correlation ($r = 0.839$), followed closely by participative ($r = 0.836$) and transformational ($r = 0.810$). This suggests that clear goal setting, rewards, and structured expectations (transactional) – combined with involvement in decision-making (participative) – strongly encourage employees to communicate horizontally. Authoritative leadership had the lowest correlation ($r = 0.763$), possibly because its directive, mentor-driven style may reduce peer-initiated exchanges. These findings align with IMD (2024) and BusinessBalls (2019), noting that participative leadership directly fosters horizontal communication. For DepEd Rizal SDO, where horizontal communication is already the strongest pattern (mean = 3.993), leaders should maintain delegative and participative approaches while ensuring that authoritative direction does not inadvertently suppress peer collaboration.

Table 19
Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Satisfaction and and Upward Communication Patterns

Satisfaction on the leadership styles	Upward				Remark
	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	
Transformational	0.918	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.814	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.900	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.895	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.912	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.864	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 19 shows very strong positive correlations between subordinates' satisfaction with all six leadership styles and upward communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.814–0.918$). This means that emotional satisfaction with a leader is a powerful predictor of employees' willingness to voice concerns, offer feedback, and share ideas upward. Transformational leadership had the highest correlation ($r = 0.918$), followed closely by participative ($r = 0.912$). This suggests that leaders who inspire, motivate, and involve employees in decision-making create the strongest climate for upward voice. Delegative leadership had the lowest correlation ($r = 0.814$), possibly because high autonomy reduces the perceived need for upward interaction. Satisfaction-based correlations are generally higher than attitude-based ones (compare Table 16), indicating that genuine satisfaction matters more than mere agreement. For DepEd Rizal SDO, where upward communication scored lowest on "superiors actively solicit feedback" (mean = 3.67), increasing employee satisfaction through transformational and participative practices – not just improving attitudes – would be most effective.

Table 20
Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Satisfaction and and Downward Communication Patterns

Satisfaction on the leadership styles	Downward				Remark
	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	
Transformational	0.894	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.903	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.909	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.901	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.885	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.924	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 20 shows very strong positive correlations between subordinates' satisfaction with all six leadership styles and downward communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.885–0.924$). This means that when employees are genuinely satisfied with their leaders, they perceive goals, instructions, and performance feedback as clearer and more supportive. Servant leadership had the highest correlation ($r = 0.924$), indicating that satisfaction with empathetic, well-being-focused leaders produces the clearest downward communication. Participative leadership had the lowest but still very strong correlation ($r = 0.885$), possibly because its collaborative nature slightly dilutes top-down directive clarity. Compared to attitude-based correlations (Table 17, where transactional leadership was highest at $r = 0.909$), satisfaction-based correlations are even stronger, especially for servant leadership. For DepEd Rizal SDO, where downward communication scored lowest on "feedback is constructive" (mean = 3.70), increasing employee satisfaction through servant leader behaviors (empathy, prioritizing needs, ethical role modeling) would most effectively improve the clarity and helpfulness of downward feedback.

Table 21
Spearman's Rank Correlation: Relationship Between Subordinates' Satisfaction and and Horizontal Communication Patterns

Satisfaction on the leadership styles	Horizontal				Remark
	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	
Transformational	0.764	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Delegative	0.830	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Authoritative	0.791	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Transactional	0.800	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Participative	0.822	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Servant	0.820	Very Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 21 shows strong to very strong positive correlations between subordinates' satisfaction with leadership styles and horizontal communication ($p < .001$; $r = 0.764–0.830$). This means that satisfied employees are more likely to engage in open peer-to-peer collaboration, idea-sharing, and teamwork. Delegative leadership had the highest correlation ($r = 0.830$), followed by participative ($r = 0.822$) and servant ($r = 0.820$). This suggests that autonomy, involvement in decision-making, and empathy most strongly encourage horizontal communication. Transformational leadership had the lowest correlation ($r = 0.764$), possibly because its focus on visionary inspiration may prioritize vertical over lateral exchange. Compared to attitude-based correlations (Table 18, range 0.763–0.839), satisfaction-based correlations are similar, indicating that horizontal communication is already robust and less dependent on emotional satisfaction. For DepEd Rizal SDO, where horizontal communication is already the strongest pattern (mean = 3.993), leaders should maintain delegative and participative approaches while using peer collaboration as a vehicle to improve the weaker upward and downward communication channels.

Discussion of Objective 1
Objective 1 measured the level of attitude of the subordinates toward their superiors' leadership styles. Tables 1 to 6 present the results for the six leadership styles: transformational, delegative, authoritative, transactional, participative, and servant.

The overall weighted means show that subordinates held positive attitudes toward all six leadership styles, with all verbal interpretations falling under "Agree." However, the degree of positivity varied. Delegative leadership obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.933, indicating that subordinates most strongly agree that their superiors trust them to make decisions independently, allow autonomy in completing tasks, and provide guidance while giving them space to work. This finding aligns with IMD (2024), which noted that delegative leaders emphasize trust and accountability, and with Vorecol (2024), which found that autonomy enhances employee engagement and satisfaction. The high rating for delegative leadership suggests that DepEd Rizal subordinates value being trusted and given independence in their work.

Transactional leadership obtained the lowest overall weighted mean of 3.760, though still within the "Agree" range. The lowest-rated item across all leadership styles was "My superior rewards achievements and recognizes hard work" with a mean of 3.650, suggesting that recognition and rewards may be an area for improvement. This is consistent with Hubstaff (2024), which cautioned that transactional leadership can lead to negative perceptions if monitoring is excessive or if rewards are not consistently delivered.
Authoritative and servant leadership also received relatively high ratings of 3.823 and 3.793, respectively, indicating that subordinates appreciate decisiveness, clear expectations, empathy, and compassion from their superiors. These findings support Ilac (2021), who observed that Filipino employees prefer makatao or empathetic leaders who are also job-savvy and who mentor and inspire.

Transformational and participative leadership received moderately positive ratings of 3.787 and 3.770, respectively. The lowest-rated item for transformational leadership was "communicates a clear and compelling vision for our work" with a mean of 3.730, while the lowest for participative was "values and considers my input in decision-making" with a mean of 3.720. These findings suggest that while subordinates generally agree that their superiors exhibit these styles, there is room for improvement in vision communication and input consideration.

Overall, the results indicate that subordinates have a generally positive attitude toward all six leadership styles, with delegative leadership being the most favored. This suggests that DepEd Rizal superiors are perceived as flexible, trusting, and supportive, though there are opportunities to strengthen recognition, vision communication, and participatory decision-making.

Discussion of Objective 2

Objective 2 measured the level of satisfaction of the subordinates with their superiors' leadership styles. Tables 7 to 12 present the results for the six leadership styles.

The overall weighted means show that subordinates were satisfied with all six leadership styles, with all verbal interpretations falling under "Satisfied." Delegative leadership obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.89, with the highest-rated item being "My superior's provision of autonomy in completing tasks" with a mean of 3.92. This indicates that subordinates are most satisfied when they are given independence and trust. This finding aligns with the Job Characteristics Model of Hackman and Oldham, which posits that autonomy enhances empowerment and self-development (Cilliers et al., 2008). However, researchers such as Madlock (2008) and Xirasagar (2008) cautioned that a passive, hands-off approach can lead to fear of failure and lack of direction, suggesting that leaders should remain accessible for guidance.

Transformational and authoritative leadership tied for second with overall weighted means of 3.84 each. For transformational leadership, the highest-rated item was "My superior's communication of a clear vision for our work" with a mean of 3.89, indicating that satisfaction is driven by clear vision communication. For authoritative leadership, the highest-rated item was "My superior's setting of clear expectations for our team" with a mean of 3.85, indicating that satisfaction is driven by clarity and structure. These findings support Govender et al. (n.d.) and Mazzetti and Schaufeli (2022), who found that transformational and authoritative leaders enhance job satisfaction through inspiration, empowerment, and psychological safety.

Transactional and participative leadership tied for fourth with overall weighted means of 3.83 each. For transactional leadership, the highest-rated item was "My superior's provision of clear instructions on tasks and expectations" with a mean of 3.85. For participative leadership, the highest-rated item was "My superior's valuing and consideration of my input in decision-making" with a mean of 3.87. These findings suggest that subordinates are satisfied when instructions are clear and when their input is valued. However, participative leadership can be time-consuming and may slow decision-making in urgent situations.
Servant leadership obtained the lowest overall weighted mean of 3.81, though still within the "Satisfied" range. The highest-rated item was "My superior's prioritization of the needs and well-being of team members" with a mean of 3.85, while the lowest was "My superior's role modeling of ethical behavior and integrity" with a mean of 3.76. This suggests that while subordinates appreciate empathy and care, there is room for improvement in ethical role modeling. Servant leaders also risk burnout or being perceived as overly soft in high-pressure environments.

Overall, the results indicate that subordinates are satisfied with all six leadership styles, with delegative leadership producing the highest satisfaction. This suggests that autonomy and trust are key drivers of satisfaction in DepEd Rizal, though leaders should balance delegation with accessibility and ethical role modeling.

Discussion of Objective 3

Objective 3 identified the communication patterns that exist between the subordinates and their leaders as perceived by the respondents. Tables 13 to 15 present the results for upward, downward, and horizontal communication.
The overall weighted means show that subordinates agreed with positive perceptions of all three communication patterns, with all verbal interpretations falling under "Agree." Horizontal communication obtained the highest overall weighted mean of 3.993, with the highest-rated item being "I feel supported and respected by my colleagues in our communication interactions" with a mean of 4.100. This indicates that peer-to-peer communication is the strongest and most positive communication pattern in DepEd Rizal. This finding aligns with Guthrie (2021), who noted that horizontal communication fosters collaboration, problem-solving, transparency, and unity. However, disadvantages such as interdepartmental rivalry, workflow disruptions, and gossip, as noted by Articles Junction Blog (2013), should be managed.

Upward communication obtained the second-highest overall weighted mean of 3.797. The highest-rated item was "I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and concerns to my superiors" with a mean of 3.900, indicating that subordinates feel psychologically safe to speak up. However, the lowest-rated item was "My superiors actively solicit feedback and suggestions from me and my colleagues" with a mean of 3.670, indicating a gap in proactive leader-initiated upward communication. This suggests that while subordinates are willing to speak up, superiors may not be consistently inviting feedback. This finding aligns with Soni (2022), who identified lack of leader engagement as a challenge in upward communication.
Downward communication obtained the lowest overall weighted mean of 3.790, though still within the "Agree" range. The highest-rated item was "I feel supported and informed by my superiors through their communication efforts" with a mean of 3.840, while the lowest was "Feedback provided by my superiors on my work performance is constructive and helpful" with a mean of 3.700. This indicates that while subordinates feel informed and supported, the quality of performance feedback needs improvement. This finding aligns with Study.com (2019), which noted that disadvantages of downward communication include information distortion, slow feedback loops, and reduced morale.

Overall, the results indicate that horizontal communication is the dominant and most effective communication pattern in DepEd Rizal, followed by upward and downward communication. While all three patterns are positively perceived, there are specific areas for improvement: proactive feedback solicitation in upward communication and constructive performance feedback in downward communication.

Discussion of Objective 4

Objective 4 measured the significant relationships between subordinates' attitudes and communication patterns, and between satisfaction levels and communication patterns. Tables 16 to 21 present the results of the Spearman's Rank Correlation analysis.
All correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses. The relationships ranged from strong positive to very strong positive. This confirms that leadership styles and communication patterns are significantly related in DepEd Rizal.

For the relationship between attitudes toward leadership styles and communication patterns, the results show very strong positive correlations with upward communication ranging from 0.840 to 0.872, very strong positive correlations with downward communication ranging from 0.824 to 0.909, and strong to very strong positive correlations with horizontal communication ranging from 0.763 to 0.839. This means that the more favorably subordinates view their superiors' leadership, the more they perceive all three communication patterns positively. Servant leadership had the highest correlation with upward communication at 0.872, suggesting that empathetic, well-being-focused leaders create the safest climate for subordinates to voice concerns and give feedback. Transactional leadership had the highest correlation with downward communication at 0.909, indicating that when subordinates have positive attitudes toward structured reward and penalty systems, they perceive goals, instructions, and performance feedback as exceptionally clear. Transactional leadership also had the highest correlation with horizontal communication at 0.839, followed closely by participative leadership at 0.836, suggesting that clear goals and involvement in decision-making encourage peer collaboration. Authoritative leadership consistently had the lowest correlations with upward, downward, and horizontal communication, possibly because its directive style may reduce two-way exchange and peer-initiated interaction.

For the relationship between satisfaction with leadership styles and communication patterns, the results show very strong positive correlations with upward communication ranging from 0.814 to 0.918, very strong positive correlations with downward communication ranging from 0.885 to 0.924, and strong to very strong positive correlations with horizontal communication ranging from 0.764 to 0.830. Notably, satisfaction-based correlations were generally higher than attitude-based correlations, indicating that emotional satisfaction with a leader is a more powerful predictor of communication perceptions than mere agreement. Transformational leadership had the highest correlation with upward communication at 0.918, followed closely by participative leadership at 0.912, suggesting that leaders who inspire, motivate, and involve employees create the strongest climate for upward voice. Servant leadership had the highest correlation with downward communication at 0.924, indicating that satisfaction with empathetic, well-being-focused

leaders produces the clearest downward communication. Delegative leadership had the highest correlation with horizontal communication at 0.830, followed by participative at 0.822 and servant at 0.820, suggesting that autonomy, involvement, and empathy most strongly encourage peer-to-peer collaboration. Transformational leadership had the lowest correlation with horizontal communication at 0.764, possibly because its visionary focus may prioritize vertical over lateral exchange.

The results confirm that leadership styles are significantly related to communication patterns in DepEd Rizal. Positive attitudes toward and satisfaction with leadership are associated with more positive perceptions of upward, downward, and horizontal communication. The strongest relationships were found between satisfaction with servant leadership and downward communication at 0.924, satisfaction with transformational leadership and upward communication at 0.918, and attitude toward transactional leadership and downward communication at 0.909.

These findings suggest that to improve communication in DepEd Rizal, leaders should focus on building satisfaction, not just positive attitudes, through servant, transformational, and participative practices. Specifically, to improve upward communication, which scored lowest on proactive feedback solicitation, leaders should adopt transformational and participative behaviors. To improve downward communication, which scored lowest on constructive feedback, leaders should adopt servant leadership behaviors. To maintain strong horizontal communication, leaders should continue delegative and participative approaches while ensuring that authoritative direction does not suppress peer collaboration.

The rejection of both null hypotheses confirms that leadership styles and communication patterns are not independent. They are significantly and positively related. This supports the study's theoretical framework integrating Social Judgement Theory and Organizational Communication Theory, which posits that subordinates' evaluations of leadership influence their acceptance or rejection of communication flows.

General Discussion

Horizontal communication is the most dominant and effective communication pattern in DepEd Rizal, driven by the delegative, participative, and servant leadership styles. However, while this communication pattern encourages collaboration, it also has significant challenges that must be addressed to maintain group cohesion and prevent internal conflicts.

While delegative and transformational leaderships are preferred, these styles pose challenges such as limited problem detection and potential burnout, particularly when leaders manage less competent teams. Transformational leadership requires additional support to mitigate emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions among leaders.

Authoritative leadership is viewed positively but has negative implications, including a tendency to be overbearing and reduce employee autonomy. Although positively perceived, transactional leadership can foster a negative work culture through excessive monitoring and a lack of employee morale.

Both upward and downward communication are positively perceived by subordinates, but each communication pattern presents limitations. Information distortion, slow feedback, and a lack of employee input are common issues that need to be addressed to improve overall communication.

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