

Understanding Human Dimension That Contributes To The Success Or Failure Of Cooperatives At The Philippine National Impact Zone (NIZ) Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study

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Abstract

This research is limited to analyzing the human dimension of leadership traits and the style of the Chairman/leader of the cooperatives at the Philippine national impact zone. This is a qualitative research study using an online survey questionnaire to generate the data needed. A descriptive method for presenting data was made. Out of 20 Chairmen of cooperatives, the leadership traits of those in matured cooperatives that were identified and rated higher as perceived by the leader themselves (Chairman) than their members' were the following: forward-looking, fair, and broad-minded. While for the in-distress coop, the traits such as honest, competent, inspiring, intelligent, forward-looking, fair, and broad-minded were rated higher by the Chairman than his members. The Leadership Style, on the other hand, was perceived as the character trait of the matured cooperatives. The matured cooperatives have an experienced & knowledgeable set of officers and committees in running the cooperative business. All of the respondents (n=20) are currently serving as Chairman and have an average of five (5) years in their current position. With regards to experience, 35.00% of them have previously served as Chairman for an average of 5 years, 25.00% served as ViceChairman for an average of 3 years and 20.00% served as Secretary for an average of 7 years. Results of this survey show that the Leadership Style of the 19 (90.00%) out of 20 Chairmen of the matured and in-distressed cooperatives fall under the Team Leader type of managerial grid.

Keywords: Understanding, Human Dimension, Success, Failure, Cooperatives National Impact Zone Covid-19

Introduction

COVID-19 offers numerous opportunities to evaluate, learn about, and analyze leadership. The coronavirus pandemic is a complex, dynamic problem that involves a wide range of systems, including public health, economics, social, technical, time, emotion, the environment, and many more. All of these systems are linked, which adds to the number of variables that alter limits and opportunities. This never-before-seen dynamic necessitates a holistic approach and

difficult decision-making for everyone specifically our national leaders.

The road to excellent leadership is a unique and personal one. The journey's objective is determined by each individual, but it will eventually be about the deliverance of human potential. The realization of one's vision through others is what leadership is all about. If you don't have any followers, you can't lead. Leadership is defined as a set of concepts, abilities, behaviors, and attitudes that combine knowledge, trust, and power to accomplish a goal (Carreda, 2020).

Successful organizations, as seen by both external and internal clients, have leaders who set high standards and goals, values that demonstrate the organization's concern for its employees, and concepts that define products and services. The quality of leaders and their leadership style is cited in several kinds of literature as a crucial predictor of any successful group activity (Bass, 2009).

The national and local government institutions have played a crucial role in the development of rural areas and the implementation of efficient poverty reduction initiatives. Institutions are the rules by which agents interact and the organizations that carry out the rules to accomplish desired outcomes (World Development Report, 2002).

The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) is one of the national government institutions that focus on smallholder farmer cooperative development in target communities to harness the power of group undertakings. As defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, n.d.), producer organizations (POs) are "formal and informal organizations and institutional arrangements that involve producer organizations (POs) and others to achieve common objectives."

leadership style. As cooperatives exemplify a collective undertaking being led by a leader or Chairperson some cooperatives successfully matured and showed good performance while others mature at a relatively slow pace and some cooperatives have been in-distress making dairy farmer members live with a meager income. This living situation was further

. So far, no study has been done at the NIZ on the human dimension of leadership and how it influences the success or failure of cooperatives during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study aims to learn more about the leadership traits and style of the Chairman to better understand the aspects of leadership that are perceived to promote cooperative success or failure. Understanding the human dimension of

Since community organizations such as cooperatives perpetuate lasting group activity and empowerment, PCC envisioned cooperatives growing into independent and powerful conduits for promoting carabao-based enterprises. Smallholder farmers joined cooperatives to participate and develop a formidable way of putting a business on a commercial scale formerly exclusively available to private producers only. Dairy cooperative development was a strategy of PCC to help rural farming communities to improve their income and nutrition through carabao-based enterprises.

The Carabao Development Program (CDP) has designated Nueva Ecija as the "National Impact Zone (NIZ)" for demonstrating the model for the carabao-based enterprise. This approach takes into account the collective minimum volume of milk required to keep dairy businesses afloat. Today, there are 50 dairy producer cooperatives in existence in varying degrees of development.

Over the years, PCC has developed indicators to categorize the stage of development of dairy producer cooperatives at the NIZ. It has been pointed out in the literature that one major determinant of the success of group undertakings is the quality of leaders and their exacerbated in mid-2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic prevented people from going out, including to work and getting daily necessities. This has a tremendous effect on people's lives, particularly those who are self-employed, small-scale manufacturers, and distributors of goods and services, such as dairy farmers

leadership in successful, matured cooperatives will be a valuable success indicator for PCC as an institution and the cooperative as an organization, as it will allow them to implement necessary interventions such as identifying the next quality leader or successor. As a result, there would be a higher chance of program success and sustainability, which would help to create jobs, reduce poverty, and enhance

income and nutrition in rural farming communities.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to understand some aspects of the human dimension of leadership that contribute to the status of cooperation in the National Impact Zone (NIZ) being facilitated by the Philippine Carabao Center before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. determine the leadership trait and leadership style of the cooperative Chairman perceived to contribute to the success or failure of cooperatives

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The Chairman and members of the cooperatives of PCC-National Impact Zone in Nueva Ecija were the focus of this research. This research was limited to analyzing the human dimension of leadership traits and the style of the Chairman/leader and will not take into consideration the cooperative's many success indicators.

In particular, the focus was on the Chairman leaders and certain cooperative members who remain **active** (as per status at the NIZ) in 2019 and during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-2021). Due to the time constraints of this case study, available documents, reports, and other materials were obtained to augment the descriptive quality assessment of the contribution of PCC to cooperatives and the community.

Methodology

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1, shows the relationship between selected variables and intervening variables that may describe the outcome-dependent variable. The selected independent variables depict a relationship to the intervening variables on Chairman leadership traits and

2. compare the leadership trait and leadership styles of successful and not successful cooperative
3. describe the contribution of PCC to cooperatives before and during the pandemic;
4. describe the contribution of cooperatives to their community during a pandemic.

Time and Place of the Study

The study was conducted from April 15 to May 20, 2022, at the National Impact Zone (NIZ) cooperatives located in the province of Nueva Ecija.

leadership style that may show influence on the resulting category of the cooperative, based on the stage/status of development following the typology as devised by the PCC National Impact Zone (NIZ). These categories are the following: infancy stage, growth stage, maturity, and in-distress or problematic cooperative.

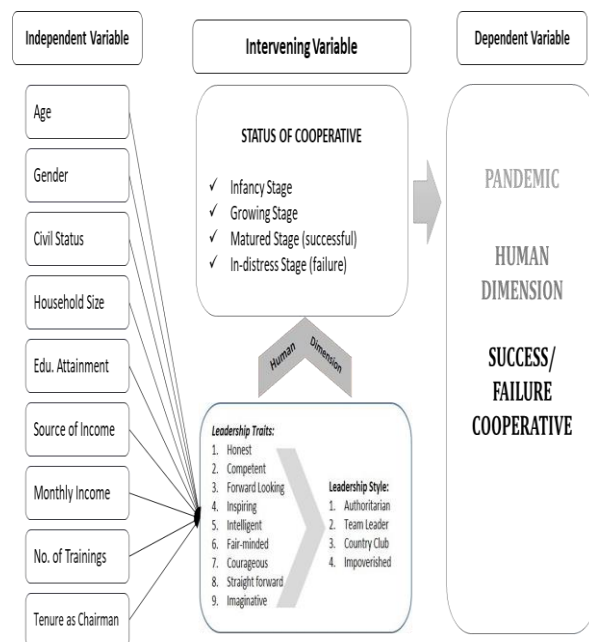


Figure 1. Factors influencing the leadership traits and leadership style of Cooperative Chairman

In this study, the intervening variable is expected to have an impact on the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable. Typically, the intervening variable is a cause of the dependent variable and is caused by the independent variable.

Research Design

This qualitative research study was used, using an online survey questionnaire to generate the data needed. A descriptive method for presenting data was made. It entails analyzing, interpreting, and documenting data collected to understand the cooperative Chairman's leadership traits and style as one of the many factors that were perceived to contribute to cooperative success or failure before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data collection occurs at the time of answering the online survey questionnaire capturing respondents' opinions in real-time.

Sampling Design and Unit of Analysis

Purposive sampling was used in this study owing to the nature of the research survey questionnaire that was structured purposively to generate the answer to the objectives of the study. During the research, the respondents were counted as individuals. Due to time constraints, the researcher identified the top 10 chairman of cooperatives in the matured (successful) stage of development and 10 Chairman of cooperatives in distress of development. Similarly, randomly selected cooperative members with online access to survey questionnaires were included, to generate their perceptions of their Chairman's leadership traits and style.

Table 1, shows the list of cooperatives of the National Impact Zone with their status of development as of 2019 (Del Rosario, 2019). Following the purposive sampling method, from a total of 50 cooperatives, the list of top 10 matured (successful) cooperatives and the least 10 in-distress (not successful) cooperative Chairman with their five (5) coop members were the respondents of the study. Overall respondents were 20 cooperative Chairman and 100 cooperative members.

Table 1. List of Cooperatives with the status of development

	Matured Cooperative	Number of Respondents		In-distress Cooperative	
		Chairman	Members	Chairman	Members
1	Pulong Buli PMPC	1	5	Buklod Producers Cooperative	1 5
2	Simulang Panibagong Bukas PMPC	1	5	San Vicente DPC	1 5
3	Bagong Pag-Asa PMPC Cabiao	1	5	Angat Buhay DPC	1 5
4	PAO PMPC	1	5	United Farmers PC	1 5
5	Catalanacan PMPC	1	5	Rizal West Coop	1 5
6	Aglipay Dairy	1	5	New Mabuhay MPC	1 5

	Producers Cooperative				
7	Eastern PMPC	1	5	Lakas Magsasaka PMPC	1 5
8	Kalasang PMPC	1	5	Labong Dairy Cooperative	1 5
9	Bagong Pag-Asa sa Bagong Talavera MPC	1	5	Kabulihan Farmers PC	1 5
10	Bongabon Dairy Cooperative	1	5	Samahan sa Likas Kayang Pag-unlad	1 5
	Total Respondents	10	50		10 50

Data Collection Technique and Instrumentation

The researcher observed the proper protocol in generating data for the survey by asking permission before the conduct of the online research survey from the chairman and cooperative member respondents.

One set of online questionnaires was developed and pre-tested. It consists of two parts, the first part will be used to gather primary data such as a profile of the Chairman and coop members. The second part was further divided and tailored to generate information directly from the chairman's leadership traits and style and another was intended to gather information, and view of coop members regarding the leadership traits and style that was observed by the chairman leader of their cooperative. Questions on the survey instrument were developed based on the review of the literature.

The online survey questionnaire was used with a combination of quantitative and qualitative data that generate information for the independent and

Secondary data from the available reports and documents on cooperative profile and status as influenced by the inputs and supports provided by PCC was reviewed

intervening variables. In addition, secondary data regarding the cooperative status of development as influenced by the inputs and supports provided by PCC, in particular, was gathered from the survey, available reports, and documents at the PCC-NIZ office. Likewise, additional data with regards to the cooperative effect on their community were also included.

Methods of Data Analysis

This study used descriptive statistics in analyzing the data. Frequencies, percentages, means, ratios, and standard deviation were used to summarize the descriptive data gathered particularly on the profile of the respondent's Chairman and members.

Likert scales were used to interpret the leadership traits and leadership style of the Chairman leaders of the cooperatives. In addition, correlation analysis was also used on data whenever applicable such as the relationship of the independent variables to the intervening variables and of the dependent variables.

and analyzed to support the result generated from the survey. Likewise, the effect of cooperation on the community they serve was gathered, analyze, and described.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent Chairman and members of the matured (successful) and in-distress (not successful) cooperatives of the National Impact Zone.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Out of 20 Chairman, 35.0% already belong to 61 years old and above, followed by 25.0% belonging to 51-60 years old as well as 25.0% of 41-50 years old, and only 15.0% belonging to 31-40 years old. Ninety percent (90.0%) are males and 10.0% are females. Only 5.0% (n=1) remain single and 95.0% (n=19) are married mostly belonging

belong to a household size of 3-4 (44.09%) members followed by 5-6 members (34.41%). While educational status mostly falls on the secondary level of education

to a household size of 3-4 members (50.0%). While 40.0% (n=8) of Chairman belong to elementary education, 30.0% (n=6) got secondary education and 15.0% (n=3) with a graduate degree or higher and only 3.0% (n=3) have vocational/skilled level of education.

While out of 93 cooperative member respondents, 21 (22.58%) belong to 61 years old and above, 31 (33.33%) belong to 51-60 years old, while 21 (22.58%) belong to 41-50 years old, 17 (18.28%) belong to 31-40 years old and only 1 (3.23%) belong to 20-30 years old. A total of 80 (86.02%) respondents are male and only 13 (13.98%) are female. Most cooperative member respondents are married (90.32%), with 7 (7.53%) single and 2 (2.15%) separated. Most of the members (41.94%), followed by elementary level (34.41%), graduate-level (8.60%), and vocational/skilled level (15.05%).

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Profile	Chairman Frequency		Cooperative Member	
	n=20	Percent	n=93	Percent
Age				
20 - 30	0	0.00	3	3.23
31 - 40	3	15.00	17	18.28
41 - 50	5	25.00	21	22.58
51 - 60	5	25.00	31	33.33
61 and above	7	35.00	21	22.58
mean±SD	55.25±12.70		50.73±11.34	
Sex				
male	18	90.00	80	86.02
female	2	10.00	13	13.98
Civil status				
single	1	5.00	7	7.53
married	19	95.00	84	90.32
separated	0	0.00	2	2.15
Household size				
1 - 2	4	20.00	9	9.68
3 - 4	10	50.00	41	44.09
5 - 6	4	20.00	32	34.41

7 - 8	2	10.00	8	8.60
9 above	0	0.00	3	3.23
Educational attainment				
Elementary	8	40.00	32	34.41
Secondary	6	30.00	39	41.94
Graduate Degree or Higher	3	15.00	8	8.60
Vocational/Skilled Level	3	15.00	14	15.05

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 3 shows the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. For the occupation of Chairman of the cooperatives before the pandemic, 18 (90.0%) of them are self-employed and only 1 (5.00%) is employed and 1 (5.00%) retired. The cooperative chairman has multiple responses in terms of their sources of income but mostly are into farming (rice, vegetables, onions, garlic, etc) (90.00%). Some 40.00% of chairman respondents are into dairy farming (buffalo farming) and some 60.00% are also into their own dairy business.

During a pandemic, cooperative chairman occupation slightly changed from 90.0% self-employed into becoming 80.0% during a pandemic. Employed status from

5.00% to 10.00% and recorded a 5.00% unemployment during a pandemic. While the cooperative Chairman's sources of income during the pandemic remain the same.

For the cooperative member's occupations before and during a pandemic, most of them are self-employed (84.95%) with 11.83% unemployed. While their sources of income before the pandemic were mostly on farming (rice, vegetables, onions, garlic, etc) with 83.87% which becomes 78.49% during a pandemic.

Out of 93 members, 21 members (22.58%) are into dairy farming before the pandemic which becomes 25.81% during a pandemic. For the dairy business, 57 (61.29%) have their own dairy business before the pandemic become 61 (65.59%) during the pandemic (**Table 3.**)

Table 3. Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Particulars	Chair		Cooperative Member	
	Before n (%)	After n (%)	Before n(%)	After n(%)
Occupation				
Unemployed	0 (0.00)	1 (5.00)	11 (11.83)	11 (11.83)
Self employed	18 (90.00)	16 (80.00)	79 (84.95)	79 (84.95)
Employed	1 (5.00)	2 (10.00)	3 (3.23)	3 (3.23)
Retired	1 (5.00)	1 (5.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Sources of income*				
Farming (rice farming, vegetables, unions, garlic, others)	18 (90.00)	17 (85.00)	78 (83.87)	73 (78.49)

Dairy Farming (buffalo farming)	8 (40.00)	8 (40.00)	21 (22.58)	24 (25.81)
Own Dairy Business	12 (60.00)	12 (60.00)	57 (61.29)	61 (65.59)
Employment (Salary)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	6 (6.45)	4 (4.30)

*** multiple responses**

To better understand the cooperative chairman and members’ engagement in dairy farming or dairy business that made up their cooperative operations before and during a pandemic, Table 4, shows the proportion of respondents’ engagement in dairy farming or dairy business operation.

Before the pandemic (2019), 90.00% (n=18) of cooperative chairman, followed by during the pandemic in 2020, 80.00% (n=16), and in 2021, 75.00% (n=15)

Table 4. Proportions of respondents engaged in dairy farming before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Engaged in dairy farming	Chairman (%)	Cooperative Member n (%)
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Chairman-respondents’ monthly income in dairy farming before and during a pandemic.

Table 5, shows the Chairman respondents’ monthly income in dairy farming before (2019) and during the pandemic (2020, 2021). Out of 20 Chairman, 18 respondents earned an income average ranging from Php 16, 502.78 to Php 18, 202.06 (before the pandemic). While during

Table 5. Chairman-respondents’ monthly income in dairy farming before and during pandemic.

Monthly income in dairy farming	Before pandemic (2019) n=18 %		During pandemic (2020) n=16 %		During pandemic (2021) n=15 %	
	5,000 and below	2	11.11	2	12.50	2

Proportions of respondents engaged in dairy farming before and during the Covid-19 pandemic.

are respectively engaged in dairy farming or dairy business operation of their cooperative. While before the pandemic the cooperative members’ engagement in dairy farming in 2019, was 77.42% (n=72), followed by during the pandemic in 2020, 69.89% (n=65), and in 2021, 75.27% (n=70), their engagement in dairy farming or dairy business operation help sustain their cooperative operation during pandemic (Table 4).

Before pandemic	18 (90.00)	72 (77.42)
During pandemic (2020)	16 (80.00)	65 (69.89)
During pandemic (2021)	15 (75.00)	70 (75.27)

pandemic, 16 Chairman earned an average income ranging from Php 15,968.75 to Php 18,950.13 (2021) and 15 respondent chairman earned Php 17, 420 to Php 19, 702.87 (2021). This result shows that the monthly income of the Chairman in all cooperatives (matured and in-distress) before and during the pandemic is less affected, hence, only slight differences have been observed.

5,001 - 10,000	7	38.89	6	37.50	5	33.33
11,001 - 15,000	3	16.67	4	25.00	3	20.00
15,0001 - 20,000	3	16.67	2	12.50	2	13.33
more than 20,000	3	16.67	2	12.50	3	20.00
mean±SD		16,502.78 ± 18,202.06		15,968.75 ± 18,950.13		17,420 ± 19,702.87

Cooperative member respondents' monthly income in dairy farming before and during a pandemic

On the other hand, the cooperative member respondents' monthly income in dairy farming before and during the pandemic is shown in Table 6, The table shows that out of 93 cooperative member respondents before the pandemic, 72 of them has a monthly income ranging from Php

7,722.2 to Php 11,732.1 (2019), while during the pandemic (2020), 65 member respondents have Php 7, 488.8 to Php 10,841.3 (2020) and 70 of them has a monthly income of Php 7,860.5 to Php 12,804.5 (2021). The result shows that the monthly income of all cooperative members (matured and in-distress) has not been affected by the pandemic since a slight difference has been observed.

Table 6. Cooperative member respondents' monthly income in dairy farming before and during a pandemic

Monthly income in Before pandemic	During pandemic (2020)		During pandemic (2021)			
	n=72	%	n=65	%	n=70	%
5,000 and below	15	20.83	6	24.62	9	12.86
5,001 - 10,00	26	36.11	23	35.38	30	42.86
11,001 - 15,000	16	22.22	16	24.62	12	17.14
15,0001 - 20,000	9	12.50	6	9.23	11	15.71
more than 20,000	6	8.33	4	6.15	8	11.43
mean±SD		<u>7,722.2 ± 11,732.1</u>		<u>7,488.8 ± 10,841.3</u>		<u>7,860.5 ± 12,804.5</u>

Recorded cooperative average highest monthly income (pesos), before and during a pandemic

On the other hand, the survey has captured the overall cooperative recorded average highest monthly income before and during a pandemic. Table 7, shows that matured cooperatives recorded the highest monthly income before the pandemic (2019)

of Php 31,250.00 while during the pandemic it recorded Php 29, 200.00 (2020) and Php 60,000.00 (2021) respectively. While **in-distress cooperatives** have recorded an average highest income before the pandemic, a Php 20, 250.00 (2019) while during the pandemic an income of Php 28,333.33 (2020) and Php 35,333.33 (2021) has been recorded.

The result shows that there is no significant difference noted in the income of cooperatives

before and during a pandemic. This cooperative income during a pandemic (2021: Php 60,000) indicates a state of cooperation that have leaders who are

adapting in times of difficulty and threats and are quick to find ways and opportunities to improve the condition (Falessen, 2020).

Table 7. Recorded cooperative average highest monthly income (pesos), before and during a pandemic

	Matured Coop	In distress Coop	t value
Before pandemic	31,250.00 ^a	20,250.00 ^a	0.625 ^{ns}
During pandemic (2020)	29,200.00 ^a	28,333.33 ^a	0.038 ^{ns}
During pandemic (2021)	60,000.00 ^a	35,333.33 ^a	0.438 ^{ns}

Note: means with the same column superscript (a-c) is not significantly different. ^{ns} means not significantly different (between matured and in distress)

Chairman-respondents’ current and previous membership in cooperatives

Table 8, shows the Chairman respondents’ current and previous membership in cooperatives. Out of 20 current cooperative Chairman, 7 of them have previously served as Chairman for 5 years, 5 of them have been Vice-chairman for 3 years, 4 of them served as Board Members for 7 years, 1 has been a

bookkeeper for 3 years and 3 were the previous member of the cooperative.

According to Carr et al., (2008), the common characteristics of successful cooperatives were connected with human traits. It is critical, among other things, to have an experienced Chairman with a long-term outlook beyond 1 to 5 years. A reasonable and open Board of Directors, as well as knowledgeable and courteous employees, are essential.

Table 8. Chairman-respondents’ current and previous membership in cooperatives

Current position in Particulars	Average years in position n (%)	Chairman (n=20)	
		Previous position in cooperative Average years in position	Previous position in cooperative n (%)
Chairman	20 (100)	5.04	7 (35.0)
Vice-Chairman			5 (25.0)
BOD Members			4 (20.0)
Secretary			
Treasurer			
Book Keeper			1 (5.0)
			3.00

Audit Committee		
Mediation & Conciliation Committee		
Education & Training Committee	3 (15.0)	4.33
Technician		
Member of Cooperative		

Chairman-respondents' attendance to different leadership training from 2016 to 2021.

Table 9, shows the different pieces of training attended by the Chairman of the cooperatives to strengthen their leadership

skills. Out of 20 cooperative Chairman, 7 (35.00%) of them have undergone more than six (6) different leadership training capacitation from 2016 to 2021. While two (2) of them have 5-6 training, four (4) have 3-4 training, another four (4) have 1-2 training and three have no training at all.

Table 9. Chairman-respondents' attendance to different leadership training from 2016 to 2021.

Attendance to Leadership training	Frequency n=20	Percent %
None	3	15.00
1 - 2	4	20.00
3 - 4	4	20.00
5 - 6	2	10.00
more than 6	7	35.00
mean±SD	6.00 ± 5.93	

Leadership Traits of the cooperative Chairman self-rating compared to ratings of their cooperative member

In today's complicated and uncertain environment, any formal or informal organization requires strong leaders to direct its members toward attaining specified goals. There is no such thing as a manager who fits all situations. Managers perform a variety of activities and have a variety of responsibilities at each level of management within a company. In addition to being leaders, managers are problem solvers, cheerleaders, and planners.

At the height of the pandemic in Nueva Ecija, the observed disruption of cooperatives' normal activities with the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine created an immediate impact on dairy farmers.

There are currently 50 dairy producer cooperatives operating within the National Impact Zone, with varying stages of development. Del Rosario (2019) stated that they already developed a typology to describe the development status of those cooperatives in the National Impact Zone (NIZ). She went on to say that 13 (26.0 percent) of the 50 cooperatives are mature or successful, 9 (18.0 percent) are still in the development stage, and 11 (22.0 percent) are in the in-distress stage of development.

Chairmen of the 10 matured cooperatives and 10 in-distress cooperatives have been surveyed to determine their characteristics traits and styles as a leader of their cooperatives. Table 10, shows the Leadership traits of cooperative Chairman self-rating compared to the ratings of 10, their cooperative members.

According to the literature, these leadership **traits** are critical to the success of an

organization. Trait theory claims that the leader's attributes will improve organizational performance. The leader is the exclusive emphasis of trait theory (Kotter, 1990). Many researchers have suggested that leadership is unique to a small number of people and that these people have some unchangeable characteristics TRAITS that cannot be developed (Bass, 1989). Leader effectiveness, on the other hand, refers to the amount of influence a leader has on individual or group performance, followers' satisfaction, and overall effectiveness (Derue, et al., 2012).

The ratings below show how the leader/chairman self-rated higher than the observers/cooperative members did on the characteristics such as Forward-looking, Fair (Patas sa Lahat), and Broad-minded (Malawak ang Pag-visit) for Matured cooperatives. While for in-distress coop the chairman self-rating is higher than cooperatives members for the traits Honest (Tapat), Competent (May sapat na Kakayahan), Inspiring (Nakaka- Inspire), Intelligent (Matalino), Forward-looking, Fair (Patas sa lahat), and Broad-minded (Malawak ang Pag-iisip) .

Table 10. Leadership Traits of the cooperative Chairman self-rating compared to ratings of their cooperative member

	Matured Coop Leadership Traits Chairman Members	In-distress coop Cooperative Chairman Members	Cooperative Cooperative		
Honest (Tapat)	4.31	4.33	4.39	4.32	
Competent (May sapat na Kakayahan)	4.29	4.33	4.37	4.29	
Inspiring (Nakaka- Inspire)	4.30	4.33	4.36	4.28	
Intelligent (Matalino)	4.31	4.34	4.37	4.36	
Forward-looking	4.35	4.34	4.38	4.37	
Fair (Patas sa lahat)	4.36	4.31	4.40	4.37	
Broad-minded (Malawak ang Pag- iisip)	4.30	4.26	4.38	4.34	
Courageous (Matapang)	4.20	4.26	4.33	4.34	
Straight forward (Diretso magsalita)	4.15	4.30	4.30	4.37	
Imaginative (Mapanlikha)	4.20	4.34	4.30	4.40	

Chairman-respondents frequency in meeting BOD officers and assisting individual members with coop. related matters before and during a pandemic.

Successful leaders, according to research, stand out from the crowd and have some basic personality traits that contribute considerably to their success. Many studies have shown that these ten (10) characteristic traits have a significant impact on leadership.

A Cooperative operates as a self-governing group of people that have voluntarily teamed together to achieve their

common economic, social, and cultural needs and goals through a democratically run enterprise, brings people together on an equal and democratic foundation, as all members have equal voting rights under the "one member, one vote" policy (Sapiro, 1993).

As such, mature or successful cooperatives in the National Impact Zones are those that have been in operation for at least five years and display the following characteristics: With medium-term strategic goals; established and implemented internal procedures, an ordered book of accounts,

and an annual audited financial statement; at least 2-3 active projects; dividends and patronage refunds; annual capital build-up of at least 15%; annual membership growth of at least 5%

Furthermore, as indicated by the fact that the cooperative's business enterprises are monitored by a skilled and experienced team of managers and committees, mature cooperatives at the NIZ have basic leadership abilities. Physical assets are accumulated, such as office structures and equipment. Full-time staff includes the manager, bookkeeper, cashier, and secretary. Organizing and conducting numerous meetings, as well as maintaining meeting minutes. Finally, a well-established cooperative has formed alliances and

networks with both private and public enterprises.

Table 11, shows the Chairman's frequency of meeting and assisting his cooperative members with cooperatively related matters. Before the pandemic, 75.00% of the Chairman conducted meeting with his BOD and officers once a month while during a pandemic, 35.00% of Chairman conducted meeting once a year, 30.00% once every quarter, and 20.00% once a month. But when it comes to assisting his cooperative members 75.00% of the Chairman assisted anytime as needed before the pandemic, and 55.00% of them still assisted anytime as needed during a pandemic.

Table 11. Chairman-respondents frequency in meeting BOD officers and assisting individual members with coop. related matters before and during a pandemic.

Schedule	Meet with your BOD and coop. officers		Assist individual members with coop. related matters	
	Before pandemic	During pandemic	Before Pandemic	During pandemic
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Once a week	1 (5.00)	1 (5.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
Once a month	15 (75.00)	4 (20.00)	4 (20.00)	4 (20.00)
Once every quarter	2 (10.00)	6 (30.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (10.00)
Once per semester	1 (5.00)	2 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (5.00)
Once a year	1 (5.00)	7 (35.00)		
Anytime needed			15 (75.00)	11 (55.00)
No answer			1 (5.00)	2 (10.00)

Common issues discussed during meetings

It's important to remember that everyone possesses qualities that make them good leaders; the notion is that anyone can learn to lead. Small actions can cascade to the top, boosting organizational success, and leadership qualities can originate from everywhere in an organization. However, an effective leader is defined by self-awareness of their activities within a larger organization and how they may impact everyone around them, regardless of their level of the organization.

As such, Table 12, shows common issues discussed during cooperative meetings before the pandemic such as dairy production/target/health (65.00%) and coop. objective/vision, mission, goals (55.00%), BOD tasks and responsibilities (50.00%), the income of the cooperative (40.00%), and membership issues (30.00%). While pandemic, dairy production/target/health (50.00%), membership issues (40.00%), coop. objective/vision, mission, goals (30.00%), income of cooperative (30.00%), and BOD task and responsibilities (25.00%).

Table 12. Common issues discussed during meetings

Issues*	Before the pandemic n (%)	During pandemic n (%)
Coop Objective/Vision/Mission/Goals	11 (55.00)	6 (30.00)
BOD task & responsibilities	10 (50.00)	5 (25.00)
Dairy Production/Target/ Health	13 (65.00)	10 (50.00)
Income of Coop/ Marketing Issues	8 (40.00)	6 (30.00)
Cooperative/ Membership Issues	6 (30.00)	8 (40.00)

* **multiple responses**

Table 13, shows how the Chairman of matured and in-distress cooperatives resolved issues indicated during their meetings with the officers and members of their cooperatives before and during a pandemic. The strategy of 70.00% of the Chairman before the pandemic is to discuss issues identified or raised with the concerned members, while 65.00% of them discussed the issues at the BOD/officers meeting, and 15.00% of them request others to resolve the issues of conflict. While during the pandemic 65.00% of the Chairman still

discussed the issues with the concerned members, while 50.00% of them discussed the issues with their BOD/officers during meetings.

The board of directors (BOD), on the other hand, is the cooperative's policy-making and direction-setting body. It is made up of the cooperative's core leaders. A weak board of directors is incapable of managing the cooperative's operations or assets. As a result, the vertical hierarchy and authority flow between the BOD and its committees were misrepresented and reflected incorrectly.

Table 13. Chairman-respondents' strategies to resolve issues and conflicts in the cooperative before and during a pandemic.

Strategies*	Before pandemic n (%)	During pandemic n (%)
Discuss during BOD/officers meeting	13 (65.00)	10 (50.00)
Discuss with concerned members	14 (70.00)	13 (65.00)
Request others to resolve the conflict	3 (15.00)	0 (0.00)

* **multiple responses**

Chairman-respondents' frequency in discussing and developing a plan for the coop and reviewing coop plans and target

With a compelling vision of the future that is used to express a sense of direction, respected leaders focus on who they are (be) (such as their beliefs and character), what they know (such as their job, tasks, and human nature), and what they do, such as implementing, motivating, and

providing direction for the future (Perkins, 2015).

As such, the Chairman of the cooperative's frequency in discussing and developing a plan for the coop as well as reviewing the coop plan and targets was shown in **Table 14**, Before the pandemic, 40.00% of the Chairman discuss and develop a plan for the coop once a month, while during a pandemic, 25.00% of them discussed it once every quarter, while 25.00% of them has no answer. With regards

to the review of plans and targets of the coop before the pandemic, 36.84% of them answered anytime as needed while during

the pandemic 31.58% of them also answered anytime as needed.

Table 14. Chairman-respondents' frequency in discussing and developing a plan for the coop and reviewing coop plans and target

Schedule	Discuss and develop a plan		Review coop plans and target (n=19)	
	Before pandemic n (%)	During pandemic n (%)	Before	During
			pandemic n (%)	pandemic n (%)
Once a week	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (5.26)	1 (5.26)
Once a month	8 (40.00)	4 (20.00)	5 (26.32)	3 (15.79)
Once every quarter	3 (15.00)	5 (25.00)	4 (21.05)	4 (21.05)
Once per semester	3 (15.00)	2 (10.00)	1 (5.26)	0 (0.00)
Once a year	0 (0.00)	1 (5.00)	1 (5.26)	3 (15.79)
Anytime needed	5 (25.00)	3 (15.00)	7 (36.84)	6 (31.58)
No answer	1 (5.00)	5 (25.00)		2 (10.53)

Chairman-respondents' importance rating on concerns on annual plan of cooperative

Table 15, shows the importance of the concerns of the Chairman with regards to their cooperative annual plan. The productivity target (milk/calves production) (ranked=1.5) and strengthening of coop and membership ranked both as a priority (ranked=1.5), followed by achievement of cooperative Objective, Vision, Mission & Goal (ranked=3), income and savings target (ranked=4), and investment target ranked the least in their annual plan. This indicates that when the first two priorities are achieved all the rest will follow accordingly.

The two most important requirements for excellent leadership were

established by Lamb et al. (2004). Trust and faith in Top Leadership are the single most reliable predictors of member pleasure in an organization. Leaders who are both strong and good are needed in cooperatives, someone who can guide them into the future while also demonstrating that they can be trusted. The second most important factor is LEADERS' good communication in three areas: overall strategy, aiding members in contributing to objectives, and information on how members are doing in attaining targets.

Table 15. Chairman-respondents' importance rating on concerns on annual plan of cooperative

5 = Most

4

3

1 = Least

2

a. Local Government Unit (LGU)/Mayor, local officials	2 (60.0)	3 (15.0)	2 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (15.0)	4.59	2
b. National Government Agencies (NGA) ex: DSWD, DepEd, DTI, DAR	10 (50.0)	4 (20.0)	3 (15.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)	4.22	3
c. National Government Organization (NGO)	7 (35.0)	5 (25.0)	3 (15.0)	2 (10.0)	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)	3.83	4
d. State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) ex. CLSU	5 (25.0)	5 (25.0)	4 (20.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)	3.56	5
e. Philippine Carabao Center (PCC)	19 (95.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.0)	5	1
f. National Dairy Authority	6 (30.0)	3 (15.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (5.0)	5 (25.0)	2 (10.0)	3.22	6

The project, support, and resources received or generated from Philippine Carabao Center before the pandemic

About the linkages successfully done by the Chairman who helped them in their cooperative's development needs, Figure 2 shows that 90.00% of the Chairman of cooperatives have projects, support and resources received or generated through linkage/partnership during their Leadership.

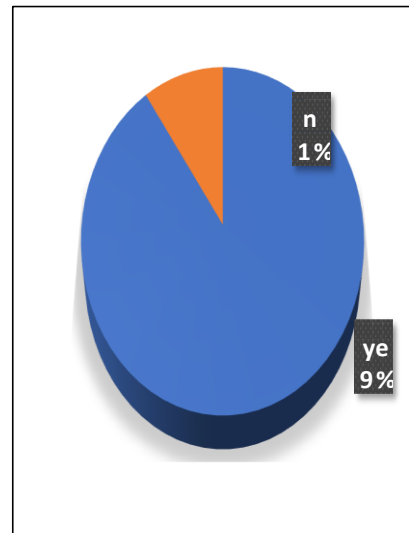


Figure 2. The proportion of chairman/cooperative that have projects, support, and resources generated through linkage/partnership during their Leadership While **Table 17** show the multiple projects, support, resources received or generated from Philippine Carabao Center before the pandemic, 30.00% of the Chairman stated to

have received support or resources for production supply, followed by animal health support (25.00%), fund support (25.00%), milk processing supplies, equipment, and other supplies for dairying (45.00%) and 10.00% stated to have received marketing assistance.

Table 17. The project, support, and resources received or generated from Philippine Carabao Center before the pandemic

Particulars*	Frequency	Percent %
Animal Health Support	5	25.00
Fund Support	5	25.00
Marketing Assistance	2	10.00
Production supplies	6	30.00
Milking Processing Supplies	3	15.00
Equipment	3	15.00
Others such as AI, Carabao, bakery, and milk feeding program	3	15.00

* multiple responses

Chairman-respondents plans/activities going to pursue

Table 18, shows the Chairman's responses regarding their plans or activities that they are going to pursue during their terms as Chairman. Most of the chairman (85.00%) will go to concentrate on the present activities and membership as well as pursue being an active member of the federation or

other organization. While 80.00% of them want to increase membership and membership commitment as well as to pursue value-adding activities to increase coop members' income. These plans indicate the vision of a leader into achieving a better and improved operation of their cooperatives. Fairness and equality, are at the center of the operation, encouraging people to work together to produce long-term jobs and prosperity.

Table 18. Chairman-respondents plans/activities going to pursue

Particulars	yes n (%)	no n (%)
Concentrate on the present activities and membership	17 (85.00)	3 (15.00)
Increase membership and membership commitment	16 (80.00)	4 (20.00)
The coop should be active members of a federation or other organization	17 (85.00)	3 (15.00)
Coop should pursue value adding activities to increase coop members income	16 (80.00)	4 (20.00)

Leadership style of the cooperative Chairman

Any institution and organization require leaders who are both strong and good, someone who can lead them into the future while also demonstrating that they can be trusted. Good leaders do not appear anywhere. Self-study, education, training, and experience are all part of the process of becoming a good leader.

While the leadership model serves as the conceptual structure to explain what makes a leader great, the Leadership style represents the pattern of leadership behaviors they exhibit in pursuit of that greatness. The style can either be effective or ineffective, depending upon the chosen behavior in certain situations.

The managerial grid identified specific types of managerial behavior which

are a concern for people or concern for tasks (Carreda, 2021). The ratings below are the identified Leadership Style of the 20 cooperative Chairmen of the matured and in-distress coop. Out of ten (10) cooperative Chairman of matured cooperative, 90.00% (n=9) responded to be high score on task and a high score on people where it falls under the category of Team Leader, while one (10.00%) Chairman of matured cooperative fall into impoverished leadership style. While surprisingly, the result of the leadership style for in-distress cooperatives happened to fall into the Team Leadership style (100.00%).

Table 19. Leadership style of the cooperative Chairman

Leadership Style	Matured Coop (n=10)	%	In-distress coop (n=10)	p %
Authoritarian	0	0.00	0	0.00
Team Leader	9	90.00	10	100.00
Country Club Leader	0	0.00	0	0.00
Impoverished leader	1	10.00	0	0.00

Fortunately, scholars have produced several theories and frameworks that help to better recognize and comprehend the various leadership styles that describe how a person behaves when leading a group. A leader's leadership style refers to how he or she delivers orders, implements plans, and motivates others.

According to Carreda, (2021) a leadership style of a Team Leader that is high on task and high on relationship leads by example and aims to establish a team environment in which all team members and individuals can reach their full potential as team members and individuals. They inspire the team to reach its objectives as quickly as possible while also working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds among the members. They frequently belong to and lead some of the most productive groups.

While impoverished leadership style refers to a leader that adopts a "delegate and disappears" management style. They aren't devoted to work completion or maintenance,

they essentially let their staff do whatever they want, resulting in a series of power battles.

A leader with this style lacks involvement and provide their group with little or no direction and delegate decision-making. A delegative leader will provide the tools and resources needed to complete a project, as well as take responsibility for the group's decisions and actions, but power will be delegated to the group in the majority of cases.

The group led by the delegative leader was the least productive, more demanding of their supervisor, unable to work independently, and showed less collaboration. The delegative approach is ideal for a group of highly skilled workers, and creative teams usually seek this level of autonomy. This method, on the other hand, does not function well for a group that lacks the necessary abilities, motivation, or deadline adherence, which might result in poor performance (Cherry, 2021).

Conclusion

There is a significant body of literature on various assessment procedures for organizational and management performance that include the aspect of leadership and leadership style. However, measuring cooperative performance based on the human dimension of leadership is unique, and cooperative performance evaluation approaches to the human dimension are rarely encountered in scientific investigations. As a result, the role of human leadership in cooperative success is rarely documented. The performance of cooperatives is usually determined by all three sustainability indices: social, economic, and environmental.

For national economic growth and poverty reduction, strong institutions are required. Local institutions play a crucial role in regulating resource access and influencing service delivery on the ground.

Some of the factors that influence an organization are the environment, technology, size of operations, and people. These factors play a key role in determining whether or not a business is suitable for income growth. As a result, a rural organization's success or failure is defined by the individuals who run it, as well as the leadership attributes and style supplied by the Chairman as the group's head.

Leadership is a crucial aspect of organizational success. Effective leadership is a two-way process that affects both individual and organizational performance, and the leader-follower connection is reciprocal.

The result of an assessment of Leadership style, on the other hand, shows that 90.00% of Chairmen have demonstrated Team leader management style which describes as high scores on tasks and a high score on people/relationships. As the result of the survey, the socio-demographic characteristics, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of the 20 Chairman leaders in the dairy farming business has almost the same characteristics as described.

The cooperative highest income of matured (successful) and in-distress (not successful) cooperatives also indicate no significance at all.

With data presented and described in the result, it is therefore concluded that Leadership traits and leadership style are deemed necessary to have matured (successful) cooperatives. The resulting Leadership Traits and Team Leadership style of management that have focused on the achievement and completion of the set vision, goal, objectives, and targets of the cooperatives (high on task) were found to be inherent to characteristics traits and style of leadership by the 19 (90.00%) Chairman leaders. The focus to strengthen the membership (high score on people/relationship) and the forward-looking goal to improve their daily business operation as cited by 90.00% of the Chairman are additional indicators of matured (successful) cooperatives. Most of all, 70.00% of the Chairman indicated that they tend to have a personalized approach (discuss with concerned members) to solving cooperative member's problems anytime.

The impact on the observed disruption of cooperatives' routine activities with the implementation of the expanded community quarantine (ECQ) during the peak of the pandemic more or less has not been so damaging to the cooperatives. As such, matured cooperative Chairman even find the opportunity to rise (coop highest recorded generated income (2020): Php 29, 200; (2021): Php 60,000) after the onset of the extreme pandemic (2019: Php 31, 250).

The role of the Philippine Carabao Center in this cooperative undertaking cannot be ignored. As one of the government institutions supporting dairy farmers' cooperatives in Nueva Ecija, the Philippine Carabao Center has launched several support efforts to assist dairy farmer producer cooperatives in maintaining or restarting their income-generating dairy enterprises to lessen, if not eliminate, the impact of the pandemic on their livelihood. It was also emphasized that the cooperatives' success can be more or less attributed to leaders who

are willing to adapt and improve while keeping the cooperative's best interests in mind.

Recommendation

As the performance of cooperatives is usually determined by all three sustainability indices: social, economic, and environmental, it is therefore recommended not to undermine the contribution of the human aspect: leadership. As many researchers cited leaders with specific inborn traits, always visible and competent will triumph in times of adversity and threats like the Covid-19 pandemic because they can quickly build trust and motivate people to engage in action and rise from their current condition. It was also emphasized that the cooperatives' success can be attributed to leaders who are willing to adapt and improve while keeping the cooperative's best interests in mind.

Understanding the leadership traits and style of the Chairman of mature (successful) cooperatives that find ways to maintain their income-generating enterprises despite limitations and hardship has been a success indicator as they are leaders with a forward, strong vision that will provide a sense of direction for action.

All leaders have personality traits that appear to be connected with being a more effective leader. Effective leadership involves the proper matching of a leader to the right situation. The most crucial aspect of being a good leader is understanding the consequences of one's actions and knowing the suitable leadership style/behavior for the situation. Effective leadership is a two-way process that influences both individual and organizational performance, and the leader-follower relationship is vital to the success of the organization.

Therefore, it is recommended that the next-in-line leaders should have the necessary character traits and style as demonstrated by the Chairman leaders (90.00%) of matured (successful) cooperatives in this study. This alone will not ensure cooperative success but will

contribute to the achievement of objectives towards success.

The role of the government institutions and other organizations such as the Philippine Carabao Center who are true to their mandate to help rural farmers cannot be denied. PCC programs and assistance are vital for the operation of the cooperative to be established or to survive and sustain. Harmonious relationship is also vital with the local leaders as they also have programs, projects, and services that can help in the sustainability of the business operation of cooperatives.

Therefore, the power of partnership and linking to the different government and non-government organizations and institutions is highly recommended. These institutions and organizations have mandates to help, strengthen or fill in any gap of people-led organizations such as cooperatives to enhance their production operations and sustain their organized entrepreneurship activities with or without crisis.

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