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21ST CENTURY LEADERSHIP SKILLS OF ACADEMIC HEADS TOWARDS HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the 21st century leadership skills of academic heads at a local university in the city of Manila, Philippines, as a basis for the proposal of a High-performance organization (HPO) framework. The study also determined how the challenges and opportunities of these 21st century leadership skills were experienced by the academic heads

that contributed to the development of the proposed framework. It employed qualitative research that utilized a descriptive phenomenological design. Data were gathered through survey-interview using semi-structured questions formulated by the researchers. The gathered data were analyzed using thematic analysis that included the extraction of themes from the description of the academic heads' 21st century leadership skills and the challenges and opportunities of these skills, which led to making generalizations in relation to how these leadership skills were perceived. The results revealed that the participant academic heads possess several 21st-century leadership skills. The results also revealed that the participant academic heads encountered several challenges and opportunities in the practice of their 21st century leadership skills. The High-performance organization (HPO) framework constructed in this study is specifically adapted to the salient needs of the institution studied in order to create and maintain a high-performance organization.

Keywords

21st Century Leadership Skills, Academic Heads, High-Performance Organization (HPO) Framework

1. Introduction

Leadership has become increasingly significant in our society. Effective families, communities, and societies depend on leadership to change the world for the better. It is obvious that people from all walks of life need to be better equipped to engage in leadership given how drastically the world has changed (Day et al., 2021). In schools, leaders have a key role to play in setting direction, creating a positive school mindset, supporting and enhancing teachers' performance and commitment, and equipping students with the competencies needed to foster improvement, promote success, and attain high performance, especially nowadays that our education system experiences many challenges brought about by changes and complexities in our society. The effectiveness of any organization or institution greatly hinges on the skillfulness of the leaders and managers responsible for overseeing its operations. Leadership is a formidable undertaking that demands specialized training and up-to-date skills to proficiently manage both the human and non-human assets of the institution (Akinbode & Al Shusumi, 2018). In the modern landscape, leaders must modify or elevate their skills to respond, forecast market shifts and patterns, make informed business choices, and adjust strategies when technology and market

conditions deviate unexpectedly. Nevertheless, these leaders must prepare themselves by staying updated on knowledge, honing skills, and gaining deeper insight into attributes that can enhance their effectiveness in a dynamic environment (Guzmán et al., 2020).

The goal of every institution is to become a high-performance organization. It is a state of efficacy and efficiency in the attainment of institutional goals, guided by the institution's philosophy and values. As we move into the new millennium, changes occur rapidly, and our world is becoming more complex. Nowadays, educational leaders face countless economic, political, social, and technological challenges in the everyday realities of the educational system. To this effect, leadership practices employed yesterday may no longer be appropriate today, and leadership skills possessed yesterday by educational leaders may no longer be enough today. These arguments made the researchers eager to determine if the academic heads' leadership skills are sufficient to face the challenges of their leadership in this new millennium and assess if these leadership skills are able to attain and sustain the high performance of their respective colleges. *Its results served as the basis for the proposal of a High-performance organization (HPO) framework.*

2. Method

This study employed qualitative research that utilized a descriptive phenomenological design to describe 21st-century leadership skills as well as the challenges and opportunities that were experienced by the participant academic heads designated as deans of colleges at a local university in the city of Manila, Philippines. The study also determined how the challenges and opportunities of these 21st century leadership skills were experienced by the participants. Data was gathered from the participants through survey interviews using semi-structured interview questions formulated by the researcher. The data collected from the interviews was systematically organized and presented in tabular form for better interpretation and analysis. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis that included the extraction of themes from the description of the academic heads' 21st century leadership skills that led to making generalizations in relation to how these leadership skills were described or perceived. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research approach commonly applied to both primary investigations and systematic reviews. Generally speaking, thematic analysis is a technique for recognizing, examining, and conveying patterns or themes among datasets (Purssell & Gould, 2021). It has

been proven that phenomenological thematic analysis is a suitable method for examining people's lived experiences and understanding how they interpret and make sense of those experiences (Abrams et al., 2022).

3. Results

This part covers the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data gathered from the responses of the participant academic heads with respect to their capacity and personal perspectives.

3.1. 21st-century leadership skills of Academic heads

This part focuses on the leadership skills of the participant academic heads to lead and direct their respective colleges and face the challenges of their leadership in the fast-moving circumstances of the 21st century.

Table 1 Theme: *Creativity in Dealing Situations*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: "If I have to describe who I am as a leader, I can tell you that I am not just thinking within the box, I think outside of the box, because of the volatility and uncertainty of today's situation, especially in the government.</i>	Think creatively to deal with uncertain situations	Creativity in dealing with situations
<i>P4: Regarding creativity & innovativeness, especially in solving problems, I tend to become extraordinary.</i>	Remarkable creativity & innovativeness	
<i>P5: I employ creativity and innovation when circumstances prevent me from acting or using conventional methods in addressing concerns & issues in the college. I employ unconventional ways of tackling issues & concerns.</i>	Employing creative ways	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 1 presents the responses of Participants 1, 4, and 5, where the theme *Creativity in dealing with situations* emerged. Participant 1 (P1) claimed that she thinks creatively when dealing with the unpredictability and uncertainty of the situation. Participant 4 (P4) regarded himself as remarkable for his creativity and innovativeness. Participant 5 (P5) is capable of employing creative ways of dealing with situations. Creativity is the mental process of coming up with new and possibly useful concepts and has been regarded as essential for organizations to achieve

sustained competitive advantage (Ruiz-Palomino & Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, 2020). Creativity is an intangible resource that underlies both organizational competitive advantage and innovation. Therefore, creativity plays an essential role in an organization's foundation and sustainability in a challenging and competitive environment (Gao et al., 2021). Creativity is an important 21st-century leadership skill because it can be a significant tool for creating new ideas to increase efficiency in dealing with situations and devise effective solutions to complex problems.

Table 2 Theme: *Receptive to New Ideas to Increase Knowledge*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: When you are in a leadership position, you must be open-minded from the very beginning. You must be open-minded always.</i>	Receptive to new ideas	Receptive to new ideas to increase knowledge
<i>P4: About having an open mindset, keeping an open mindset lets my knowledge flow which eventually becomes wisdom. I learn from my mentors. My mentors helped me to gain new knowledge. When I have the knowledge, anything will be possible to achieve.</i>	High degree of understanding and Acquire knowledge from my mentor	
<i>P5: I establish an open mindset to be able to learn from other people of different generations & cultures. I employ this skill and most of the time I consult with my subordinates, most especially with the senior faculty members of the college. I often listen to their wisdom and ideas.</i>	Receptive to new ideas and knowledge Learn from others	
<i>P6: I conduct regular consultations with members of my core team & representatives of our student organization. I initiate brainstorming with them on the pros & cons of situations. I make a consultation with the top management for specific concerns urgent or not. I benchmark with other departments & institutions regarding policies. I consult with the members of my team for needs, problems, & issues concerning the faculty, students, and staffs.</i>	Make dialogues with people Seek ideas and opinions Discuss matters with superiors Observe from other organizations Discuss with the team	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 2 presents the responses of Participants 1, 4, 5, and 6 that generated the theme *Receptive to new ideas to increase knowledge*. Participant 1 (P1) pointed out that she is receptive to new ideas and information from the very beginning once she became a leader. Participant 4's (P4) open mindset led him to have a high degree of understanding. He acknowledged that he acquired knowledge from his mentors, which gave him the inspiration that led him to think positively.

Participant 5 (P5) is receptive to new ideas and knowledge from experts and more experienced people around him. He also learns from the ideas of other people. Participant 6 (P6) constantly makes dialogue with her people. She seeks ideas and opinions from her team. She discusses important matters with her superiors. She formulates operating principles based on observations from other organizations. She discusses with her team important matters and concerns in her organization. Being receptive to new ideas will increase one's knowledge. As a modern-day leader, it is important to be receptive to all new ideas and suggestions, as no one ever knows when or where the next great idea will come from. The people around us may have lots of great ideas waiting to be extracted from their minds. Being receptive to new ideas will enable a leader to seek diverse opinions. Organizations rely on vibrant and robust discussions encompassing a variety of viewpoints to facilitate decision-making and provide a platform for expressing opinions that are often overlooked. Other points of view may introduce us to new knowledge and points of view, which can help us improve the correctness of our own opinions across a wide range of information (Yeomans et al., 2020).

Table 3 Theme: *Determination in Achieving Goals*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P3: Having a clear & compelling vision keeps me focused and does not easily give up when facing difficult times.</i>	Focus on goal Surpass challenges	Determination in achieving goals
<i>P4: In terms of perseverance, when people are sleeping, I am working. When things get tough, I embrace the moment because I believe that God is just testing my capacity. As my dedication to work, I am laser focused.</i>	Guide in achieving goals Maximizing for achievement Show determination	
<i>P5: As a leader, I make a clear set of goals to achieve. A leader without clear sets of goals will only exhaust himself & his resources without accomplishing anything. A clear & compelling vision is a leader's & organization's roadmap to where they want to go.</i>	Commitment in achieving goals	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 3 presents the responses of Participants 3, 4, and 5 that led into the theme *Determination in achieving goals*. Participant 3's (P3) clear and compelling vision maintained her focus on her goal and enabled her to surpass all the challenges that came her way. Participant 4 (P4) shows determination in his work and holds on to his faith to overcome difficulties. He shows commitment and adherence to achieving his goals. Participant 5's (P5) clear and compelling

vision serves as his guide in achieving organizational goals. He pointed out that he sets a clear goal to maximize organizational capacity and resources. With clear goals, a leader becomes aware of precisely what he wants to achieve and how to achieve it. Adding commitment and determination to the goals allows a leader to find that he is willing to take continuous and consistent action toward making dreams a reality, despite any obstacles in his path, including difficult times. A compelling vision is essential to the success of organizational change. Vision is the idealized objective that the leader wants the organization to accomplish in the future. The more idealistic the goal, the more out of alignment it is with the present situation, and the more urgent the need for change (Men et al., 2020).

Table 4 *Theme: Effective Communication*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<p><i>P3: I seldom suppress emotions. I freely express my feelings through more conventionally accepted ways. It is only through effective communication that my relationship with my team is built and kept. It is also a way where I can share my opinions, beliefs & directions.</i></p> <p><i>P5: To ensure effective communication, I establish proper and open channels of communication among members of the organization. I make sure that the directives and instructions from the administrators are immediately disseminated to the program chairs, faculty members & staff of the College. Memoranda are explained and any concerns are communicated immediately.</i></p>	<p>Expresses emotions Show feelings Let others know viewpoints and vision</p> <p>Fast dissemination of information</p>	Effective communication

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 4 presents the responses of Participants 3 and 5 that led to the theme *Effective communication*. Participant 3 (P3) expresses her emotions and shows her feelings in accordance with the norms. She maintains a good relationship with other people through effective communication. She acknowledged that effective communication allows her to let others know about her viewpoints and vision. Participant 5 (P5) prioritized the execution of proper protocols for fast dissemination of information and instruction. Effective communication is important to leaders who effectively relay information about the organization's culture, core values, mission, and vital messages to build trust and encouragement in their people. It helps prevent miscommunications within the organization and ensures that all members are kept up-to-date

with relevant information. In a versatile environment, it is essential for leaders to effectively communicate and distribute information to improve connections among everyone involved, foster learning and innovation, build a network environment, and encourage more participation (Guzmán et al., 2020). Organizational leaders are expected to be more than just spokespersons, decision-makers, and figureheads; they must also be enablers and skilled communicators. In an era of exceptional transparency, employees who are well-informed are raising greater expectations for top leaders to step out of their offices, communicate candidly, interact directly with both internal and external groups, and even express clear positions on contentious matters. The communicative function of top leaders has gained unparalleled prominence and significance (Men et al., 2020).

Table 5 Theme: *Delegate People Effectively*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: Leadership is something that is a relationship between the leader and the one being led. I cannot say that I am a very good leader if my followers cannot respond.</i>	Lead people to follow	Effective delegation
<i>P5: A good leader must also be a good delegator to not be overburdened by too much responsibility. As a leader, I must be able to share and delegate some of it.</i>	Learn how to delegate people	
<i>P6: I delegate and mobilize my team members to a specific task.</i>	Assign people	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 5 presents the responses of Participants 1, 5, and 6 that generated the theme *Delegate people effectively*. Participant 1 (P1) described her leadership as a relationship between her and her follower. She pointed out that a good leader leads his people to follow. Participant 5 (P5) pointed out that he delegated some of his functions to his people and shared with them his responsibilities. Participant 6 (P6) assigns her people to perform duties. As a leader, delegating people is important because a leader should not do everything by himself. Delegating people in leadership empowers the leader's subordinates to exercise autonomy by providing them with the big picture and entrusting them to deliver agreed-upon results. It allows the leader to lessen his job without compromising the quality of the organization's delivery. It's important to delegate, both to demonstrate trust in your team and to free up your time to concentrate on the most important things. When a leader delegated a task to one of his members, that person had the

opportunity to function efficiently and effectively for the team. Distributed leadership has been recognized as a highly significant leadership approach in terms of elevating the caliber of teaching and learning. This is due to the involvement of numerous school members in the process (Kumari, 2021).

Table 6 Theme: Promote Constant Collaboration

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: I check on the working environment and have to let everybody participate as much as possible because in that way I am able to gauge how much they can contribute to the vision of the organization both we are serving. You cannot deliver the service properly if you cannot collaborate.</i>	Make people collaborate Allow them to participate Seek help from other people	Promote constant collaboration
<i>P2: In an ideal case, I'd like to have the goal in place for every single employee regardless of how simple their job is. Once I have the goal in place, I can set milestones or daily schedules for everyone.</i>	Collaboration Contribute Perform daily role for the College	
<i>P6: In problem-solving, I initiate teamwork with members of the core group composed of program heads & coordinators. I coordinate & collaborate with other departments as a support system. I benchmark with other institutions for best practices. I make plans together with my team on programs & projects. I collaborate with top management regarding institutional plans, programs, & activities.</i>	Seek help from team members Mimic best practices from other organizations Allow people to participate	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 6 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, and 6 that led to the theme *Promote constant collaboration*. Participant 1 (P1) assesses the organizational environment, makes her people collaborate, and allows them to participate to be able to measure their potential capacity to contribute to the vision of the organization. She collaborates with other people, specifically in terms of finding needed resources. She pointed out that she cannot provide what is expected of her if she does not seek help. Participant 2 (P2) has his objectives properly established with the collaboration of his people, regardless of how much they contribute. He establishes organizational goals to set guidelines for how his people will perform their daily roles. Participant 6 (P6) seeks help from his team members to solve problems. She considers mimicking best practices from other organizations. She identifies the leadership potential of her people and allows them to participate in planning. Leadership requires the ability to build and maintain a strong and collaborative team of individuals working toward the same goal. It

becomes essential for leaders to establish agreements for mutual advantages for everybody in their organization, building an environment of increased collaboration and active participation and motivating employees to explore and share fresh ideas. It is important to create a learning and innovation environment that encourages the decision-making of collaborators and, therefore, persuades people to adopt a more open mindset. It's necessary to create a stimulating and creative atmosphere that supports collaborative decision-making while encouraging employees to develop a broader perspective in the process (Guzmán et al., 2020).

Table 7 Theme: *Provide Encouragement, Motivation, and Inspiration*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: I encourage my people to participate as much as possible because in that way I can let them feel their importance in the institution. Being their leader, my great role is to serve as a catalyst between them and the vision of that of the organization. And I often tell them it's not bad to be exclusive, sometimes you must consider the fact that all of you are united in one goal to grow.</i>	Know their potential capacity Provide support Encourage people to achieve Provide pieces of advice to people to learn and improve	Provide encouragement, motivation, and inspiration
<i>P2: I can lead my people on their way to continuously attain their goals by checking their progress daily, making sure they know what they are supposed to do, delegating work, counseling them, and so on. It is also important to me to lead people in a way they can see the bigger picture.</i>	Encourage people for improvement Give pieces of advice to attain goal	
<i>P4: I empower others by expressing appreciation for their efforts and offering nice feedback for their good performances.</i>	Encourage people by appreciation and recognition	
<i>P5: Motivation skills, honestly, a leader must be a beacon of light for the members, especially amid an extraordinary situation. Having these qualities, I am able to push the members in actualizing and realizing their potential in order for them to become valuable assets of the organization.</i>	Inspire and motivate to perform	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 7 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, 4, and 5 that generated the theme *Provide encouragement, motivation, and inspiration*. Participant 1 (P1) allows her people to participate to be able to know their potential capacity to contribute to the vision of the organization. She pointed out that her great role is to encourage her people to achieve the vision of her

organization. She provides pieces of advice to her people to build their relationships and let them learn and improve themselves. Participant 2 (P2) encourages his people to self-improve and improve their services. He gives advice to his people to attain their individual goals. Participant 4 (P4) encourages his people by appreciating their efforts and giving recognition for their performances. Participant 5 (P5) inspires and motivates his people to perform beyond expectations. He emphasized that highly motivated people will be able to show their full capacity, which will be beneficial to the organization. One of the responsibilities of a leader is to make other people, particularly his subordinates, do the best that they can for the benefit of the organization. To achieve this, the leader must be able to inspire and motivate his people. An effective leader must be able to motivate people and work in a team in a constantly changing and globally integrated environment (Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). The behaviors that employees exhibit towards achieving their goals are greatly influenced by leaders, who in turn have significant effects on internal motivation and outcomes (Gao et al., 2021). The leader's attention is directed towards advancement rather than avoiding regression. A comparable scenario is a coach leading a team to an extended series of victories. In such a case, the coach will motivate the team to strive for victory rather than merely aiming to prevent defeat (Fay & Patterson, 2018).

3.2. Challenges of the 21st-century leadership skills of the participant Academic heads

This part discusses the different challenges experienced by the participant academic heads in the practice of their 21st-century leadership skills. It focuses on the themes that emerged from the responses of the participant academic heads.

Table 8 Theme: Changing Subordinates' Attitude

Participant's Response	Code	Themes
<i>P1: It is difficult to break a culture already engraved in a system. That to me is the greatest challenge, because sometimes what you consider unethical becomes normal. It is a challenge how to wake them up and tell them "That is not the proper way". To me, it is the greatest challenge.</i>	Changing a culture Change the accustomed ways or practices	Changing subordinates' attitude
<i>P2: Specific challenges related to my leadership skills include how to instill a sense of rightness in my people and how to give pieces of advice to change their bad attitudes without offending them.</i>	How to encourage people to become righteous	
<i>P5: I experienced some challenges in the lack of empathy of some members in our College.</i>	Lack of concern of some people	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 8 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, and 5, where the theme *changing subordinates' attitudes* emerged. Participant 1's (P1) greatest challenge encountered in her leadership is the difficulty of changing the culture from what is already inculcated in the organization. She found it very challenging to encourage people to change their habits. Participant 2 (P2) experienced difficulty encouraging his people to instill righteousness. He finds it challenging to advise his people to change their negative attitudes. Participant 5 (P5) experienced challenges regarding the lack of concern of some of his people. Negative attitudes exhibited by a couple of members may have a negative impact on the entire workforce and even on the performance of the organization. Any member of an organization with a negative attitude will become inadequate in their role and will perform unsatisfactorily, while those with a positive attitude are more productive and useful to the organization. Leaders play a vital role in driving transformation, tasked with conveying the importance of change to employees, exemplifying desired attitudes and actions, actively involving themselves, and openly engaging with others (Men et al., 2020).

Table 9 Theme: *Promote Cooperation*

Participant's Response	Code	Themes
<i>P1: Most of my faculty members are not inclusive, they are exclusive, meaning, they prefer to do things on their own. So, I need to break that and encourage them to become inclusive.</i>	A challenge in the exclusiveness of people	Promote cooperation
<i>P2: It is a challenge for me to encourage collaboration in a big team composed of diverse people and how to establish teamwork among them.</i>	The challenge to make people participate	
<i>P5: Resistance from some members of the organization not necessarily from the college but also from auxiliary offices and most especially from those who are more seasoned members of the school is another great challenge for me.</i>	Uncooperativeness of staff and employees	
<i>P6: I encountered challenges in dealing with some faculty members. Because I am new in this institution, there are those who will exert their seniority and would outwardly show resistance to cooperation. Also, in soliciting cooperation from the faculty members in different activities.</i>	Soliciting of cooperation Challenge in seeking participation	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 9 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 that generated the theme *Promote cooperation*. Participant 1 (P1) encountered challenges in developing an inclusive attitude toward her faculty members. It is challenging for Participant 2's (P2) part to make his people participate. Participant 5 (P5) experienced challenges with the uncooperativeness of some college and auxiliary service staff, particularly the older ones. Participant 6 (P6) experienced challenges in soliciting cooperation from more senior faculty members at the university than her. She also experienced challenges in seeking participation from her people in several events. The lack of cooperation from members can greatly affect the productivity and performance of an organization. A cooperative relationship among members of the organization makes the organization more productive and effective in their roles, and when one person is uncooperative, the entire process in an organization slows down. A leader has been suggested as an important catalyst for effective change, as they formulate a vision, strategy, and change-oriented culture while also inspiring employees to actively participate in the process of change (Men et al., 2020).

Table 10 *Theme: Understanding Multiple Perspectives*

Participant's Response	Code	Themes
<i>P1: You know, a lot of things is a very challenging aspect of leadership because you have to study the people around you.</i>	Challenge in understanding multiple people	Understanding multiple perspectives
<i>P4: I have experienced challenges in understanding everyone's opinion and point of view. I have to understand where each individual came from.</i>	Challenge in understanding other's viewpoints	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 10 presents the responses of Participants 1 and 4 that led to the theme *Understanding multiple perspectives*. Participant 1 (P1) encountered great challenges in her role as a leader, specifically in understanding people's diversity. Participant 4 (P4) experienced challenges in understanding other people's viewpoints. He found it challenging to know the diversity of his people. One of the challenges for leaders is to foster an environment where such ideas can be discussed and to make sure that divergent viewpoints are redirected into a constructive debate that fosters development and mutual understanding. Understanding the individual perspectives of other people helps us understand different beliefs, experiences, and viewpoints. It gives a leader better understanding and a high level of empathy for his people. It promotes proper judgment, eliminates biases, and reduces conflicts. While conflict unsettles some individuals, others seem

to enjoy it, yet managing conflict is a universal challenge. Our reactions to conflict play a crucial role in determining the positive or negative outcomes of our relationships with others. Therefore, organizational leaders can benefit from understanding the various aspects of conflicts, such as their origins, reactions to them, and ways to resolve them. While conflict creates challenges, it also offers many opportunities to strengthen relationships and solve issues. Expertly handling conflicts is an extremely valuable skill for leaders. (Steen & Shinkai, 2020). Though coming up with competing ideas may seem unavoidable, in reality, people do not always seem to manage conflict effectively. According to a large body of research, the presence of opposing viewpoints leads to avoidance, negative affect, skewed information processing, reactance, and unfavorable inferences about the opposing viewpoint. Previous studies have shown that conflict may get out of control and damage a relationship when there is disagreement. Additionally, tension in one relationship might affect others (Yeomans et al., 2020).

Table 11 *Theme: Strengthening Students' Competencies*

Participant's Response	Code	Themes
<i>P1: Because of the pandemic, they show low performance in classes. This pandemic has in a way adversely affected their competence. Although it's beyond my control, I need to think of ways to improve their competencies.</i>	A challenge in students' attitude & performance	Strengthening students' competencies
<i>P6: There's a big challenge in improving the board exam performance of our graduate students.</i>	Challenge in producing competent graduates	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 11 presents the responses of Participants 1 and 6 that led to the theme *strengthening students' competencies*. Participant 1 (P1) encountered challenges in the effect of the pandemic on the competencies of the students and admitted that she couldn't do much about it. But she pointed out that she needs to develop better approaches to strengthen students' competencies. Participant 6 (P6) experienced challenges in producing board-competent graduates. A significant portion of the student population consists of individuals from the Millennial generation. These students perceive education as a financial venture and a path for progress, and they anticipate tangible returns on their investment. They are less patient with educational material that doesn't directly correlate with practical job skills. Millennials possess greater technological proficiency compared to earlier generations, accessing and utilizing information in real-time. This can sometimes create a disconnect between faculty members, who might excel in teaching but use

more conventional approaches, and the expectations of Millennial students (Thompson & Miller, 2018). The leadership skills of academic heads can have effects on students' learning. Today's school heads take on the difficult mission of educating students for the future with enthusiasm, and they carefully consider the methods and objectives that will help them in this endeavor. The world is changing swiftly; thus, students must develop the ability to adapt as quickly as these changes take place. They must have confidence in their abilities and the capacity for quick learning.

3.3. Opportunities of the 21st-century leadership skills of the participant Academic heads

This part discusses the opportunities of the 21st century leadership skills of the participant academic heads. It focuses on the themes that were generated after closely analyzing the responses of the participant academic heads.

Table 12 *Theme: Able to Accomplish Leadership Roles Effectively*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: You know I feel good when I can solve problems. I'm essentially a problem solver. I am not a complainer. When there's something wrong, I need to do something about it.</i>	Able to solve problems Fulfill expectations	Able to accomplish leadership roles effectively
<i>P2: I had the opportunity to show a new perspective of leadership which is more relevant to today's changing nature of work and provides a framework for effective leadership.</i>	Improve leadership skills Become more effective	
<i>P4: I am able to share my talents and experiences. I was able to practice patience. I am able to exercise time management, and I am able to deal with different people with different personalities. I am also able to improve all my aspects of being a leader.</i>	Share skills & expertise Handle people Improvement of leadership	
<i>P5: Opportunity to employ a servant leadership brand in the college and organization. Not saddling many responsibilities towards subordinates but maintaining a high standard in the delivery of quality education and services to stakeholders</i>	Opportunity in serving Unique leadership ability High standard of delivery & service	
<i>P6: Able to serve regardless of compensation. Coordinating with some institutions like Manila Doctors Hospital for employment of our graduates.</i>	Offering service Helping alumni	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 12 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 that generated the theme *Able to accomplish leadership roles effectively*. One of the opportunities that Participant 1 (P1) experienced in her leadership skills was being able to solve problems. She described herself as a problem-solver. Participant 2 (P2) recognized opportunities for improving his leadership skills and becoming more effective in this new millennium. Participant 4 (P4) recognized the opportunity to share his skills and expertise. He was able to exercise tolerance, use time effectively, and handle diverse people. He found an opportunity to improve his leadership skills and practices. Participant 5 (P5) experienced an opportunity to serve his organization with his unique leadership ability. He experienced the opportunity to unburden his people without compromising the high standard of delivery and services. Participant 6 (P6) found an opportunity to offer her service because of her passion. She also found an opportunity to help their alumni become employed in hospitals. Accomplishment is a standard that needs to be met by a leader. It includes maintaining a high level of excellence in performing leadership roles and activities. It requires skills and competency building, with an understanding that what is needed to accomplish today is vital for the organization's future achievements. Accomplishment is not just a matter of getting things done; it includes creating a vision, building strategies to support it, developing the team to become successful, and seeing it through to the end. All of this is done in a supportive and goal-oriented manner. Leadership and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) have been looked at in relation to forecasting either creativity or innovation (Černe et al., 2018).

Table 13 Theme: Able to Respond to Situations

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: Because of the bureaucratic red tape when you're in the government, the limited resources & other challenging situations if you just sit down & complain, you won't achieve anything. Given this opportunity for leadership skills, there are lots of challenges I can respond to.</i>	Do something for a result Respond to several challenges	Able to respond to situation
<i>P2: As a leader, aligning myself with the environment I'm working with serves as a key pillar in my effective leadership. With so many changes & disruptions taking place, I can still align my function as a leader. Although it is becoming increasingly difficult to align myself with an ever-changing environment, having an open mindset enables me to adapt to new circumstances rapidly.</i>	Opportunity to adapt to changes Able to perform role Able to adapt to increasing complexity	

P6: Able to learn several techniques & strategies. Using several types of leadership skills for different people & different situations.	Opportunity in adapting new techniques	
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(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 13 presents the responses of Participants 1, 2, and 6 that led to the theme *Able to respond to situations*. Being in the government, Participant 1 (P1) recognized the opportunity in terms of finding resources. She pointed out that you have to do something to achieve favorable results. She also recognized the opportunity to respond to several challenges. Participant 2 (P2) stated that it is an opportunity for him to be able to adapt to changes, and despite the disturbance caused by changes, he was still able to perform his role as a leader. He recognized the opportunities in his inherent open mindset and adaptability, which enabled him to adapt to the increasing complexities of leadership in this new millennium. Participant 6 (P6) found an opportunity to adapt to many challenging tasks. She experienced opportunities to adapt to new techniques and strategies by employing her leadership skills with various people and in several circumstances. Schools are already being affected by disruptive changes in higher education. Fast-paced, data-driven workplace models, the interdependence of the professional workforce, the demand for civil and inclusive working environments, and improved, more transparent communication at all levels of the organization are pushing for changes in how students are educated. In order to respond to "disruptions" in the academic environment and represent knowledgeable modern leadership and management scholars, today's leaders must build new components of their leadership qualities (Thompson & Miller, 2018).

Table 14 Theme: *Understanding Thoughts and Feelings*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
P1: Open-mindedness enables me to understand the organizational culture and it allows me to be able to demonstrate empathy. I learned to listen to others' thoughts & feelings which helped me how to lead my people properly.	Understanding the culture Understand & share feelings of other people Learn to listen to	Understanding thoughts & feelings
P5: Showcasing empathy to members of the organization and subordinates gave me the opportunity to have a good relationship with my people.	Show concern Understanding the feelings	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

Table 14 presents the responses of Participants 1 and 5 that generated the theme *Understanding thoughts and feelings*. Participant 1 (P1) acknowledged the opportunity to understand the culture

of the organization. It helped her understand and share the feelings of other people in the organization. With this, she learned to listen to be able to direct her people. Participant 5 (P5) found an opportunity to show his concern and understand the feelings of his people. The capacity to identify the emotions of others and the interrelationship within your institution is described as social awareness. Exceptional leaders in this regard display adept social awareness and implement empathy. They make an effort to understand the emotions and viewpoints of those around them, thereby enhancing their communication and cooperation with peers. Through empathetic communication, they provide support to the team while also enhancing their personal effectiveness. When leaders genuinely display emotions like personal support, concern, and understanding for their employees, they demonstrate authentic leadership. This authenticity has been connected to fostering trust in both management and the organization (Men et al., 2020).

Table 15 *Theme: Create a Clear and Compelling Vision*

Participant's Response	Code	Theme
<i>P1: To me, the little things that I can do are my little successes & opportunities as a leader. What is my mission and why I am in this position? I don't settle for anything else; I execute my mission and focus on the school's vision. If you are not aligned with the vision, you won't be able to execute your mission and make it clear what the school wants.</i>	Opportunity to focus on performing roles The opportunity of having a vision aligned with the school	Create a clear & compelling vision
<i>P4: I am also able to provide a clear line of sight between the vision of the College and the day-to-day responsibilities of the faculty members.</i>	Opportunity to translate his vision to his people	

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

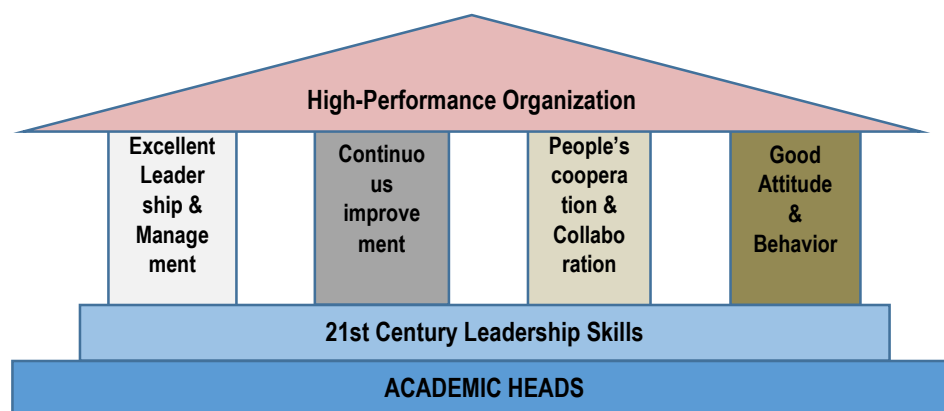
Table 15 presents the responses of Participants 1 and 4 that led to the theme *Create a clear and compelling vision*. Participant 1 (P1) recognized the opportunity to solve problems. She pointed out that you must focus on performing the leadership role that is expected of you. She also recognized the opportunity to have a vision aligned with that of the school. She considered that personal preference should meet the school's objectives. Participant 4 (P4) experienced an opportunity to make his people perform their roles for the achievement of the organizational goal. Creating a vision is the first step in giving others a reason to follow. A leader may attract people's attention by employing a unique expression and an appeal for change. The leader communicates an influential commitment to move ahead and venture into things that others are afraid to do (Fay & Patterson, 2018). A leader must be able to clearly understand what the

organization will look like or do once the vision is achieved. As a leader of an organization, you should cultivate a global perspective and avoid thinking small. Approach everything with a view to sustainability, well-being, and the bigger picture, and help create a vision that encourages your people to think the same.

3.4. Proposed High-performance organization (HPO) framework

Based on the results of the study, a proposed High-performance organization (HPO) framework was developed by the researchers. The framework constructed is specifically adapted to the salient needs of the institution studied in order to create and maintain a high-performance organization.

The High-performance organization (HPO) framework (Figure 1) is supported by four pillars: excellent leadership and management, continuous improvement, people's cooperation and collaboration, and good attitude and behavior. These pillars are grounded in 21st-century leadership skills. The first pillar of the framework is excellent leadership and management. This implies that there is a need to cascade the executive performance target and action plan down across organization levels through performance indicators, targets, and measurements. The second pillar is continuous improvement, which means that there should be regular assessments of leadership capacity and continual improvement of leadership skills through training and workshops. The third pillar is people's cooperation and collaboration. This is meant for the people within the organization to cooperate in the organizational process and collaborate effectively with other members of the organization for the achievement of the organizational goal. The fourth pillar is good attitude and behavior. This applies to positive leadership traits that can become contagious to others and can encourage the most truthful and fair outcome for the organization's team. The core ground on which the four pillars stand is 21st-century leadership skills. It includes creativity in dealing with the situation; receptivity to new ideas to increase knowledge; determination in achieving goals; effective communication; delegating people effectively; promoting constant collaboration; providing encouragement, motivation, and inspiration; and close supervision and monitoring. In this study, these leadership skills are deemed vital to supporting a high-performance organization.



<i>Pillars</i>	<i>Description</i>
Excellent Leadership & Management	Cascading executive performance targets and action plan down across organization levels through performance indicators, targets, and measurements
Continuous improvement	Regular assessment of leadership capacity and continually improve leadership skills through leadership training and workshops
People's cooperation & Collaboration	Make people cooperate in the organizational process and collaborate effectively with other members of the organization for the achievement of the organizational goal
Good attitude & Behavior	Apply positive leadership traits that can become contagious to others and can encourage the most truthful and fair outcome for the organization team
<i>Core ground</i>	
21st-century leadership skills	The core ground on which the four pillars stand. It includes creativity in dealing with the situation; receptivity to new ideas to increase knowledge; determination in achieving goals; effective communication; delegating people effectively; promoting constant collaboration; providing encouragement, motivation, and inspiration; and close supervision and monitoring.

Figure 1: *High-Performance Organization (HPO) Framework*

(Source: Authors' Own Illustration)

4. Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that academic heads possess several 21st-century leadership skills. They show creativity in dealing with situations; they are receptive to new ideas to increase their knowledge; they show determination in achieving goals; they exhibit effective communication; they delegate people effectively to different roles in the organization; they constantly engage in collaboration for the success of the organization; and they provide encouragement, motivation, and inspiration to their people. Academic heads as 21st-century leaders encountered several challenges in their leadership skills. They encountered challenges in attempting to change the attitudes of their subordinates that affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment; they found challenges in promoting cooperation with some people

in their organization; they encountered some challenges in understanding multiple perspectives from diverse people; and they experienced some challenges in strengthening the competencies of their students, particularly in the board exams. Academic heads experienced several opportunities in the practice of their 21st-century leadership skills. It is an opportunity for them to be able to accomplish their leadership roles; they were able to respond to several situations because of their good leadership skills; they find an opportunity to understand the thoughts and feelings of other people, particularly their subordinates; and having a clear and compelling vision is an excellent opportunity for their leadership skills.

5. Recommendation

It was recommended that educational institutions consider the implications of this study when developing a program or operating procedure to minimize problems and challenges encountered by their academic heads. They should consider adopting and implementing the proposed High-performance organization (HPO) framework from this study or using it as a model to develop their own framework that will lead them toward high-performing educational institutions. The school administration should develop plans or programs to address the challenges encountered by their academic heads. They should re-examine existing operating procedures and revisit their administrative policies and guidelines. Academic heads should strengthen their leadership qualities, particularly their 21st-century leadership skills necessary for creating and maintaining high-performance organizations. They should examine if their current leadership skills are effective for modern-day leadership and develop leadership skills best suited for the 21st century. They should increase their awareness of the common challenges of 21st-century leadership. They should always be ready to respond to these challenges and should know how to deal appropriately with different challenges. Future researchers may conduct similar studies to validate the results of this study, and they can also conduct further studies on topics related to 21st-century leadership skills.

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